

## Chapter Thirty-Six: Battle Line Drawn

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Phera POV:

With the bunker's steel door closing behind me, the urgency of the situation hit me full-force. My boots pounded against the earth as I sprinted toward the east and south borders. Adrenaline coursed through my veins, urging me to push forward despite the disapproving mental links bombarding my consciousness.

Phera, what do you think you're doing? Get back to the bunker!

The mental voices of my mates and my brother Nate were laced with concern, even annoyance. Zane, Axel, Damon, and Nate tried to reason with me, their words enveloping my thoughts like a thick fog.

'It's too dangerous, Phera. Go back!'

'We can't concentrate if we're worried about you.'

The final straw was Damon's mental ultimatum: 'If you don't turn back, we're coming to get you.'

I clenched my fists, infuriated. Enough was enough. Channeling every ounce of my willpower, I sent out a powerful combined mind link to all of them.

'I am your Luna, your sister, and a warrior. Trust me as I trust you. Do not undermine me again.'

And with that, I threw up my mental walls, effectively blocking them out. A weight lifted off my shoulders,

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replaced by the sweet sensation of freedom. With a swift leap, I shifted.

As my form elongated, fur sprouting from my skin, the transition completed in a heartbeat. I was now a majestic wolf, my coat a kaleidoscope of silver and white, resembling moonlight dancing on a tranquil lake. I let out a resonating howl, a battle cry and a declaration, announcing my arrival to the front lines.

The moment my paws touched the ground, I felt more in tune with my surroundings—the earth, the trees, and the impending danger. My heightened senses caught the distant scents and sounds of combat. I was close. Very close.

Then they appeared—my mates in their wolf forms. Towering and imposing, their black coats were as dark as midnight, each standing at an intimidating seven feet. They growled low, their eyes glinting a dangerous shade of amber, betraying their human annoyance.

For a moment, we were in a standoff. Their large forms attempted to flank me, to force me back to safety. But before they could make their move, a new scent wafted through the air—rogues.

Like a tornado of fur and fangs, a burst of rogue wolves sprang from the bushes, lunging toward us. All internal debates were forgotten, pushed aside by the immediate, palpable threat. In seamless unity, my mates and I turned to face the enemies crashing down on us like a tidal wave.

The forest turned into a battleground—a chaotic dance of wolves and humans, all fueled by primal instinct and raw power. My senses were heightened to an almost unbearable degree; the mixture of blood, earth, and sweat

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filled the air, both repulsive and intoxicating. The cries of battle—a cacophony of growls, roars, and human shouts—echoed through the trees, punctuated by the occasional snap of bones.

I saw wolves of our pack, their coats gleaming in various shades of browns, blacks, and grays, darting through the melee. Among them were warriors in human form, their bodies adorned with hastily donned armor, swinging swords and battle-axes with deadly precision. The rogues were less organized, an unruly mob of snarling, spitting furies, but what they lacked in discipline, they made up for in sheer numbers and ferocity.

My paws dug into the soil as I leapt, jaws wide open, meeting the first rogue wolf that dared to charge at me. The crunch of bones was satisfying, a chorus to the song of battle. My fangs sank deep into the rogue's neck, severing vital arteries. With a powerful jerk of my head, I tossed the lifeless form aside.

Almost immediately, another rogue lunged at me, this one larger, its fur a matted mess of grime and dried blood. But size was never an indicator of skill. I dodged the initial strike, circled around, and aimed for the hind legs, tearing through muscle and bone. The rogue wolf collapsed, incapacitated, a pained yowl escaping its throat.

Out of the corner of my eye, I saw my mates engaged in their own brutal dances. Damon, in his towering wolf form, was a whirlwind of destruction, his jaws snapping shut around a rogue wolf before tossing it aside like a ragdoll. Axel and Zane fought side by side, perfectly in sync as they cornered and took down another. Nate was not far behind, his Beta status evident in the way he coordinated a group of warriors, pushing back a cluster of



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rogues.

However, my focus couldn't linger on them for long; another rogue wolf tried to take advantage of my brief distraction. A sharp sting pierced through my flank. Roaring in pain and anger, I turned and snapped my jaws shut on the rogue's leg, shattering the bones instantly. My eyes locked onto its fear-filled ones just for a second before I went for the fatal bite, a visceral reminder that mercy was not a currency in battle.

The fight wore on, each side giving as good as they got. But slowly, the tide was turning in our favor. Our pack's warriors were trained, disciplined, and fighting on their home ground. Every rogue wolf taken down bolstered our resolve; every fallen comrade fueled our wrath.

Just when it seemed like the end was in sight, a rogue wolf twice the size of any I had seen before burst through the front lines, snarling, its eyes filled with nothing but malevolent intent. The surrounding fights seemed to pause, a brief moment of collective recognition that a formidable adversary had entered the field.

Summoning the last reserves of my strength, I readied myself for what would be the ultimate test of my abilities. There was no room for hesitation, no time for doubt. I crouched low, my muscles taut like a coiled spring, and let out a growl that echoed the fierceness of my spirit.

Just as I prepared to engage the behemoth rogue, another rogue wolf, considerably smaller but equally vicious, lunged from my blind spot. Before I could fully dodge its attack, it sank its fangs into my hind leg. A searing pain shot through my body, momentarily paralyzing me.

My mates felt it—the burning agony, the momentary

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weakness—as if it were their own. Their roars of fury and concern reverberated through the forest. In a synchronized move that showcased their innate unity, Damon, Axel, and Zane turned their backs to the enemies they were fighting and charged through the forest floor like dark avatars of wrath.

They descended upon the rogues attacking me with a ferocity that could only be fueled by love and the fear of loss. Damon's massive jaws closed around the neck of one rogue, lifting it off the ground before shaking it so violently that its neck snapped. Axel and Zane teamed up to dismember another, each grabbing an end and pulling until a sickening tear of flesh and bone resounded. The message was clear: Touch her, and perish.

The ripple effect was immediate. Seeing their comrades so ruthlessly vanquished, the remaining rogue wolves faltered, their resolve waning. The atmosphere thickened with a collective realization; the battle was lost for them. With yelps and whimpers, the rogues retreated into the darkness from which they had come, their tails between their legs.

Painfully, I shifted back into my human form. I was aware of my nudity, but that seemed inconsequential given the circumstances. My leg throbbed mercilessly, my vision beginning to blur. Just then, a blanket was thrown over me; I didn't need to see to know it was one of my pack members looking out for their Luna.

My mates, still in their wolf forms, shifted back to their human selves, not caring that they, too, were exposed. Their eyes were a tumultuous sea of emotions: relief, fear, and a burning love that could sear my soul.

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"We need to get you to the infirmary, now," Damon said, lifting me into his arms as Axel and Zane flanked us.

Chuckling weakly, I said,

"Looks like the pack is getting a free show. Remember, guys, you're all mine, so no flaunting."

As blood trickled from the corner of my mouth, their faces tightened, a grim reminder of the gravity of the situation.

"Love, you're the only audience we ever want, but right now, we need to focus on saving you," Axel whispered, his voice tinged with desperation.

"We would bare our souls to you, sunflower, not just our bodies," Zane added, his hand lightly grazing my forehead as if trying to absorb my pain.

And with those words, a sense of warmth washed over me, a temporary balm on my injuries, both physical and emotional. As we raced through the forest towards the infirmary, a part of me realized that this was it—this was love, raw and unconditional, a force as destructive as it was restorative.

I felt my consciousness starting to fade, but their voices anchored me, a trio of lifelines pulling me back from the abyss. Even in the bleakest of moments, the intensity of our bond was a beacon, a testament to a love that could survive battles, bloodshed, and the cruel unpredictability of fate.