

## Chapter 101 - Dr.Luna

Rhea felt the hot breath upon her skin. It was like getting hit with steam. She could feel the heat from the body her back was leaning into. She could feel the well-defined chest behind her. She sighed and leaned backwards with a small smile on her face. She knew who was behind her.

“I don't ever recall saying that I would belong to you?” Rhea smirked and enjoyed his warmth on her back. It was like having a human electric blanket. It was so comfortable, who wouldn't soak it in? Especially when the blanket had a chiseled body and very handsome face.

“I don't recall ever giving you a say.” She could hear his smirk as he spoke.

Rhea whipped her elbow backwards and collided the point with his stomach.

“Ooof.”

Rhea spun around and stared into the topaz eyes that were slightly squinted from the impact of her elbow. “Don't think I'm just going to melt into your arms, Titus. You might be cute, but you are out of your mind if you think I am just going to allow you to claim me for yourself.” She reached her hand up and flicked his forehead.

Titus reached up and rubbed his forehead. “Ouch, Rhea. How can you be so mean to your future lover?”

Rhea shook her head and giggled. Such a flirt.

“Where is mom at?” Cody walked up with Lee and looked around and then back towards Rhea. He watched her eyes gloss over and become a bit dull.

“She's talking with Grandpa Sage. Apparently, it is something I am not allowed to hear.” Rhea frowned and looked down the hall. She looked at Titus and smiled. Grandpa Sage had cleared up the whole map thing. She was happy about that. She didn't want to doubt them. Then she looked over to Lee. The image of herself calling for him flashed into her head. Her sad and desperate eyes. She could feel her own heart breaking. She suddenly could hear it... the low snarl deep inside of her head. She made it out only briefly before it vanished again. She turned her head to see a man in all purple approaching them.

“My lords.” Melvin bowed and then shot an icy look towards Rhea.

Titus reached forwards and pulled Rhea into his side. He leaned his head down and nuzzled his nose into the crook of her neck. “Melvin... Is there something you need?” Titus’s eyes flickered up to him with irritation.

Melvin’s eyes glared over the actions of Titus with Rhea. “My lord... given my position I must say something. Surely this is just...” He motioned between Titus and Rhea. “This is just some fun to pass the time, right? It’s just you are treating her an awful lot like she’s...-”

“My mate.” Titus answered with a smirk. He watched the eyes of the man widen and fury build behind them.

“You wouldn’t... you wouldn’t take a... fairy” The word fairy almost vomited out of his mouth. “as your mate? You wouldn’t taint our kind like that.” Melvin’s voice hissed out with contempt.

“Careful.” Lee’s eyes looked darkly at Melvin. There was real fear in Melvin’s eyes when he noticed the dark glare from Leviathan.

“Last I checked I am the king, not you. How dare you question anyone’s choice as their mate? Let alone your kings...” Titus wrapped his arms around Rhea tightly and held her flush against his skin. Meanwhile he continued to keep his head tucked away near her neck.

Rhea stood there allowing herself to be controlled like a doll. She was getting very confused about this situation. Feeling Titus hot breath upon her neck once again. This seemed like more than just playful teasing. This was more promising and threatening. Why would Titus go this far for a simple game? She could feel his lips almost brush against her neck near her marking spot. She felt an almost pitted feeling in her stomach. This was taking things a bit too far. She didn’t want to make trouble. She was getting confused. A deep rumbling noise was heard. She could feel the vibrations underneath the chest she was being held against.

“Are you not going to discuss this with the rest of the council?” Melvin asked in agitation.

“Why do I need to seek approval from the council on my own mate?” Titus snapped his head up away from Rhea’s neck as he looked at Melvin.

“Because this is unprecedented. No one has ever taken a non-dragon mate.” Melvin looked at Rhea with disgust.

“Look at her like that again... I dare you.” Titus bared his teeth at Melvin with an imminent threat in his eyes.

Rhea didn’t know what was going on. She did know that she could not appear timid and weak. She made sure she stood fully and confidently. She pinned her gaze back to Melvin. This might not have been her fight. But this man was looking down on her kind. She would not allow it.

“Do you think you are superior to me?” Rhea smirked at Melvin. “The idea that you are superior when you are not even stronger than me is ridiculous.” Rhea grinned at the man whose mouth dropped in shock.

“St-st-stronger than me?!” Melvin gasped in outrage.

“Exponentially.” Rhea answered with conviction.

“You’re quite sure of yourself.” Melvin, being met with her confidence, was feeling himself being flung backwards. There was little room to doubt that this girl was a real leader. And that disgusted him.

“You wouldn’t even make me break a sweat.” Rhea sighed in uninterest and then looked back to Titus who was grinning with pride back at Rhea. “It is nice to let your people speak freely. Though, I think there is a fine line between speaking freely and disrespect. Anyways, I am bored with this.” Rhea waved her hand towards Melvin and walked back down the hall. She felt her insides swirl in rapid motions as she walked further away. She heard swift footsteps behind her and felt the familiar strong arm of Cody wrap around her.

“That was amazing. Awesome job Rhea.” Cody spoke lowly as they continued to put distance between them.

“What the hell is going on here.” Rhea furrowed her brows and shook her head. She felt like she was being used as a toy to break tradition. She didn’t mind helping break the backwards mindset. But she was afraid of the rabbit hole she might be forced to go down for that. She wasn’t about to be forced into being a dragon’s mate. This was all just for show right? She looked up to see her mother and Grandpa Sage making their way towards them.

“Grandpa Sage, you may want to get down to the end of the hall. A guy named Melvin seems to be stirring trouble.” Rhea watched his unreadable eyes as he nodded in acknowledgement. She watched the older man walk down the hall. Who was this Melvin guy that he was able to stir up so much trouble? It had to be deeper than just Titus’s father’s friend’s son.

“Rhea? Are you alright?” Lilly looked over her daughter. She looked flustered and confused.

“I feel like I am getting thrown into a game and I don’t know the rules or the object of the game.” Rhea sighed and glanced backwards towards the nothingness down the hall. “Everyone knows things that I don’t.” She spun her head back and looked at her mother.

“I know the feeling, Rhea. I have been there before on my own journey. Just remember, somethings you have to discover for yourself. When you are told them, it ruins your own growth.” Lilly smiled at her in understanding. She felt like almost everyone knew about her being the fairy princess before she knew. Sometimes, it is best to let the truth get discovered when it is meant to. “Don’t worry Rhea. You have a group of good people here. I feel comfortable leaving you in their capable hands. In fact... they are not the ones I worry about. It

is you.” Lilly smiled at her and raised her eyes accusingly. “It is you and your own ability to get into trouble.”

Rhea grinned and shrugged. “I guess I take after my mother in that aspect.” The two girls giggled together, and Cody sighed.

“This only means more trouble for me.” Cody grunted.

“Oh, you know you love it Cody.” Rhea teased as she poked at his chest.

“As much as I love a paper cut.” Cody folded his arms and snorted.

“Rhea, I have to get back. But as you saw, you can always reach me quickly.” Lilly gave her daughter a sad smile. She might be in capable hands, but leaving her baby here was still hard.

Rhea walked up and hugged her mother tightly. “Don’t worry mom. I will change the future. We will have a bright future.”

“I never doubted that you would.” Lilly hugged her daughter tightly back. “Come on and walk me out.”

“Hopefully, they are done quarreling now.” Cody grinned and looked down the hall. They had to pass through that hall in order to leave. Book 2

Chapter 20 Silenced Wolf

## Chapter 102 - Dr.Luna

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Rhea could see Grandpa Sage, Reese, Titus and Lee all standing around talking. The talking quickly hushed as they drew closer. Rhea could see there was some clear agitation from Lee.

Titus looked back at Rhea and smiled. “You should have seen her gramps. I thought Melvin was going to pee his pants when Rhea confronted him.”

“Good girl Rhea. You have to be assertive here.” Grandpa Sage nodded with an approving smile.

Rhea looked between the men. She looked from Lee then back to Titus. She was feeling confused and almost played with. The more she thought about it the more she felt irritated. She didn't mind playfully flirting, but she had almost felt a bit violated. Titus's lips almost on her marking spot and being seared with his hot breath. A low growl ripped through her head and then silence. That was when the pain started. Deep pounding pains were beating in her head. It was as if her wolf was clawing her way out. She reached up and grabbed her head and flung herself backwards into the wall to steady herself.

“Rhea!” Lilly yelled out as Cody embraced his arms around her to try to alleviate the pain, but he couldn't. It was like there was an inner wall there blocking him from helping her.

“I can't reach it. Something is blocking me.” Cody looked at his mother with concern.

WAIT, calm yourself. Not yet. A firm woman's voice commanded in her head. In that instant everything was silent and calm. The pain had stopped. Rhea let a shuddered breath out. She opened her eyes and looked out over the concerned sets of eyes over her. This was getting annoying. What the hell? What the hell was that? Whose voice commanded HER wolf to stop from coming forward? Why was she always the one feeling like they were on display at the freak show? All these eyes on her... No one understanding and knowing what she was going through.

“I'm alright. It's passed.” Rhea smiled. She wanted them to quit looking at her with those eyes. She wasn't a little girl who wanted their concerned eyes.

Rhea sweetie... don't shut down on me.

Rhea's eyes shot over to meet with the glowing emerald ones beside her. If anyone could understand what it was like it was her mother. Her mother grew up her whole life feeling like she was the freak.

My wolf was trying to come forward... but... there was a woman's voice that stopped it. She commanded MY wolf to stop. I think she has been blocking my wolf this whole time... Who would block my wolf and why?

Lilly looked perplexed. She could only think of one who could control your wolf. But why? Why stop Rhea's wolf from coming forward? She would need to talk with her father Ethan and Tyler about this.

Rhea... I can only think of one who could have that ability. Only the Moon Goddess herself could command our wolves. After all she is the one who blesses us with them. I don't know why she would do this though. I will speak with your father and grand father and see what they think. Maybe they will have an idea or would have heard of something like this before. I am sure that there is a reason.

Let's just pile on the things that make Rhea weird... She smirked as she looked at her mother in exasperation.

Lilly smiled and leaned forward. She pressed her forehead against her daughter. In my experience, the more weird things are usually means the stronger you are. Take it from someone who was always as weird as they come.

Rhea let out an airy chuckle and nodded. "I hope so." She said quietly.

"I need to get back. Come walk me out." Lilly reached her arm around her daughter as they walked side by side. Cody walked up behind them and draped his large arms around them both. While Titus and Lee also followed them outside.

"I still have my hippogryph here from earlier. I'll go grab him so that I can follow you back." Cody smiled and jogged off to retrieve his flying ride.

"I'll send word to you if I find anything out." Lilly hugged her daughter tightly. "I love you Rhea. Don't stop being who you are." She then turned so her daughter could not see the forming tears and went to her gryphon.

"I'll make sure your mother returns safely too." Lee said softly next to Rhea.

Rhea regarded him quietly. She could see that he seemed a bit tense. She took a small step towards him and rested her head on his chest. Immediately, she felt his arms wrap around her. She took in a relaxing breath. She was trying to make him feel better, but she was the one getting calmed by him. She reached a small hand up and rested it on his chest.

"Thank you Lee." She felt his lips land on the top of her head.

"I won't be long. Try to stay out of trouble." Lee smiled down at her and winked at her.

She felt his warmth drift away and she watched him walk over towards her mother and Cody. She watched as he transformed into his magnificent light blue dragon. His blue scales almost shimmered as they reflected in the light. She rarely saw him in his dragon form. He was beautiful. She wanted to reach up and touch him, but just as she had the thought he took off into the sky. She watched her mother and Cody follow. She stood there staring quietly as she watched them leave. She felt Titus presence behind her.

"We have a big dinner tonight. Let's get ready for it." Titus smiled and rested his hand on her back.

She nodded and let him lead her back. This dinner would be important for her as well. She was on a mission. She was going to win the dragons over to her side. Now more than ever, she realized how much they needed their help. She had seen what it could be like without them. She had to do what she could. She had to win them to their side in order to secure a future for her family and her people.

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She spun in the mirror and looked at her gown. It was an all-silver sequin gown that ran to the floor. The back was completely open and there was a slit on one side that went high to her thigh. She looked stunning in it. She had her long hair pulled half back and it flowed in silky strands over her back. Her make up was perfect and she was ready to charm. She gave herself one last look and then headed to the door. Kelsie had been gone a long time, but maybe she got caught up with something back in the Diamond Pack.

She opened the door to her room and saw Titus waiting for her in the hall. He looked her up and down.

“Maybe we should have chosen a different dress.” Titus said with a mild red hue creeping onto his cheeks.

“Why Titus... is that a blush I detect?” Rhea teased as she reached her arm around his.

Titus grinned. “Hard not to blush at the sight of you. I’m going to have to work hard to keep the beasts in check tonight.”

“I seem to have some weird pheromones that you dragons are attracted to.” Rhea said with a mischievous grin.

“No pheromones about it. Anyone not blind would be attracted to you.” Titus winked at her and tightened his hold onto her.

“Says the perpetual flirt.” Rhea didn’t pay any attention to his compliments. After all, he was always being a flirt.

Titus grinned and led her out of the castle and towards the tents. There were tiny lights glowing around the tents and on the pathway leading the way. “This month we have several big dinners and events. Especially when another royal comes like Grayson.”

“What about Ruby? Isn’t she considered a royal too?” Rhea asked thinking about the girl.

“Let me rephrase myself. Any royal who is crowned or will be crowned.” Titus looked ahead as they could hear the chattering in the tents. “Hope you are ready. You are about to become pretty popular. Here we go princess.”

Titus pushed through. They stepped into the tent and the voices all hushed. All eyes were on them. Well, all eyes were on the girl who was accompanying the King of the West. Deep breaths Rhea. You have just entered the dragon’s lair. She felt her hand tighten on him subconsciously.

Titus smiled as he felt her grip. He rubbed his hand on her back gently.

Rhea looked out over the crowd. Hundreds of circular tables were spread throughout the large area. All the tables were covered in a silky white cloth with floating candles in the center. In the front was a large dance area and off to the side a band was softly playing. Her eyes caught on an interesting sight. In the very back was a lone man. He sat alone and no one sat with in several layers of tables around him. Odd she thought. She swept her eyes forward again as she felt Titus begin to tug her forward. He led her to a group of tables off to the side. These tables had gold tablecloths.

“This is our table.” He pulled out a chair for her and helped her into her seat. She sat down as he took his seat beside her.

“Judging by first glances it doesn’t look like I made any immediate friends.” Rhea chuckled nervously as she glanced around.

Titus smiled and watched her intently. She glanced up and noticed him looking at her. She watched his eyes look around the room for a moment and then settle back onto her. “I’m going to need to make it well known that you are off limits.”

“I do need to talk to others in order to make friends.” Rhea gave him a crooked smile.

“Talking is one thing. The animals in here are looking ready to gobble you up. Not that I can blame them. The thought may have crossed my mind once or twice.” Titus flashed her his full white toothy smile.

“Does your flirting ever get you anywhere?” Rhea shook her head smiling at him.

“I guess we will find out tonight.” He winked at her in which she rolled her eyes.

Rhea could still feel all the eyes on her. This would be a horrible time to trip or spit a drink out through my nose. Rhea thought with wry amusement. Okay, Rhea. You can do this. Operation make the dragons my pets is a go. Phase one.

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Chapter 21 Dragon Party

## Chapter 103 - Dr.Luna



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The band was playing, and dozens of partners were entering the dance floor. Titus stood up and extended his hand to Rhea. "It's time I make it known that you are my partner tonight."

Rhea grinned back at him and gently placed her hand into his. She was excited to get to dance again tonight. She let him twirl her around on the dance floor. She noticed him shoot a few glares past her on occasion. He made sure no one was staring at her for long.

"I was really proud of you earlier... for how you were with Melvin." Titus stared into her blue pools. She really was stunning to look at. "I expected you to just stand quietly by. What you did... meant even more though. It showed courage. I was very pleased and always surprised by you."

"I couldn't let someone insult me or my kind... especially the likes of him. I honestly don't understand how you put up with it." Rhea was curious why he tolerated him so much.

"I know. Trust me it is hard. In his case... it is best to keep him close so that I can keep an eye on him. If I thought, he merely worked alone it would be over. I have a feeling though... and I need to find out who all are in his pockets."

She watched Titus as he drifted deep into his thoughts. "So, are you purposely provoking him to try to get him to act?" His eyes refocused on her with amusement behind them.

"Purposely provoking?" Titus grinned as he repeated the question back to her.

"Yes." Rhea giggled. "Provoking him with having a non-dragon mate."

"Hmmm. I see. You think that I was purposely provoking him by saying that?" Titus grinned and then twirled her around. As he spun her back, he pulled her deep into his embrace. "I'm not provoking him with that. I'm preparing him. Letting him get used to the idea slowly."

Rhea felt his hot breath fan against her cheek. She tilted her head up to him and smiled. She crunched her eyebrows up. "Preparing him for dragons taking a non-mate in the future?"

Titus chuckled. "Why are you fighting it so much? Why don't you accept the idea of me as your mate?"

Rhea felt her heart flutter and she caught her breath in her chest. His voice suddenly sounded serious and the usual mischief was gone. She forced herself to exhale and keep her composure. She met with his amber eyes confidently. "You are not my mate Titus." She watched a grin spread across his face.

"How do you know? When your wolf finally pops out, you'll feel differently." Titus leaned down and breathed in her scent.

"Titus... quit teasing me." Rhea didn't know for sure, but she just didn't think he was her mate. Yes, she was attracted to him, but shouldn't it be stronger even without her wolf? His teasing her was starting to make her a bit confused though. Like she should be feeling more for him.

"Rhea..." His hot breath fanned her hair as his head drew lower. There was a certain tenderness to his tone. It was just her name. Just one word. But it felt like there was so much more behind it. So much more meaning was meant in that one word. She felt an inner moment of clarity. She was no longer confused. She knew... she knew what she had always known.

She pulled back slightly and smiled up at Titus. "It's not you." She gave him a knowing smile. "I might not know who my mate is... but I know what my heart wants. And it isn't you. Even if you are good looking... you aren't the one my heart calls out for."

Titus smirked at her and continued to sway to the music with her in his arms. "Life has a way of surprising us, Rhea. I'm young... you're younger still. Sometimes we can't wait for the maturity that age brings to us. Some futures we are meant to face while young. Your future is heavily intertwined with mine... and soon you will realize just that." Titus stared at her sapphire eyes that sparkled under the light. He leaned down and kissed her cheek. A few minor gasps were heard in the crowd as they witnessed the intimate scene. Their king had just kissed someone on the cheek. This was not casual news.

Rhea felt the soft tickle from his lips on her cheek. There was a certain respect and adoration behind it. She looked into his smiling eyes as he pulled away. He might be a flirt and a tease but what he just said was genuine. What exactly it meant she was sure she would soon find out.

"I'm glad we are friends." Rhea smiled back up to him as he led her off of the dance floor.

"We are more than friends Rhea. For now, I will just leave it at that." Titus squeezed his hand on her back lightly with a small smile resting on his face.

"My lord." An older man's voice called from behind them as he approached.

Rhea glanced back to see a man that was wrinkled with time. How old he actually was... well that could only be guessed. Shifters didn't age like humans did. Even her parents still looked very young. This man was probably hundreds of years old. He was a man of stature and noticed that he had the respect of those around him.

Titus smiled at the man and nodded. "I didn't realize you arrived today."

“I did. I traveled with my two granddaughters. I promised them that I would get them dances with the King of the West.” The old man’s eyes glinted with humor.

Rhea could see the minor agitation rise in Titus, but he just continued to smile at the older man. “Of course, just let me tend to my date for one moment and I will meet you over at your table.” The old man nodded in appreciation and slowly walked away.

Titus growled lowly as the man left. “That crafty devil knew I couldn’t refuse him.”

“Who is he?” Rhea asked quietly.

“He was the old king of the Southern kingdom. Two no three kings ago. The kings step down automatically when they have an heir reach the proper age to take over.”

“What happened to your father?” Rhea bit her bottom lip as the words vomited out of her mouth before she had time to think. She watched a tight smile rest on Titus face. Titus was young and his parents were nowhere to be found... they were not even talked about.

“My mother died when I was born. No one really talks about the event, but my birth ended up burning her alive. I read the official reports...” Titus never got to know his mother, but he heard she was very sweet and loving. She wasn’t an upper tiered dragon. It was very painful being pregnant with him, but ultimately giving birth is what killed her. “Then my father... well he could barely look at the son who killed the love of his life. The day I turned eighteen he vanished leaving me the kingdom. Well... it is written that he vanished, but that’s not what happened. The pain from losing his mate was too much. He wanted to forget... everything. I don’t know all the details. According to Grandpa Sage he just doesn’t remember anything anymore. He is living his life in one of the utopias created for all magical beings. I’m sure you have heard of those villages before.” He watched Rhea nod her head. “I plan to check in on him... not that he would know it was me... but just to see him happy.”

Rhea’s eyes watered up. Poor Titus. Her mother mentioned to her before that she felt like Titus was lonely. She was right. He didn’t have anyone. Thank goodness he at least had Grandpa Sage and Lee. “Titus... you know I’ll always be here for you. And I will help you in anyway that I can. I might not look it, but I am pretty tough too if you ever need an extra hand in battle.” Rhea watched his lips curl up in a smile.

“I’m counting on always having you around. Though you must be nuts if you think I would ever allow you to fight. Who would allow someone so precious to enter a battle?”

“Hate to break it to you but you are looking at someone who will be entering the battlefield against demons. I know this is going to happen and that I will be at the front lines... I’ve seen it.” Rhea’s voice quieted over the last few words.

Titus looked over her sincerely. “I know you saw something... But I want you to know that no matter what I WILL be there. Side by side, Rhea. Well, more like me in front and you behind

me.” He grinned at her and continued. “I don’t care if I have the backing of my people or not. I will be there to fight by your side. I won’t let anything happen to you. You are important to me.”

Rhea smiled at him. She was relieved to hear him say that. She wasn’t just gaining allies for the upcoming battle. She was gaining precious friends. Titus was important to her. She also vowed that she would always answer the call if Titus was in need. Whether he wanted her to fight or not was irrelevant. Sometimes the key players are not the ones you expect. She reached out and placed her hand around his. “Thank you, Titus. It means a lot to hear you say that. You are important to me too. I know it is weird... but I feel like we have always known each other.”

“It isn’t weird... especially because I feel the same way. Yours is a soul that my own recognizes. We must have been close in another life.” Titus squeezed his fingers around her hand. Titus glanced up and towards the table in the distance where the old man had returned to. “I’ll be back soon, Rhea. Try to stay out of trouble.”

“You realize who you are talking to right?” Rhea chuckled.

Titus beamed at her. “That’s why I am telling you now to stay out of trouble. I shouldn’t be long... provided I don’t get pulled into some long-winded conversation that I can’t escape.” He all but groaned out quietly.

Rhea watched him walk away leaving her at their table alone. At first, she sat there obediently. She was really trying to be good and stay out of trouble. However, after about twenty minutes she saw that Titus was getting pulled by another man to dance with his daughter. She smiled to herself. She could almost hear his annoyance. She was tired of just sitting though so she stood up from her table and wandered to the drinks table in the back.

A few children had sneaked into the festivities and were kicking a ball back and forth. One of the children missed stopping the ball and it rolled to the side. Past the group of empty tables and right under the table of the man sitting in solitude. She watched the children looking in the direction with a frown.

“Can’t you just go grab your ball really quick?” Rhea’s soft voice called from behind them.

“We can’t go over there.” The young boy pouted.

“I’ll get it for you.” Rhea watched the children’s eyes light up and she smiled. She didn’t know why this man was sitting in solitude but surely it would not be a problem for her to walk over and retrieve the children’s ball for them. She would only be but a moment. What could go wrong?

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## Chapter 104 - Dr.Luna

Rhea took bold strides towards the lone gentleman. He was staring off in the distance where the other dragons were dancing. When she approached the table, she could see that he didn't even notice her there.

"Excuse me for just one moment." Rhea watched the man jump almost startled seeing her standing beside him. She bent down and saw the ball tucked behind his leg. She tapped on his leg with her hand. "Could you move this leg just a bit." The moment he did she grabbed the ball and leaned back up with a smile on her face. She turned to the kids who cheered happily and then rolled it over to them. The moment they got the ball they took off running with it.

"Sorry to disturb you. I just wanted to return the ball to the children." Rhea watched the man staring at her like he had seen a ghost. His eyes looked her over and his mouth was slightly open. The man looked almost dumbstruck as he looked at her. Maybe he was someone of utter importance that wasn't supposed to have contact with anyone else. Maybe she just messed something really big up!

"Wait..." She heard his voice as she made a small step away from him. She turned around and met with his deep green eyes. "Can...I..." The man reached his hand out and, with just a finger, touched Rhea. The whole time he was studying her face. She watched a small tear roll down his cheek. Then suddenly he stood up and pulled her into his arms. Rhea stood there stiff for a moment. It wasn't until she almost felt his body sag against hers that she was able to recover from the shock.

She didn't feel violated by this man. She felt... sorry for him. He was clearly upset. Rhea took her hand and patted his back. "Are you okay? Do you need help? Why are you all alone?" She used a soothing tone as she spoke to the man.

"I'm sorry." The man pulled away and wiped his eyes. The whole time though he kept a hand on her shoulder. Almost relishing in touching her. "It's just been so long..."

Rhea looked at him curiously. The man lowered his hand from her and then sat down. She reached and grabbed a chair and scooted it up next to him.

"I haven't touched anyone in ten years." The man said quietly.

"Ten years?! No one? Oh, my goodness." Rhea reached her hand out and placed it on the guy's hand. No wonder he was craving touch so badly. She couldn't imagine not being able to touch anyone for a week. Let alone ten years.

“No one can be around me. No one. That is why there is such a distance between me and the other guests. It is physically painful for them to be near me.” The man looked out over at the other dragons. It was clear he had been very lonely. “I couldn’t even be around my mate when I found her... it has been pure torture.” The man’s green eyes turned teary again as he glanced out at the dance floor.

“What on earth happened?” Rhea asked quietly.

“When I was sixteen... I was a young arrogant fool. I scoffed at another’s feelings for me. She confessed her attraction towards me, and I dismissed her... mocked her even. I was a stupid kid. She was a young witch and I hurt her feelings... her pride. I even had others tease her. Her grandmother was the head of a very powerful coven of witches. She cursed me that I would never be able to be touched again. That I would never be able to feel the warmth of an embrace or to know love. We tried for years to get the curse reversed. It was too powerful. And no one dared to cross the matriarch of that coven... she even killed her own sister. So, I have been left with this curse. I’m twenty-six years old. And from that point until just now... you are the first person who I have ever touched.”

Rhea listened to the young man’s story. It was so sad. He was a kid who made a mistake. He should not have to continue to live that punishment.

“I’m Rhea. It is nice to meet you.” Rhea smiled and squeezed the man’s hand.

“I’m Grayson.”

“Oh Grayson... the king of the East?” Rhea was able to put the connection together then. That’s why he was uninterested. That’s why it was difficult meeting with Grayson. Because of the curse.

“And you are the fairy princess that everyone is talking about... You are also on everyone’s lips.” Grayson’s green eyes glinted with interest.

Rhea smiled. She knew everyone was talking about her. She looked at Grayson and wondered. She didn’t have any experience... but she was a fairy. She came from a long line of healers... a very powerful line of healers. Maybe she could help this man? “Do you mind if I take a closer look?” Rhea asked quietly. She watched the man nod his head.

Rhea reached her two hands out and rested them on each side of his temple. She gazed into his eyes and concentrated. She tried to focus on the different lights. She could see the colors swirling and finally she was able to see a mass that did not belong. It had a cold feeling of dread with it.

“Please... hold still.” Rhea commanded in a whispered voice. With that she focused on the ominous light. Her body began to react and retaliate against the threat. This light was poisonous... it was dangerous... her body knew it was unsafe. She could feel the icy stabs trickle up her arms. The frosted liquid seeped into her veins, crawling up her arms. Her chest hurt as her lungs clenched from the cold. A frosty breath blew from her mouth. Her nose stung from the

cold. The numb stabbing pains jolted up her arms causing her to whimper but she didn't let go. She continued to draw out the curse taking it deeper inside of herself where she was purifying the poisonous light.

She could hear muffled calls of her name from behind her. She could hear Titus and Cody's voice. They were still at a distance.. the curse was still keeping them away. She wasn't done yet. She had to help him. She struggled to take in a breath as the air she inhaled became like icy needles entering her lungs. Her stomach clenched. It was like getting kicked in the gut as the curse flowed through her. It was almost gone. The light inside of him had almost diminished. She used her remaining strength to seer the icy light away. Once she felt the light dissipate, she began to fade. She fell forward into Grayson who caught her. She didn't have any strength left. She could hear the voices surrounding her but didn't have the energy to open her eyes.

She felt her body being lifted away from Grayson. Her icy body was being seared by a familiar heat. She snuggled into the warmth. Her body was frozen. She smiled as she nuzzled her head into him. "Lee." She whispered out with her eyes closed. "It's gone."

Titus looked at Rhea. She looked so vulnerable all curled up in Levi's arms. What she said brought a realization and shock to his face. He turned and reached out to Grayson. He grabbed onto his hand and then pulled him up into a hug.

"Grayson... she broke the curse!" Titus almost gasped out. Grayson had tears flowing down his eyes.

"She's an angel. She was an angel sent to rescue me." Grayson rasped out as he sobbed. After ten years the curse was finally over. He could finally go and be with his mate. This new realization hit him. He looked out over the crowd. He wanted to hold her. He wanted to smell her. He wanted to kiss her. He saw her in the distance and his feet swiftly carried him away.

Titus watched Grayson with a smile. He knew where he was headed. He then turned back to Rhea in Lee's arms. Cody was gently rubbing her head.

"Her body is ice." Cody said with a frown.

Lee growled and looked down at her angrily. "She is too reckless."

"Levi, she broke the curse. She is amazing. She basically saved Grayson's life. We both know he wouldn't last much longer. He couldn't continue to live like that." Titus could understand being concerned for Rhea, but what she did was amazing.

Lee glared at Titus. "Not at her expense. Nothing is worth it if it is at her expense. I'm getting her inside. She needs warmed up." Lee turned and stormed away.

"I think Rhea is in trouble." Titus rubbed the back of his head and looked over at Cody. "Hungry? We have quite the spread here." He watched Cody's eyes trail after Rhea. "She is



going to be fine. Plus, she is in the most capable hands and I know you are starving... when are you not hungry." Titus smirked.

Cody nodded and looked back to Titus. "You're right. I know she is safe with him. Alright... show me how the dragon king feasts." Cody followed Titus to a long serving table. Titus was right... he was of course starving. So, he fought against his instincts of being at Rhea's side. She was with her summon... the dragon deity. She was in safe hands.

Lee took Rhea into his room and pulled back the covers. He carried her into the bed with him and pulled the covers up over her while he continued to warm her with his body heat. She did too many dangerous things. He was trying to clear his head when he spotted her in the distance. He could see she was in distress and he wanted to stop her from continuing. He arrived in time to bring her cold body into his embrace. She had smiled and could hear in her voice how happy she was to have helped Grayson. He felt her lose her remaining consciousness as he held her. This was too close for comfort for him. She had put her body in a dangerous situation. He couldn't lose her. He would protect her even if it meant protecting her from herself and her negligent actions.

Rhea felt like she was in a warm cocoon. She was wrapped up in warm arms and covered in warm blankets. She felt so cozy and comfortable. She opened her eyes slowly and looked around the unfamiliar room. This was not her room. She leaned deeper in the hot arms she was wrapped in. She turned her head slightly and looked up to see his light blue eyes piercing down at her. She could see the agitation in his eyes immediately. She closed her eyes again and took in a small breath. Her body was still tired but was recovering. She wasn't sure how long she had been unconscious. One thing was for certain. It looked like she was going to have a fight on her hands. She opened her eyes and met with his unwavering gaze.

"Is it just me or are you happy to see me?" Rhea teased and she heard Lee snort in irritation. Yep, he was angry and she was going to have to go to battle to defend herself. She was proud of herself too. She had just saved a dragon king from a miserable life. He could now be with his mate. She accomplished something miraculous. She felt more power inside of her than she had ever felt. She had a newfound confidence in herself. And here was Lee ready to smash it. Well... he could try. Book 2

Chapter 23 I'm A Woman

## Chapter 105 - Dr.Luna

"I was able to purify his curse. Grayson won't have to suffer anymore." Rhea scooped herself up into a sitting position. She listened as Lee let out a deep breath of air. He then got up from the bed and walked to look out the window. Rhea could see from his posture that he was upset. She looked around the room. It was beautiful. There were statues of dragons sculpted from white



stone in the room. A mural of a water dragon was painted on the wall beside the bed. There were small crystal lights that decorated the room that could be dimmed and brightened as needed. It was incredible. “Is this your room?” Rhea eyed the room one more time and then looked back to Lee.

“Yes.” Lee’s voice was terse and direct.

“Why am I in your room and not my own?” Rhea wasn’t sure exactly why she was brought into his room. Why not just take her to her own room?

“No one will bother us in my room.” His voice was still curt and unfeeling.

Rhea sighed. He wouldn’t even look at her. She swung her feet over the side of the bed and slowly put pressure on her feet. She tested her leg strength to make sure they would bear her weight. Without having her wolf something that drained her would take longer to recover than it would have for her mother. Once she managed to stand up, she took a few quiet steps around the bed and beside Lee so she could also look out the window. Not only did he have an awesome room, but the view was amazing. She looked out from the tall window. He had a stone balcony just off of his room that would give him a spectacular view of the valley below the mountainside. She thought wryly to herself, I guess being a deity gets you top of the line perks. “It’s an amazing view.” Still silence was all that was heard between them. That and the sound of their light breathing.

How did his breath even give her an intimate feeling? She tilted her head slightly so that she could side eye him better. His jaw was set, and his eyes were fixated off in the distance. A small timid smile rested on her face as she reached forward and touched the window in front of her. “How long was I asleep?”

“You mean how long were you passed out for? ... Two hours... You have been unconscious for two hours.” His voice had a bit of a bite to it as he spoke.

“Oh... I guess I missed the rest of the party.” She chuckled quietly. Lee snapped an irritated look her way and she sighed loudly for him to hear. “I’m not sure why you are angry with me.”

“You are not? You have no clue why I would be angry with you?” Lee almost growled as he turned facing her. His light blue eyes shot daggers at her.

Rhea bit her cheek and met him with a glare of her own. “I was trying to help, and I did. For ONCE, I was able to actually help someone else and not be the one needing help.”

“I’m glad that you were able to fill some self-satisfying mortal need of feeling useful.” Lee’s voice dripped with an icy tone.

Rhea bit her bottom lip. That one stung. It stung twice as much coming from Lee. “I’m sure these petty mortal feelings are hard for a god like yourself to understand.” Rhea folded her arms as her voice snipped back at him.

“I don’t want you getting hurt, Rhea. Is that too hard for you to understand.” Lee raised his voice in irritation.

“I’m fine! I was able to save him from a miserable life and I ended up fine. I was able to use a power that I didn’t even know I was capable of using. I learned about myself today Lee. I won’t regret the actions I made. I can’t” Rhea furrowed her eyes down at him. This was a big deal to her. It showed her that for once she was capable of more than she ever knew. It also gave her the confidence that she would be able to tackle the future head on.

Lee looked up at the ceiling with a small frown. “Grayson is a good guy... I am glad that he is freed from the curse. I just wish it hadn’t been at your expense. I don’t want you to try something else like that again. Rhea... curses are dangerous. All it takes is losing concentration just an ounce and it would have backfired viciously.”

“How else do you learn except to experience things hands on? You act like I messed up. I didn’t. He is fine and I am fine. You are worrying now about the what ifs..-”

“THAT’S BECAUSE YOU DON’T EVEN REALIZE THE WHATIF’S THAT COULD HAVE HAPPENED!” Lee shouted angrily while he glared at Rhea.

Rhea jumped back a bit startled. No one had ever yelled at her like that before. How could he? This was her life. These were her choices. He didn’t own her. Why did he think he could control what she did?

“I know you see me as the naïve child who doesn’t think danger exists... but I knew it was dangerous Lee. I knew it could have turned out bad... but I couldn’t leave him like that. Not when I could help. You act like no one should light a fire because they could get burned... but without that fire’s heat we could freeze. Sometimes you have to take risks for a greater reward.”

“What is the reward here Rhea? You were able to use a power and now feel good about yourself?” Lee shot back sarcastically.

“NO! I just saved the dragon king of the east. If I am trying to win allies, I think I just earned major points with a big one!” Rhea whipped her hand out and tossed it to the side.

“So, you will try to gain allies no matter what it could cost you?” Lee’s tone was low and quiet. It reminded her of a tiger getting ready to pounce.

“I am going to do everything in my power to save my people... to save my family and friends.” Rhea’s voice trailed quietly. “You did not see what I saw Lee...” She did not mean for it to happen, but her bottom lip quivered slightly. “It was awful. We were outnumbered... we didn’t stand a chance. I have to change that.” Rhea then looked up to him with her piercing blue eyes. “You were not there Lee. I was calling for you and you never came. What could have happened? Did you get hurt or killed because of me?” Rhea shook her head and closed her eyes shut as she felt the liquid begin to creep out. “I don’t know what has shaken me more... the battle or the fact that you weren’t there, and I don’t know why... what if it is my fault?”

Lee's eyes softened and he reached out for her. He wrapped one arm around her as he pulled her close. "That future isn't for certain. I'm fine Rhea. Nothing is going to happen to me. Nothing could ever stop me from coming to you."

"That's what scares me Lee... if you didn't come to me... then what does that means..." Rhea couldn't finish her sentence as small crystals leaked from her eyes.

"No one is killing me Rhea." Lee chuckled at the absurdity of it. "I don't know what you saw or what it meant. I promise you that no one is killing me." Lee reached his hand up and patted her head gently.

This very gesture sent Rhea over the edge though. She pushed away from him and shook her head angrily. "Stop Lee! Stop treating me like your little sister." Her eyes looked at his shocked eyes with anger.

"I didn't mean anything by it Rhea..."

"Just stop... you always see me as a little sister." Her voice softened and her blue orbs were now almost pleading with him to understand what she was saying.

Lee regarded her carefully. "I don't understand Rhea... How do you want me to see you then?"

Rhea felt exasperated and her shoulders slinked in defeat. "Don't worry about it... it's fine."

"Rhea... you brought it up. I didn't realize it bothered you. I am sorry. I was... I was just trying to be close to you. I'm sorry if it made you feel uncomfortable." Lee was feeling mixed emotions now. Was she wanting him to treat her more diplomatically ? Like friends? He couldn't go back to just being acquaintances. He clenched his fist up to help control himself as he waited for her response.

"Lee...are you really not understanding what I am trying to say? Do you view me so much like a child that you can't comprehend what I am saying?" Rhea couldn't believe he did not know what she meant. That or he knew and he refused to acknowledge it.

"I don't think of you as a child Rhea...trust me." His voice was quiet and controlled... if not strained as he spoke.

"I want you to look at me as a WOMAN Lee!" Rhea finally spit out. She was done dancing around the topic. She liked Titus and was attracted to him... but it was Lee. It was always Lee. He was the one who made her insides burn. He was the one who caused her heart to give herself away. She was in love with Lee. To hell with finding a mate and the mate bond. She was in love with Lee. Couldn't she just have him... was that too ridiculous to even think? Gosh she just made a fool of herself. She could tell by the shocked way he was staring at her. She was so beneath him that the idea of her being attracted to him was way over his head. If she could just find a rock to crawl under for the rest of her life that would be great. Bring on the demon army... it had to be better than this humiliation.

“Why... would... you... think... that I... EVER... saw... you... as... anything... but... a... woman?” Lee’s voice came out in a low breath as he stared at the delicate woman in front of him. He watched her as she looked up at him with vulnerability flashing in her eyes. He met with her cool blue eyes. She was the one who didn’t understand. He could see the look in her eyes. She looked vulnerable in that moment. She was feeling troubled and he had the overwhelming urge to comfort her. He silently cursed at himself in his head. Damn it. Damn all of it. He punched the side of the wall and set his gaze upon her. She had no clue how much he had been controlling himself. This wasn’t some game to him. He couldn’t just casually flirt with her so that she could feel like a woman. He had tried to control the animal inside of him, but he had finally lost. What he had managed to hold onto, for her protection, was gone. His eyes flickered with the animal within as he took long strides towards his prey.

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Chapter 24 Not Coming Back

## Chapter 106 - Dr.Luna

Lee gripped Rhea’s chin with his thumb and tilted her head upwards so that she was looking at him. “I’m sorry Rhea... I’ve tried... I have tried so hard up to this point.”

His hot breath sizzled on her lips causing her to lick them lightly. This action brought his attention to the light pink lips of the young doe in front of him. She liked to play games and tease him sensually. He warned her that her games were dangerous. He couldn’t stop his animal instincts... not that he wanted to. He had wanted things to progress differently... but he was now going to cross a bridge that couldn’t be uncrossed. He lowered himself, closing the gap between their lips and pressed his up against hers. He felt her body stiffen at first. No doubt in complete shock that the game she had been playing went further than she planned. He continued to explore her lips as he felt her soften under his demands. And as her body responded his beast was encouraged.

It was so hot. His kiss was so addictingly hot. It was a gentle burn that she craved. She was shocked at first when his lips met hers. That quickly vanished though. She was melting under his touch... this was more sensual than she ever dreamed it would be. A fire ignited within her as he began to greedily devour her lips. She was also craving more from him and she instinctively parted her lips ever so slightly. The moment she did he plunged his tongue into her mouth. She clumsily tried to keep up with his experienced tongue. This was her first real kiss and it was heavenly. The searing pleasure from his kiss alone was driving her delirious. She was giving into

him entirely and letting him lead. She wasn't sure when or how... but she suddenly found herself being laid onto the bed. They never broke apart until she was laying onto the bed. Then she felt his lips retreat from her own. He was leaving trails of hot kisses on her face and neck. He was gently nipping and tugging on her virgin skin. Her body was tingling with little jolts of electricity. She was experiencing sensations that she never knew existed. As he began to burn her neck with his volcanic tongue, she let out an involuntary moan.

She was so inexperienced, and it was as if her body took over for her. It knew what it wanted more than then she did. Her soft moans slightly embarrassed her but it seemed to encourage him more as the smoldering heat intensified on her neck. Her hands swung up around him and pushed him deeper into her. All she knew was that she liked being burned by him. Her body craved it... it desired it. This is what she wanted and more. She had been wanting him for a very long time. Her neck was being torched by him. There was a sudden feeling like a hot ember was pushed into her neck. The pleasurable pain sent tingles inside of her, making her stomach do flips in excitement. Another moan escaped from her lips. Soon his lips began to incinerate her lips again. His hot body seethed into hers as she held him captive in her delicate arms. Then his hot lips were gone. She fluttered her eyes open at the loss of his heat. She looked up to see his light blue eyes glazed over as he stared down on her. They were both panting heavily. Their chests were rising and falling in erotic rhythms. Suddenly, she saw his jaw clench and he muttered a curse word under his breath.

"Rhea...wait here. I'm needed really quick. But... stay here so we can... continue... or talk... ugh... just wait here until I get back." Lee bent down and kissed her forehead a bit flustered. He didn't want to leave her then but duty called. Grayson had formally accepted his mate and as protocol would have it Lee would have to approve of the royal match. He didn't have to do this for others... only royalty. He looked Rhea over and then inwardly cursed at himself. He went further then he meant to. He didn't just cross a bridge... he cut the ropes once he reached the other side. They were way past the point of no return. They would need to talk... but that would have to wait until he got back. He hoped she wasn't upset with him. Who was he fooling? She was going to be angry with him.

She watched as he gave her a hesitant look before he hoisted himself off of her body. She half sat up as he opened the door.

"I'll be back as soon as I can Rhea." He said one last time before leaving her alone to process what had just happened.

Rhea rolled to her side and yelled into the pillow. So close, they were so close. Though maybe this was a good thing. This gave them both time. Though she didn't need it. She already knew she wanted him. She just didn't want him to feel pressured after what she had said. Ugh! She held onto his pillow and rolled back and forth on the bed. She made herself seem desperate, so he pitied her. The more she thought about it the more embarrassed she felt. He sympathized with her and felt sorry for her. He almost slept with her because of it. She sat up holding the pillow to her face and groaned in it. She was such an idiot and now she would live the rest of her life in embarrassment.

An hour had passed and Rhea realized he wasn't coming back. She had waited for him in there like a fool when he was trying to give her a comfortable way out where she wouldn't be confronted with the embarrassing truth. Wow, I really am pathetic. Maybe I do need my mate after all so I can get rid of these feelings. Rhea frowned as she got up from Lee's bed. She walked into his bathroom to splash some cold water on her face. She reached for the faucet and splashed the cool liquid onto her skin. She looked up in the mirror and she gasped. Her neck was well marked up with little love bites and slight bruises and then there was a considerably large hickey that stood out brightly above the rest. She tried to adjust her hair to cover the love marks. It was the first time her skin had ever been marked up. She would have felt proud of it if it wasn't for them being sympathy love bites. She sat her face in her hands and whimpered. "Ugh, you are so pathetic Rhea. You know mom never had to beg for attention." She spat out to herself in disgust. Oh well... what is done is done. She pushed off from the sink and left the room.

She was feeling a bit pitiful and sorry for herself to say the least. When she thought over the moment, she was flushed with embarrassment thinking about the real moans she had let out from his touch. He had drove her to the brink. Though he was gentlemanly enough to not take full advantage of the moment and came up with an excuse to leave. It just took her too long to take the hint. She walked down towards the main hall and saw two familiar figures in the distance.

"Kelsie! Cody!" Rhea smiled and waved her hand quickening the pace to walk up to them. Seeing them brought her an immediate familiar comfort. They were always there for her. In a sense... they were her home... her safe space.

"Ray Ray! I was worried about you." Cody wrapped his large arms around her and held her tight. "How are you feeling? You okay?"

Rhea nodded her head. "I'm fine. I'm so excited I was able to help him." She said and felt another pair of tight arms around her.

"No more! You are not allowed to hurt yourself over these lizards." Kelsie held onto her and then leaned close to Rhea's ear and said barely audible. "You smell heavily like someone..."

Rhea felt the unforgiving heat rise to her face. She cleared her throat. "Where have you been? You have been gone for a while now. I figured I wouldn't see you until the morning. Did you see my brothers? How were they? How was the pack?"

"Wyatt and Jason are good. In fact, they gave me this to give to you." Kelsie pulled out a sealed envelope and handed it to Rhea.

Rhea took the paper delicately and gently opened the seal.

Hey Ray of Sunshine,

Are you missing us like crazy? We miss you.

I heard you are being kept in the West Dragon Kingdom... I am going to be honest... both Jason and I want to bring you back here. Dad said to leave you be for now, but you know you come first to me. Say the word, send Kelsie back and in an instant we will be there for you. We will bring you back home where you belong.

Do me a favor though Rhea... don't travel anywhere alone. There are a lot of weird things going on lately. There is a pack of demon wolves that have been roaming the area. The Diamond Pack has had a run in with them once. It was only brief, and everyone is fine, but I have a feeling we haven't seen the last of them. Don't worry about us though. I know how you are. We are fine. We are all doing good Ray Ray... just missing you and your trouble making (haha).

Anyhow, I know you must be having a tough time after leaving here. I will always be here for you and you are always welcome home with me. Jason said to tell you he feels the same way. You and Cody will always have a home here.

We both love you and will see you soon. We sent a special letter just for Cody too. Didn't want him getting jealous. Jason said take care of Cody for him since he can be a bit of an emotional wreck (haha).

Rhea... please stay safe and be careful. If you ever need me... us... don't hesitate to reach out.

-Always-

Wyatt and Jason

Rhea felt the dampness around her eyes. She did miss them like crazy. She loved them and her pack. It gave her an overwhelming feeling of homesickness when she read the contents.

Cody brought her in for a hug. "I miss our brothers too. Don't worry. We will see them soon Rhea." He felt her soft nod into his chest.

"There she is!" A voice called out from the side of the castle.

Rhea turned to see two people walking towards her. Then not far behind them was a couple more people who she didn't recognize and slowly trailing them was the familiar slime dressed in purple. Book 2

Chapter 25 Love Bites

## Chapter 107 - Dr.Luna



Grayson was being practically pulled towards her by Ruby. Once Ruby reached Rhea she dropped Grayson's hand and jumped into the unsuspecting body. "Thank-you, so much. It has been so hard not being able to be with my mate, but I was going to wait for him forever. You are a god send. Because of you I can finally be with my mate."

Rhea was surprised by her action initially but soon regained her composure and patted her kindly on her back.

"Thank you, Rhea. You will never know what this means to me. In the future, I will always be there for you. Consider the East Dragon Kingdom an ally for life. Life is what you gave to me and in return I will forever be indebted to you." Grayson spoke his words with conviction. It was music to Rhea's ears as long as he holds up to it.

There were two young women and a man standing behind the new couple. They seemed annoyed with Grayson and Ruby in their acceptance of Rhea. It was obvious by the way they were looking down at her. Grayson was the king and Ruby would be the queen now. These were two people at the top of the chain of command saying they were indebted to her, a non-dragon. They did not approve of the way their royalty was behaving.

"I'm very happy for the both of you and I am happy that I was able to get rid of the curse. I wish for the best for you both." Rhea said politely as Ruby stepped back and leaned into Grayson.

"We mean it Rhea. We both have agreed. We are indebted to you. We know that things are shaky with the demons and fairies right now. We have already discussed it. If you need our aid, we will bring the full might of the Eastern kingdom with us." Ruby affirmed what Grayson said. They would not leave them to their demise.

Rhea felt an instant relief in her chest. Titus had declared himself an ally of hers and now the King and Queen of the East have promised their full might. Somehow Rhea was managing the impossible. She could do this. She did do this. Ruby was also a princess of the Southern Dragon Kingdom. Maybe she could help her talk to her brother? In either case, things were finally starting to head into a positive light.

"Thank you... that means so much to me." Rhea said in a hushed tone.

"UUOOH!" One of the girls behind Ruby gasped out loudly pointing at Rhea. Rhea looked at the girl curiously. What did she do? Kelsie and Cody each took a protective stance at Rhea's side as they stared at the shocked girl.

"Your...your.... neck!" The girl gasped out and all eyes were now on Rhea.

Rhea felt the unforgiving crimson stain her cheeks as she realized what they were now all staring at. She could feel an anger building up in Cody beside her. Her brothers have always kept men an Olympic pools length away from her. He didn't say a word, but his eyes bore into her side.

"Who did that to your neck?!" Melvin bellowed out as he stepped closer to Rhea.



“I don’t see how it is any of your business.” Rhea snapped back and crossed her arms defiantly. Her love bites were none of their business.

“It is if it was someone from the West Dragon Kingdom.” His voice hissed out with malice as he glowered down at her.

“Why? What is the big deal? I hardly see why it is any of YOUR business.” Rhea did not like this man one bit. She wanted nothing more than to engulf his body in a bubble of water and watch him struggle for air. Okay... her violent nature was the werewolf side of her.

“Quit playing games with me.” Melvin growled out.

A low growl rippled out beside Rhea. “Watch your tone with her.” Cody warned as he took an aggressive stance.

“You should be concerned too! Don’t you care that your sister has been marked?!” Melvin cried out furiously.

Rhea’s eyes almost bulged out and she coughed as she tried to catch her breath. Cody and Kelsie were now looking over her neck intently.

“This isn’t a mark. These are just... love bites.” Rhea whispered out the last words in embarrassment.

“Did you not consent to that? To be a mate?” Grayson’s voice was calm but sounded a bit alarmed.

“This isn’t a mating mark.” Rhea insisted. It couldn’t be. If they only knew that it was from Lee than they would understand. He wouldn’t have marked her. He didn’t mark her... To mark her would be to claim her as his mate. It just wasn’t possible.

“Hon.... That mark is a dragon’s brand. That is a mating mark from a dragon. Look...” Ruby lifted her hair from her neck to reveal a similar looking but unique mark on her neck. A slight shade of red smeared over her cheeks and then she lowered her hair back down. “Each dragon has their own unique mark that they leave on their mates’ neck. They brand it to their neck with their heat. You have been marked... and by the look on your face it looks like you had no idea about it. Did someone force themselves on you?” Ruby’s kind voice was looking over Rhea with concern. If someone took advantage of her new dear friend, she was not going to idly stand by.

Cody growled when he heard about someone forcing themselves on his sister. He put a protective hand on her shoulder. “Rhea... is everything okay?”

Rhea shook her head frantically. “It can’t be.... It isn’t... it isn’t a mark. If I am marked that means...”

“It means you are that dragon’s mate. Who did this to you?” Melvin growled again with menacing eyes.

There was just no way. Lee hadn’t marked her, right? He was a deity why would he mark HER of all people. Not only that, he didn’t even ask her if it was okay. Taking a mate is a permanent thing. To not ask her if she also wanted him as a mate felt a bit forced. This wasn’t the case though. They were wrong... they had to be wrong. Right?

“TELL ME!” Melvin growled out loudly and a loud bellowing roar was heard in the distance behind them.

Everyone looked back to see Lee, Titus and Grandpa Sage walking in from outside. Titus made quick authoritative strides to the group. He grabbed onto Rhea possessively and then pulled her body behind his. He turned to Melvin and dead pinned him with his amber eyes.

“MINE.” Titus’s voice was a low growl and his fangs ever so slightly were showing.

“My lord... you.... you didn’t... my lord did you mark her?!” Melvin’s eyes widened in shock.

“Why are you so surprised?” Titus continued with his deadly tone.

Wait... say what? Titus is claiming that he marked me? Rhea flashed her eyes quickly in the direction of Lee. He wasn’t even looking at them and seemed almost uninterested as he stared in another direction. What... the... hell. Wait. Does that mean he really did mark me? And now he is forcing Titus to claim me? Ugh I am so confused. Rhea was angry and getting uncomfortable. She could not understand everything that was unfolding right in front of her.

“Titus, you marked her but didn’t inform her you were taking her as your mate?” Grayson leaned back on his heels keeping his arm wrapped around Ruby. Rhea was the girl that just gave his life purpose again. He didn’t want her being taken advantage of. He was going to protect her now like a little sister. She was his angel.

“It’s not like I forced myself on her Gray.... You know me better than that. We just haven’t had a chance to talk after the heat of the moment took over.” Titus cleared his throat and gave him a wry grin. He watched Grayson nod his head knowingly. They were animals after all and sometimes that instinct took over in the throes of passion.

“You do realize what you have just done....” Melvin almost whispered out.

Titus snorted at him. “And what is that? What have I just done? Change tradition? Step up with the times? I stopped being an elitist. I am following my feelings. Do you wish to challenge me on this?” Titus watched Melvin close his mouth tightly and shake his head no. The man lowered his head and then walked away to the shadows. He had no intention of getting into a fight with Titus. He knew it would be a death sentence.

“Well... I can see the two of you need to talk. Maybe we can talk some more later Rhea.” Grayson tugged onto Ruby’s side and began to pull her away. She mouthed the words thank you one last time before they also left along with their little following.

Rhea stood there a bit in shock. She was still standing behind Titus when she felt his hand tug onto hers gently. It snapped her attention to him. A small smile was on his face. “Come with me for a bit Rhea. I think we need to talk.”

Cody growled and placed his hand on Rhea’s shoulder while staring at Titus. “You are not taking her anywhere until I have a moment to talk with her. If someone is playing around with my sister, they are going to die.” There was no lightness in his tone. He was promising to deliver a swift judgement of death. Swift sure but merciful...no.

“Cody... everything is okay. I think. Honestly, I’m pretty confused.” Rhea looked from Cody back to Titus who was giving her a small smile. Behind him from her peripheral vision she could see Lee and Grandpa Sage talking. Lee wasn’t even sparing her a second glance. It was like she was just some girl all of the sudden. Some girl among the numbers. This was when the sickening pit hit her stomach. What if she was just another number? What if this was a game he played? He marked other mates just because he could. Okay... she knew she was getting ahead of herself. It was just something about this entire situation seemed off. She didn’t know what to think. She needed answers and talking to Titus was at least the first step. “I’m okay... I want to talk with him.” Rhea looked back to Cody and lightly laid her hand on his. “Kelsie, keep him from getting into any trouble. I will come back and talk with you both soon.”

“You better... babysitting Paddington here isn’t exactly my thing.” Kelsie grimaced as she looked at him.

Cody snarled. “I don’t need no moldy horse to babysit me.”

Rhea smiled at the two of them. Honestly... she didn’t know what was going on and she felt better knowing the two of them were together. If worse came to worse, they were a force to be reckoned with. And she felt better having them both nearby.

Rhea looked up to Titus and nodded. “Okay, lead the way.” Rhea thought about the irony about the marks on her neck. This all happened because of her feelings for Lee. Her emotions caused her into a heated intimate moment and now who knows what was going to happen because of it. There was one thing that she kept thinking though... love bites. Book 2

Chapter 26 Oubliette

## Chapter 108 - Dr.Luna

Rhea quietly followed behind Titus down the long hall. The clacking of her shoes echoed down the quiet hallway. She was being led to an area where she had never been before. He opened the door and ushered her through. She walked in and was staring up at a very steep [stairway](#) leading upwards. It was so high that the [stairs](#) seemed to get lost in the ceiling and darkness as it spiraled around the wall. The area was poorly lit and reminded her of what a dungeon would probably look like.

Rhea raised an eye as she looked at this seemingly abandoned area of the castle. This looked like a place you took someone on a one way walk. She felt the gentle pressure on her back as Titus encouraged her to walk up the stairs. Alright... she didn't know why they had to go here to talk but there was probably a reason, right? There was probably a reason for all of the madness... there had to be. At this point, she couldn't hardly just turn around and say never mind. She could always still mind link with Cody if there were any problems. She took in a breath of the cool stone air and began to ascend the never-ending staircase. What was waiting for her at the top? And why did she have to walk all the way up here just to talk?

It had been a quiet walk upwards. The soft sounds of their steps echoed keeping it from being completely silent. Rhea didn't know what to say or how to start things off. I mean... how do you talk about something like this? She was waiting for him to begin to explain things. Like why he had taken the blame for her neck. She was curious about the situation too. Did Lee really mark her? Was it an accident? Or was it a game of his? She had so many questions that she was driving herself nuts thinking about them. They were about halfway up when she stopped. She had been wearing shoes with a little heel on them. Usually this wouldn't bother her feet but with the long flight of stairs they were beginning to slightly ache.

Titus looked at her as she took a shoe off of her foot and then glanced up towards the remaining stairs left. This was not going to work. They still had about halfway left to travel.

"Come on I'll carry you the rest of the way up." Titus slid past her and bent down slightly so she could climb on his back.

"No, there is no need. I'll just take my shoes off. I am quite capable of walking." Rhea appreciated it but she didn't need to be carried like some frail girl.

"The stairs are dirty and cold. You can't walk up them in your bare feet. I'm carrying you. It's up to you to decide how though." Titus slightly turned back at her and waited.

Rhea stood there stubbornly with her arms crossed. She didn't care if her feet were cold and dirty. It would at least spare her her dignity. "Where are we even going? Do we really need to journey to the stars to talk?" Rhea studied his stoic expression. He didn't say a word and clasped her wrist in his hand. In a swift motion he tugged her towards him and lifted her up with his other arm. He then began to carry her bridal style upwards. She struggled in vain against him for a few moments before she finally gave up. "So now you're going to be the quiet type?"

Titus chuckled. "You are just full of sass aren't you. Just relax and enjoy this. You know I wouldn't carry just anyone. Especially up these steep [stairs](#)."

“So, you are expecting a thank you?” Rhea rolled her eyes and looked away from him. When she turned her head though her hair flowed away from her neck showing off her marks.

A low sound came from Titus’s throat. Was it a growl or a low chuckle? She wasn’t sure. She looked back at him out of the corner of her eye to see him looking ahead indifferently as if he didn’t make any sound at all.

“How did this end up happening?” He finally asked quietly as he nodded down to her neck.

Rhea reached up and covered it with her hair. She was still embarrassed of the proof on her neck. “You’re a grown man... I don’t think I need to explain these things to you.” She said in a rather salty tone.

“Oh, I know about that stuff... I mean... how did it end up that Lee did this?” Titus said slowly and with an almost accusing tone.

Rhea was putting what he meant together. He was accusing her of seducing Lee. For Lee to mark her or whatever he did to her had to have been her fault. That is what it sounded like he was saying. “Just what exactly are you saying Titus? It’s not like I threw myself on him naked and offered my body up to him as an offering. We were just talking... well sort of arguing... and it just... sort of happened. I’m not sure what sort of happened though. Are you sure this is a mark as in a mating mark?” She watched Titus’s unmoved face again as he seemed to be deep in thought. He wasn’t going to answer her as he continued to quietly carry her.

What happened... wasn’t her fault was it? Sure, she wanted him to see her as a woman, but she didn’t say take me as a woman. She didn’t say see me as YOUR woman. She just didn’t want to be treated like she was his kid sister. She wanted him to at least look at her like she was someone he could be attracted to. Okay... maybe that was a lie. She wanted more from him, but she never asked for more. Just because she wanted more from him that doesn’t mean that she was at fault for what happened. It bothered her though that Titus had acted like he was responsible for it. He all but implied that it was his mark... wouldn’t this in itself be problematic?

“Why...why did you do that...” She watched as his eyes flickered down towards hers. “Why did you imply that the mark was from you?” He stared at her for a moment before redirecting his gaze forward.

“Does it bother you? The fact that I am claiming you as a mate. Would it bother you if you were?” Titus said quietly there was a tad bit of sadness in his eyes.

Rhea opened her mouth to say something but couldn’t find her voice. She was trying to think about how she wanted to answer him. “I don’t want claimed just for the sake of being claimed. I don’t want to just be thrown into a role that was not supposed to be mine. Don’t I have a say in any of this? If a dragon or anyone claims me as their mate do I not have a say? Shouldn’t I be given the option to hear if my wolf also claims this person as my mate or not? It has happened before you know... That the mates were not mutual...-” Rhea was cut off by Titus.

“It has happened before. Where a dragon has found a wolf as their mate, but the wolf didn’t see them as a mate. Which has worked out for the dragons since they wouldn’t have taken the wolf as a mate anyways. However, a marked mate no longer can choose. The branding bond from a dragon can’t be undone. Once marked, you belong to whoever marked you.”

“I’m not a dragon though.” Rhea said softly.

“No... you are not.” Titus answered tersely.

“For goodness sake Titus stop being so short and mysterious. What does all of this mean? What is going on?” Rhea couldn’t take the unanswered questions. What did all of this mean? Let’s just say that Lee marked her. What does that mean for her? Hmm... what does it mean? What are the options here? Either Lee marked her on purpose or by accident... or she wasn’t marked at all, which doesn’t seem to be the case. So, if she was marked by accident then what? If she was marked on purpose was it just for fun or... Her stomach fluttered and spun at the very thought. Could he really want her? What if he did mark her because he wanted her? She was inwardly smiling at this. She should be furious though. After all she would have been marked without consent. But... it would be everything that she had ever wanted. This is stupid Rhea. You don’t know anything. Just take the information you do have and go from there. Quit planning your wedding. Rhea scolded herself as they neared the top of the [stairs](#).

She looked up at Titus. “Titus... is this going to be a problem? Would it be best if I went back home?” Her voice came out a bit more pitiful than she planned on. The idea that this was all just one big mistake screamed in her head. She didn’t want to cause any trouble. Wait, is that why she is being led to this oubliette? Was she supposed to be kept in a secret place and held there indefinitely? This new realization suddenly made the most sense. She was to remain there. A marked outsider can’t just wander around freely. It would be an insult to dragons everywhere. Especially when word got out that it was the dragon deity that marked her. So instead, she would be kept locked up where no one would ever know.

She watched as they reached the trapped door ceiling at the top of the stairs. With one shove Titus flipped it open and carried her through to the ceiling floor. Once they were at the top her thoughts suddenly seemed like reality. She looked around the room. To the far side was a large opening to the outside where a dragon could come and go. She stood in a great oval room. Large enough for several dragons. There were a couple normal size doors off to the sides which Rhea assumed were perhaps bedrooms or bathrooms?

Titus lowered her down and she turned back to look at him curiously. He had an almost sad expression on his face.

“What is this place?” She whispered out. She had barely managed to get the words out as she felt them get caught in her throat. She watched him avert his eyes away from her. Then he turned and walked back to the door a few feet away.

“I know you are confused and wanting answers. Please... try to make yourself comfortable here. There is a room over there where you can change clothes and shower. There are also a few

bedrooms if you get tired. And over there is a kitchenette that has cold drinks and snacks. Lee will be up to talk with you soon.” Titus’s eyes flickered for a moment as he struggled with what else to say. “You won’t be able to mind link from here it is imbued with magic.” With a heavy sigh he turned and lowered himself down the stairs and shut the wooden trap door. Securely bolting it behind him.

When she heard the sound of the loud bolt clicking the reality of the moment kicked in. Well shit. Book 2

Chapter 27 Dirty Secret

## Chapter 109 - Dr.Luna

There was an eerie quiet that swept over the place once the sound of Titus’s footsteps completely faded. She looked around the room. How long did they plan to keep her up here? She wasn’t going to lose her head over the situation. It never did anyone any good to panic. Panicking makes you unfocused and you can’t think clearly. This was the complete opposite of what you needed when in a tough situation. Okay self. We are going to go and take a nice hot shower... hoping it is actually hot water... and try to logically think this situation through. Rhea walked in the direction where the normal sized doors were. The first door she walked through opened into a large bedroom. The room was actually quite elegant. Strange for an oubliette. The bed was huge and had a large wooden frame with dragons carved in the wood. A canopy draped over top of it that helped give the bed extra privacy. There were two other doors off to the side of the room. One of the rooms was a large walk-in closet, which had lots of male clothes inside. The other room was a large bathroom suite. There was a large stone shower with multiple shower heads and then a deep walk down tub. She eyed the tub greedily. She might be locked up here, but it was with the most amazing tub she had ever seen. She was going to enjoy herself with a luxury soak.

She filled up the water and added soap so that there was a thick layer of bubbles over the top. She then discarded her clothes and slipped into the heavenly warmth. She wasn’t worried about herself. She was concerned about Kelsie and Cody. What would they tell them? Would they lock them up too? Or would they simply just kick them out of the dragon kingdom? Doing the latter would probably lead to war quicker because they would come back with help. No... if they planned to keep her up here, they would have to also lock Cody and Kelsie up too. Maybe she could scale the wall outside? How hard could that be?

It didn’t make sense at all. She didn’t feel like Titus and Lee were bad. Maybe this was her problem. Even after being locked up she still was having a hard time doubting them. She leaned her head back onto the cool porcelain of the tub and closed her eyes. There had to be a reason. This was her last thought as she drifted into a light slumber.



Rhea opened her eyes to the feeling of another presence in the room. She glanced to the side to see Lee standing there staring down at her.

“It’s dangerous to fall asleep in the tub.” His voice growled out.

Rhea noticed his eyes were trailing over her. The bubbles had vanished from the tub and under the water she was fully unveiled.

“How long have you been standing there?” She asked quietly as she slowly stood up. She stepped out of the tub. A small smear of red on her cheeks as she openly walked out in front of him. She then grabbed the large towel and wrapped her body in it.

“Long enough.” His voice came out in a rasp. His eyes were dilated. He was clearly affected by looking at her.

Rhea turned and faced him. Her sapphire eyes captured his light blue ones. “How long am I supposed to be locked up here? Am I now some dirty little secret that needs to be hidden away?” She bit her bottom lip as she stared up at him. “What is going on?” She all but whispered out.

“You aren’t a dirty secret Rhea. I asked Titus to bring you up here for your safety until I could talk with you properly.”

“What is up here?”

“This is my private place. This is my own area that is off limits to everyone except those who are invited.”

This was Lee’s place. The elegant bedroom and bathroom now made complete sense. She could understand being led up here now. She still wasn’t sure about the whole neck thing. It was definitely the elephant in the room. So she decided to be the one who brought it up. She needed to know. Was she marked and if she was... why?

Lee turned around and cleared his throat. “I have some shirts in the closet if you would like to put one on.”

Rhea nodded and walked past him and into the large closet. She found a long shirt and threw it on over her head. The shirt came down past her bottom and she looked like a child in their daddy’s shirt. She left the closet and saw Lee standing on the other side of the room where a large ceiling to floor window was.

“I’m sorry Rhea.” She heard him say as he looked out the window. “I didn’t mean to do it. I’m very sorry. I have kept my distance from you because sometimes I can have a hard time controlling myself. My feral animal got the best of me this time and marked you.” She heard him let out a breath and then turn to look at her. “I can’t apologize enough... I hope you can forgive me for this.”



Rhea quietly looked down at the ground. She reached up with her hand and delicately touched the mark on her neck. She was in fact marked. Her chest stung and squeezed tightly. She was marked but the person who marked her did so by accident. So, he really didn't want her. What does this mean for her now? If she is marked, then how is this going to affect her? What does this mean as far as her finding her mate in the future?

"I understand." Her voice squeaked out. She understood. How could a deity take her as his own? It really did make sense. He got carried away and did something he shouldn't have. She could forgive him even though it hurt her heart. "What does this mean now?" Rhea rubbed her mark lightly and glanced up to meet with his eyes.

He regarded Rhea for a moment. She looked almost defeated. Her eyes seemed to be filled with disappointment and sadness. He had caused that. It was his fault. He should have asked her before it got to this point. Instead, he went to the brink and lost control. He felt like an insecure child, but he had to say it. "Well, it means you are my mate Rhea. Do you not want to be mine?"

Her body stiffened a bit and her eyes widened. The betraying flutter of her heart trumpeted loudly. She is his mate? Does he want her to be his mate or is it just because it was too late now? Ugh this was stupid. Why was she acting like this? She needed to just open up and speak her mind. Besides... was he really that daft? Did he not know how badly she wanted him? She only always blushed under his look and melted in his arms.

"I don't understand any of this Lee. I don't get it. I don't understand your questions and I don't understand why Titus was claiming the mark on my neck as his own. What is your game here? Am I a toy you plan to share? Play around with my feelings because you can obviously see how I feel about you, is that it? It's not right Lee-"

"Hey! Rhea... stop. You are the one not making sense right now. Sharing? I don't share Rhea. I never have and never will. The Titus thing... well that is another thing to talk about. But first... how do you... feel about me? Because I don't know. It isn't obvious to me." Lee took a few steps towards Rhea. He wanted to know how she felt. He had always wanted to know how she felt.

"I...I don't know if you are teasing me or being serious..." Her eyes were almost pleading with him. "It has been obvious since the beginning. Since the day I met you. I..." Her cheeks heated up, but she pushed through the embarrassment. She was going to get everything out in the open. Why not now? She was already marked.

"Geezes Lee. You already know this but are making me say it anyways. Just poke more fun at the girl who has been in love with you for years. And I don't even-"

In a second he was there, and his lips were crashing down on hers. She was stunned but couldn't help her natural reaction. Her arms came around his neck and she met with his heated lips. There was so much depth and passion poured into this kiss. It was soft but lingering. She felt like her soul was being sucked out into him. Her body tingled in the fire that was being caused by him. He pulled his lips away from her and held her tightly against his body.

“I love you too, Rhea. Damn... do I love you.”

The words were like pure ecstasy to her, but they were also confusing. He loved her as well? Since when? So, he did mean to mark her?

“I don’t understand. You are in love with me too?”

“Baby... from the day I met you I knew you were my mate. I was shocked and I wasn’t sure what to do. You were still so young. So, I waited, hoping that you would also recognize me as your mate. I have been waiting for your damn wolf to come forward all this time. I have been trying to keep a distance and not force myself on you because it was hard at times. Your very scent drives me over the edge.” His voice was low and raspy as he held her tightly against his body. “All these years I have been hoping you loved me... wishing you wanted me like I wanted you. I had to wait though. I had to wait because I couldn’t claim you. What if your wolf didn’t claim me as your mate? All my self-control came crashing down tonight. When you asked me to look at you as a woman... when that was all I have ever seen you as. Something inside of me snapped and before I knew it... I marked you as my own. I just hope... I hope this all doesn’t backfire. Rhea, I won’t be able to bear it if you do not also see me as your mate.”

Rhea shook her head in his chest. He had loved her all this time too. So much time wasted. She didn’t care about the mate pull. She loved Lee. She chose him. “I don’t care Lee. I don’t care who my mate is because I want you. You are my mate with or without my wolf telling me so.”

“Rhea... things might not be easy at first. There are a couple things stacked up against us, but it doesn’t matter to me as long as I end up with you.”

“Is it because you are a dragon?”

“There is that and I am a deity. Taking you as a mate is against the rules. This is why Titus has been claiming you as his mate. The dragons aren’t really an issue. Sure, they may complain about it but there isn’t a thing they can do about it. However, the other deities will need to be convinced. Until then, Titus will be pretending that you are his mate in order to protect us both. Really... they won’t do anything to you, so it is to protect me. Don’t worry though it will all work out.”

“Would they hurt you?”

“In the worst way possible. They would try to seal me away until you die.” Lee nuzzled his head into her neck.

Rhea’s chest tightened. This is what her premonition was showing her. Lee hadn’t died... he had been sealed away. Book 2

Chapter 28 Last To Know

## Chapter 110 - Dr.Luna

“So that is what my premonition was showing me. That you had been sealed away and couldn’t come to me.” Rhea dug her fingers into his chest and leaned her head into him deeper. “It was because of me then. The reason you were not there in the future is because of me.”

“Rhea... the future is always changing. Besides it isn’t because of you. This...” He squeezed his hand around her waist. “This is us. Our decisions in the future gave you the premonition you saw. Though Titus and I already worked that detail out together. We figured that is what your vision meant since there is no way I wouldn’t be there if you were in danger. I’m not going to lie though... your premonition did give me hope... it gave me promise that you chose to be with me at some point... And I was being punished for being with you... When I left you earlier, I told Titus and the Sage that I had marked you. We were deep in discussion on how to proceed now. We came up with, for now, that Titus and you would feign a relationship together. While I will try to work on the deity council. You have a dragon mark on your neck. Some dragon is going to have to claim that. Titus is the safest one to do that. And the Sage said that there is also an ace in the hole that he is trying to iron out if negotiations fail...” Lee chuckled quietly. “There is so much to talk about and discuss... but right now I...” Lee inhaled deeply near her neck. “I feel like I have been torturing myself for years for no reason.”

“You could have talked to me, you know? Though I don’t know how you could not know how I felt about you. Are you completely dense?” Rhea smiled into his chest. She couldn’t believe that what she had wanted was becoming a reality.

“It’s not like you came out and told me you had feelings for me either... well up until today that is.” Lee chuckled. “I couldn’t let myself hope for it. I was honestly trying to tune everything out and avoid being with you too much. I didn’t want to go too far with you. I kept counting down the days and waiting for your damn wolf to show up. I just wanted you to choose me for yourself and not because I...well I didn’t want to take advantage of you. You were just sixteen when we first met... and now... well it was hard Rhea because I wanted to be with you. I planned to keep waiting but, in the end, there was just no more waiting. Apparently for either of us.” He smiled into her hair as he held her tightly.

“I felt like I was doing something wrong. The way I felt about you and... thought... about you. I couldn’t wait for my wolf to show up so I wouldn’t have those thoughts about you anymore. I didn’t want to have these feelings for someone that I couldn’t have. I never thought I would be able to be with you. You were so close but yet so unattainable. It was so difficult to keep these feelings inside. Then little by little I hated the idea that you only viewed me as a little sister. I didn’t want to be your sister. Then I just snapped. I didn’t know what to think when everyone was saying that I had been marked. Was it just an accident? There was no way you would mark me on purpose. I honestly thought you only kissed me because you felt sorry for me. I had no idea... that there was more to it... to any of it. Then with Titus always implying I was his mate... always touching me...”

Lee let out a growl. “I can’t stand it when he touches you. He gets some sort of sick satisfaction out of it. And he has always tried to throw others off about you which is why he did that from the beginning. I could have killed him that day when he refused to let you leave.”

“So why did he do that?” Rhea glanced upwards towards Lee.

“Because he knew. Titus and the Sage already knew that you were my mate. I had told them. Titus knew I wasn’t going to do anything about it so he kept you here... for me. So that I could see you every day. He was hoping to push the relationship along or at the very least make it a bit easier on me. Still, it was none of his business. That brat refused to concede though. I wanted you back in Elysium, but he did have a good point. You would be safer here, but I hated to do that to you. It wasn’t my call though. Titus is the king. I don’t interfere in the ruling kings’ decisions. Well... I usually don’t.” Lee chuckled lightly.

“You should have seen your father though. He was ready to destroy the place in the conference room. There was no way he was leaving his baby girl here. It wasn’t until I popped into the room and finally told them that I was your mate that he settled down. He still didn’t like it but he could hardly refuse to leave you in the hands of your mate.”

“Wait! So, my mom and dad knew you were my mate?” Rhea asked, a bit shocked.

“Well, they knew that I at least viewed you as my mate. We are still waiting on the verdict from that wolf of yours.” Lee smiled down at her.

“I told you. I don’t care who my wolf claims because I have chosen you.”

Lee smiled down at her warmly. This is exactly what he had always wanted to hear. “Cody knew too by the way.”

“He WHAT?!”

“We had asked them all not to say anything. I told them I wanted you to choose for yourself and didn’t want you influenced into choosing me. Don’t be upset with them. That day I went for a walk with Cody I explained everything.”

“I guess that makes sense how much faith he had in you and Titus when I found that map of Elysium.”

“Wait, you found the Sage’s map? You thought we were using it for ill purposes?” Lee frowned at this.

“I decided to have faith in you. At first, I was shocked to see it, but I figured there had to be an explanation. I felt dumb for my blind faith. I felt like I could trust you and Titus. I’m glad I wasn’t wrong in my judgement.” Rhea pressed into Lee and tip toed up with her arms around his neck. “I trusted you Lee. It has always been you. You have always been the only one who ever

existed in my mind.” She pulled herself up and pressed her lips against his. Having a new found confidence knowing she affected him just as much as he affected her.

His hot lips began to melt hers as they moved together in sync. She slightly parted her lips and he immediately obliged with her invitation. Soon their tongues were dancing passionately together. She wasn't as clumsy as the first time as she also played and nipped at his lips. He made a throaty groan at her little nips which only encouraged her more. She reached her fingers into his hair and tangled his strands around them. She pushed him into her as their passion intensified. His hot breath sent shivers down her spine. This was all she had ever wanted. She had always wanted Lee and he had marked her. On purpose! He had claimed her as his mate. That is exactly what she wanted to be, his mate. Now... they only needed to complete the mating ritual. She was getting delirious in his kisses. Their battling tongues were fighting for dominance and were intensifying with urgency and need.

Suddenly, he pulled away. He was looking down at her as the two of them panted for air. “Rhea... we should stop.”

“Why?” Rhea pressed her front onto him as she took a step into the tiny gap he had formed.

His eyes were hooded as he looked down at her. “Because any further and I won't be able to stop.”

“Why do you have to stop?” Her voice was coquettish as she gently traced a finger over his lips.

Lee let out a low growl and nipped at her delicate fingers causing her to giggle. “I think we should wait Rhea. I know you say it doesn't matter. But I don't want this to be a regret. If you have a different mate out there... I don't want to do that to you Rhea.”

“Lee. Why are you the only one who gets a say in the decisions here? What about what I want? How about how I feel? I already told you I don't care. I want to be with you.”

“It warms my heart to hear you say that Rhea. It really does... more than that. It lights a fire up inside of me. Still... I know you are... inexperienced and I don't think we need to rush this. Let's just enjoy this moment. Let's relish in this fact. The fact that I love you, my sweet, beautiful fairy. I am completely and utterly devoted to you and you alone.”

Rhea smiled up at him. It was cute that he was trying to deny himself of her. Sure, she was inexperienced, but her heart knew what she wanted. She trailed her finger up his chest, raising the shirt she was wearing exposing her bottom cheeks. “Inexperience is not synonymous with indecisive. I know what I want Lee. My heart isn't going to change. I know that I love you and even if I have a different mate out there that will never change. I have loved you for years. I don't only want to warm your heart Lee. I also want to warm your bed, but we can just sit and enjoyed this moment for now. If you are not ready for an intimate relationship than I can wait for you.” She gave him a wry smile as she felt the low rumble in his chest. Sure, she was playing with fire. The thing is she didn't mind. She actually wanted to get burned. She didn't mind it as long as it was by him. Book 2

