

Dr. Luna

#

The Vampires Promised Bride Chapter 11

Ryan smirked at Lucy. He found her anger cute. The way her cheeks reddened slightly and how her arms folded in front of her. He let his eyes wander over her and frowned as he looked at her wounds. She was strong. There was no denying that. But she fought dangerously. She fought to the brink. His chest squeezed in pain when he looked at her wounds. He couldn't have her getting hurt again or worse. He would take care of Beryl so that she wouldn't have to. He was going to protect her now. She was his to protect. He hadn't had a moment alone with her besides when she was unconscious. He wanted to talk with her. They had a lot to talk about. His eyes focused on her lips and inwardly he groaned. They had a lot not to talk about too. She was recovering but her lips were not injured. He wanted to taste them and bury himself in her intoxicating scent. He wanted to show her just how serious he was about taking care of her. He could see she was still trying to restrain herself and fight off the mate pull. There was no need to fight against what nature had intended. They were meant to be. She did everything for her people. She was always thinking about them first. But he could tell this was something she didn't do for herself. He wanted to ask her what she wanted. What did she really want? To hell with everything and for once just answer what it was that her heart really wanted.

He couldn't express the amount of pain he felt when she talked about Derek. Seeing her own pained and sad expression tore him apart. He didn't want to see that look on her beautiful face ever again. He would take care of her and be who she needed him to be. But he needed her to also choose him. He wanted this to for once be a real choice for her.

"I'd like to talk with you privately." He said meeting with her green pooling emeralds.

Lucy looked back into his amber eyes. He never said anything when she mentioned not solidifying the treaty. Instead, his amber eyes darkened slightly and his eyes began to wander over her body. Going to 'talk' with him privately? Yeah, he wanted to do more than talk privately. And what scared her... was that she didn't trust herself to be alone with him. For once in her life, it was herself she didn't trust in this situation. She did want to get to know him better. She was curious about him and his life. But this would only hurt her more in the long run. It was best to try to close herself off from him, right?

And she was still irritated by the manner in which he spoke to her. Asking her what was more important to her? Taking out the witch or the treaty. She knew that the treaty with

the vampires was the most important for the werewolves because Beryl would get taken care of. She wanted to prevent anymore loss of life and maybe she could take her out herself. It was a big maybe and a risk though. If something happened to her... there could be no treaty. But she would not admit that maybe she was thinking hastily. She couldn't stand to give him that satisfaction.

A sweet scent floated in the air from the kitchen. And her nose detected the smell of chocolate chip cookies. She could definitely go for one of those right now.

"I'd rather not." Lucy finally spoke and quickly hoisted herself upwards. She made sure not to wince from the pain and she held out her hand to stop Ryan's advances. "I am perfectly capable of walking by myself. I have a couple wounds but I'm not lame." She stared at him fiercely as she challenged him. She could see it in his eyes that he was not about to allow her to walk. She was going to have a fight on her hands if he tried to lift her up. She needed some space away from his intoxicating pheromones. Suddenly she felt herself being lifted up from behind. She glanced up in shock to see Tonya winking down at her.

"Come with me Lucy. Let's go and see if those chefs need any help in the kitchen. You know, being helpful and all. Maybe they need some taste testers."

Lucy smiled up at Tonya in appreciation and nodded her head. Tonya looked up at Ryan and smiled sweetly. "Don't worry. I'll carry her. I am sure you have other things you need to attend to."

Lucy could see Ryan's eyes flicker as he stared at Tonya. He was visibly upset with her actions. But when his eyes settled back to Lucy they softened. He took in a deep breath and nodded his head.

"There are a few things I need to take care of. We will have that talk later Lucy. It isn't an option so prepare yourself for it." Ryan's gaze sharpened on her before he turned and walked away. Tonya walked the opposite direction with Lucy and smiled. "That was a close one."

"Thank you for upsetting your leader for me." Lucy said quietly.

"I could see you needed a break. The mate bond is intense, and I can't imagine how hard it is trying to fight it..." Tonya's eyes drew serious. "He is serious, you know. He has no intention of letting you go." Lucy frowned. "You can put me down now. He isn't here."

Tonya laughed. "Sorry I wish I could. But he threatened that if I let you walk on your own he would break my legs and stab me with vervain."

Lucy's eyes widened in shock. "He wouldn't."

"Ryan is a good guy, but he is protective over his team and now you. The moment I interfered I placed a target on my back. If I don't extend to you the same attentiveness that he would give you, I'll be punished." Tonya chuckled and shrugged. "He is a frustrated male vampire mate right now and that makes him more dangerous. We are animals in a sense. And just like other wild animals get more ferocious when a female is ready to mate, our males are just as similar finding their mate. However painful it is for you it will be worse for him as a male. Fighting against instinct is hard."

Tonya placed Lucy in a chair at the table. And grabbed them some cookies and milk. She sat across from her and smiled, raising up a cookie. "Well worth it."

"Lucy... I'm sorry about all the pressure that is on your shoulders. I have a hard time thinking that your parents would want you to reject your mate... even for the treaty's sake. Would they?"

Lucy held the warm cookie in her hands. She studied it quietly. "I know they would want my happiness no matter what. They wouldn't force me to be with Derek. In fact, they always told me this was my choice." She let out an airy laugh. "Though let's be honest, what kind of choice is it really? You don't have to do this Lucy but if you don't there won't be a treaty with the vampires. And this could lead to a devastating war down the road." She lifted her eyes up to Tonya and raised her eyebrows. "Some choice, right?" "I'm sure Ryan has a plan. Maybe hear him out? Ryan also has pure blood lineage. Maybe the two of you could bargain your own child?"

"And pin this burden on my own child knowing what it is doing to me?" Lucy shook her head. "Couldn't do that."

"Maybe they will accept the treaty with you two as mates?"

"Derek isn't going through all this trouble to make sure my family is protected to not take me as his chosen mate and bride."

Tonya nodded her head slowly. "That is true... the prince is going through a lot of trouble even sending his elite soldiers out here... He must care then. You wouldn't go through all of this if you didn't." She smiled up at Lucy weakly trying to offer up some silver lining. Lucy nodded her head. "I think Derek and I really need to have a sit down. We need to have a heart-to-heart conversation of what we want and expect out of this relationship. I think it will be better once we lay everything out on the table." She raised the warm gooey cookie to her mouth and bit into it. "Oh my gosh this is soooo good."

"I know! You would never know they were cooked mixed with human blood."

Lucy's eyes bulged open, and she stopped chewing. She stared at Tonya in shock and even quit breathing for a moment. Eeewww. She was eating human blood and was enjoying it. The thought immediately began to turn her stomach at the thought. Sure, she had vampire in her but she never partook of blood. She didn't have to.

Tonya busted out laughing, tears pooling from her eyes. Her loud laughter filled the air as she waved her hand in front of her. "I'm teasing. You should have seen your face! Hahaha. I'm sure you know that we don't do the whole blood thing like before. We have our human village who offer up their blood to us since it is our preferred taste, but I am sure you have seen our village. The people there are happy and they like being under our protection. Of course, some choose not to drink human blood. As you know we have evolved and now even eating a steak rare is sufficient for us."

Lucy sighed in relief and grinned. "You really had me there for a second. I always make it a point to visit the village. Everyone loves their life there. I think it is a really nice set up for both of your kinds." The vampires had a human village right next to their kingdom. It was secluded from the rest of the world but still had all the modern conveniences. These were humans who knew about the supernatural world and its existence. They are not forced to live in the village but choose to. They like being under the vampire's protection; it was what the humans chose. No one had their blood forcibly taken but they offered it up willingly. This was the human's choice so who was anyone to interject. It worked out for both species. And was a very civilized way for vampires to get the blood they craved and needed. They didn't have to hunt or chase down humans to drink their blood. They had a village of humans they could get it from.

It wasn't like human raised cattle. The vampires appreciated and cared for the humans. Some vampires even took them as mates. And if a human wanted to change into a vampire, they obliged them. A bite from a vampire to drink blood was different than a bite to claim your mate. And if a human wanted to become a vampire, they would also need to drink vampire blood in addition to being bitten.

The two girls laughed and talked about various things. Tonya talked about when she first met Zach how she didn't know they were mates. The two of them were always at odds in the beginning and competitive with one another. Especially since they were both aiming for a spot among the princes' elite soldiers. Then one day he stopped competing with her. He even started to go easy on her at times which really aggravated her since she thought he was treating her as if she was weak. It wasn't until a year later when she finally felt the pull that she understood. The relationship immediately fell into place and they both earned a spot among the prince's elite.

Talking with Tonya now was just what Lucy needed. Though hearing about Tonya and Zach did make her wonder about her and Ryan. She wondered what kind of life they could have had together. And she already knew if it wasn't for being promised to Derek, she would accept Ryan as her mate. Not only was there the mate pull but she also was liking him as a person. She liked the things she heard about him and how the people around him respected him. It hurt to want something so bad. She realized even more so now after listening to Tonya how much she really wanted a mate... her mate. How cruel was life being to her that the summer she was to be married she would meet her fated mate? Couldn't he at least be an a*****e so it would be easy to reject him? But all of his actions and reactions have been out of concern for her.

Lucy sighed and ended up letting out a big yawn.

"Your body is working overtime trying to heal itself. Would you like to rest some?" Tonya looked at the girls-tired eyes and could see she was worn down.

"A nap sounds wonderful." Lucy smiled and nodded. Tonya carried her up to the bedroom and placed her on the bed.

"Get some rest. I'll be back and check on you periodically. The bathroom is through those doors there and there is a mini fridge against the wall if you need anything. Um... oh yes. If you need me before I come to check on you, you'll need to open the door and call for me. The room is soundproof, so I won't be able to hear you. I'm sure you wolves have soundproof bedrooms too since we all have exceptional hearing."

Lucy felt an anger rise inside her and she couldn't control the bitter tone that came from her mouth. "Does Ryan have many overnight visitors?"

Tonya began giggling. "I think you just froze the room there. A little jealous, huh?" She winked at Lucy and watched the girl bite her bottom lip as her cheeks reddened. "Don't worry. I won't tell. And that is a normal reaction... But as for your question..." She walked over towards the door and looked back at Lucy. "Never." She gave her a very serious look. "He has never had a visitor or another woman around him like that. I think he is a firm believer in the mate bond and it's sanctity. Not to make this all harder on you but he has been waiting for you. And being a virile young attractive vampire male in his prime..." Her eyes met with Lucy's. "He has shown great restraint. I'll also add this... he has many fans among our kind. There are a lot of females... hell there are even some males who are interested in him. But he has never shown them any interest beyond friendship. Which really makes this whole situation more of a shame... Anyways, get some rest Luce."

Lucy watched as Tonya closed the door. She pulled a blanket around her as her heart sank. Well, she felt like s**t now. In fact, her heart was now hurting more for Ryan than it was for herself. The idea that he was waiting and saving himself for her only to end up

being rejected made her stomach nauseous. He sounded like everything she ever wanted in a mate and more. Deep down a part of her was hoping she could be with her mate. Just maybe there was a way it could work out. It was dangerous to think this way. She knew she was only hurting herself more in the long run. But a tiny flame of hope and want ignited inside of her as she drifted off to sleep.

The Vampires Promised Bride Chapter 12

A woman with dark hair and ivory skin looked over the destruction in front of her. "You are certain it was only a werewolf and two vampires?" She hissed. "Yes, Beryl. Those are the only ones that escaped from their cells."

Beryl scowled as she took in the sight of her deceased dark elves and other followers. She clicked her tongue and shook her head. "What the hell did you guys' capture? This is not the work of regular wolves and vampires." Her eyes slowly widened as a realization hit her. "Of course..." Her eyes glowered over the dead bodies. "A normal werewolf couldn't have done this but the wolves I am after could..."

"What about the vampires?"

"Unless it was their nobility or elite then this would be impossible. And you had the only two in captivity already with the wolf being the only one new. No... we don't have to worry about the vampires..." Beryl raised her finger to her chin as she scowled. "If it was one of the damn Locke werewolves then they must be on to me." She looked back at the witch doctor behind her. "We are going to have to move our timeline up a bit ahead of schedule. I won't let those damn wolves get the jump on me. I have waited too long to take them down."

She turned away from the scene and stormed away. As she left, she passed a couple goblins. She pinned her icy gaze on them and growled, "Get this mess cleaned up."

The Locke family would pay for what they did to her grandmother Meryl. When she was just a child, they killed her grandmother and she had to remain in hiding as an outsider. She wasn't welcome among the covens after that and was hunted down. She found a new home among the demon witch doctors.

She had in secret gathered blood from the werewolf king and queen that was spilled in the main coven house the night of the attack. She handed this blood over to the witch doctors in order to create something strong enough to take on the Locke family. They took everything from her that night. Because of them her world was forever changed. If it wasn't for the potion her grandmother had prepared for her as a precaution, she wouldn't have been able to escape without being detected. She owed her life to her grandmother and was going to give her justice.

Beryl was just a child when she joined with the witch doctors. Of course, joining them came at a price. She made a pact with Wicker, the most powerful witch doctor. He was their leader. Wicker agreed to take her in and help her out. In exchange when she died her soul belonged to him. Which he would devour to become even stronger. She was a child when she agreed to these terms and didn't realize the magnitude of what she promised. She thought she would be dead anyways so what did it matter. Now she realized what type of agreement she had actually made. Her soul would live a torturous existence inside of Wicker until his death. Only then would the agreement be broken, and her soul could finally find peace.

She needed to have strong allies and the witches had turned their backs on her. They were all eating out of the werewolf king's hands now. It was repulsive. She did what she had to do. Who else could be strong enough to help her but the demons? And they would be bitter enough to do it after losing Mephisto because of the Locke family. In the demon war the Locke family and their allies had killed one of their powerful original demons, Mephisto. There would be plenty of demons wanting revenge for this. Posted by FindNovel.net Being a witch, the witch doctors seemed like the best place to start. She made a deal with the devil but what did she expect by working with demons? And what choice did she have?

She could have run back to the covens and cried that she was forced by her grandmother. And they would have accepted her as a poor child who was being manipulated. However, she couldn't let her grandmother down like that. She would avenge her and finish what she started and that was to destroy the abomination Freya the dhampir. Well, she was more than that now and still an abomination. The same thing with her children. It was disgusting for a high witch's blood to run through their veins. They must be purged from the world. As for the werewolf king, Wyatt, he sealed his fate the day he took Freya as his mate. She didn't care about anything else as long as they ended up destroyed.

Wicker had other plans though. He didn't want the unity of the werewolves and vampires. Instead, he wanted to pit them against each other by creating attacks on werewolves that looked like vampires. And it was going well... up to this point. They wanted to stir more trouble and provoke a war between the two species, but it looked like they were running out of time. And somehow someone from the Locke family must already suspect. She wondered if they knew it was her.

The dark elves said they captured a female werewolf. Which Locke female was she dealing with? Was it Freya or her daughter? In either case she would try her potion out soon. And if it worked, she would hit the rest of the family with it. It was a powerful potion that had taken almost twenty years to complete. She needed something extra powerful in order to take that family down. The king and queen of the werewolves were underestimated before. Somehow, they were able to break a powerful blood potion. She needed to have something developed even stronger. And that is what the witch doctors have done for her.

Her lips curled upwards in a cruel smile as she walked deeper into the woods. She would dive back into the darkness for just a little longer. Just until the finishing touches could be made. She has waited this long and wasn't going to rush in without being prepared. They would gather their army and provoke the Locke family to respond. And that would be the moment they would meet their doom. She felt almost giddy as she laughed to herself.

Her loud cackling sound was heard as her body drifted into the darkness. Little did she know... she was being watched.

Lucy wasn't sure how long she dozed off for. She could feel a presence in the room but her senses already told her who it was. She could feel her chest pulling her as his sweet scent swam into her nose. She felt happy and comforted by his presence. Her eyes fluttered open slowly and she was met with beautiful amber eyes. She gulped slightly as his face was close to hers. So much that she could feel his breath upon her skin.

He reached his hand out and gently cupped her cheek while he rubbed his thumb over her gently. "You are so beautiful." His tender voice cooed out to her.

She gulped as she felt her heart rate picking up. She watched as his gaze began to focus on her lips. She could see his eyes darkening with desire. And she felt like she had to have him... she had to at least taste his lips. He was her mate... she should be able to at least share one kiss with him, right? Would it be too awful to end up kissing the other half of your soul? Was that really cheating? Yes... but she was going to run with the technicality that since it was her other half it wasn't. Hell at this point she honestly wasn't caring. She couldn't contain how much she needed him. She needed to feel his warmth on her lips. She needed this one moment to feel connected to her mate. Just one moment of weakness and that was all. Something she could always hold dear and tucked away in her heart that she could remember. This moment would become her light in the darkness that she could hold onto.

She felt his thumb trace over her lips, and she closed her eyes. Her breath grew shallow as her chest tightened in anticipation. She shuddered as she felt his other hand trace slowly along her side. Small sparks of electricity shoot up and down her spine. The sensation just from his touch made her gasp as her body leaned into his touch.

"Lucy..." His soft voice made her eyes flutter open. His breath beat upon her lips and in the moment her eyes closed he had moved in even closer. She licked her lips as her chest heaved up and down in anticipation. She could see he was waiting for her objection. He was giving her a chance to tell him no even though he had to have been burning with the same intense desire she was. She had but a moment to not cross a bridge she couldn't uncross. But damnit she couldn't do it. Her whole body wanted this. And it was not just her body anymore, she wanted it as well.

His hand held her cheek captive and she watched as he torturously inched closer. His lips pressed against hers and she was hit with the sensation of melting internally. Her hand raised to hold his head against hers. Her fingertips tingled as she glided them through his hair. She gripped her fingers into his locks soliciting a moan into her mouth from him. She wasn't expecting how sweet it would feel when he dipped his tongue into her mouth. His tongue slowly massaged against her with gentle deep strokes.

On reflex she arched her body into him as their tongues tangled together. She gently sucked on his lip and pulled on it with her teeth. The deep throaty moan he made sent butterflies fluttering inside of her. The kiss felt like everything and so natural. And for her first kiss it was perfect and everything she could have imagined.

He then began to move, peppering her face with sweet gentle kisses while his hand explored over her body. He kissed her down to her neck where he flicked his tongue out to taste her sweet spot. She felt him slowly lick her neck and his fangs lightly grazed her. He pulled back and stared down at her. His amber eyes were dark as he searched her eyes. When she slowly shook her head no to him there was such a deep pain that reflected behind his irises. She felt a heavy weight on her chest as she saw his pain. Pain that she was causing by not being able to accept him.

It was too much. This life was too much. Her fate was too much. Wouldn't it have been great just to be a regular werewolf? To not have to worry about the fate of two species. She could see her life with Ryan. They would be happy, and she could have what her parents have. As she thought about the happiness she was giving up, the tears began to pool from her eyes. She wanted to bury herself in her mate and seek his comfort. But this was a comfort she couldn't have. "Lucy."

She looked up at his kind gentle eyes and smile.

"Lucy..."

"Lucy wake up baby."

Wake up? She felt his hand on her cheek. "Lucy."

His voice sounded farther away and almost muffled. Suddenly he began to blur away and she was covered in darkness.

"Lucy."

Ryan's voice came through clearly now. She opened her eyes to see him sitting on the bed beside her.

"There you're awake." Ryan looked down at her and sighed. A wry smile spread across his lips. "It's a good thing you are awake because I don't think I could have continued to just sit here and watch you during a dream like that." Lucy blinked a few times and then her eyes widened in horror. It was all just a dream and somehow, he saw it?

Moon Goddess just kill me now.

The Vampires Promised Bride Chapter 13

Lucy stared into the amber eyes in front of her. Maybe he didn't really know? How could he possibly know, right? Unless she called out his name? Oh gosh. She has been told she has talked in her sleep before. She wished she could become invisible right now

She cleared her throat slightly and pushed herself up into a sitting position. She tried to play it cool and hide the stomach turning embarrassment inside of her.

instead of pinned against his heated gaze.

"It is perfectly natural. Nothing to be embarrassed about. It is normal to dream about your mate." He flashed her a wide cocky smile. "It would just be nice for it not to be just a dream..."

"What are you talking about?" Lucy was still trying to play it cool though her heart was racing.

Ryan reached his hand up to the back of his neck and rubbed it lightly. He looked up at the ceiling and breathed in through his teeth making a hissing noise. "I know Lucy. Well... we have a connection as mates. And we must be really connected because suddenly these visions started popping into my head. At first, I was confused with what I was seeing but then I realized I was getting it from you. That somehow, I was seeing these images from you. And when I went looking for you you were in here sleeping...dreaming." He peaked down at her as he continued to look upwards. He knew she would be embarrassed.

"I've been wanting to talk to you actually. And since we are finally alone I think this is the perfect time for that."

Lucy was mortified. She immediately swung her legs over the bed and got up. "Wait Lucy."

"No. No. No. We aren't talking right now." She held her hand out as she took a few retreating steps back until she reached the bathroom door. Then she spun around and ran inside. It hurt her legs to push them like that but she had to escape. She quickly shut the door and locked the latch. She heard Ryan chuckle and the soft thud of his head leaning against the door.

"Really Lucy? You know I can just break the door down, right? No need to lock it."

She could hear the cockiness in his tone and rolled her eyes. She took a couple steps back from the door and buried her face in her hands. This was so embarrassing. She peeked through her fingers to take a look at the room she was in. It was an impressive bathroom. There was a large stand in stone shower with multiple shower heads and she could also see a large white porcelain bathtub. Was this really a cave?

She stared at the door cautiously for a moment. If he was going to break down the door he would have done it already... right? It seemed like he was going to at least respect her privacy. She walked over to the tub and turned the water on. She adjusted the temperature and shed her clothes onto the floor.

"You uh sure you don't want company in there? You know with your injuries I should be in there to help you get in and out of the tub... and to wash you."

Lucy let out a quiet airy chuckle. "I'll manage." After the dream she had she completely doubted herself. She didn't have the confidence in herself to stop things. And she was sure he had a newfound confidence after seeing that dream as well. She needed to get her mind right so that she could face him as level headed as possible. She listened to the sound of him leaning against the door and the gentle thud of his head against it again.

"This hurts Lucy. I really need to talk with you."

She looked at the door and felt a pang in her heart. She could hear the pain in his voice and the memory of his pained face in her dream flashed across her mind. She squeezed her fingers together and bit her inner lip. After hearing about the kind of guy he was from Tonya she really didn't want to hurt him.

"We can talk about it after I get cleaned up." Lucy stepped into the tub sucking air in through her teeth as her wounds clashed with the water.

"I'll have some clothes sitting for you right outside of the door for when you are done. I'm sure you want fresh clothes."

"Thank you." Lucy listened as he walked away from the bathroom door, and she heard the sound of the bedroom door opening. She sighed and sank down deeper in to the tub, so the water covered just below her nose. She blew air out in frustration creating bubbles.

She felt exposed since he had seen her dream. She frowned as she felt this empty feeling deep inside of her. She felt... disappointed. It was only a dream. And while it was probably a good thing she couldn't help but feel cheated. She had decided in her dream to allow that moment for herself. But now after having the dream she felt like she couldn't play with Ryan's emotions like that. He was a mate she couldn't have. And she hated the flame of hope that flickered inside of her as it wished to be with him. Ugh, girl get ahold of yourself. You don't even know this man he is a stranger. Well, she tried to rationalize that with herself. But it wasn't like that with your mate. Your mate was like the other half of yourself you didn't know you were missing. And once you find them you can never be whole again, not now that you know what you are lacking. And she felt it. She felt like she knew Ryan. She felt connected to him, and he was familiar to her.

She leaned her head back on the tub and closed her eyes. Ryan couldn't go against the royal family so why did he feel that it was okay for him to keep the prince's bride? What did he have up his sleeves? Did he really think that because she was his mate and he was pureblood that it would be okay? Maybe that is one of the things he wanted to explain to her. She really did not let him explain his situation.

She had to hand it to Ryan for his self-control though. Her own father had forcibly marked her mother not giving her the choice in the situation. It was an accident, and her father was not like that. He had just gotten his powers as the werewolf king, and they took over him. His wolf was able to seize control of the moment. That was something her and Aiden wouldn't have to worry about since their wolves were not separate from them. And vampires weren't separate either, but she has been told several times that their primal instincts can take over. Which is why newly turned vampires have accidentally killed before. It is also the reason why they usually end up marking their mate immediately. They are not able to control themselves.

What she couldn't get over was Ryan's gaze. How he already looked at her like Harley looked at Destiny. Like how her parents looked at each other. There was a possessive tenderness in his eyes. She wondered if her eyes betrayed her when she looked at him. She raised her hand up and played with the surface of the water making a trickling sound.

She would have to reject the mate bond. She had to marry the vampire prince and then Ryan could go and find someone...else. She bit her bottom lip as a wave of anger flashed over her. The very idea of him being with someone else not only infuriated her but it sent a wave of hurt in her. It would be different if they rejected each other, right?

Though to be honest she was not sure. She knew from her father who was rejected that it was an incredibly painful experience. And that if her mother hadn't come into the picture, he probably would have taken the she wolf that rejected him back. It is a strong bond that can continue to last even with the rejection. And she has heard of the rejection not working for some. What if she couldn't sever this feeling inside of her?

She didn't want to think of it. If she still had these feelings, she was not sure how she could bear to be away from him. She had no idea how she would be able to walk into another man's arms and to his bed. The idea of laying with another man made bile rise up into her throat. It repulsed her. Already the mate bond had fastened her to Ryan. It had convinced her that there was no life without him. He was her oxygen and without him she would die.

She realized how naïve she had been all these years. She had thought it was just a feeling she could push aside. She thought for sure she could easily reject her fated mate for her duty to her people. Now she was saying the words but wasn't meaning them. There wasn't a part of her that wanted to reject Ryan. But it wasn't fair. It wasn't fair to their species or to Derek who was waiting for her. This wasn't just on her end. Derek was also sacrificing his fated mate too.

She wondered if he had met her yet and how that meeting would have gone. It just depended on if she was born yet or not. It wasn't unheard of for it to take decades or even centuries for a vampire to meet their fated mate. Vampires (who are born vampires) stop aging physically in their twenties. This was the same for werewolves and fairies.

Though usually werewolves were not immortal but lived a long time. But her parents were not normal werewolves since they were also part vampires. The king of the vampires had confirmed that while they are not invulnerable, they were both immortal from their vampire blood. And in another weird turn of events, they also found out that her aunt Rhea (Wyatt's sister) was also immortal now. Apparently, there was a gift from the moon goddess called the Ocean's Tear. This object was supposed to connect her life with her mate who is a deity. But what the object did was connect her aunt's life to the deity's. Which means she will live as long as her mate lives but if either one of them are killed then they both die. And since her mate is immortal as long Rhea wasn't killed, she would also live eternally. Which makes things interesting as the fairy queen.

As for her and Aiden? The vampire king wasn't sure yet about Aiden. He said he would need to test his blood as he ages. And with Lucy it didn't matter because once Derek marked her she would be his immortal bride... for all eternity.

That is enough to let reality really sink it. What she was about to do wasn't just for a short amount of time. She was promising to be with the vampire prince for eternity or until death they part. What if Derek never changed how he acted with her? What if he continued to be cold and uninterested?

She bit her bottom lip as her chest squeezed. Eternity. An eternity of a loveless marriage? She brought her knees up to her chest and wrapped her arms around them. She knew what she wanted at that moment. She wanted Ryan. She wanted to be wrapped in his love and to be his world.

But life is what it is. And what she wants? Well, who said you get what you want in life?

The Vampires Promised Bride Chapter 14

Lucy wrapped a large grey fluffy towel around her body. The towels had a fresh sweet smell to them with a hint of lavender. She took a few steps toward the door when she felt a hair-raising sensation. Look, there are things in life that bother everyone. And while she had no problem gutting her enemies and mowing down the masses there was one thing that terrified her. In fact, her brother always teased her about it. It was a big weakness and embarrassing for a werewolf. But she was still human, and she couldn't help her fears.

She felt an all too familiar creeping feeling of something crawling on her shoulder and then down her arm. She turned her head and verified her fears. A large black jumping spider was now staring directly at her. She let out a high pitch yelp as she batted the spider away. Only to panic even more as it leaped away from her hand and she lost sight of him. She was a goner. The spider was an assassin, and she lost its location. Yet she knew that the spider would know where she was and was planning to leap at

her at any moment. Panic set in as her heart raced. This was it. This would be how she died.

The door crashed open and Ryan came storming into the bathroom. On second thought this was how she died. Out of pure humiliating embarrassment. But first thing was first. The assassin.

"Lucy, are you alright?!" Ryan asked in a panicked voice.

"Is it on me? Is it on me? I lost it! It was here and it's gone. It's on me isn't it?! Get it get it get it!" She talked in a fast panicky voice and squinted her eyes closed. Since if her eyes were closed then the spider couldn't see her either, right? Like a toddler playing hide and seek. "Lucy, calm down. There is nothing on you. What is it? I don't see anything?"

"Check my hair? Are you sure?" She could just envision the little ninja hiding and waiting to strike. Since obviously that is the only purpose for spiders' existence. To attack with their deadly assassin stealth. She felt two strong hands land on her shoulders, and she opened her eyes. She could see his amber eyes looking at her with concern.

"Lucy there is nothing on you, I promise. Unless you'd like for me to check under the towel..." A smile pulled at the corners of his lips as he tilted his head at her.

Now she was back to the real reason she would die. She looked down and bit her bottom lip. She glanced around the room and decided it would be better to escape. She quickly took a few quick steps to reach the bedroom where she decided she could examine herself safely. Her wounds pinched a bit from the excitement, but it wasn't anything major. She looked up to see Ryan leaning on the bathroom doorway.

"So you want to tell me what happened?" Ryan looked at the damage he caused with the door. It would need to be rehinged but was salvageable. But he was wondering what warranted a scream from her. Maybe it was a fairy he couldn't see? Though he couldn't imagine her being so panicked about that. He saw her cheeks heat up and she turned her head away from him. Now that made him want to take a bite out of her for being adorable.

"You'll laugh at me..." Lucy said with a small pout.

Ryan's eyes glinted with humor. This side of her was too cute. He wanted to scoop her into his arms and pull her into his chest. "I'd like to know the reason I'm going to have to fix my bathroom door."

"That's because you knocked it down." Lucy said simply, still refusing to make eye contact.

Ryan chuckled lowly. "And I wonder why that is... It couldn't be because of the screech my mate made and the sound of her racing heart."

"You heard my heart racing from out here?" Lucy turned to face him.

Ryan tilted his head to the side as he thought about it. "It was more like I could feel it..." He tapped his own chest. "In here. I could feel your distress in here."

"But... we haven't even marked each other... and even then something like that..."

"Is rare." Ryan said simply keeping his gaze on her. "This is something that is only common for soul mates in my kind."

"My kind too... My grandparents are the only soul mates that we even know of and before them... not sure. It is that rare. That can't be what this is..." Lucy said in a whisper.

"Then how could I see your dream earlier?" Ryan asked pointedly.

Oh gosh her dream from earlier. For a brief moment she forgot about that embarrassment. Man, she was racking them up today. Then she felt something tickle her leg. She knew it! The assassin had latched onto her to kill her. She jumped and spun as she looked down. A small yelp escaped her as she looked for the culprit.

"Lucy." Ryan wrapped her into his arms. "Hey calm down. What is going on?"

Lucy looked down at her legs as she felt the strange tickle again. She noticed a tiny string from the towel was brushing against her leg. She sighed in relief and leaned forward in Ryan's chest. She didn't even mean to but she was just so relieved. And then she immediately felt ridiculous.

"Could you please not look at me while I find a place to crawl under and hide?" Lucy mumbled into Ryan's chest.

"What is going on? Is there something in here? You need to talk to me Lucy." Ryan felt a bit of panic. There was something attacking Lucy that he couldn't see. But whether he could see it or not he would protect her. She just needed to tell him what he needed to do. "Ugh... this is so embarrassing... but ummm there was a black jumping spider on me in the bathroom and I felt something just now but it was a string on the towel." Lucy felt her face heat up as she kept herself hidden against his chest. She didn't dare look at him while she spoke.

"So, this was over a spider?" She felt his muscles relax as he sighed a breath of relief. She felt his body ease as he pulled her in closer. Then she could feel the soft vibrations underneath her that sent sweet sparks through her body. Then those little vibrations turned into a loud set of rolling laughs.

Ryan leaned his head down onto hers while he continued to laugh. "Thank goodness. I was getting worried Lucy."

"Sorry you broke your bathroom door for that." Her voice was mouse-like and quiet. She knew her face was fully revealing her embarrassment in an evil crimson color. So she continued to keep her head buried into his chest. She was not just embarrassed about the spider now but also her appearance. She was becoming more and more aware of only being covered in a towel.

"Don't worry about the door." Ryan smiled and sifted his hand through her damp hair. "My sweet Lucy."

"It's embarrassing, isn't it? For me to be afraid of spiders."

Ryan smiled. "No... it makes perfect sense actually."

This was a weird response she thought. She pulled back and looked up at him. "What do you mean?"

Ryan met with her green emeralds and raised his hand up to gently cup her cheek. "I want to talk with you Lucy... about us."

She looked down at herself and scrunched up her nose. "Perhaps this talk should happen AFTER I have clothes on."

Ryan chuckled. "I guess. Though afterwards we may end up taking them back off again." He winked at her and grinned widely. "Right there on the stand are clothes for you. There isn't a bathroom door for privacy, but I promise I won't peek."

Lucy backed out from his warm arms and watched as they slowly left her. He wanted to continue holding her just as she wanted to continue to be in his arms. Her eyes met with his. The longing in his eyes was evident, even his irises were dark. She watched as his eyes trailed down her body. A loud sigh escaped his mouth, and he turned his head away.

"You better get those clothes quickly." Ryan growled lowly and gave her a side look. His look carried a promise of what was about to happen soon if she didn't.

Lucy grabbed the shirt and turned to glance at him. He was still looking the other way. She quickly pulled the large t-shirt over her head and let her towel drop to the floor. She could see Ryan's body stiffen at the sound of the towel hitting. And she couldn't help the small smile that rested on her lips from that. She quickly pulled the shorts up and straightened herself out.

"There done." She said and looked herself over. She was wearing a pair of girl shorts, she guessed were Tonya's, but the shirt was a man's t-shirt. She tilted her head and looked up as Ryan turned around. "Why the guy shirt?"

"Because... that is my favorite t-shirt. And it belongs on my favorite person." His lips curved upwards looking at her. He was quite satisfied with the way it looked on her.

"Plus, it sends a hidden message, right?" Lucy raised her eyes at him as he grinned widely.

"That shirt is mine and so is the wearer." Ryan shrugged. "You look better in it than I do."

Lucy smiled sadly. She wanted to belong to him... but it was time she told Ryan plainly. "Ryan, I'd like to say something." Lucy said quietly.

Ryan took a step towards her. "I need to tell you something too."

Lucy held her hand up to stop him from advancing. "Wait. Please let me go first."

Ryan sighed with a small frown. "I really think me going first would be better." He looked at her eyes that were almost pleading. "Alright gorgeous the floor is yours."

She played with her fingers nervously and took in a deep breath. "Ryan, I think you seem like a great guy. Honestly, I really like you and that isn't just the mate pull talking. But... this isn't just about me. This is bigger. And I am not the only one going through this. Derek also has to give up his fated mate. This is also Derek's sacrifice as much as mine. And I'm sure I am not the person he would have chosen for himself. Even so, I'm sure we can come to an agreement together. Derek and I just need to have a good talk about our expectations and how to make this work. But I believe he is a good guy... no I know he is. And I won't betray him. I'm sorry Ryan. I know you have been waiting for your fated mate and I am so sorry it ended up being me. But look at me as if I am already taken, please. Our species deserve for this to work. It can't just be about me and what I want."

"What do you want?" Ryan's eyes fixated on her.

"That doesn't matter."

"No Lucy. I am asking you. If this treaty didn't exist. If you didn't have any obligations but to yourself... what do you want?"

Lucy shook her head and frowned. "Why? Why even bring that up? What does it matter?"

"It matters to me, Lucy. I need to hear it. I need to hear for once how you really feel. It is important to me."

"If I had a choice..." She looked into his sweet amber eyes. She knew what she would choose easily. "I would choose you if I had a choice." She watched as a smile spread across his lips as he took a few steps towards her. "But I don't have a choice." She raised her hand up to warn him from advancing but he didn't. He walked into her outstretched hand and pushed his chest deeper into her touch.

"Lucy, I also choose you. Here, now, and forever. You are the one I choose. I want you and not because of the mate pull. I am choosing you on my own. You are my partner. The only reason my heart is beating is for you." His intense gaze captured hers. "The thing is-" Loud thudding echoed on the bedroom door causing Lucy to jump backwards. Ryan clicked his tongue, growling lowly. He then stormed over to the door and whipped it open. "WHAT?!"

Zach jumped back from Ryan's tone. "Ummm they are back." He looked back over his shoulder and then back to Ryan.

Ryan shook his head back and forth angrily. "Of course, they are back now." He looked back at Lucy. He gave her a small smile and changed his tone to calm for her. "Wait here I'll be back."

Lucy shook her head and walked towards the door. "No, I'm coming too."

"I won't be long."

"Yeah but ummm..." She looked towards the bathroom door where the slayer was still lurking in wait. She looked back at Ryan and licked her lips nervously. She didn't want to say why she didn't want to stay but he caught on quickly. A low chuckle sounded from his chest. He stepped into Lucy and scooped her up into his chest.

"Actually, this is better anyways." He said lowly as he cradled her into his chest.

"Ryan, I can walk. The wounds are healing."

"You CAN walk, yes. But I don't want you walking around with those wounds." He smiled and turned back to the door where Zach was holding it open for them. "Let's see what they know."

The Vampires Promised Bride Chapter 15

Ryan was a bit annoyed with the timing. He really needed to talk with Lucy. A small smile spread on his lips as he felt her body curl into his arms. She didn't even realize

she was doing it but subconsciously she wanted to be close to him. the dream and feeling her heartbeat that they were connected on a deeper level.

He had his suspicions about them being soul mates but wasn't sure because Lucy should be feeling these things too. He was guessing it was because she was trying to fight off the mate bond and that they haven't marked each other yet. But he was certain now after

Soul mates were rare among all species. But there was one thing that was certain. And that was all species regarded the sanctity of soul mates and their bond. This was something so rare that none would oppose it. No matter the situation. But even still... there was more to Ryan than she knew. And he had been dying to explain this to her. He wanted her to know that it was okay to accept the mate bond if it was what she really wanted. He wanted to know exactly how she felt and what she wanted.

Now that she has voiced that she would also choose him it was a done deal. It was never a question about if he wanted her. He just needed to explain the situation to her. He knew this was just a temporary delay. They would have eternity together, but he still felt so frustrated. He needed her to look at him with want and not feel guilty about it. Even in her dream she started to feel guilty. Though it did show that she was desiring him as well. And even thinking about it now made him want to go right back into the bedroom with her. But first thing was first. He needed to see what Chaz and Sabrina found.

Chaz and Sabrina had been tasked with watching what was going on with Beryl. They were the two on his team called ghosts. They moved like ghosts and could go undetected. They were able to conceal their aura as if they weren't there. Which made sense for Sabrina who was this tiny little vampire who was five foot nothing. She was petite in every aspect except her attitude. But Chaz was built like a brick wall. Not only was he tall coming in at almost seven feet but he was built like a tank. Yet despite his size he was incredibly stealthy. They were the best at being assassins among the vampires except for one other person. Jasper was the only vampire better than the two of them. He was also extremely deadly in combat. Which made him an incredible asset to the vampires. His loyalty was also unquestionable.

Lucy looked at the two strangers as Ryan carried her closer. She could see they were looking at her curiously... probably wondering why their leader was carrying her around. Ryan stopped a few feet in front of them but still kept her in his arms. "You can put me down." She whispered and tugged on his shirt some. This only elicited him to smile and grip her body tighter. She sighed and folded her arms in front of her. Okay she asked nicely. This is why you can't just be nice because you get taken advantage of. People think you are nice so you can be bullied. Well not her. Despite how wonderful it felt being curled up in his arms she still needed to stand up for herself. She turned her head to Ryan and met with his gaze. She gave him a small smile. "Ryan, you are going to put me down. Or I am going to get down on my own."

"Are you threatening me?" Ryan's eyes danced in amusement as he grinned widely down at her.

"No. I'm promising you."

Ryan smiled but when he noticed the serious look in Chaz and Sabrina's eyes, he slowly lowered her body down beside him.

"What is it?" Ryan asked, keeping his hand on Lucy's shoulder. Chaz stared at Lucy as he hesitated. "You can speak freely in front of her."

"Is she the prince's mate?" Sabrina asked.

"How did you know about that?" Ryan asked. They were sent out when he came back with Lucy. So they never heard of her connection.

"We ran into Jasper who came here because of the prince's mate. We described the girl you brought back and he seemed immediately relieved." Chaz said as he eyed Lucy up and down. "If she is going to be with us for a little while we can have some fun with her..." Lucy didn't even have a moment to react. One moment Ryan's arm was around her and in the next it was gone. A blur moved in front of her and then the loud sound of a body hitting the wall. In a flash Ryan had Chaz pinned against the wall by his throat. He growled in his face and bared his fangs at him.

"Whoa Ryan chill. It is just a joke. I didn't realize you were so protective over the prince's fiancé." Chaz struggled a bit under Ryan's grip.

"Lucy, are you alright?" Tonya said in a shocked gasp. Immediately Ryan released Chaz and whipped back to Lucy's side. Lucy looked confused at Tonya who was smirking. "Oh must be the lighting playing tricks on my eyes." She continued to grin as she looked at Ryan. All it took to snap Ryan out of his rage was to make him think something could be wrong with Lucy. So she may have lied to make his mind switch gears.

Chaz rubbed his throat with his brows furrowed. Sabrina was watching the scene curiously. She was shocked by Ryan's outburst. And it didn't make sense.

"If I didn't know any better..." Sabrina said quietly, watching Ryan's concerned eyes for Lucy.

"Lucy is Ryan's mate. Chaz is lucky he didn't get gutted for what he said." Zach chuckled as he walked up behind Tonya and pulled her into his chest. She was such a vixen sometimes and he loved her for it. Chaz's eyes widened. "Oh s**t dude I'm sorry." Then his mouth gaped and he pointed at Lucy. "The prince's fiancé is your mate? Awe man tough luck. I know how you've been waiting for your mate to show up."

Ryan reached over and wrapped his arm around Lucy. He turned his head and looked back at Chaz in annoyance. "Lucy is mine. I'll be claiming her as my mate. So for now on I expect you to treat her as such."

"Ryan duuuude. You are going against the royals? You are more badass than I thought. But what are you going to do with the prince's watchdog? He has come to take her back with him." Chaz straightened himself up as he thought over the situation. "I'll have a chat with Jasper. It won't be a problem." Ryan said simply.

"And if he is a problem there are a lot of places, we can bury a body." Chaz said with a laugh.

Lucy let out a low growl as her eyes flashed with the color of her animal. "Touch Jasper and see what happens to you."

Chaz looked at her in shock while Ryan looked down at her in amusement. Sabrina however held a skeptical gaze as she tried to study Lucy.

"You would protect this Jasper and take his side over your mate?" Sabrina said as she scrunched her nose in distaste. "Do you love him or something?"

"Of course I do! Jasper is family to me. I would never allow for anything to happen to him." Lucy growled.

"Don't worry Lucy. Jasper is my family too. I would never allow anything to happen to him either. Chaz here was just teasing." Ryan squeezed her into his side and smiled down at her. He admired her loyalty especially to someone who wasn't her pack member. "Well Jasper has to make it back to us first." Sabrina said as she waved her hand in the air.

"What do you mean?" Ryan's voice was sharp as his eyes snapped up to the girl.

"That's what we have to report. We ran into Jasper and when he heard the girl who you found he shifted directions to the ones who took her. He was livid. We told him that you are formulating a plan and not to give himself away. But he went following after them anyways." Chaz rubbed the back of his head as he started feeling uncomfortable seeing Ryan getting more and more agitated.

"We are going after him. He has a hard time controlling his temper when it comes to people he considers precious." Ryan glanced down at Lucy then over to Zach. "Get Enzo and Lenny. We are going after Jasper. Tonya and Sabrina will stay here." "Hey! I don't want to be stuck on babysitting duty. You may need my help." Sabrina said angrily.

"You will stay behind with Tonya and if one hair is out of sorts on Lucy's head it will be your necks!" Ryan curled his lips as he seethed in anger.

"Ryan, I don't need a babysitter. I am not fragile. I promise I won't leave if that is what you are worried about." Lucy meant it too. She needed to know Jasper was okay and it made sense to take their whole team since who knows what mess they could encounter. "I know you don't need a babysitter, but I will feel better having people I trust around you. Don't worry I promise I'll be coming back to you and with Jasper in tow." Ryan winked down at her with a cocky grin on his lips.

"Fine, but if I have to end up coming out there to save you guys, I won't let you live it down."

Ryan chuckled and he patted the top of her head. "You just stay put. I don't want you leaving this cave." He leaned his head down close to hers. "We will finish our talk when I get back... my Lucy." He quickly pecked her on her forehead and then flashed off before she could object. The other men followed suit.

Lucy quietly relished in the light sparks sent down her spine. The deep pulling and yearning inside of her. Her whole body screamed for her mate. So much that she now felt empty without his presence near her. So, this was how it felt to be apart from a piece of your soul. And the sweet warmth she felt from his quick kiss had butterflies swirling in her chest. It was so soft and sweet in that quick moment. And yet she could feel his affection in it. For that split second it was as if she felt his feelings through that quick kiss. Maybe Ryan was right. Maybe they were soul mates...

The Vampires Promised Bride Chapter 16

"Well so much for that." Sabrina sighed and poked out her bottom lip with a pout. "So much for what?" Tonya asked.

"So much for adding Ryan to my list of conquests." Sabrina said with a wry smile.

"Oh goodness Sabrina. That list is disgusting. You really need to find your mate..." Tonya shook her head.

"Your list of conquered?" Lucy asked, raising her eyebrow to Sabrina.

"Have you noticed how gorgeous your mate is? Who wouldn't want to break themselves off a piece of that..." She could see Lucy's eyes darkening as she spoke. She quickly waved her off. "But I never go after mated males. I do have principles after all. He is your mate so I can respect that."

"Well he is but he isn't. He is my mate but I am engaged to your prince..."

"It seems like that doesn't matter to Ryan." Sabrina shrugged. "He must feel confident that the royal family will let him keep you..."

"Well, it is more than just him making the decision here. But we haven't been able to have a proper conversation over it yet. I did explain to him that I wasn't going to choose him though. I have a duty to fulfill our species treaty." Lucy felt her stomach turn as she said this. The idea of parting with Ryan was making her nauseous. Obviously, her body disagreed with what she was trying to convince everyone else. She needed to convince herself as well that she would not take him as her mate. When the time came that she would really walk away from the man that made her heart beat.

"Hmmm." Sabrina said as a smile spread across her face. "And you think he is going to just let you go? Ryan?" She chuckled and shook her head. "He may act sweet around you but he is a fierce leader. There is a reason he can command our band of powerful elites. He isn't a push over. He is dangerous and can be vicious at times. He can be cold and unfeeling, but he ALWAYS gets what he wants. And under his leadership we NEVER fail. THAT is who Ryan is. And if he has decided you will be his then you already are." "I hear what you are saying. But if I choose to leave, Ryan will be in for the fight of his life if he tries to stop me. It isn't just me. My parents will come for me before too long. If they are even waiting as it is. If they know Jasper has come for me then they may be waiting... if not..." Lucy sighed and rubbed her forehead. "My family can be pretty scary. And if the whole family gets involved, I don't care how strong anyone is, they can't fight off my family." It really did come down to this too. If Lucy was held against her will her family would crush anyone who stood in their way. They were not an ordinary family after all. Heck if her Aunt Rhea asked her Uncle Levi to, he could wipe out the vampires. Which is why the other deities have always been cautious of their relationship. Since a god can easily bend the world to their will with their power. But Rhea would never ask Levi to use his powers like that... lucky for the world.

"Sweetie... Ryan wouldn't have to fight anyone to keep you." Sabrina giggled and waved her hand at the silly idea.

"What do you mean?"

"He could just simply take you. He could take you and disappear with you. He wouldn't have to fight with the vampire royalty or your family. He could just hide you away somewhere. There are so many places around the world where he could keep running and hiding. Deep maze-like caves he could hide you in... just think of the possibilities." Sabrina shrugged and held her hand out.

"He wouldn't do that." Lucy said confidently.

"And what makes you think like that? You barely know him." Sabrina was curious where this faith in Ryan came from.

"Well for one if he wanted to, he could have marked me and he hasn't. And two I can sense that he doesn't have bad intentions."

"And on that note let's go and sit down." Tonya said and lifted Lucy up. She gave her an apologetic smile when Lucy shot daggers at her. "Sorry Lucy but Ryan's orders. But I will say I think your faith in him would make him cry blood in happiness."

--

The group of stealthy vampires dashed through the treetops in silence. This mission was all about getting to Jasper before he did something reckless. They have a plan in the works to take down Beryl. But they were waiting for one thing all this time. They were trying to find the location of an ancient evil. One that hid its true character, but time had a way of telling its secrets.

They have been tirelessly searching for Wicker a dangerous witch doctor... well that is what he wanted everyone to believe. But Wicker was not a witch doctor he just used it as a disguise to not get caught. He was more sinister and dangerous... they just needed to find out his location and where they met. Then they would be able to give this information to the Locke's so that they could end him.

Wicker was not someone their group of vampires could take out. In fact, if their suspicions were correct, he was not someone any of them could take out. They would need a tier one deity in order to put an end to him. Yes, he was that dangerous. And one would assume this would be an original demon but that is not the case. Wicker is a tier one deity... at least Ryan was almost certain of this. He wasn't sure what the deity's real name is, but he went by Wicker among the darkness. He lurked in the shadows and assisted the demons.

Wicker was clever, cautious and dangerous. He was never seen. In all the years they had been on this case they were never able to sniff him out. It was beginning to get discouraging and soon he was going to have to abandon finding out more information on him. They would have to take out Beryl and the pests she had created along the way. And all they would be able to do is pass the suspicions along to the Locke family. He hoped to have more than this to present to the king and queen of the vampires though. Ryan wanted to have something. A location, motivation, the overall plan...something! But all he had was a hunch and his suspicions. This all stemmed from whispers he heard from the creatures of the shadows. Demons who hissed that his blood was not their own. But why would a deity lurk among demons? It was almost as if this deity was seeking to cause chaos by any means necessary just to cause chaos.

Ryan suddenly halted and the rest of the vampires immediately froze as well. The scent of blood wafted in the air. The strong smell of iron was getting heavier in the air as the wind carried it to them. The tiniest of vibrations were picked up as he listened closely. He could hear the sound of fighting off in the distance. His eyes flashed over to Zach and there was no need for words. Another scent hit their nose. It was blood again, but it was a scent they all recognized. It had come from Jasper.

Speed was now more important than stealth as the band of vampires sprinted through the treetops. At first Ryan felt relieved they were heading away from the forest where the witches trail went. That was until he came across the scene below him. Jasper dripped in blood both his and foreign. He was holding off a small vicious army of creatures with pale clay looking skin. The only color was from the crimson liquid that was splattered on their bodies. Ryan landed at Jasper's side followed by Enzo, Lenny, Zach and Chaz.

"What the hell are you doing Jasper?" Ryan growled as he took a fighting stance next to him.

"I came out here to invite them to my tea party and they just got hostile. Some people have no sense of culture." Jasper panted out as he wiped a trickling red drop from his forehead. He then looked around nervously. "Where is Lucy?!"

"She is safe. Which is more than I can say for you. You can't fight an army of the voidless all on your own." Ryan shook his head angrily as the zombie-like army fixated on them.

"Oh they have a name now?" Jasper grinned looking over at Ryan who looked less than amused. "We have to take care of them. They are heading for the Slate pack."

Ryan groaned and gritted his teeth. "Let's make it quick and get back. I don't like being away too long."

Jasper looked at Ryan curiously when he said that. "I want to finish this up too. I need to see Lucy for myself." His eyes met with Ryan's and there was a sharp look between them. Which couldn't get more read into since the voidless suddenly charged into the group of vampires.

Chaz leaped forward and crashed into a blob of white creatures like a bowling ball hitting down the pins. Zach and Enzo quickly began relieving the enemies of their heads. While Lenny grabbed the heads and bodies, piling them up to burn.

"You can rest Jasper. We can handle the rest." Ryan said and sprinted forward. As he went to s***h at one of the voidless it suddenly fell over. It's body went one way while it's head went another. Jasper shrugged and grinned.

"You have to move faster than that. And here I thought you were an elite soldier." Jasper gave Ryan a cocky grin and dove into more voidless.

Ryan scoffed. "I'll show you why I am considered elite." He bit on the tip of his finger creating a string of blood. He grabbed the crimson strand that hardened under his touch turning into a blood whip. He raised it upwards and belted it forward. A loud c***k echoed in the air and five heads of the voidless went rolling over the ground.

Jasper turned and quirked an eyebrow at Ryan. "Really? You are going to use noble moves? So petty just to try to win." He turned around with a frown. The voidless were already wiped out and none left to show his own moves on. "I guess I'll have to show you up next time." He let out a big yawn and rested back on his heels. "Man, I am exhausted."

Ryan watched as Lenny torched the bodies and heads of the voidless. These were creatures that started appearing more and more. They were the ones that were responsible for the attacks on werewolves recently. They attacked with claws and fangs similar to vampires only more savage. It is enough for the blame to easily get shifted to vampires. And the fact this small army was heading towards werewolves was not a coincidence.

"Okay... well let's head back. I need to see Lucy. She almost stopped my heart." Jasper said, shaking his head.

"Before that... we need to talk... privately." Ryan pinned his gaze on Jasper. His face and tone were both serious. Jasper narrowed his eyes at Ryan. "Lucy isn't hurt is she? If something happened to her-"

"She's okay. But we do need to talk about her."

Jasper straightened up and stared into the amber eyes in front of him.

What is it? Jasper asked through their mind link. The best way to keep it private would be this way. No chance of someone eavesdropping in their heads. And from the look on Ryan's face it was a serious conversation. Jasper, Lucy is my mate.

The Vampires Promised Bride Chapter 17

"You are a demon! I'm convinced. This doesn't make any sense. No wait. WAIT! How the hell did that happen?!" Sabrina growled, turning to Lucy. Her eyes glared at her like she was the devil herself. "I landed on a tweester... so the star changed locations." Lucy could see the girl's eyebrow twitching.

"So... you mean to tell me when I was just a few spots away from the star you moved it?" Sabrina listened as Tonya snickered quietly.

"Yes. That is correct." Lucy smiled, biting her bottom lip.

Sabrina sighed and slouched back into the bean bag. "That was going to be my first star. It has to be the cruelest thing anyone has ever done to me. I feel so... so... defeated."

"Don't worry Sabrina. There are bonus stars at the end of the game. Maybe you will get one of them." Lucy said, trying to cheer her up.

"Really?" Sabrina asked excitedly.

"Yeah, they are loser stars though. They hand them out so that you don't feel horrible because you s**k at the game." Tonya grinned as she sat her controller down. "Ugh! That's it. Let's play a different game." Sabrina tossed her controller in front of her with an over dramatic fling.

"I want cookies." Tonya pouted and looked back to the kitchen.

"Well, go get some." Sabrina hissed.

"There isn't anymore and the cooks went out about an hour ago." Tonya pouted and sighed loudly.

"Let's go and make our own then." Lucy giggled. Tonya groaned louder and Sabrina snickered.

"She can't cook. She spent all her time training to fight. The only thing she can create is charred food." Sabrina's eyes glinted over at Tonya's as a smirk played on her lips. "Shut up! You can't cook either!" Tonya spat out with her eyes furrowed.

"I know. And I own it. I can kick a*s and can sneak up on anyone. But when it comes to the kitchen... eh that's why we have cooks." Sabrina held her hand out and shrugged.

Lucy giggled and stood up. "I can cook." She watched as Tonya and Sabrina turned to her with large puppy eyes.

"You can? Like... good?" Sabrina asked.

"I think I'm decent." Lucy smiled as Tonya's eyes began to light up.

"Okay, we will help you then!" Sabrina hopped up and lifted Lucy up with a bounce.

"I don't need any help." Lucy was thinking if the girls were as bad as they said they would do more harm than good.

"Nonsense. You are injured, we can't have you doing everything on your own." Sabrina stood up with a bit of excitement.

It occurred to Lucy that both women actually seemed excited to try their hands at cooking... regardless of what they may want you to believe. Somehow, she felt like this was going to turn into an interesting cooking lesson.

CRASH

Lucy jumped startled by the sound of tin bowls crashing onto the floor. She was right about what making a simple batch of cookies turned into. Now each girl was trying their own hand at making their own batter. They had watched Lucy make her cookies and put them in the oven. That was when they asked if she could teach them to make them.

Lucy looked around the kitchen. When they had walked into the area it was spick and span. Now the sink was full of dishes. There were cracked eggshells discarded everywhere and a healthy layer of sugar and flour scattered the counters and floor. She wondered if they were going to have to clean all this up.

"What the hell does a dash of salt mean?" Sabrina asked, shaking her head. "Am I supposed to run with it?"

"Sabrina... you are joking right?" Lucy figured she had to have been teasing. But when she looked up at her she could see she was serious. "You were watching me when I was mixing my batch right?"

"Well, I tried but then I lost focus and started daydreaming about a dark-skinned muscular man lying next to me on the beach..." Sabrina gave her a sheepish shrug.

"Just pinch a tiny bit with your fingers and put it in." Lucy hoped her fighting skills were better than her cooking skills. Otherwise, the vampire elites may not be that impressive. She looked over at Tonya who had a determined gaze on her forehead. She analyzed the batter she spooned out on the baking pan. And gently eased her pan into the oven.

"Whatever. I'm done with this." Sabrina said and shoved her batter to the side. She looked over at Lucy's fresh baked cookies and helped herself to one. Her eyes widened and she turned to Lucy. "These are amazing! They are better than the ones the cooks make for us."

"Are they really?!" Tonya asked and grabbed one to test for herself. She tested the warm, gooey cookie out in her mouth before she turned a suspicious eye towards Lucy. "And you can fight too... I'm worthless." She whined and took another bite of the cookie to drown her sorrows in.

"Anyone can learn how to cook. But not everyone can be a lethal fighter. You have mastered the hard one. Cooking is easy. It is just a matter of following the directions. The more your practice the better you will get." Lucy tried to encourage Tonya who looked defeated.

"No, these cookies are amazing. Not everyone can make cookies taste like this. This is incredible." Tonya shook her finger at Lucy who giggled at her.

"They are just chocolate chip cookies Tonya. And we still have to see how yours turn out." Lucy grabbed the large bag of flour off the counter to start cleaning up while they waited for Tonya's cookies to bake.

"Get out of here." Sabrina said nonchalantly as she waved her hand in front of her.

Lucy looked closely and could see her most hated foe hanging from a web. A large eight-legged assassin dangled from a single silk string and his eight eyes were focused on Lucy's jugular, she was certain of it. The wind created from Sabrina's hand as she swatted at the little slayer made it sway back and forth. Then with the next swat chaos broke out.

It all happened so fast. In a moment Lucy's life flashed before her eyes. It all happened in slow motion (at least mentally she envisioned it this way). Sabrina's hand collided with the spider who was sent flying in the air straight for his target. Lucy screamed, throwing her hands up to shield herself and the flour bag in her hands flew into the air. In seconds all that could be seen was a big cloud of white. This was the second time that day that Lucy's life was in peril.

She had overcome so much in life. She trained just as hard as the men. She studied and did well in school. She had well rounded herself out as a person and was also able to bake. All for what? For it to come to an end now. Right now, under the cover of flour his murderous intent was fixated on her. The grim reaper held her life string in his hands ready to cut it. Nothing could be done. There was no hope. All was for not. She coughed as she breathed in some of the flour and curled backwards into the counter. Then she felt herself being lifted into an electrifying embrace. Sweet sparks revived her body giving her the energy to continue on. She looked up and through the falling white cloud was able to make out the most beautiful amber eyes. "Lucy, are you okay?" Ryan asked as he looked her over with concern.

"Is she okay? She attacked me with flour." Sabrina coughed as she walked away from the white cloud.

"Well, what do you expect? You sent that spider right for her. Disgusting little thing was going to land right on her." Tonya said dusting the flour off of herself.

"It probably is on her." Sabrina said innocently, making Lucy squirm looking over herself frantically.

Ryan chuckled and leaned his head down to breathe in Lucy's scent. "We are going to have to do something about these spiders I think." He whispered against her skin.

A dark smoke started wafting in the air mixing with the flour.

"My cookies!" Tonya cried and ran to the oven to bring out a sad tray of darkened cookies.

"Like I said... charred." Sabrina said and waved her hand in the air.

"It's okay Tonya. We will keep trying. You'll get it." Lucy smiled over at her.

"Well at least I have your cookies to eat." Tonya grabbed another but it was slapped out of her hand.

Ryan has sprinted over to the tray with Lucy in his arms. "You made these Lucy?" He watched her confused head nod slowly. "Then they are not for anyone else to eat but me." Ryan possessively began bagging the cookies up. "No please! I'll do anything, anything! Just don't take her cookies away." Tonya cried dramatically.

"Ryan, give her some!" Lucy scolded giving him a displeased look.

"Fine." Ryan reached in and grabbed one cookie out. "There I shared."

"I better be getting one of Luce Luce's cookies too." Jasper said and then started laughing loudly. Lucy was covered in a layer of white flour. It was all over her body and through her hair. "Halloween came early huh Lucy?" "Jasper!" Lucy squealed and wiggled to get down from Ryan. She felt him reluctantly lower her and she jumped into Jasper's outstretched arms.

"I told you to stay put and wait for me." Jasper sighed into the top of her head.

"You know I don't listen to men." Lucy smiled up at him. She watched him step back and look her over. When his eyes landed on her wounds he frowned.

"What happened?" Jasper asked kneeling to look at the worst wound on her leg.

"Don't worry about it. I'm fine. It is just taking me longer to heal because of the vervain. Really, it hardly bothers me." Lucy watched as his eyes flickered at her angrily.

"It shouldn't have happened Lucy. What were you thinking?! How could you leave the pack borders? I can't believe you would be so reckless." Jasper said in a low tone as he pressed his lips.

"Who do you think you are lecturing? I let myself get caught so I could-"

"YOU LET THEM TAKE YOU?!" Jasper looked up and shook his head dramatically.

"Unbelievable. Unbelievable. Do you realize what could have happened?!"

"I was trying to get answers. When I heard they were after the Diamond pack I knew I needed to protect my people."

"Yeah, I can see how being dead really helps them." Jasper said, rolling his eyes.

"Am I dead? No, I'm not."

"She saved us, Jasper. She saved me and Zach from our cell. We weren't able to escape like we planned." Tonya said quietly making sure to give Jasper the respect he deserves.

"I'm glad she was able to help you two. But her life... she is someone whose life shouldn't be risked." Jasper frowned and sighed. "Everyone was so worried, Lucy. I have never felt this much fear. I thought..." His voice trailed off into a whisper.

Lucy smiled at him. "I understand you were worried. But you don't have to yell at me, right? You know when you yell like this it makes me want to rebel more." She listened to him chuckling and walked back into him. She wrapped her arms around him and hugged him gently.

"Alright, that's enough." Ryan grabbed onto Lucy and pulled her back into his chest.

Lucy turned and looked up at him. "What is your problem?"

"My problem is my mate is hugging the wrong man." Ryan said with an almost adorable pout.

"Ugh, Ryan we have been over this." Lucy said rubbing her forehead.

Jasper stared at Ryan. His eyes were fixated on him before they lowered to Lucy. "Let's go and have a talk. We have a lot to discuss."

"Yes... we do." Ryan's said quietly his eyes never left Jaspers. He lifted Lucy up gently into his chest and slowly carried her out of the kitchen with Jasper trailing right behind him.

The Vampires Promised Bride Chapter 18

Jasper followed Ryan into the room and closed the door. He looked over at the broken bathroom door and quirked his eyebrow.

Ryan chuckled as he slowly lowered Lucy down in front of him. "We had a spider incident earlier." He rubbed his hands over Lucy's shoulders gently as a warm smile rested on his lips.

This was a bit awkward for Lucy. Ryan being touchy and Jasper not ripping them apart didn't make sense to her. She wondered what was talked about before they came back. Jasper seemed to already be well aware of the fact that Ryan was her mate. But he was

Derek's cousin and right-hand man. Wouldn't he be opposed? Or did Ryan really have something that would allow them to be together?

She looked over her flour covered self. She needed to get a quick shower, but there was no door. And the evil killer could still be in the bathroom.

"What is it, Lucy?" Jasper asked, seeing her eyes staring off at the bathroom.

Lucy inched away from Ryan's touch as she used her hands to motion over her white powdered self. "Look at me?" She giggled. "I have flour in places flour should never be."

Jasper chuckled. "Well then go get cleaned off real quick. It isn't like I'll peek in on you."

Lucy gnawed on her lip and Jasper let a thunderous laugh rip into the air.

"You are still afraid of the spider in there aren't you. Oh Lucy you are too much." Jasper wiped the tears from his eyes.

"I'll just use someone else's shower." Lucy said simply.

"You aren't showering in another room." Ryan said with a slight growl. "I'll stand watch for you."

Lucy scoffed and planted her hands across her chest. "I bet you will. No thanks. I don't need an audience."

"Are you sure? Having someone to shower with is more fun... and I could use a shower too." Ryan let his voice drop low.

"Okay time out." Lucy looked up at Jasper. "If anyone else said something like that you would kill them. Shoot, you were ready to murder Kyle when he tried to kiss me."

"WHO TRIED TO KISS YOU?!" Ryan roared. He walked into Lucy and gripped onto her shoulders.

"That's not the point."

"Oh no, that is the point now." Ryan growled and then lifted his gaze up to Jasper.

"Ryan is your soul mate Lucy. That is sacred. Its sanctity is absolute. There is no one who will object to that." Jasper said as he could see the confusion in her eyes. "And Lucy was going to stop him from kissing her, but I just beat her to it." "What did you do that made him think it was okay to try to kiss you?" Ryan asked between clenched teeth.

OH! HELL NO! Lucy shot daggers at Ryan. "What did I do?" She scoffed loudly. She stepped into him and poked into his chest. "How dare you talk to me like that. What did I do? Who the hell do you think you are? Obviously, if someone tried to kiss me it was because I led them on, right? I guess unhooking my bra and tossing it to the side might have been too suggestive huh?" She listened as he growled at her when she said this. "You know what, forget it. I'd rather take my chances with the spider than talk with you more." She shoved him and turned marching towards the bathroom. How could he say that? She flipped on the shower angrily and huffed in anger. Jasper had said that she could accept Ryan as her mate because they were soul mates. But what about the treaty? Even if the vampires would understand Ryan taking her as his mate, what would this mean for the treaty? And right now, she was irritated with him so she could feel a bit more rational in her thoughts. When she was next to him it was as if her body was drugged. It was slowly being consumed by him.

No... that wasn't right. She was the one who wanted to consume him. What the real problem was... well she didn't trust herself with him. He was the one in danger of being devoured though she didn't think he would mind. She had to keep holding the treaty idea in her mind. It was the only thing she was barely grasping onto in order to control herself. That and now she was irritated. However, she had other ideas about how to release her frustration. She reached her hand and turned the water temperature cold. Yeah, she needed a cold shower.

From the doorway, she could hear the soft baritone chuckle coming from Ryan. She looked back and could see part of his shoulder as he leaned against the doorframe but looking away towards the wall.

"You know Lucy... that spirit of yours only makes me hot for you. You know I can wash the parts you can't see."

Ugh. She could almost hear the smirk in his voice. And damn her if she didn't want him.

She clicked her tongue loudly. "Jasper, would you put your friend on a leash?" She listened as Jasper snickered and she heard his back plop on the other side of the door frame. She also heard Ryan grumble at him for being too close to where she would be showering.

"Sorry. If Lucy wants me to protect her from you then that is exactly what I will do. Mate or not."

Lucy smiled as she listened to Jasper. She could tell in his voice that there was a serious air to it.

Ryan sighed loudly and flopped his head back banging it on the doorway. "I'm sorry Lucy. Don't be mad at me. I got really jealous and was wrong. I never should have questioned you."

"Thank you, Ryan. But you still aren't joining me."

"You want me... I want you. You heard yourself that it is okay to be with me... You'll accept me as your mate, right?"

Lucy stepped into the cold water and sighed. She could hear the insecurity in his voice. It broke her heart but being allowed to be with him was only a start. What about the treaty? The water dripped cloudy on the floor below her as it washed the flour off of her body. She grabbed the bottle of body wash and scrunched up her nose.

"Sandalwood? There isn't anything less... male in here?" Lucy squeezed the liquid into the scrunchy hanging up. She blushed slightly knowing it was Ryan's scrunchy. "I hope this is the first time your loofah is seeing a woman's body." She listened as Ryan groaned and heard the thud of his head again.

"At least your loofah is getting some action." Jasper teased with a snicker.

"I'll make sure I have your own body wash for you for the next time..." Ryan said, trying to ignore Jasper. "And what are you accusing me of?" He smirked and listened to her giggle. He listened as the shower turned off and heard quiet footsteps come up to the door. "So... am I to wear a towel all day or do you have something else for me to wear?" Lucy asked in the doorway.

"I think a towel looks good on you." Jasper said with a shrug.

"Don't look at her. TURN around." Ryan said lowly.

"Relax Ryan. Jasper is like a brother to me." Lucy rolled her eyes and moved closer next to Jasper to prove her point. She was completely comfortable with him.

"Lucy... he is a male. And you are a beautiful woman. And no matter what he isn't related to you. There is no way I can be okay with this." He walked forward and shoved Jasper away a couple feet. "I'll get you something to put on." He quickly walked to the end of the room. He grabbed out a shirt and a pair of drawstring pants. "Um... I have boxers and boxer briefs..."

"That will work for now." Lucy said matter-of-factly. She kept her voice level to not show that she was affected about hearing that... though she was. When Ryan walked back over his cheeks looked a bit more flushed as he handed her the clothes. She smiled as she took them from him. There were some things he was bashful about too.

She quickly walked to the side of the bathroom and threw the clothes on. She rolled up the bottom of the pants and tied his shirt in a ball. She pulled the string as tight as she could and knotted it up.

"Well. At least I am not covered in flour anymore." Lucy giggled as she held her arms out. After hearing Ryan's apology, she was no longer upset with him.

Jasper placed his hand on the top of her head and moved it back and forth. "Much better Lucy." He then leaned down. "What do you want to do about him? If you want me to steal you away from him just say the word."

Ryan chuckled darkly. "Just try it and see what happens."

Lucy turned and looked at Ryan. "I'm sorry. It is more than acceptance. I won't abandon the treaty. I don't want to risk there ever being a war between our species."

Ryan sighed and rubbed his forehead with his hand. "I didn't want to have to do this..."

Lucy's eyes darkened as she stared at him. "If you think you are going to force your mark on me you have another thing coming." A growl solicited from her throat as her eyes flickered to that of her wolf.

She watched him smile at her as his eyes danced in amusement. "Lucy, you are my treasure. I would never EVER mistreat you. Come on. You can feel my feelings if you really try. Open your heart up to me and you will be able to feel how I feel about you." She felt Jasper put his hand on her shoulder and she looked up at him. "Lucy, I am right here. You know I would NEVER allow anyone to harm you or touch you if you didn't want it." He squeezed her shoulder and smiled down at her. "Oh, we need to send a messenger fairy to your parents."

"I already sent one letting them know I was safe." Lucy watched as Jasper nodded his head. She looked back at Ryan who had a possessive gaze fixated on her. But in the possessiveness, there was also tenderness. And she could see that she was his center. "Lucy..." Ryan's eyes glanced at Jasper's hand on her, and he frowned. "Please... come to me, Lucy. I need to hold you."

She looked at his amber eyes that were pleading with her. She took a step towards him before she was pulled into his chest. He wrapped his arms around her and held her gently against his chest. He sifted his fingers through her hair with one hand while the other lightly pressed against her back.

"I never thought I would ever feel this... ever. I didn't think I could ever have this... but I do and I can. Lucy, I need you. You are not optional to me. I can't live without you. My soul is connected to yours. I can feel you and what you want. I know you are fighting against this... because you want to protect your pack. My Lucy... what if I told you that the treaty will stand between us?" Ryan said in a soothing baritone voice.

Lucy pulled back slightly and looked up at him. She could see his eyes were serious and that he meant what he was saying. She then looked over at Jasper who also nodded his head.

Wait a minute... Were they telling her she could be with Ryan and still unite their species? She could really have her fated mate? She felt her chest squeezing. Her eyes were burning. Was it really okay to give into the mate pull? She looked back into Ryan's eyes as she waited for him to explain.

The Vampires Promised Bride Chapter 19

Ryan sighed. He reached up and brushed his thumb over Lucy's face as he gazed into her emerald eyes. "This is a lot to ask but please don't be mad at me. I know I was wrong now but that doesn't change anything. And... I can say this clearly. Before you were my mate, I loved you, Lucy. Finding out you were my mate was wonderful but to find out you are my soul mate... it is unbelievable. I mean that doesn't happen. Our fate together was connected by someone. Maybe your moon goddess?" Lucy shook her head and looked at him confused. "What are you saying?" She knew what it sounded like he was saying but this didn't make any sense.

"This has to be kept a secret right now. Just let me explain please." He sighed as he watched hurt begin to reflect in her eyes. He nodded his head slowly. "I'm Derek, Lucy."

"You are not the guy I have been seeing-" She suddenly stopped... but he more closely resembled the little boy she used to play with. She always excused his differences due to growing up. But looking at him now... he did look more like Derek. She thought to herself as she softly took in his scent. It was familiar. Derek... well who she thought was Derek told her before that his scent changed because of puberty. Which was true since Jaspers changed as well. Jasper however still had a hint of his normal scent while Derek didn't. But this Ryan... she was finally putting a puzzle together. There was a nostalgic scent to him... one that made her heart race. Her eyes were glued onto him as she waited for him to continue.

"That is my double, Ryan. The real Ryan. Let me explain, please. The prince's men must be people that can be trusted unconditionally. The only way to truly see that is to work among them. No one will show their true colors in front of the royals. They even act differently in front of Jasper. So, I swapped places with my double. I took on the soldier role and he took on the face of the prince. At the end of this summer, we would be switching back. The prince's soldiers would move into the palace as my elite trusted men. And the real face of the prince would be known to all. Right now, only a handful of people know who I am. I'm so sorry Lucy. I didn't realize how isolated and unwanted he was making you feel. I can tell by how you were talking how hurt you were by this. I'm so sorry..." His eyes watered slightly as Lucy's face looked more pale and pained.

"He was supposed to keep it on a friend level so you didn't fall for him. I never meant to hurt you. Please don't be mad."

Mad? Lucy wanted to laugh. Mad? She wasn't mad... okay maybe a little. But she was hurt. For years she felt like she was unwanted and not good enough. All of that could have been avoided if they just told her. Why was she left in the dark? And then Jasper... Her chest felt constricted by air as she turned her gaze to her... friend? She wanted to scream. That hurt the most. Her 'best friend' kept this secret from her. Was he her friend or just the prince's spy?

"Back to what we talked about before Jasper," Lucy said icily. He would know exactly what she meant by that. This was a conversation they have had several times if he could truly be her friend as the prince's cousin. A real friend would have told her, right? He had seen the pain that Derek was causing her by ignoring her and not joining her for dinner. Yet, he never said anything.

"Lucy, please. Don't be angry at me," Jasper said and Lucy stepped back from both men though her gaze was turned to Jasper. She felt the biggest betrayal from him.

"Angry? Frustrated... hurt and feeling naïve as hell. But angry? No..." Her eyes watered and she shook her head. "You knew Jasper. You saw firsthand how much I was hurting over all of this..."

"He was under orders. This was top secret Lucy."

Lucy turned her head and looked at Derek. "So it's Derek? I'm your fiancé but I couldn't know this secret? Instead, you wanted me to meet another man and he would be the picture of my fiancé. That was really thought out well. What if I developed feelings for him? course, that is why he treated me like dirt to make sure that didn't happen. So instead it is okay for me to suffer. For years I felt like I was the unwanted trash that the prince had to take as his bride."

"You aren't unwanted Lucy. I love you. You were always on my mind. You were so bright and your energy was so attractive. When I first met you as a baby, I admit I didn't think much of you but that started changing. The more we were together I felt myself becoming more and more drawn to you. We were too young to feel the mate pull but it must have been because we would be soul mates... If I could do it over, I would make sure you knew. I'm sorry. We were wrong not to tell you. My father said it was best to keep the secret with us and I listened to his suggestion. I know now how wrong it was." Derek dropped to his knees and took Lucy's hand in his. "Please forgive me Lucy. I need you."

Lucy sighed. "I've made my stance quite clear. I plan to stand by the treaty." She felt him grip her hand tighter and he lifted up into her with a low growl.

"No Lucy. Not for the treaty. For me. As a man, as your mate. You will choose me for this or not at all."

Lucy let out an airy laugh and pushed Derek back with a fierce look. "You think because I desire you from the mate pull that I will just give into those feelings? I should ignore the hurt I am feeling and just be thrilled that my fated mate has been deceiving me for years. And not care that my best friend kept the biggest secret ever from me even though it caused me pain. I understand that you both were following orders and to hell with my feelings over it. You love me?" She scoffed. "You don't know me. You love the idea of me. And now you feel the mate pull towards me. And if you would have just met with me, we would have known a long time ago we were fated mates." She squeezed her hands into a fist.

"Why? Why did it have to be like that? I attended parties and dances alone or with my cousin. I had you so I shouldn't have been alone. And I would have understood had the situation been explained to me. Look, I understand now. Really, I do. You both were just doing what you were told. But I need time...I need to process this away from the two of you."

"Lucy," Jasper said in a desperate tone as she took a few steps towards the door.

She looked down at the floor. "I thought of you as a brother to me... but Aiden would have never... in the end you are the prince's cousin first. I understand that. I just don't know what that means as far as our friendship is concerned." She looked up at Jasper and could see the hurt in his eyes. She was hurt too. He was under orders. She understood that but where is the line between their friendship and orders? Is there a place for it? And how far do orders go? If he was ordered to, would he have killed her? Where was his line? She lifted her gaze to Derek. She should be elated that she could be with her fated mate. But she had been struggling inwardly for so long. The feeling of being unwanted and unaccepted by the prince plagued her for years. And then to hear it was all for naught? She needed to sort out her feelings.

"I don't need to be carried." She met with Derek's eyes to make sure he understood. She then opened the door and walked out of the room.

She walked into the living room and felt like tearing something apart out of frustration. She was overwhelmed with emotions. Both good and bad. Okay, she could admit that if she ordered Justice not to say something she knew he would listen to her. So, she could understand Jasper's position... a bit. Part of it was them being dumb boys. She understood this from Aiden and Justice who very rarely thought about how their actions affected other people. She once had to tell them how they hurt a girl's feelings because the morons were oblivious. They just didn't think things through.

All Jasper had to do was explain to Derek that her feeling rejected by his stand-in was hurting her. Had he done this Derek probably would have made her the exception and told her what was going on. Which is the problem with boys not thinking. She felt the burden alleviate from her knowing that Derek was her fated mate. The guy she was ready to give herself to was actually the right guy. He was her fiancé. Which was not a coincidence. It couldn't have been. She was sure her parents would think the same too.

She wasn't going to reject her fated mate especially since he was Derek. But... it was best to let them sweat for a bit. She was running the show here. If she wanted a relationship, then it would be her pursuing it. That was the other thing those two needed to learn. That they were not the ones in charge. She was. She was the alpha king's daughter and didn't run behind anyone.

And while on a primal level she wanted to mark her mate on an emotional level they needed to talk some. She just needed to think of the memory of a party where she stood by the punch bowl while everyone danced with their partners. She had asked the man she thought was Derek if he wanted to go with her, but he politely turned her down. And Jasper was busy, so she ended up going alone. Even if she would have known... the real Derek couldn't have gone with her. But she would not have felt rejected. The fake Derek didn't even give her a reason. He just said 'No thanks.. Yes, she needed to hold onto this memory for willpower.

"Are you okay?" Tonya asked, walking up to Lucy.

"Me?" Lucy gave her an evil smile and shrugged. "Sure, just teaching a lesson is all. I think they need to learn who is really in charge."

Tonya giggled. "Those are the best lessons to teach."

Lucy smiled. Finally, she wasn't being carried everywhere. Her injuries were healing, though not healed up completely. But she was a werewolf and didn't need to be coddled.

Through the wall, a messenger fairy whisked in quickly. She watched as it halted in front of her frantically.

Your parents have been attacked on their way here to find you-

Lucy didn't let the fairy continue its sentence. In a growl, she shifted into her wolf and charged out the door.

"LUCY!" Tonya yelled. "s**t, tell Ryan!" She turned as Zach opened the door to Ryan's room.

"LUCY LEFT! She shifted into her wolf and took off." Zach yelled.

Derek growled and shook his head. "If she thinks she is going to just leave she has another thing coming. Jasper and I will bring her back. You all stay here." He ordered and blurred out of the room with Jasper.

Lucy's fawn colored wolf pushed off the ground with all her might. Her wounds were opening back up, but she didn't feel them. Pure adrenaline had kicked in while she

headed in the direction of her parents' scent. As their scent got closer another scent hit her

nose.

Blood.

The Vampires Promised Bride Chapter 20

You move well for an old man." Jason laughed, shifting back into his human form.

"Old man? You are older than me!" Wyatt chuckled and then looked over at Freya who was wiping her daggers clean. "I think she still managed to outdo us both." Jin swirled the bodies together gathering them in a whirlwind and stacking them up. "Ready to be torched... and what the heck were they?"

Wyatt frowned as he stepped near Freya. "That is what concerns me the most. But I think we know what is causing those attacks now."

"Someone is coming!" Freya said, snapping her head to the side. She immediately relaxed and smiled. "Seems like our girl doesn't need to be rescued after all."

Lucy jumped through the bushes and was shocked to see her parents, aunt, and uncle. She was expecting a battle. Though from the pile of bodies to the side it looked like they didn't need any help. She quickly shifted back to her human self. She could see her father studying her attire. She was wearing Derek's shirt and pants.

"Lucy!" Freya said with outstretched arms.

"Mom! Dad!" Lucy jumped into her parents' arms. They held her tight and squeezed her body between them.

"Let me see you. Are you hurt? What happened?" Wyatt knelt down as he got whiffs of the fresh blood from his daughter. He lifted her pant leg slightly, seeing the blood trickling down.

"I'm fine. Those reopened on my way to get to you. A messenger fairy told me you were fighting..."

"Why do you still have these wounds?" Freya asked as she bent down to investigate.

"The dark elves attacked with a liquid silver and vervain mixture. The silver didn't bother me but the vervain did." Lucy said as she watched her mother analyzing the wounds.

"Dark elves dared to attack my daughter?!" Wyatt growled. His eyes started to turn dark as Jason growled in anger.

"Did you get my message?" Lucy asked.

"Yes, we are going to deal with that little witch." Freya said in annoyance.

"And you know your mom and dad aren't about to just sit around even if you say you are fine." Jin giggled as she leaned into Jason. "So here we are to bring you back. Ta da!"

Freya looked at Lucy and frowned. "It is odd how the vervain is affecting you. It is just as severe as it would be for a full vampire. How long ago were you injured?"

"It is going to be dark soon. We need to get set up somewhere and then we can talk." Wyatt said, looking up at the darkening sky.

Freya suddenly raised her dagger and narrowed her eyes. "Come out or die."

"Nice Freya! I'm impressed." Jasper said, chuckling as he hopped down from the tree above them. Behind him Derek also landed. His gaze was fixated on Lucy.

"Oh Jasper. So, you already found Lucy." Freya put her dagger away and looked at her daughter confused. "Why are you by yourself then?"

Lucy leaned in her father's side who had a protective arm on her. She smiled smugly at the two vampires. "I was annoyed with him that's why." She looked at her mother and gave her a sweet smile. She looked back at Jasper and Derek. "What are you two doing here?" She said in an icy tone.

"We heard you shifted and took off running. So, we came after you." Jasper shrugged his shoulders, a small frown on his lips.

"So what if I was running home? Were you planning on stopping me?" Lucy asked, quirked her eyebrow up.

Derek sighed loudly. "Exactly. You aren't getting away that easily." The moment the words left his mouth Wyatt and Jason released a low growl.

"I don't like the way you are looking at my daughter." Wyatt snarled as he stared at the stranger.

"How else should I look at my mate?" Derek asked with a smile.

"Your... mate?" Wyatt asked, looking at his sweet baby curled tucked safely under his arm.

"You look just like how I remember you. Sorry, it has been so long." Derek said, looking between Freya and Wyatt.

"Are you really..." Freya started and watched Jasper nod his head. Freya knew better than to utter his name. The forest had ears sometimes. It's Derek... I guess Selene strikes again? She mind linked to the others.

Wyatt stared at Derek. His eyes narrowed on the boy who was his daughter's mate. "Are you mistreating my baby girl?"

"It isn't like that-" Jasper quickly came to Derek's defense.

"She is clinging to me and not to her mate." Wyatt growled. "I don't care who you are. No one will mistreat my daughter." His eyes darkened as they narrowed onto Derek.

"I'm sorry." Derek said quietly. "I've wronged your daughter. I can't change what I've done. But..." He set his gaze on Lucy. "If you let me, I will spend eternity making it up to you. Please Lucy... I need you."

Lucy pondered quietly to herself. His actions hurt her whether intentionally or not. When she thinks about how long she felt unwanted... She tilted her head to the side as she felt a deep burn inside of her chest. It felt like her lungs were being filled up with water and it was hard to breathe. But this wasn't her. This wasn't from her body. This was coming from Derek. She looked up to see his pleading eyes. They looked scared and were watering slightly. She could feel a deep pang of regret from him.

She knew by looking at him that he was full of remorse. She could feel it. She pictured her brother doing something similar. And she knew he would except he had a sister smart enough to beat him upside the head. Something Derek didn't have. And the truth is she was never going to reject Derek but just planned to make him suffer a bit. But how could she continue that now? Especially in front of her father who will think badly of him if she does. Her father may not move past this moment if she acts too wounded. Plus... he was suffering. Her lungs were being squeezed from Derek's feelings. He was scared... now she felt like she was the one being cruel. She wanted him to fret about it a bit... but the feeling that was coming through was almost an agonizing level. He was breaking and this broke her resolve. He was her mate after all. And obviously her soul mate. Very obvious at this point from the flashes of his emotions that invaded her.

"Okay. But we have to rehome Jasper." Lucy raised a challenging eyebrow.

"Hey!" Jasper gasped.

"Done." Derek said simply with a small smile on his face.

"HEY!" Jasper turned and said in exasperation.

Lucy giggled. "Okay, Jasper can stay."

"Thanks for your benevolence." Jasper whimpered out with a small pout.

"Lucy, you don't have to. Even if he is your fated mate. I will-" Wyatt stopped as his daughter raised her fingers up to his lips.

"I know daddy. This is my choice." She smiled softly. "It's what I want." And for the first time that was true. She wanted Derek... her fated mate. She turned back and looked at Derek whose eyes were still glued on her. She took a step away from her father's side. She felt his hand reluctantly drop from her and then she slowly walked up to Derek. She paused just in front of him. She could feel the suffocating feeling inside of her slowly subside as she stared into his eyes.

"You are an idiot." Lucy said and watched as Derek grinned.

"I know." His eyes gazed back in to hers. He felt his heart hammering in nervous excitement. He wanted to hold her but was waiting for her. He needed to feel her in his arms... He screwed up. He didn't think things through. And ended up hurting his most precious person.

She smiled up at him and walked forward, leaning into his chest. She felt his arms come around her and the sparks and tingles rippled over her body. This time she could enjoy them. She felt his head come to rest on hers.

"My Lucy." He whispered into her hair.

"So what are those things?" Freya said, turning her attention to the pile of corpses.

"We call them voidless or soulless. They are the witches doing..." Derek said, lifting his head up. "Though she isn't doing this alone. The real culprit we believe to be Wicker. Disguising himself as a witch doctor. But he won't show his ugly face. Jasper... burn the bodies."

Jasper walked over and lit the pile of bodies on fire. "You guys can still fight for being... out of the battlefield for a while." He winked over at Jason. He knew they knew he was implying they were old. Jason chuckled dryly and rolled his eyes. "I'd like to hear everything you know." Wyatt looked up at Derek who nodded.

"Come back and stay with us tonight. I will tell you everything we have found out... you can refer to me as Ryan there. And I can explain all that as well." Derek looked down at Lucy. "And why I haven't been by her side..."

"Is there chocolate there?" Jin asked and smiled brightly.

Jasper chuckled. "I spied chocolate cake in the refrigerator."

Jin's eyes widened. "Well, what are we waiting for? It is going to be dark soon so we better hurry."

Now you couldn't have asked for a better outcome. Derek is her fated mate. Stop pouting. Freya mind linked to Wyatt.

I guess deep down I hoped she would reject the treaty and just stay with us... now she is going to move away.

Yes, but she will have a piece of the black pearl. We can visit her anytime. Just think how your parents felt having to be apart from both of their children. At least we know Aiden is never leaving the nest. Freya smiled up at Wyatt who smiled nodding his head. Wyatt wrapped his arm around Freya and pulled her into his side. "Alright let's go."

Lucy went to take a step but was immediately hoisted into the air. Derek smiled down at her as he held her bridal style. "I don't think so. You used your legs way more than you should have. And I can smell you reopened those wounds."

"I'm a werewolf not a glass doll." Lucy frowned though she was enjoying being held against his chest.

"You have to pick your battles Lucy." Freya smiled up at her daughter. "If we lose, it is because we lose on purpose." She winked at her daughter.

Lucy felt a sharp pain jolt up her leg. She remained motionless and kept it hidden from her face, yet Derek stopped walking immediately. He looked down at her in confusion and frowned.

"Lucy what hurts?" Derek's voice was laced with concern. Freya and Wyatt were instantly standing in front of them both.

"I'm fine." Lucy said quietly.

Derek set his jaw. "Don't lie to me Lucy. I felt it."

"You felt it?" Wyatt asked. He glanced over at Freya and back to Derek.

"Yes, I can feel Lucy. It is hard to explain but it has been getting stronger. Her thoughts, her feelings... her dreams..." He looked down at Lucy, his eyes flashed in amusement for only a brief moment. "And the longer the day has gone on this connection has been getting stronger." "You haven't marked her yet..." Freya said as her eyes widened.

"Even with my parents that connection didn't start until after they marked each other." Wyatt said, looking at the couple in front of him. "You two are soul mates... but from the sounds of it, it is a connection like none we have ever witnessed."

"What hurt?" Freya narrowed her eyes at her daughter. Hearing Derek's explanation she now knew her daughter was hiding her pain.

"Mom I'm fine..." Lucy sighed as she saw the anger behind her mothers' eyes build. Her mother was more relaxed about things but if she asked for an answer, she expected one. "I pushed off of my leg when I was running. I jumped off of a boulder and I think I tore it worse. And normally that wouldn't be a problem but -"

"With the vervain still in your system it is." Freya sighed with a frown.

Derek's eyes were dark and his jaw was set. She could feel him trembling slightly.

"It's just a tear. I'm okay." Lucy tried to calm Derek down.

Wyatt slapped Derek on the back. "Get used to it. She is her mother's daughter, and she is going to keep you on your toes. Remember this day. You asked for her, no take backs." Wyatt winked at Derek. While Jasper and Jason chuckled behind him. Wyatt understood exactly how he was feeling. Being a new mate, your senses are heightened, and you are extremely protective. It must be even worse for soul mates. Derek smiled at Wyatt and curled Lucy deeper in his chest. "I can't handle her in pain."

Lucy felt her heart clench as the butterflies fluttered in her chest. She could see the pain in his eyes because of her. "It's not that bad. Honest."

"If this is this strong now it will only be worse after the marking." Freya looked at Lucy and frowned. Her daughter wasn't getting a possessive protective alpha... she was getting a possessive protective vampire prince. She was going to have a lot of fights in the future about having some independence. She raised her to have a mind and will of her own and trusted she would make it through the fights ahead.

"I'm worried about marking her with the vervain in her system." Derek said quietly.

"You can't mark her until the ceremony anyways." Jasper said.

"I don't care about the ceremony. I'll be connected better to her once she bears my mark. It is safer that way."

"Look I'm a pretty progressive dad I like to think. A mark is a fact of life. But another one is that she is my baby girl..." Wyatt felt Freya elbow him in his side.

"Well at least he is being considerate and taking his time with the marking. You know, instead of just planting it on her the moment they meet." Freya raised her eyebrow at him and he gave her a sheepish smile in return. Wyatt's situation was different and in a normal situation he never would have forced his mark. But he had just gotten his powers as the werewolf king and his wolf took control of the situation. Still, he felt bad about it, so Freya liked to tease him over it from time to time.

"Sorry Wyatt. I know she is your daughter. I'll try to be more mindful of those things around you..." Derek met with Wyatt's silver eyes. "She might be my mate, but she is more than that to me. I love your daughter. She is precious to me." Lucy could feel her cheeks heat with embarrassment. What was he saying in front of everyone?! The way he was staring at her father right now. It was so determined and with so much conviction.

Wyatt smiled. "Good. Because I couldn't hand her over to anyone who she wasn't precious to."

"Can't we talk about this after I have my chocolate... I mean after we are inside?" Jin giggled.

"Yes, we need to get back. I need to look at your wound and treat it." Derek looked down at Lucy. Her cheeks were lightly flushed as she gnawed on her bottom lip. She was so damn adorable. He wanted nothing more than to taste the sweet peach below him. But with her parents there that would have to wait. Still, his chest felt ready to burst with happiness. He had his Lucy in his arms. His love. His soul mate. His queen.