

BENEATH HER DARKNESS The Alpha's Little

BENEATH HER DARKNESS: The Alpha's Little Demon Chapter 61

061 – Merciless and Ruthless

ADAN STONE.

I knew what I was getting into when I told Lucien I would go to the underworld. It could lead to my demise, but I feared nothing except not knowing when I would see Lucy again. Lucy might have thought this was a stupid thing to do, but I wasn't taking my chances on her, especially now that I knew she was my fated mate.

Everything was starting to make sense now. Two years ago, Lucy turned eighteen, and I was assuming it was at the point when Beast began acting strange and refused any female, insisting we look for our mate. He felt her.

Now that we have her, we're not letting her out of our sight. I meant it when I told Lucy I would go to the depths of hell for her. And that is actually where I am now.

In the blink of an eye, my body was sucked into limbo, and when it stopped, I was fully naked in a hot place, like a sauna. I should be able to tolerate it, but there was something on fire around me that was burning me from

the inside.

But I refused to let the demons around me

see my discomfort.

I was completely naked, sweat dripping from my brow as they pushed me to start walking. I'd seen dungeons

horrible ones

– but they were nothing compared to the dark place I was in right now.

I was walking on the warm ground, and nothing looked filthy or dirty, but it was foggy, and the thing that was giving me goosebumps was the smell of burnt flesh. I couldn't smell anything else except that.

And did I say the men around me had horns and tails, with scaling dark skin? Fucking horrible-looking creatures and I wondered if

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Lucy had this kind of form too. But with her, I was imagining Mystique of the X-men.

Fuck! I was getting a hard dick just thinking about Lucy in that form. I should have

thought of my survival and that I might end up dead soon, but instead, all I could think of were the many ways I wanted to fuck her

in her demon form.

"Hic!" [Here!] One of the men behind me pushed me to one corner.

"What?!"

"Dixi hic habitas." [Stay here!]

"I don't speak your language," I replied to him as I kept swallowing. I wondered if they had water here.

Two of them shackled my wrists with a chain attached to the wall behind me that was just long enough to allow me to sit on the floor. I was just about to wander my eyes around the area when something hit my back.

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“Aah! Mother fucker!” I roared more out of surprise than of pain.

The fuckers around me laughed, their tails wriggling around and irritating the fuck out of me. Something whipped me from my

back, and it was not just a regular whip there were thorns on it, but for some reason, it didn't hurt me.

‘Buddy, are you here?’ I tried to connect with my beast.

‘Here. But the strong aura surrounding this place is making me weak.’

‘Did you take the pain from the whip?’

‘No. Why would I do that? I haven't forgiven you enough to sacrifice myself.’ Same old Beast. He would still make it sound like I'm

weaker without him.⁴

‘I didn't expect you to, but it didn't hurt me at all, so I wonder. Rest, don't use your energy unless we need to.’

‘I know. But I'm not sure I can shift in this place.’

‘We will find out soon, I'll take charge for now.’ I just ended my conversation with him when another whip hit my back, making my body jolt. I was gritting my teeth as sweat dripped all over my body.

They were still having fun mocking me until their bodies froze on their spots and they began talking in their fucking language again.

I heard something drop to the ground before all of them walked away from me, leaving me on my own.

It was only then that I noticed that on the other side of the wall, probably twenty to twenty-five meters away, there were other prisoners attached to a shackle, but they were attached so close to the wall, and I was all alone on this side of the wall.

I could only see silhouettes of them, and some of them didn't look like humans in form. We might all have come from different species.

I needed to get away from here. I didn't volunteer to come here just to be held back by these chains.

'Lucy...' I tried to mindlink her, but there was nothing.

Where is she?

I tugged on my hand, checking how strong the chain was. It was indeed strong, and there was no way I would be able to break it. My only way out was for them to unchain

I was seated with my back against the wall, my knees bent, and my arms resting on them. I was fucking thirsty already, and I had no idea how long I had been sitting here until I heard footsteps approaching. The prisoners on the other side began to press their bodies against the walls behind them.

Were they sinking in out of fear?

I could feel a strong aura approaching, but for some reason, it didn't rattle me. Maybe I was used to being surrounded by strong

auras, and I knew I could give one out as

well.

And then her smell hit me.

I couldn't stop the goofy smile from tugging at my mouth. Despite my ordeal, her scent was enough to calm me and strengthen Beast. He woke up from his slumber and gawked at the corner, where we expected her to appear.

And there she was, walking like the goddess that she was in her white, floor-length Roman dress. Her skirt rustled, dusting off the ground with every sway of her hips. Her

hair was a striking red and light black with faint veins, like the tattoos on her arms and everywhere on her skin.

But the veins disappeared the moment our

eyes locked. Did she ever think that it would make her less attractive in my eyes?

Because, in reality, everything about her was beautiful in my eyes. I was thankful I was in this sitting position because her scent and the way she looked right now just made my dick fucking hard, as if I was not in danger and as if my life was not on the line.

There were two females behind her. They were also beautiful, but nothing compared to my mate. She stopped in the middle of the two walls, and it didn't slip my eyes the way the rest of the prisoners were gawking at her, some of them were even growling in

It made me tug at my chains, and a growl reverberated from my chest. I knew I should stay calm, but I couldn't.

She jerked her head at me, but her face was expressionless until she shifted her gaze and looked around.

"[Where is the man in charge here?]" She was speaking in a language I couldn't understand, but it was alluring to see a different side of Lucy.

I always knew she was never meant to be a meek Omega, and the air of arrogance in her stand and the way she spoke just added to her allure. 1

Soon, footsteps were heard, and the men

who had hit me earlier came with the rest of

the guards that took me here.

Lucy was still ignoring me, but I was

enjoying watching her.

"[Who whipped him?]" Her words were full of authority.

"[My lady, we took turns whipping all the prisoners here.]" The demon who whipped me answered her. 1

Lucy let out a low snarl before her eyes blazed red. "[Who whipped the Alpha werewolf?]"

I still couldn't understand a fucking word, but I was sure Lucy was furious. The same demon moved his hand, but before he could finally raise it up, Lucy gripped his jaw, Her thin claws slowly erupted from her nails, just long enough to dig into the demon's skin.

"[Who told you you're allowed to touch him?]" Lucy's tone was sharp.

"[All prisoners brought here, my lady, have the same punishment of lashes and burning.

"[I don't give a fuck! Alpha Stone is mine to play with!]" Her grip on his jaw tightened, causing his cheeks to hollow before his skin dried up while his eyes turned full black, and then, he was gone. Lucy let go of him, shoving his lifeless body away. "[That's a warning for every one of you! Touch Stone and I will suck the life out of you!]"

Wow! That was something. If I was cold-

hearted, Lucy was merciless and ruthless. I

swallowed as I watched the rest of the males bow their heads at Lucy before they dragged the dead demon away.

And just when I thought Lucy was ready to face me, another set of footsteps was heard.

"What have you done, Lucija?" Lucien's voice echoed, and a rumble rose from my chest. He spoke in my language, and I

assumed he wanted me to understand their

conversations.

"You can always give him his life back. I just didn't like that he gave me pain."

"He had no idea. He was doing what he was supposed to do."

"I don't care. When did we learn to accept reasons to adjust the punishment?"

"You can't just kill off my demons!"

"Then let Stone go." Lucy was totally

different from the one I knew. If I thought she was scared of Lucien, I guess I

underestimated her. Or perhaps, letting her fire and wolf out gave her the confidence to defy him.

"No!" Lucien roared back, making the prisoners on the other side flinch from their positions.

“Then I’ll keep killing anyone that touches him.” Lucy moved and stood in front of me. She was just inches away, and her long, flowing dress was covering me from his father’s line of sight.

They were still conversing, but I didn’t stop myself from reaching her. I slipped my hand inside her dress, my fingers skimming over her ankle, and the sparks danced around me, igniting everything in my body. I felt me, igniting everything Lucy flinch, but she didn’t stop speaking

with her father while Beast growled in my head – enjoying the connection we had with Lucy at the moment.

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062 – Demon Lesson 101

Note: ***Any conversation with [] is in a demon’s tongue/language, so Adan will have no idea what the conversation is all about***

LUCY.

I didn’t mean to kill the dungeon keeper, but the moment I saw Adan chained up to the wall, rage surged within my body. I wanted to crush everyone around us, and the keeper was the closest thing in my grasp.

“Then I’ll keep killing anyone that touches him,” I answered nonchalantly as I moved in front of where Adan was seated.

Adan wasn’t making any noise while I was dealing with the keepers except when he tried to growl at the other prisoners who were gawking and whistling at me earlier.

He was quiet – either he was scared or my mate was fascinated. I was assuming it was the latter. Adan was not the type of man who was easily frightened.

“I’m warning you, Lucija. You will face my wrath if..”

I didn’t hear the rest of Lucien’s words as

sparks ignited from my ankle to every part of my body, centering on my core. Adan’s fingers were skimming against my skin in such a sensual way that if he didn’t stop soon, everyone would smell my arousal.

“Remove his chain, and I promise you there will be no more casualties from your keepers.

“Lucija, you don’t have any right to negotiate.”

“I surely do. Look at this.” I stepped forward, and although I missed Adan’s touch on my skin, I needed to take action.

I turned my body around and gripped Adan’s forearm before tugging it hard, away from the wall. The chain clattered. Adan

didn’t even flinch when the shackle

tightened on his skin and the chain pulled his wrist back, but I faked a gasp before I

showed Lucien my wrist. A bruise formed on it. “This is cruelty toward a royal princess. punishable by death or revocation of the

royal title. And besides, scars and bruises

acquired in this realm never fade from our

skin. Would you like everyone to see how cruel you are to your own daughter?”

“[You are trying to outsmart me.]” He spoke to me in our demon tongue, and I assumed he didn’t want Adan to hear us.

“[I’m not. What are you scared of, Father?

Alpha Stone will never be able to leave this

realm without your approval. Like all supernatural beings that you held hostage in

the underworld. He cannot shift into his

wolf. He’ll be useless in an uprising. So why are you threatened?”]

“[He’s useless, and yet you still want him.]”

“[I do. For now. I don’t know if I will still like

him tomorrow. There's nothing we can do about him at the moment. You hurt him, you hurt me. You kill him, you kill me. So at least, let me have my fill of him, Father.]"

"[And when you're tired of him?]"

I shrugged my shoulders at the same time Adan yawned, and I had to keep myself from bursting into laughter. I was bargaining with his life, and he was getting bored to death. "[

I had no idea. We can feed him to the orms, but then I will also die a terrible death.]"

"[You're stupid to bind your life to him.]"

"[That's what love can do, Father.]" I

mocked him.

He scoffed and laughed loudly. "[Love? You're referring to lust. I needed to find the witch that did this to you. Give me her name.]"

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"[I don't know her name. But she has wild, curly hair and a pointed nose.]" Everything was the exact opposite of Althea.

"Move..." Lucien spoke in human language, and I didn't question him. I was hoping he would not force an answer from Adan.

"Stone, did you like my kingdom?" He asked as he crouched in front of him.

"Yes..." Adan answered in a calm tone as if

he were not naked and sweating.

"I didn't expect that." Lucien scoffed.

"Lucy is here, enough reason to like this place."

My heart fluttered at his words, but I

couldn't shriek with giddiness. I needed

Adan out of this filthy place before I jumped

on him.

“Are you trying to win my daughter over?”

“Does it matter to you?”

“No. Give me the witch’s name and tell me where I can find her.”

“I’m not sure what you need the witch for?”

Shit! Adan had no idea our lives were already bonded.

“Does Lucy know the witch’s name?”

“I assume not.”

My father didn’t ask another question but

instead pressed his pointer finger into Adan’s forehead, and my breathing stopped. Adan was lying, and if he could read his lies, this meant trouble for everyone.

“Why the fuck can’t I reach your mind?” He snapped at him, his eyes glowing red. 1

My eyes widened before I smirked at him. “Maybe he never lies.”

“What have you done, Lucija?”

I shrugged my shoulders, but I already had an inkling that the link between us, had let me share some of my abilities with Adan. My father could read lies from ordinary demons and humans, and from anyone with a soul except his own blood and those who had

royal blood.

“I told you maybe he didn’t have a lying bone in his body.” I chuckled.

“I need to find the fucking witch who did this to you!” He roared as he stormed off without any warning.

I threw a glance at Adan, who had his forehead creased. Confusion was written on his face, but I didn’t have time to explain to

him as I followed after Lucien.

“Father!” I doubled my steps until I was walking beside him. “Let him out of the chain. I promise he will behave.”

“No! If you think I’m stupid. I’m not! Spend time with him in the dungeons if you want to be with him!” He snapped at me, and rage filled my body. I wanted to curse him, but instead, I stopped in my tracks and watched him walk away while formulating my next steps.

The moment he disappeared from my sight,

I prepared to turn around to go back to Adan, only for Lucius to appear out of nowhere and block me.

“What do you want?” I snapped at him.

“Where are you going?” He asked back instead of answering.

I rolled my eyes at him and slid to his side, but his hand grabbed my wrist so that I had no choice but to stop walking.

“What now?” I asked, shrugging his hand from my wrist.

“Listen,” he said in a hushed tone as he

inched closer. “No one around here knew of

your connection with the wolf at the

dungeon. So if I were you, back off and don’t show anyone that he’s important to you.”

“What ploy are you trying to play? Did

Father ask you to talk to me?”

“You should know better. When did I let

Father control my ways?”

“So why are you helping me?”

Instead of answering, he smirked at me and held my arm, dragging me away from the dungeons and heading for the flight of stairs that will lead us to the main tower, where we

reside. "You will find out in time, but it's enough that you know I want Stone out of here."

"Can I trust you?" I asked him.

"Trust?" He snorted before letting go of my arm as we walked side by side up the staircase. "Lesson number one on being a demon: never trust anyone, not even your own blood. Lesson number two: always watch your back. Your brother today might be the one to stab you tomorrow. Lesson number three: no matter how scared these demons are around you, their loyalty will always be to their king, and that's not you. Number four: if you want them to follow your order without any questions or doubt, act as if you were always on the king's side."

He stopped walking midway, and it made me halt as well. "That is why never, ever visit Stone. Do it when Father is not here. Tell

them to unchain him and let them bring him to your chamber for punishment. They knew how violent she-demons are when it comes

to punishment, so play along." 1

"But when does Father leave?"

"Soon. He was determined to find the witch."

I almost gasped, but I took hold of myself

never trust anyone, not even the one who

taught me this.

"Why doesn't he ask someone to look for her?"

"Father takes pride in his own endeavors. He'll do it himself, especially if it's

something as important as this. So he gets to decide on the spot what to do when he finds

her."

Althea would be in danger.

“Just be calm, and don’t bother checking on Stone until Father leaves.”

“But what if they do something to him?”

“You will feel it. However, Father forbade anyone from touching him.”

That should be good enough.

“How about food, and water?”

“Oh, Lucija! The wolves made you soft! He’s a fucking Alpha male! He can survive days without them!” He answered in an annoyed voice as he brushed his hand over his wavy locks.

“Are you sure Father is leaving Kalmerus soon?”

“He’s not going to wait that long. If he doesn’t go tonight, he’ll probably leave tomorrow.” He didn’t wait for any reply from me. Lucius gave me a mocking salute and flashed me his usual smug smirk before he disappeared, leaving me in the middle of the stair tower.

I closed my eyes and leaned my back against the wall, contemplating whether I should believe him or not. But every lesson he told me rings through. Everyone would do my bidding more if they knew I was on my father’s side. So I had better keep up with that facade.

I let out a deep sigh and continued walking up the stairs even though Angel was whimpering in my head. She wanted to see Adan, but I couldn’t risk anything more after I just killed one keeper because of him.

I needed to occupy myself so I would stop thinking about our mate.

Patrea!

I needed to find her. Perhaps she could help Adan get out of here. And I needed to tell her about Althea.

I thought of the place where I would usually see Patrea when I was here two years ago and willed for my body to disappear from here and appear at the location in my head. I blinked, and soon my surroundings changed.

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063 – A Glimpse of His Soft Side

ALTHEA.

“Oh, Spirits! Blade! I told you I’m not leaving this territory!” I yelled in frustration at him for the hundredth time as he shoved my clothes inside my luggage, and I kept pulling them out.

We’re playing a game of tug of war, and up until this moment, no one was winning.

He wanted to leave this place as soon as Kingston told us that Lucien had taken Alpha Stone to the underworld, and Lucy had followed them. But before she left, she told Kingston to make sure I was safe because her father would come for me.

With the shield up, I thought I would be safer here, but Blade thought otherwise. But what does he know?

“You have no say on this one, Althea! We’re leaving! We’ll go to a safer place where the demon lord can’t reach you!” He snapped at me, tugging the last pieces of clothing from my hands before shoving them inside my bag. He zipped it up and threw it by the door, where it landed with a loud thud.

“This is my life on the line! Why do you get to decide for me?”

“I’m not going to let another mate die before my eyes, Althea. Even if that means putting myself in front of you to catch all the fire! I will fucking do it if I get an assurance you will come out of this alive!” His jaw twitched as his eyes dilated into darkness.

I swallowed and opened my mouth to speak, but the words got caught in my throat. How do I retort back from that?

“Get moving! We don’t have all night!”

“But we will be protected from here. We are more vulnerable if wo

go outside the
territory.”

“Do you think your shield can protect you? How long have you been doing shields? I’m not a witch, but I’ve met a lot of them.

Unless you are a hundred years old, I don’t think you alone could hold back a demon lord from entering this territory. And I’m not going to take fucking chances just

because you think you can! Now get your ass rolling and pack your witchy gadgets, or I will do it myself!” 1

I rolled my eyes at him, but I hurried to the desk, where I laid out some of my potions and books. I carefully gathered the runes in

a small black pouch and placed them in my

pocket before I tucked the rest of it in a black bag I kept handy all the time.

Blade knew fairly well I didn’t want anyone touching my things, and despite being annoyed with him at the moment, I was

grateful he remembered not to touch them.

“But where do you think we can go? I’m sure

I’m not safer in the mountains than I am

here.”

“You mentioned your ancestors being part

of a coven. I knew a coven of witches

somewhere in Salenda. We can start from

there, and maybe they can track which coven your family belongs to, or maybe they will take you in.” His voice was calmer now.

“But how about you?” I asked, making sure my voice didn’t break, although my heart clenched in pain.

A coven of witches, according to my mother, was not allowing werewolves to live with them. They accept them as visitors for a few days but never accept them as members of

their communities. And if any coven accepts me, that would mean Blade would be on his own.

“What about me?” He asked, slipping his hands inside his jeans pocket, but his eyes avoided mine.

“Where will you go if we find a coven to take me? I’m not sure they are willing to take you in as well.”

“I’ll be fine. I’m used to being alone. I will survive.”

“I thought Alpha Stone paid you to protect me? Why will you abandon me?” I had no idea how I got the courage to ask him. I wanted to push him away, yet the thought of not seeing him anymore was making me uneasy.

“If you didn’t realize it, Alpha Stone is not here anymore. So I am doing this for free now.”

My chest heaved. I wanted to be mad at him, but he was right we both didn’t want each other.

“Just as long as you’re safe, then my work is done. We need to get going. Because I’m sure he’ll come back for you soon.” He didn’t wait for me to reply as he opened the door and slipped out before adding, “I will just pick up my bag, and then we’ll go.”



Blade and I walked down the stairs together to the main hall of the packhouse. He was carrying all our luggage while I carried my bag for my witchy things. I knew the moment I agreed to help Lucy, I was already putting one foot on the ground, but it was my only way to free my grandmother from the demons. So even if this would cost my life, it was worth it. And I knew Lucy would never fail me.

The only thing I was not prepared for was Blade.

I was ready to risk my own life for my grandmother, but I was not sure I was ready to risk his life to protect me. Even if I didn't want the bond he was saying existed between us, I still didn't want any harm to come his way.

We finally reached the main hall. The Beta and Gamma couples were already there, waiting for us, together with Alpha Audrius and Luna Helena. The packhouse felt gloomy and eerie. Everyone was still in shock, but we had no time to mope around. As Alpha Audrius said, they had a whole pack to protect.

And Blade was right – once I was gone here, the pack would be at a lesser risk from Lucien’s wrath.

“I hope you didn’t have to go, sweetheart.” Luna Helena held my hands before she pulled me in for a hug.

“This is for the better, Luna Helena. We should think of the innocent lives that will be caught between me and Lucien.”

We pulled away from each other as she nodded her head, tears welling in her eyes. Don’t hesitate to give us an update. Just so I can rest easy knowing you’re both safe.

Laira walked up to us and handed me a

regular cellphone, not the new smartphone, but the one where you have to press the number multiple times to get to the right letter when texting. “It has my number and Lena’s too. Call or message us. I chose this one because it’s handy and just for calling purposes.”

I smiled at her and hugged her. “Thank you. Please let us know if you have news about Lucy and Alpha Stone.”

The females nodded their heads while all the males were silent, their lips pursing into thin lines.

“We should go. The farther we are when he comes back, the safer Althea will be.”

“I tanked up your car and loaded extra diesel. It’s on your trunk.” Beta Collin informed Blade

“There is also a basket of food inside your car. So you don’t have to stop and can just keep going.” Lena added.

My eyes watered as I smiled at all of them. My heart clenched in pain at just thinking of how they were all feeling right now with the absence of their Alpha.

"I'm sorry for what happened with Alpha Stone... I somehow felt responsible..." I started, but I was immediately cut off.

"No. No. Don't say that. When we welcomed Lucy into our lives, we knew what we were getting into. And Kingston told me you linked Adan's life to Lucy." The Luna's shoulders shook, but she kept talking while tears trickled down her face. "It's the only thing that's keeping me sane right now. I know as long as he's linked to Lucy, Lucien will not touch him. So, thank you."

She hugged me again, and I did my best not to cry as I smoothed my hand over her back.

"Be careful. And when this is all over, you're welcome to come and stay with us." The Luna added.

I nodded my head in response, but this time, I couldn't keep the tears from falling. It would be nice to come back here. I had lived

alone in the mountains with my mother for so long, maybe having other people around me would be wonderful too.

"Thank you. We should go now." I pulled away from her, and the Luna gave me a kiss on the cheek before I said my goodbyes to

Laira and Lena.

I heard Alpha Audrius giving instructions to Blade about the route he could take. He was listening to him and nodding his head at him, but his eyes were on me.

I smiled weakly at him, and he motioned for me to come to him, which I did. I didn't object when he took my hand and clasped it with his as we walked out of the packhouse and down the steps to his car, which was waiting for us by the grounds.

There were four cars outside, aside from his.

Gamma Kingston ordered his men to escort us to the exit, and by then only two cars would follow us until we reached the nearest neutral city.

To be honest, I was not sure what they could do to help us if Lucien cornered us, but Alpha Audrius and Beta Collin wouldn't hear of it when Blade refused escorts. They wanted to ensure that we were protected and that we would arrive safely in the neutral city.

Blade didn't argue more. He opened the passenger side and let me in. I thought he would just leave and go to his side immediately, but he didn't. He fixed my seatbelt – our faces were just inches away from each other.

Once he was done fumbling with my belt, his gaze locked with mine. "Althea, do you trust me?"

I should learn to trust Blade, so I nodded my head in response.

"Words. I want to hear words," he said grumpily.

"I trust you, Blade," I answered in a soft tone. I had no energy to counter his grumpiness at the moment.

"I want you to remember that when the time comes that I ask you to do something." He added, and it made me bite my lower lip, all the while, his eyes never left mine. "When we step out of this territory, it will just be you and me. I want you to trust me enough to tell me your plans and what you are thinking. Am I understood?"

"Yes..." I answered in a hoarse voice.

And then he smiled, something he never did

in my presence

not too wide but not

forced either. A real smile, just enough to

make my heart somersault in my chest.

And then he did something I wasn't

expecting from him. He leaned forward,

bridging the gap between us, and placed a

soft kiss on my forehead while his hard, calloused palm rubbed the skin of my arm so gently that it felt too sensual, sending shivers down my spine – down to my core.

“Good. Now, be a good little witch and stop defying me so we can have a peaceful trip,” he said as he pulled away. A smug smirk was back on his face, and it just made me roll my eyes, but I decided to shut my mouth

because my core was still throbbing from his

touch.

Blade slid into his seat, and I waved goodbye to the people on the steps as we drove off. The moment the packhouse was out of my view, my gaze shifted to look at the man driving the car. I could only see the side of

his face.

Blade looked dangerous, but the way he smiled earlier showed me a glimpse of his soft side – or maybe I was just imagining things. He seemed to be too cold and

distant.

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I closed my eyes and leaned back in my seat. I knew a dangerous time was ahead of us, and I had no idea if I would come out alive. But if I do, I hope Blade does as well.

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064-Maybe One Day

LUCY.

The place felt damp and warm, with no wind blowing at all. I used to be okay in these surroundings, but now I miss the cold wind biting against my skin while I was still in the north. This palace looked dead, but why would I expect more?

I trod my way on the usual path that would lead me to Patrea's stone cottage. She might be a prisoner in this realm, but she was given an option as to what home she would like to have. She told me she had them construct a home that was nearly identical to the one she had in the human realm. She thought she was being clever so it would still feel like home, but it only made her long for her real world.

The smell of a freshly cooked home meal whiffed through the air, and I heard my stomach rumbling. My thoughts went to

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Adan – we both hadn't eaten dinner, and I was sure he was already hungry by now. It was already almost dawn in the human

world, while in this realm, we didn't have any concept of time.

Darkness was everywhere, and the demons and the lost souls around never slept. And I was sure my father and Lucius didn't need to, but they just did it so they could rest.

But Patrea kept her sense of time and would always have her meals according to how she programmed her hours. I wondered how she never lost her fire and spirits in this dead realm where there were barely any living souls here.

I stopped by her front door, but before I could knock, the door opened, and standing before me was a beautiful female that

seemed to never age despite the fact that she was already a grandmother now. When I first met Patrea, I thought she was just the same age as my mother, but knowing her story from Althea, she must be around fifty

or sixty years old, and yet she looked like she was just in her late twenties.

It was probably her age when she was brought here by my father.

I wondered if there was more to Patrea and Lucien than meets the eye. She was clearly the only living soul from another realm who had gotten this far.

“Lucija? Is that you?” Her eyes rounded as her hand clamped over her mouth.

I flashed her a wide smile, my teeth showing, as I nodded my head.

She looked around before her hand reached for my arm and pulled me inside her home, closing the door behind us as soon as I stepped in.

“Why did you come back? How did he find you?” Her eyes were flitting with worry before they became sad. “Or did you decide to embrace your demon side?”

I wet my lips before I smiled warmly at her. “First, let me hug you.”

“Oh, sweetheart!” She smiled warmly back at me and opened her arms, enveloping me in a warm hug. She smelled of cinnamon mixed with herb spices. “I didn’t want to see you here, but I did miss you.”

“I’m glad you’re okay, Patrea. I have so much to tell you.”

“You can tell me everything, but have you eaten? I just finished making dinner. It’s not much, but it’s enough for the two of us unless you now eat like the wolf that you are.

I giggled softly and followed her lead as we walked to her small dining area. My eyes roamed around her cottage. Nothing had changed there was still a place for all her potions and books in one corner, and the house was still as tidy as ever.

“Sit,” she said as she patted the chair before

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moving on to fix food and plates on the table. “Now, tell me first what brought you here.”

“I found my mate.”

“You did not!” she exclaimed as she placed her hands on her hips, a wide smile playing on her lips. She looked excited and happy.

And it made my heart warm and ache at the same time. It felt like this is how my mother would react if I told her I had found my

mate. I wondered if Mom knew I had found

Adan.

“I did!” I couldn’t help but smile back before biting my bottom lip.

“Then what are you doing here, young lady?” she asked with a raised eyebrow.

“My father brought him here. So I have no choice but to follow them!”

“Oh, spirits! Your father had never faltered in bringing living souls here! Did he abduct him? Go directly to King Hades and tell him! I’m sure he won’t turn down a meeting with a royal princess!” Her face morphed into a scowl. She hated my father – but who didn’t?

“Adan volunteered to be here... so no, I can’t go to Hades and tell him that.”

“And why would he do that? Was he stupid? Oh, Spirits! I forgot I’m one of the stupid ones as well!” She slapped her palm on her forehead before looking at me again. “Tell me what happened?”

“Father wanted me back here and

threatened to hurt others, so I was left with no choice but to tell him I was coming here. Then Adan... Adan was being Adan...He...” I let out a sigh, not knowing how to explain further.

“He didn’t want you out of his sight... Understandable. Is he locked up somewhere?”

“Chained with the prisoners from the other realms. In Kosior Dungeon.”

“It’s not the worst dungeon. He’ll survive.. unless Lucien orders something terrible for him.” She sat down and reached for my hand resting on the top of the table and rubbed it gently.

I nodded my head. The Cyberus was the worst one, where souls were sucked at the moment they entered it, and they would be left with a hollow body tortured in constant heat. But these were reserved for the bodies and souls of all creatures that their own realms would not accept in their afterlives.

“Do you know what Lucien plans to do with him?”

“I don’t know. But I know what he wants to do with me. Lucius said he still wants to drain me of my werewolf blood. Do you think it’s still possible? I have a wolf now.”

“Oh, spirit! The only way he can do it is to
kill your wolf first. And then rituals, magics, spells...”

“He’s going to ask you to do it, right?”

“I’m not going to do it!” She shook her head, her eyes flitting with defiance. “I can do all the others, but I will not let me harm you!”

“What will he do to you if you disobey him?”

“It doesn’t matter. At the end of the day, no matter what he does to me, I won’t die.”

“How long before he breaks you?”

“Listen, darling. If there’s no witch to help him, his next option is to release a very strong demon power to convert you. And Hades and Selene will feel that, and if you’re not willing to be transformed, they can interfere and stop him.” My mouth opened in awe.

“You need to kill me if he decides to make me use my magic and spells to kill your wolf and change you.”

“No. I’m not going to kill you.” I shook my head.

“No one else can kill me but Lucien and his blood. I’m sure if he had a way out, he would also not let his spawns kill me, but he can’t. And ironically, despite having hundreds of sons, none of them can approach me except you.”

“What do you mean?”

“I’m assuming that, when he made our contract, he added that without my knowledge. Maybe he specifically stated that none of his sons could approach me without his presence. He had no daughters by then, and he probably thought he would never have any.”

It made sense. Lucius had never referred to her as Patrea, just ‘the witch’ because he had never met her on a personal level as I did.

“So you see, you’re

my only way to freedom.

You might think killing me will tarnish your soul, but you’re doing it for the greater good. The sooner I’m dead, the lesser dark magic Lucien can come up with.”

“I can’t do that. Especially without telling you about her.”

“About her.... What do you mean?”

I took a deep breath before I began talking. I found your granddaughter... You have one.”

She gasped. Her mouth remained open as shock registered on her face.

“Adora is dead. I’m sorry.’

“My Adora...” Her lips quivered as tears streamed down her face.

“But she has a lovely daughter. She’s eighteen now. She is a little shorter than me, with beautiful dark plum hair. She has your nose. She also has your spirit and your fire. Her name is Althea.”

“Althea...” She murmured her name as she

clutched her hands on her chest while she

tried to stifle her sobs, but it wasn’t working. Tears kept trickling down her cheeks as her body began to glow bright purple.

My eyes widened in awe before she gave me

a weak smile.

“My glow had darkened over the years, but it’s glowing brightly today. It mirrors my emotions.”

My eyes watered as I flung my arms around her, hugging her tightly. Patrea was happy. And I was certain the bright purple glow represented hope – all the more reason I needed her to get out of here alive.

“We need to help each other. I will get you and Adan out of here if you promise me you will help Adan once he steps out of the underworld.” I told her as I withdrew from hugging her.

“What do you mean, help Adan? And to what extent are you going to offer your father in exchange for my life and Adan’s?” She asked, her brows furrowing.

“You don’t need to know. But whatever it is,

it won’t kill me, and I doubt my father would kill me. He needs me. But I want to make sure that once you’re out of here, you will help me with Adan.”

“What do you want me to do?”

“Make him forget about me...” I bit my bottom lip to stop it from quivering as my eyes watered. Soon, I could no longer stop the tears from streaming down my face. “... like I never existed in his life.”

"I'm not going to do that, Lucy." She kept shaking her head. "No."

I took her hands and held her tightly. "You have to do it. There's no future for a werewolf with a demon."

"You are a werewolf, Lucy. Don't forget that.

"Adan deserves more than me. He's an Alpha..."

"I knew it! You will be mated to a great one."

"He is. That's why I can't take him away from them. There are many people who need him."

"But he needs you. Does he love you? Was he treating you good?"

I nodded my head in response.

"Then I'm not going to do that. He deserves to choose what he wants with his life."

"I cannot take him away from them, Patrea. It's better to lose him this way than to see him chained and locked up until his soul and spirit fade away."

"But it's unfair for him to not remember anything of you. I'm sure there are other ways."

"It's for the best. If he doesn't remember me, then he will not feel any loss."

"And how about you?"

"I'm a demon. We don't do love. I will forget about him in my own time." I was trying to convince Patrea, but it felt like I was trying to convince myself more.

"Can you?" She asked, her eyes boring deep into mine as if she wanted to read my soul.

My whole body shook as my cries got louder. I loved Adan with all my heart, and I knew I would never forget about him, but at least I knew I could love him from afar.

Then maybe one day we will meet again.

