



CHAPTER 12: The Return of the Ruby

Sophia slinked back from the wolf. Asher tore off his mask, revealing himself to be Amelia's brother.

Oh shit, Sophia thought, her heart dropping. It's Amelia's brother and he's fucking furious!

"You poisoned my sister?" Asher growled, his eyes flashing yellow. His claws started to come out. "You damaged her wolf?"

Sophia looked to Gabriel. "Gabriel, do something. This wolf is crazy! He's lost his mind. I never poisoned Amelia. I would never do that," she pleaded with Gabriel.

Asher lunged forward but Sophia stepped behind Gabriel. "Get out of the way," Asher growled threateningly at Gabriel. "This isn't your fight."

"Please. NO, Gabriel. Help me," Sophia yelled, terrified. Everyone in the room was holding a collective breath. Asher was a strong wolf, one of the strongest around, and by the look on his face, he was about to teach Sophia a lesson.

Gabriel thought back to that day with Amelia, when she had accused Sophia of poisoning her. He had been too blind to see it. He'd been so busy taking care of her to fulfill her brother's dying wish, he hadn't seen her for what she really is! All of Sophia's antics came flooding back – she was

manipulative! She lied. And she was dangerous.

He couldn't believe he'd been so naïve. He shook his head and met Asher's gaze. Then he stepped to the side, leaving Sophia fully exposed to Asher's wrath.

Asher wasted no time. In the blink of an eye, he had both hands around her throat. Her knees buckled under her but he held her up by her neck. "Tell them," he growled to her. "Tell them all what you've done to my sister."

Sophia's eyes were wide with terror. "I, I didn't do anything," she stuttered. He tightened his grip around her throat, cutting off her air supply.

"LIAR!" Asher growled. "Tell the truth. Tell them now before I kill you!"

Amelia hadn't confided in Asher (she had Olivia for that) but Asher had known from the moment Amelia came home that something was very, very. He sensed her pain. And from the moment this lying she-wolf here in his hands talked about damaging Amelia's wolf, Asher knew that she was the culprit.

"You bullied her! You made her life a living hell. You damaged her wolf. ADMIT IT!" Asher hollered, shaking Sophia. Sophia was becoming more and more lifeless by the moment. She knew she had to confess or she feared for her life! She couldn't speak; she could only gargle because his grip was so strong. She managed a quick nod, though, which was enough for Asher. "She admits it!" Asher said

triumphantly, releasing her. Sophia collapsed to her knees, rubbing her neck and choking in air in huge gulps.

Gabriel walked over to Sophia and Sophia reached out for him. But the look of disgust on his face made her recoil her hand. He looked down at her. "How could you? I protected you. I cared for you. And you? You poisoned my Luna? Our pack's Luna? Just, just stay away from me, Sophia. Or I might regret what I do to you," he told her.

Sophia looked around the room. Everyone was staring at her with the same look on their faces – pure disgust. Damaging someone's wolf on purpose is one of the sickest, most twisted things a wolf can do. It breaks the wolf code of ethics. Sophia would never recover from this – her status had just dropped to the lowest of the low.

"You're not welcome here anymore," Amelia said, stepping forward.

"You fucking bitch!" Sophia screamed at Amelia. "You ruined my life! I was supposed to be Luna, you whore!" Amelia felt her wolf rising.

"Such foul language, Sophia. Please, refrain yourself," Amelia said gracefully.

Sophia allowed her anger to overcome her and she changed into her wolf. Everyone gasped. This was not the place to turn wolf! At a royal banquet? How dare she? Has this wolf no class at all?



Everyone watched, shocked. But as Sophia changed, something fell from her body. It landed on the ground with a hard thud. Sophia didn't notice, however, because as soon as she took her full wolf form, she ran out of the room.

Amelia stepped forward and picked up the object that had fallen from Sophia's body. It was the ruby, the legacy jewel of the Stormfang Pack.

"It was her all along," Gabriel said, shaking his head. "I guess she kept it in her pocket so we wouldn't find it. She must have-" but then Gabriel stopped talking because the ruby was emitting a dim red light. Amelia held it in her hand, shocked as the right light shone from the jewel.

"Amelia," Gabriel said, his eyes wide with disbelief. "That means that you're..."

"The rightful Luna of the Stormfang Pack," Asher said, finishing Gabriel's sentence.

A flurry of emotions washed over Amelia. How could this be? How could she be the rightful Luna? This was ridiculous. She didn't want to be Luna of the Stormfang. She was home now. She was the princess of the Eclipse Pack and she was back where she belonged.

She marched over to Gabriel and placed the ruby back in his hands. The red light dimmed. "There now, I owe you nothing. You've found your ruby. Clearly, I wasn't the one who stole it. I want nothing to do with you, or your pack."

Gabriel met her eyes, and if she didn't know better, she'd swear he looked deeply hurt. But that was impossible. Gabriel hated her – he always had.

"Amelia, please. Let's talk. I've - I have some things I need to say." He reached out and grabbed her arm. "In private," he added, in a tone so low only she could hear. Her breath caught in her throat. He looked earnest and ashamed. For two years, all she'd ever wanted was his love and to feel like a respected Luna. But he'd been an ass. What could he possibly want now?

No. It didn't matter. It was too late/

She shook him off and reached out for Asher. She was feeling weak but she couldn't let anyone see. The fight with Sophia had taken a lot out of her. Sophia was right – her wolf was damaged. Asher came to her quickly and put his hand around her waist.

"Help me leave here," she whispered in Asher's ear. "But don't let them see that I'm weak." Asher nodded. He held her up from the waist without anyone seeing. They left Gabriel standing in the centre of the dance floor, the ruby clutched in his hand, a bewildered look on his face.

"Here, let me help you sit down," Asher said to her once they were away from everyone in the hall. He helped her to sit down. She felt like she didn't have an ounce of strength left

but she didn't want Asher to know how weak she really was.

"Sophia? That's her name, right? How badly did she damage your wolf, Mila? Be honest." But Amelia shook her head and smiled, feigning strength.

"It's not that bad, Asher. I'm okay, honestly." That was far from the truth but she didn't want her dear brother to worry about her. "I'll figure something out. I'll find a way to strengthen my wolf."

Asher knew that his sister was lying. He could tell she was very, very weak. "It doesn't matter, though, Amelia," he said. "You're the princess of the Eclipse Pack. You're so strong and powerful, even without your wolf."

"You forgot rich," Amelia said, smiling. "I'm also filthy rich." Asher laughed.

"Amelia, the ruby," Asher started, but Amelia interrupted him.

"I won't go back," she said.

"But Gabriel saw the red light. He saw that—"

"I don't give a damn," Amelia said, cutting Asher off. "Look. I was an idiot. I never should have left home and joined that pack. I was young and stupid. Gabriel was a complete asshole to me. He treated me like - like I didn't matter at all. He degraded me. No one respected me there. It was, it was hell, Asher. Complete and utter hell."

They sat in silence for a few minutes while Asher absorbed

the information. He knew things had been bad for Amelia but he hadn't known how bad.

"I should have killed him," Asher said. "Her too. I should have tore his head off and ripped her into pieces."

"No," Amelia said, shaking her head. "You're not a killer, Asher. That's not the way of our family. You scared her. And humiliated her. That was enough. As for Gabriel..." 1

"He deserves to be punished," Asher replied, anger flickering in his eyes.

"I don't want to think about him anymore. I want to be done with him forever. I need to move on, Asher. And I don't give a damn what Gabriel saw. I don't care if I'm the rightful Luna or not. I'm NEVER going back."

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