

Chapter 115

Garret was now long gone and so was the content of Nicole's coffee mug.

She gazed at the empty doorway through which Marisol had exited a while ago with a forlorn look, a sigh leaving her lips.

Her wolf had become more protective of Marisol recently. It was like it could tell that something was wrong. She felt it too, but Marisol continued to prove stubborn.

A shudder runs through her as she recalls the terror that overcame her whole being just a few hours ago, threatening to rip her heart apart when she'd felt Marisol's fear and distress through their bond.

It felt like a cry for help, desperate and loud. The feeling threatened to shut her airways and she wondered just how terrifying it must've been for Marisol at that moment even though she refused to admit it.

With another sigh, she rose from her seat, going to the sink to rinse her used cup and setting it to dry. Had it really been nothing to worry about? Perhaps a teenage tantrum?

Marisol had always been mature for her age, and a teenage tantrum when she was turning 21 in a few days was very unlikely. With the younger child's continuous refusal to open up, she would need to come up with some sort of plan with Liam to get her to reveal what it was she was obviously shielding from her parents.

The crisp morning air clung to Nicole's skin as she left the otherwise warm kitchen and made her way towards the pack training grounds. The scent of damp earth and pine filled her senses, a familiar fragrance that brought back memories of countless days spent in the heart of the werewolf pack she now called family. The early sunlight painted the landscape with hues of gold and amber, casting long shadows across the terrain.

Her mind echoed the recent conversation she had with Garrett, the Beta of the pack. The weight of the discussion lingered, and she couldn't shake the feeling of dread.

The bond between mother and daughter was strong, woven with the threads of love, care and understanding. It was a connection that transcended the physical realm. Which Marisol had somehow found a way to shut her out of.

With a nod of determination, Nicole reaches out to Liam through their bond.

'We need to talk.'

'I know'. He replies almost immediately. 'But I'm at a meeting at the moment. We need to consider the expansion of the northern border. We're going over the details again.'

She nodded at the information even though he wasn't seeing her.

Those types of meetings always took a lot of time, needing appropriate detailing and tying of any possible loose ends. Everyone wanted something from the Dark Moon pack. Expanding the border is currently a delicate topic because there is a high possibility of encroaching on new territories.

The last thing she needed at the moment was unrest of any kind. They'd been blessed with peace for more than two decades now, the trials with the witches, Lillian and Asha seemed like a distant memory, a chapter closed with the promise of a brighter future, and she would do everything in her power to maintain the tranquility they'd experienced.

After all, she was Luna and, alongside Liam, their reign had blossomed into a tapestry of love and prosperity. She had a responsibility to keep it that way. Together, she and Liam would protect everyone.

They'd been doing just that for a while now, the trials and challenges that arise every once in a while, a subtle reminder of just how fragile the amity was.

If only Marisol would open up so that they could solve whatever the issue was together as a family.

A warmth enveloped her heart as she reminisced about the birth of Marisol. The Moon Goddess had blessed them with a child whose beauty rivaled the moonlit night. Marisol had grown into a captivating reflection of her mother, with a heart that radiated warmth and a spirit that mirrored the strength of the pack's Alpha. She was her little miracle.

As Nicole approached the training grounds, the rhythmic sounds of claws against the earth and the occasional growls of exertion reached her ears.

The sight she was greeted with brought back a lot of memories from when she was younger. Werewolves of varying sizes and coats moved with purpose, their muscles rippling beneath their sweat-soaked clothes as they practiced combat maneuvers and honed their instincts.

Some were in wolf form practicing animal combat. It was these training sessions that made them unstoppable as a pack. Sharpening their skills together and devising new and swift strategies that complimented the other's strong points.

She could sense the energy and dedication that permeated the air as the pack members engaged in the rigorous exercises that made up the entirety of their training, and on instinct, her eyes searched for Marisol, locking in on her and following each of her every move. Tall and resolute, swift and precise with her movements, Marisol had a presence that commanded attention, just like her father.

Her movements were a graceful dance of power and precision. Each step, each strike, resonated with a natural talent that bespoke her lineage. Nicole couldn't help but marvel at the fluidity with which her daughter moved.

It showed just how powerful the blood that currently flows in her veins was and the amusing, but not so shocking part of it all was the fact that she had yet to completely manifest her powers. James seemed to be doing a wonderful job with her.

Marisol wasn't just any hybrid. Her father was a hybrid from the mountains, but he'd only inherited his wolf abilities and Lillian was able to harness witchcraft.

Nicole was a powerful witch bane as well as a powerful wolf. Marisol, being their only child, inherited both qualities. She was destined for greatness.

Yet, beneath the pride that swelled within Nicole's chest, the nagging worry persisted. Something felt off. It was an instinct, a mother's intuition that whispered of unseen troubles. Nicole observed Marisol's every move, scrutinizing for any hint of distress or anomaly.

The pack members around Marisol displayed a mixture of admiration and respect, their eyes reflecting the pride they felt for their future Alpha. Marisol, aware of her audience, performed with a confidence that bordered on regal. She was not just a leader in the making; she embodied the qualities of a queen destined to guide her pack with wisdom and strength.

The training session ended, and the pack members dispersed, acknowledging their Luna with waves, hugs, and cheers. Nicole, on the other hand, approached her daughter with a bright smile.

"Marisol, you were remarkable as always," she praised, eyes squinting with traces of her amusement.

"Thank you, Mom," Marisol replied, grabbing a bottle of water to chug down its contents.

There were a few bruises on Marisol's body that were healing slowly. Nicole ached to tend to the bruises, but she'd learned the hard way not to smother Marisol.

"Stop looking at me like that," Marisol murmured like she could hear where her mother's train of thought was headed.

Nicole sighed, suppressing the urge to roll her eyes at being so easily read by her daughter. "What? Are you going to give me a lecture on my overprotectiveness now?"

Surprisingly, Marisol burst into laughter at the comment, her hazel blue eyes dancing with mirth. Nicole felt

her own smile grew impossibly wider at that, feeling relief and joy at the sound of her daughter's cheerful laughter, like the little jingles of a bell, reaching her ears.

It'd been a while since anyone had made Marisol so amused to the extent of uncontrolled laughter. However, there was a flicker of something indefinable in those eyes, a fleeting emotion that once again, wriggled away before Nicole could begin an attempt to decipher it.

"Mom, stop staring at me like that." Marisol groans after her laughter dies down, "Always so sentimental." She adds and Nicole actually rolls her eyes this time.

"The list of things you will not let me do seems to be growing. So now I cannot smile at my daughter who's making me proud?" She muses, earning a huff.

"You know what I'm talking about," Marisol replies, already walking to stand next to her mother and together, they silently begin to walk, leaving the training grounds behind as they did.

Although the silence was comfortable, Nicole internally debated rousing the topic that had been a cause of worry for a while now, not wanting to disrupt the tranquility of the moment.

"Okay, I've got to go prepare for the ball. I'll be meeting with Estella and the team to discuss other things next." Marisol said now that they were out in the open again, turning to face her mother with a loud clap of her hands.