

Chapter Twenty-Two: Finally Home

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Phera POV:

As the portal closed behind us, the unsettling mix of familiarity and foreignness washed over me. We'd just stepped into the Red Moon Pack territory in the wolf multiverse. The sky above seemed to hold a deeper hue of blue, and the earth beneath my feet felt more alive, as if greeting an old friend.

Damon, Axel, and Zane were beside me, a protective circle closing me in. My eyes met each of theirs in turn, searching for answers in depths that seemed both infinite and shallow. Before I could say anything, though, Axel enveloped my hand with his, and I felt those unmistakable electric tingles once again. My wolf stirred within, a yearning too primal to ignore, yet too complicated to give in to.

"Remember our terms," I managed to say, my voice steadier than I felt.

A synchronized nod came from each of them, and I took it as a tacit agreement.

"Let's go," Damon murmured.

Suddenly, two guards who were stationed near the portal bowed their heads.

"Alphas," they greeted, deliberately leaving out my title.

My eyes flickered to the triplets, who seemed unfazed. Before I could react, Axel spoke, his voice smooth as silk

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but edged with authority. "Things have changed," he said, leading us past the guards and deeper into the territory.

"The Red Moon Pack isn't what it used to be. We're stronger, more united. And now that you're here, it's complete. You complete us, Phera. You're our Queen, our Luna." They reminded me once again

The words weighed heavily in the air, leaving me struggling to wrap my head around the enormity of it all. There was no missing the finality in Axel's words, a sense of destiny that brooked no argument. My mind raced, conflicting emotions fighting for control. I was trapped in a whirlpool of past and present, of resentment and an inexplicable sense of homecoming.

"We're here," Zane announced softly, interrupting my inner turmoil.

I looked up and found myself in front of a grand building made of dark stone and rustic wood. I was led up a set of broad steps and into a foyer that was the epitome of understated elegance.

"Welcome home," Damon whispered, and despite myself, my heart did a somersault.

The tug of the mate bond, the allure of the pack link—it was a lot to take in. But before they could lead me further, I steeled myself.

"This may be home," I said, "but we have unfinished business. I hope you remember my terms." My voice came out stronger than I'd expected, resolute and unwavering.

The triplets exchanged a glance, tension passing between them like a palpable force. Then they turned to me,

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nodding solemnly.

"We remember," they said in unison. 2

Their voices filled with a promise, a conviction that told me they were committed to proving themselves to me, to winning my trust and my heart. And as I stood there, surrounded by my mates in the home that had once been mine, I realized that despite the storm of emotions raging within me, a flicker of hope had ignited—a hope that perhaps, just perhaps, things could truly be set right.

As the large wooden door to the pack house swung open, a wave of sights, sounds, and scents enveloped me like an all-encompassing hug. I was immediately greeted by the joyful cries and delighted eyes of my family and friends. It was overwhelming, an assault to my senses, but in the best way possible. My mom was the first to reach me, tears glistening in her eyes as she wrapped her arms around me.

"My baby, you're home," she whispered, her words soft yet heavy with emotion.

"I missed you, Mom," I managed to say, my own eyes misty as I felt the comforting embrace of the woman who gave me life. My dad was right behind her, his rugged face glowing with a warmth that melted my defenses. He hugged me tightly, the strength of his arms a fortress around me.

"Welcome back, Princess," he said, his voice choked with emotion, the way it always got when he was trying to be strong.

Nate, my brother, enveloped me in a bear hug, lifting me off the ground for a moment.

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"Sis, it's so good to see you!"

"Put me down, goofball," I chuckled, grateful for the levity he always brought into my life.

Newmara, my sister, was more reserved, holding back as if she wasn't sure what to do. But as our eyes met, something shifted, and she stepped forward to hug me. It was brief awkward but laden with unspoken sentiments. And then there was Adam, the triplets' younger brother. Though he had the same striking features as his older siblings, his expression was softer, friendlier.

"Welcome home, chimpunck," he said, embracing me warmly. 1

My best friends, Betty and Reese, were next. They rushed towards me, and we engaged in a group hug, laughing and crying in a confusing mess of emotions.

"Girl, you have no idea how much we missed you," Betty exclaimed, wiping a tear from her eye.

As we broke the hug, I glanced back at the triplets—Damon, Axel, and Zane. They had stepped back, giving me space for these personal reunions. Their eyes were fixed on me, expressions unreadable but intense. For a fleeting moment, I felt a pull, an invisible thread tugging me toward them. But I pushed it away, not ready to dive into that emotional abyss just yet.

The pack house was elaborately decorated, draped in hues of silver and gold, the pack colors. The scent of delicious food wafted through the air, mingling with the aroma of scented candles and the crisp outdoor air that filtered in through the open windows. The tables were laden with a feast, and a live band was setting up in a

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corner, their instruments gleaming under the subtle lighting. It seemed the entire pack had turned out to welcome me, their long-lost Luna.

"Let the celebration begin!" Nate announced, breaking the momentary stillness.

And as the first notes of music filled the air, the room erupted into cheers, pulling me into the here and now. Yet even as I smiled and laughed, joining in the merriment, I couldn't shake off the weight of the decisions that loomed ahead, the unspoken words that hung heavily in the air between the triplets and me. But for now, this was my homecoming, a moment to live in the present, and maybe, just maybe, a chance to find a slice of the happiness that had eluded me for so long.

The air thickened with tension as the triplets, Damon, Axel, and Zane, made their way through the crowd. Each step they took seemed calculated, almost reverent, as if they were approaching a sacred altar. Their eyes, those hauntingly beautiful eyes, stayed locked onto mine, filling me with a complex brew of emotions—longing, skepticism, and a dash of fear.

"May we have a moment?" Damon spoke first, his voice a rich blend of authority and humility that I couldn't quite decipher.

I glanced at my family and friends, who all wore expressions of anticipation and concern, then back at the triplets.

"Alright, but not for too long. This is a party, remember?"

Damon nodded, and all three escorted me to a semi-secluded corner of the grand hall, away from the prying

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eyes and bustling excitement. The atmosphere here was different; quieter, and somehow, heavier.

"You look stunning," Axel said, breaking the silence.

His voice was gentle, but the words seemed to crawl over my skin, making me hyper-aware of my own existence.

"Thank you," I replied, almost robotically.

My mind was spinning with conflicting thoughts and feelings, making it hard to concentrate.

"We're sorry to pull you away, but we thought it was important to discuss some things," Zane added, his voice tinged with a seriousness that further pulled me away from the celebratory mood.

"All ears," I responded, doing my best to sound detached.

I wasn't sure how well I was succeeding.

"We want you to know that we're committed to honouring your terms," Damon began. "The financial role in the pack, the female warrior training—everything."

"Even the not marking and mating part?" I asked, a hint of incredulity in my voice.

Axel sighed, his jaw clenching momentarily.

"Yes. It's not what we want, but if that's what it takes to regain your trust, we're willing to wait. You are worth waiting for."

The sincerity in his voice struck a chord deep within me. I looked at each of their faces, seeing an identical expression of earnestness mirrored on each one. And yet, I couldn't shake off the years of pent-up emotions and

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unsaid words.

"Listen," I began, my voice laced with a newfound determination, "I'm glad you're willing to respect my conditions but remember that it's not just about waiting. It's about proving yourselves, proving that I can rely on you, trust you." 1

"Fair enough," Zane conceded. "We have a lot to make up for, and we're prepared to do the work."

I nodded, still grappling with the gravity of the moment. "Good," was all I managed to say before taking a deep breath and turning to rejoin the party.

As I walked away, I couldn't help but feel the triplets' eyes on me, burning into my back like a physical touch. I knew things were far from resolved, but for the first time, the weight of our complicated relationship felt a little bit lighter. 3

And so, I reentered the crowd, offering smiles and laughs as if nothing had changed. But deep down, I knew everything had changed. My mates were willing to try, and so was I. A new chapter was unfolding, and whatever came next, I'd face it head-on—strong, resolute, and finally home.