

Chosen 121

Chapter One Hundred Twenty One

Davin Sirius sat in his office going through the paperwork he'd just asked Jackson to generate. After the time his daughter had spent in hiding, there was a lot to do for her identity to be set straight. He couldn't care less about it since she was known to be his daughter. Well, she would be during the announcement and welcome dinner prepared for that night.

He didn't sit in the office to do paperwork on this joyous day. He sat in his office to clear his head. Sandra had recounted the events upon their arrival between one of the beta's daughters and Katie. It wasn't a good look for the Royals and Katie had disappeared since then along with the Lycaon boy.

"You should stop stressing yourself, you know," Martha spoke up, walking into the office in a white flowing dress. She'd been known to wear a lot of white, but only because of her husband's love for the way it made her comparable to an angel in his eyes. She walked up to him and put her arms around him to help calm his nerves.

"I know," he agreed, sighing, "What did beta Raymond say about his daughter's violation?"

"Well, he hasn't said much on the matter. So I invited him here so that we might talk to him together," she replied. The phone at the royal's desk started to ring almost immediately. Checking the caller, he answered and turned the speaker on.

"Alpha, Beta Raymond is here to see you," Jackson's voice came through.

"Let him in. Thank you, Jackson," the king wasn't a great fan of the man that was being brought to him for a number of reasons, but necessity called for this meeting. Royals had to be careful with everything they did... even the way they spoke simply because it was very easy for them to compel other werewolves to do their bidding. It was still unknown to them whether Katie had done it as a mistake or whether she had intended... However, they were ready to keep this matter away from her.

A tall man came into the office only moments later dressed in a suit as though he was just from a business meeting, "Did we interrupt your programs, Beta Raymond?"

"Oh, don't mind that. I was only leaving my workplace when I received this information. Welcome back, Alpha Davin... Luna Martha," he greeted them before casually taking a seat in front of them.

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"Thank you for the warm welcome. I hope nothing bad happened during our leave," Martha added warmly. She started rubbing circles into her husband's shoulders, passing the gesture off as a nervous tick meant to calm the alpha down. She knew of the friction between the two and couldn't bear to screw up the discussion.

"Everything was just fine, Luna. I had no idea there was still a Royal who was not aware of the rules," he began.

"Yeah, there is one that's still unaware of the powers of a Royal and we are doing our best to give her the proper training," Davin said, tensing upon hearing the phrasing of man's questions.

“Oh, it was Lina. I’m surprised she would do such a thing. Isn’t she good friends with...”

“It wasn’t Lina. It was Katie...” the queen stopped him. The man paused for a moment processing the words that had just reached his ears.

“My King, I was among the pack warriors that risked their lives to defend your daughter eighteen years ago. You mentioned she’d been killed in that rogue attack. I’ve been hearing whispers of her return. Would you care to explain what that’s all about?” he asked, trying his best to control his temper.

“That’s what we’d gone to confirm when we left. The child was rescued that night and she was taken far away and hidden. She’s been raised by hunters the past eighteen years,” Davin explained.

“And where might this girl be?” he asked, folding his hands across his chest.

“Well, she went out with Cole Lycaon. I don’t know of their current whereabouts. They will come back when they feel like it,” Davin answered, his forehead gaining a few more creases from worry.

“Don’t worry, honey. She will be here by nightfall,” Martha tried.

“I know she won’t leave. She shows that much courage. I can’t blame her for lashing out after everything that’s happened, but I do wish there was something more we could do to make her stay here a better one,” Davin said, going off into his thoughts.

“You lost me when you said Cole Lycaon,” Beta Raymond interjected, “What might he be doing here?”

“Have you already forgotten the story of the Moon goddess’ chosen Royals,” she asked him.

“Oh, you mean the ones that will strip all Royals and alphas of their power to turn humans into werewolves?” he inquired, drawing on the memory from eighteen months ago.

“Yes, that one. Isn’t it wonderful? The rogues will no longer be able to multiply,” Martha squealed, “The war will finally reach a foreseeable close.”

“That’s one way to look at it,” the Beta said. There was no excitement in his voice and the good news didn’t appease him, “I’m only voicing my concerns when I say this. And I ask that you don’t take any offence in the matter. For years, the hunters have been working with the Royals to stop the Rogue King. This has always provided you with a common enemy compared to the beginning when you were both enemies. With the Royals’ power gone and the rogues dwindling, who do you think the hunters will turn their bows too?” he asked.

“That’s a pessimistic point of view, I see. If that were to happen, the hunters would be split into many factions since not all of them would agree to put down werewolves once the rogues are dead,” Martha argued.

“Your optimism makes you blind, my queen. I have only given my opinion on the matter. With regards to the use of the Royal tone on my daughter, I will turn a blind eye just this once. It mustn’t happen again. I also expect an apology,” he said to them before standing up to take his leave.

“Hey, Beta Raymond,” the king called back to the man’s retreating form.

"I remember you saying something about taking your daughter on a tour to search for her mate. How's that working out for her?" the man asked.

"I would say she doesn't have long until she's realised who her mate is," the man replied with a proud smirk on his face. Davin returned the smile in kind, making sure to leave no holes in his faked expression. The two waited until they could no longer hear the man's footsteps even through their enhanced hearing senses.

"That man gives me chills," the king spoke up first.

"Oh, you worry a lot. I do get chills from his daughter though. I remember the incident at the Royal games five years ago," the woman said.

"And to think Cole doesn't remember her. I would have loved this to be one of those relaxing family reunions," the king sighed.

"What makes you think it won't be?" she said, giving him a peck, "Now come out for some fresh air. The paperwork will wait. This is simple enough that you can even have Jackson or Dalton look through it," giving up on complaining, the man let the office be and walked out with his wife. There was much to prepare.

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Cole was now wondering how long they still had to get to the castle. Having walked for thirty minutes without any sign of the place, he couldn't help, but wonder how he'd gotten that deep in the forest. He looked to his guide and saw that she didn't falter in the direction she was leading him, "How much longer do we have until we get there?"

"I don't know. I just know that we are very far out. Probably a few more..."

"Can we shift then and make it there faster?" he groaned, getting a feel of what King Davin was going through earlier that day, "Were you able to get a feel of the place to soothe... your mojo?"

"Cole, how much do you remember from that moment?" she asked, finally tired of his somewhat erratic behaviour.

"Well, it's all a mess. I was with you at the river and then that's it. I want to ask what happened next, but I feel like I don't need to. I don't even know why I'm not freaking out about you walking normally. What's up with that?"

"Well, I've overcome my trauma... I can walk just fine now," she boasted.

"That's amazing. Can you run like you used to? Who else knows? How long was I out?"

"How can we fix whatever is going on with your head first? You must have been hit pretty hard..." it was only then that she realised a faint glow in the werewolf's eyes. She took a step closer to him and watched him reluctantly take one back.

"Are you okay?" she asked him.

"I honestly... don't know," he resigned settling down, "I know something happened, but my mind's a mess. What happened?"

"Well, we were attacked by someone I'm pretty sure is associated with the moon goddess," she replied. A moment of silence went through the two of them...

"What..." was all he could say after an explanation that vague...

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After explaining everything that had occurred, Katie was able to catch him up to speed with their current situation and the reason why they seemed too far from the castle. He took in most of the information without any hesitation except for one thing that bothered him, "I don't think I could have been taken out that easily," he complained once again, drawing a sigh from his mate.

"Cole, he wasn't human or werewolf. He was much more powerful than that. I wouldn't be surprised if the power behind his fist was actually meant for you to sleep deeply," she said.

"You suspect some kind of magic in play now?" the man mused.

"We've seen a man that runs and breaks the speed barrier releasing the sound of thunder and you find magic to be surprising," Katie countered.

"Yes, I find the magic to be surprising. Just how much chaos do you think the world would have if such a thing were to happen normally. Soon enough we'd be flying about on dragons," he threw his arms into the air. Katie couldn't help but laugh at how fast his mind had rushed to the extremities of magic.

"It doesn't have to be drastic for something to be called magic, you know..." to this, he did not answer. After walking for a bit in silence, "Have you finally cleared your mind?"

"Thankfully, yes... I guess I just needed a ride from my mate and a visit from a diety to set me straight," she replied, giggling at her own phrasing.

"Yeah, I guess so... Let's get back to the palace then. You have a party to attend," the alpha said, shifting into his giant black wolf.

"Have I ever told you that you have a beautiful wolf?" the girl said to him while they rushed back to the palace. With the wolf's enhanced sense of smell and hearing, Cole could tell where the city was and the rest was obvious to him.

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"You keep that saying things like that and you'll be marked before long," the man replied through the mind link. Katie had only heard the word a few times and it wasn't one of the things that she had never thought of that would happen to her.

"Wait, when you say 'mark', you mean..."

"What else do you would come to mind when I say something like that?" he asked her, his voice was serious and yet keeping its usual calm tone. She wrapped her hands through the wolf's fur and allowed herself to rest on him.

“Maybe not just yet...”

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The palace of the Royal family of Sirius was built with more space behind it than was in front. Mainly because that's where several events were held within the pack. Most of the pack members were still wondering what the fuss was all about. The king and queen had drafted an entire program that was to be followed to the letter. A barbeque was being held... (well, werewolves and meat, even after centuries of development, remained inseparable...)

The betas and the alphas of the Royal pack milled about ordering those that could to help get things ready. Different people took on different tasks like setting the bonfire, hunting and everything else that was needed to get this barbeque going.

“It needs to be perfect,” Drake could be heard from one side of the backyard as he supervised everything that was going on. Lina couldn't be bothered to help the rest with whatever they were doing. After all, with all the manpower they had, there was nothing she needed to do to help them. She walked past her brother, having seen preparations and satisfied with everything going on, walking on to get a sneak peek at her phone in her bedroom.

Coincidentally getting a whiff of an odd scent that she'd never smelt before, she started to follow it. It was not her mate's scent, for she knew the anticipation her wolf would have had for a miracle that gigantic, but it was peculiar and her strong sense of smell (some could have called it too strong for her own good) picked up on it.

Walking through the halls, she heard hushed voices coming from one of the rooms. Maybe it was curiosity or her sheer love for gossip, she didn't know what pulled her closer to the door and strain her ear to find out what was being spoken about...

“How did you get your hands on it?” one of the voices said.

“Why ask? You want to get a sample. This will definitely get results this time,” another voice said. This one she could recognize immediately to be none other than Crysta.

“But Crysta, it's not right to spike one of their drinks. You could get into big trouble if you were discovered,” another hushed voice spoke up, sounding timid in comparison to the others.

“Oh, come on, Bree. Don't be a wet blanket. Just imagine me becoming next in line to be Luna. Our lives could be so different,” Crysta said, sending Lina's heart into shock. She'd always known about Crysta's obsession with men in power, but she was never around long enough to know just how bad it was, but the more she thought about it, Crysta would have never told another royal about her plans. It wasn't because Lina didn't spend enough time with her friend... it was just because of the colour of her eyes.

“Crysta, why do you want to become a Royal? They have so many restrictions that they are basically powerless,” one of them said. A sad truth... They had power because of what they meant in the werewolf community and they couldn't be overthrown because of the fear of their power. As a result, they remained in power, like it was supposed to be. Those who knew how to use the law knew how to walk all over them without tripping over any alarms.

“Every time she walks up to us, she mocks us with how low we are,” the girl began, her voice filled with malice and hate. Lina couldn’t believe what she was hearing. There was only one female in the palace that interacted with Crysta, “Then there is that new one that has come. She looks down on me even when she’s crippled... A defective royal to me,” she commented.

“What kind of werewolf rides in a wheelchair?” one of them giggled, “Did you notice the ramps they added to the stairs to cater for her movement? It’s got to be embarrassing. The way Cole ran after her. It was like he was taking pity on her.”

“After tonight, Cole will know who he deserves to be with. It’s only a matter of time now,” Crysta’s voice came. Lina chose that moment to leave the room alone having learnt what she needed to. Crysta had a sinister plan in mind and Lina couldn’t help, but giggle at the foolishness of whatever hopes the girl had. She did get one thing right though... She was the right age to have a mate and any claim she made on a male was to be taken seriously... Well, that would be until everyone would discover if she was lying or not...

‘This might just get interesting...’ no one could blame the girl for wanting a little bit of drama on the day her sister returned to the palace. In her mind, it was only a way to teach the girl who to associate with and who not to...

“Hey, Lina, aren’t you going to help out?” someone called out to the girl. The girl who’d called her carried a flowerpot of roses, probably for the ceremony. She was the daughter of one of the pack warriors who liked to work in the palace, dressed simply in floral dresses and didn’t mind what anyone thought of her.

“I was... going to my room,” Lina groaned, after receiving a glare from the one person in the entire castle that she could call her ‘best friend.’ “Oh, come on, Honour. You know I don’t like heavy lifting.”

“Come on and help me do the decorating. You can tell me all about Katie while we do that,” Honour replied, ignoring the princess’ complaints, “Well, tell me... How is she? Rumours are going around that she actually used the Royal tone on Crysta.”

“Yeah, Crysta had it coming. I actually knew my sister would snap at her one day, but I who would have thought it would happen the moment they met. Personally, I thought it was hilarious even though laughing at her would have made her situation much worse.

“What are the King and Queen going to do about it?” she asked.

“They spoke to Beta Raymond. She’s been forgiven although it sounded like it was the last warning...” Lina explained, giving her friend a side hug as she took the flower pot out of her hands. Honour, just like Lina didn’t inherit much of the strength that came from being a werewolf. That didn’t stop them from trying their best to help the pack. Being an ordinary werewolf, however, wasn’t the same as being a royal and that made Honour much weaker than Lina.

“I envy that strength of yours, Lina,” she said, wiping sweat off her brow.

“Just keep that flower shop going and you won’t need to have it,” Lina giggled at her friend. The two proceeded with the decorations, taking on the gigantic order that the Royals had issued to the flower shop. Lina regretted her slacking goals when she realised just how much work her friend had to get done

before the barbeque... 'When will you learn to depend on me for more help?' she wanted to say, but then again... she liked that about Honour.

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The Sirius pack was surrounded by three packs that had formed from the Royals of the past. They were the three that didn't leave the Royals when the war had raged on centuries ago. And they were also the ones that knew the depth of the Royals' mission. Partly the reason why humans in the capital of Sirius were so comfortable living with them.

A hierarchy had been established to maintain the order amongst the werewolves with the Royals at the very top. The King's Beta alphas were ranked above all the other alphas in Sirius. They didn't form packs either as their main priority was to serve the king. Beta alphas, albeit powerful, lacked the power to defy the king even if he was only voicing his opinion of something. It was cruel, but also a consequence of the Royals of the past trying to control the bloodthirsty werewolves.

The strongest of the alphas would be selected to become beta alphas which gave them more power over the rest but robbed them of their free will. As a result of this, the king was always careful around his beta alphas to keep his wishes hidden from them. This allowed them to retain their sense of self. Davin walked out the huge exit at the back of the palace and smiled at the finished preparations.

Cole had communicated through mind link that they would be arriving soon. Everything was going according to plan. Tonight was the announcement of the return of his daughter and one of the moon goddess' chosen. Nothing could go wrong... or could it?

The mouth-watering scent of roasted beef wafted through the air. "Now that smells good," Davin spoke more to himself.

"Yeah, definitely. I hope Katie loves it. Lina went out of her way to help with the decorations," Martha said, walking up to the king. King Davin's wife was dressed in one his most favourite white gowns, flowing to her feet and sweeping the floor. It might have been his love for aesthetics or just an odd obsession with the colour of peace. Nonetheless, the Queen looked nothing short of dazzling.

"Lina, really? Are you sure you saw the right daughter?" the man asked her, pulling her into his arms.

The queen giggled, "Yes, it was Lina. I almost asked why she was doing it, then I say Honour with her. That girl is quite the influence on dear Lina," the woman chuckled, letting her husband shower her face with pecks.

"Have you heard from Katie yet?" Davin asked, ending his shower of love.

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"She is going to get changed," a new voice came from behind them. Cole Lycaon was dressed in a black tux, fitting his bowtie... Martha could see a large difference between the time before he found out who his mate was and now... He was glowing.

"Someone's happy," she chirped.

"Oh, you don't know the half of it. Something smells good," Cole turned his face in the direction of the numerous bon fires that had been set up, "I hope it all goes well," he said.

“What could go wrong? This event will be perfect. The return of my daughter and a better future for the werewolves once the moon goddess’ plan comes to fruition,” he said.

“I don’t know. I get the feeling something’s amiss. Maybe Katie’s weird mojo rubbing off on me,” Cole chuckled. Just then a group of female werewolves came up to the male and asked that he join them. Cole, politely bidding the king and queen farewell, followed the ladies, taking note of the one from earlier, Crysta.

They walked up to a counter that had been set up outdoors and was serving refreshments, “How are you liking Sirius so far?” Crysta asked him, crossing to the other side of the counter. Cole took a seat on one of the stools, ending his visual scrutiny of the girl’s skimpy outfit and focusing on other things like the smell of beef waiting to be devoured.

“It’s breath-taking. People are hospitable, I would say... I haven’t spent much time touring,” he said.

“Oh, why’s that? There is so much to see in Sirius. Have you heard of the Great river of Sirius? It has the most beautiful waterfall you could possibly imagine. It’s also a perfect diving spot,” the girl said, preparing him a drink and setting it on the table for him to drink.

“Oh, that sounds fun indeed. I have seen the river though. Just today actually,” he said, taking a sip of the cocktail she’d just presented him.

“Oh really... I could show you how to enjoy yourself there the next time we go,” she smirked. Cole was so occupied in identifying whatever was odd with the different scents that invaded his nose that he missed the smirks that spread across the girl’s face. Her friends, who pretended to be making finishing touches to the makeshift bar mirrored Crysta’s expression... Their mission had been accomplished.

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“I don’t need all these things you are adding to my face,” Katie screamed at the girls around her for the umpteenth time as they tried to apply yet more makeup to her face. Courtesy of her sister, Lina, she was being forced to dress up to the nines.

“You need them if you are going to look your best, princess. Princess Lina was strict with her orders when she told us to make you look good,” one of them tried.

“What’s wrong with my face? I look perfectly fine,” she huffed.

“You look like you were in a fight with a tree, your highness. No offense, but where have you been? And your hair, it’s like you’ve been inside a tornado...” she continued.

Katie gasped at the remarks and preened at herself in the mirror once more. Her hair was indeed a mess, though a casual one that she was used to and her face, barely blemished was fine (according to her standards anyway...)

“I agree with the hair, but there is nothing wrong with my face,” she huffed grumpily. A melodious giggle filled the air, coming from a girl Katie had come to know as Honour. She was allegedly Lina’s best friend. Katie hadn’t found anyone in Sirius yet who had a soul purer than hers. She cared about everything worth caring for and carried herself in a way that was only deserving of Royalty... and yet she was supposed to be a commoner when placed among other werewolves.

“What do you think, Honour?” Katie asked her.

“I think we can put a bit of foundation on your face, but your hair really needs a makeover. I can tell you like it shoulder length, so we won’t be snipping any part of it,” she explained.

Sighing deeply, Katie gave in to their demands, “Very well, do as you may. Just don’t turn me into doll. Make sure I keep my natural look though...”

“So, is that the kind of thing Cole is into?” one of them asked her, prying into her affairs right at the core.

“I won’t engage in that conversation,” Katie chuckled...

“Oh, you’re no fun. I heard something from the other girls. He has quite a fan base,” the girl began.

“Oh, yeah. Although not many of them make themselves known because everyone knows Crysta has got her eyes on him. Rumours have been spreading about the two of them being mates,” another chirped in, working while Katie listened.

‘Did you really have to exclude yourself from this conversation?’ Ashley spoke up, clearly irritated by the information the girls were delivering.

‘I didn’t think they had information of their own. I’m just as curious as you are, but...’

‘Let me out so I can ask them personally. You are too calm in front of these people,’ she screamed, forcing her consciousness out.

“Umm, Katie... Can you stop doing that thing with your face? It makes it hard to apply makeup,” Honour’s once quiet voice made it through the girl’s argument with her wolf. She looked up to see white fur gracing her facial features. She’d never seen herself in a mirror before, but had felt it the last time she faced the rogue king.

The effect of Ashley trying to bring herself forward was a half shift that made her look less of a human. Her ears were longer, the fur covered the top of her forehead and fell down in a neat line to the top of her nose, reducing the closer it got to the tip. The rest of her face remained normal except for the eyes that glowed brighter. The changes were minimal but significant, giving her an entirely new look.

“I’d been told you were someone special, but you’re something else,” one of the girls spoke first, having watched Katie’s face return to normal.

“Was that the fabled half shift?” Honour asked.

“Yes, it is. I’m guessing Katie knows nothing about it, just like Lina said. It’s what happens when a wolf that’s very compatible with their other half merges in a shift with them. That’s what happens. They both take control of the human body and achieve that,” she explained.

“Why does Katie have to be the one with that kind of gift?” another asked, storming out of the room in frustration. ‘Being talented is going to get you in quite a bit of trouble,’ Ashley observed from the back of Katie’s mind.

‘I’m guessing we aren’t supposed to reveal the fact that I’m a hunter with both Prometheus gifts...’

'Yeah, I think that might be safer...' the wolf replied, sighing, 'The price of having such an awesome wolf like me... Fame will soon be suffocating you...'

'Are you being cocky...'

124 Chapter One Hundred Twenty Four

King Davin, yet again, found himself feeling impatient for the second time that day. The party was now twenty minutes in and drinks had been served, however, the guest of honour was still to be seen. "Hey, Davin..."

"Mind your tone, Phillip," Martha cut him off.

"Oh, forgive me, Your Highness. King Davin, are you sure you're not making a big fuss over this... seemingly too good to be a true discovery. We know this was the month in which she was born and you don't normally act normal at that time. Isn't this a bit... much?" the red-eyed man voiced his concern, taking another sip of the drink he'd been served.

"I appreciate your concern, Alpha Phillip, but she will be here soon. What I can't believe is the fact that none of you has seen her this entire time," the king sighed.

"I heard that she was seen exiting the premises immediately we arrived. She only needed some time to take everything in," Martha told his husband, trying her best to keep him in his happy moods. It was rare for the man to get impatient considering all his orders were normally followed to the letter. This girl was doing the entire opposite of that.

"Where is Cole? Maybe he could tell us where she was the entire day..." Davin perked up, standing up swiftly and smoothing his white coat. He scanned the crowd and found him... (by scent). The alpha had his time occupied with a girl dressed to seduce... if only it were possible. However, Cole was not objecting to all the signals she sent his way and it troubled the king's mind.

He walked up to him only to be stopped by an announcement through the mind link, "King Davin, the princess is on her way. She's done preparing herself," Jackson's voice came through.

Panic set into the King's mind. He'd known she was getting ready but hadn't thought too much about it. He walked up to Cole and whispered into his ear, "You might want to keep your eyes peeled," with this he left the man contemplating the meaning of the short gesture. Something was wrong with the boy... or maybe it was his imagination.

Calling the entire crowd to attention, the King walked up the stairs so that he looked down on all of them from the top of the staircase. He would be the first one to see Katie when she came. The familiar warm presence of his wife by his side settled by him, setting his nerves at ease instantly. Lina was the first one to come through the door, pushing it wider to reveal the girl behind her.

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The two parents gasped upon seeing their daughter dressed in a blue sleeveless dress, her hair tied was tied in a neat bun that exposed her fair skin. "Is it a good idea to expose her neck on a day like this one?" the queen asked as their daughter walked up to them.

“That all depends on the two of them. We have nothing to say about that,” he replied before turning around and calling for everyone’s attention. The whole crowd went quiet instantly, “There was a slight delay due to some... Unforeseen circumstances...” this was the first time the king was speaking about tardiness and he didn’t make it look natural at all.

“Is everything okay, your majesty?” Alpha Philip called from his seat.

“Yes, everything is fine now. There are probably rumours moving about on the reasons for this barbecue as well as the reason why we haven’t let the lot of you dig your fangs into the meat before you,” he began, forcing a ripple of laughter through the crowd, “I’ll say what has brought us here and not what the rumours are saying. My daughter didn’t die eighteen years ago. She was rescued that night and taken into hiding to keep her safe from the rogues that tried to kill her. As of today, she has returned to the castle and this is her welcome ceremony.”

“You mean to tell me that we are about to set eyes on the famous, Katie Sirius,” another one of the werewolves spoke out.

“That would be what my husband just said. Try to contain your excitement,” Martha cut in, proudly.

Katie, on the other hand, just felt her nerves double... probably triple upon announcing her arrival. ‘How can you be nervous when you have me as a wolf... Stay confident... I saw a memory of you giving a speech once. You were inspirational.’

“Those people knew me and I knew them. There wasn’t a face there that I couldn’t place and everyone knew who I was. That was nothing like this at all,” she mentally yelled.

“Well, maybe you could focus on something else. Like Co... There is something wrong with his scent,” this was the last thing Katie could have heard with the stress she was under. “Katie, breath in and out twice...”

“Are you trying to get me to do the thing that the hunters used to make me do when I needed to...”

“Yes, that is what I’m talking about, Katie. Now do it now...” it didn’t take a fraction of a second before the hunter had lost all expression from her face, bracing herself with a small smile. This had been harder for her in the past few days, but with Ashley’s support, everything was fine.

She walked out of the large doors, the hints of nervousness completely gone from her composure. Her mother received her with a hug, followed by her father, King Davin, “You guys didn’t have to go through all this trouble, you know...”

“Oh, we had to. It’s only proper that we welcome our daughter back with one of the most anticipated ceremonies for werewolves,” King Davin said mid hug.

“I can smell the love for this event,” Katie chuckled, enjoying the assaulting scent that threatened to make her mouth water. Ashley, who could no longer be felt at the back of the girl’s mind was also waiting for the right moment to join the party... the eating party.

“Katie, might I ask you where your wheelchair is and how the hell you are walking?” Martha asked her, doing her best to mask her surprise.

“That’s not the same girl that you brought earlier today,” a voice broke through from the audience. Katie’s eyes rushed to the source and spotted a man with green eyes, dressed in a suit and staring at the king in rage.

“What makes you say that?” Katie’s voice rang clear, rattling everyone’s nerves. Without Ashley to keep her hunter side intact, her voice came out cold and demanding, yet lacking all the elements of the Royal tone, “Would you rather accuse my father of deceit?” She asked him once more.

An air of awkwardness went through the backyard, “Let’s not make this day any gloomy, alright. Beta Raymond, watch your manners. The person in front of you all is indeed our daughter... and one that I’m proud of,” Martha said, hugging her daughter once more in front of the crowd.

The party was then allowed to commence, Katie luckily dodging whatever speech they would have wanted her to hold. Retrieving her phone, she contacted Sandra and met up with her before she’d look for Cole. Reversing the order of that search only felt impossible, even though she was worried about her mate. If he’d been in imminent danger, she would have felt it, but he seemed to be okay.

“How are you enjoying your evening?” Katie asked the girl who she found partaking in a pool game against a group of males.

“I’m enjoying myself much more than I thought I would. Jason introduced me to a few of the pack warriors. Some male, some female... I don’t know why I didn’t like the female ones, but they are very friendly,” she said, hitting yet another one of the balls into her desired target.

“Well, that’s good to hear. Although it’s not fun watching you play a game that you are too good at,” Katie said to her.

“Well, it was my idea to challenge a pool master. It should be obvious for a hunter to be an expert in this game,” Sandra groaned while getting rid of another one.

“I’ll carry that lesson with me for the rest of my life, Sandra,” the werewolf spoke up, leaning against his cue with no hope of winning the game. “That was quite an entrance, Katie. Do you always speak with such a commanding tone?”

“Oh, come on, Gunther. She’s my mentor. Of course, she knows how to command,” Sandra spoke up.

“I don’t usually speak like that. I just didn’t like the way the beta spoke to my father. It was disrespectful,” she retorted, trying to find the man through the crowd and giving up after a failed attempt.

“Oh, you mean Beta Raymond. He’s always trying to get the king off his game. The rest of us don’t know what his game is, but he’s always trying something. Just earlier there were rumours about the princess... Katie, using the Royal tone on her... Something like that would have caused quite a stir. Beta Raymond chose to overlook it, but it feels like there was more at play. Anyway, those are just my speculations,” Gunther shrugged, “Sandra, would you fancy teaching to play pool as you do?”

“Back off, Gunther. She’s mine... If anyone’s learning pool from this hunter, it will be me,” the voice of an interrupting alpha pitched in from behind Sandra and swept her off her feet, literally.

“Then someone asks where child abuse starts from,” Katie commented, watching the two, “Have you seen Cole?”

“He’s... over there...” dread filled the girl as she turned to follow the direction Jason was pointing. Surrounded by three girls that seemed heavily interested in every word that came from his mouth, Cole’s hand stirred a drink, that Katie was sure was not the first he had had, while he slipped further and further into the grasp of whatever tonic she could tell was in it. However, even after knowing all that, she wasn’t the least bit bothered by the sight in front of her... That was until she recognized Crysta to be the one that wouldn’t keep her hands to herself... despite Cole’s efforts.

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Sandra noticed the scene before her a little later than she would have liked. Katie was walking over to the counter of the makeshift bar with murder written all over her. “Hey, Katie, wait,” the girl rushed over to her friend and stopped her in time. Crysta noticed the two and gave a knowing smirk. Cole didn’t seem to notice what was happening as he had his back turned to them.

“Shouldn’t he have caught my scent by now?” Katie asked the girl.

“I don’t know, Katie, but...” the girl’s voice was drowned out of the hunter’s perception when she noticed only one thing wrong with the scene before her... and that was the glass that was being presented to her mate. She’d already watched him drink one before, but the girl before him kept bringing more. Katie’s senses had never let her down and knowing what she knew made her even angrier than she would have been.

“Hey, Cole,” she called out when she was behind the man. Cole reluctantly turned back. His face showed confusion as he looked at his mate. He was happy to see her but also bewildered that he hadn’t noticed her approaching him. The two girls beside him barred Katie’s advance which angered him.

“Would you step aside so that I might hold what’s mine?” Cole asked the girls politely.

“And what exactly might that be?” Crysta asked, leaning over the counter so that she was closer to the royal while he answered the question. Katie clenched her fist in anger upon seeing what was going on. Despite her minimum knowledge of the way werewolf society worked, she knew this was all sorts of wrong.

Cole stood up and walked past the girls, pulling Katie into his arms, “I’d like all of you to meet, Katie Sirius, my mate. Katie, why can’t I catch your scent? I have to be very close...” he announced, the question directed more to the girl in his arms who didn’t fight his hug, but rather returned it.

“Maybe you’d like to ask the slut who’s been drugging you,” Katie replied to him, before pulling out of their hug.

“What would make you say something of the sort? Do you have any idea who I am?” Crysta snarled at her. Katie walked up to the counter and took the glass of the counter.

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“Sandra, I’d like to have this glass tested...” she handed the glass over to the girl. With Sandra gone, Katie didn’t think she had anyone else to stop her from pummeling the beta that had crossed the last

line she could allow. Two people she cared about most besides her family and she'd drugged one of them.

"Katie, wait... besides my senses, there was no more damage," Cole said, pulling her into another embrace... this embrace she fought.

"You don't know that Cole. There could be more effects only waiting to rear their ugly heads. This b..."

"I'm fine, Katie. I'm resistant to drugs," he said briefly, bringing her struggle to a halt.

"What do you mean you are resistant to drugs?" she asked, turning so that she could face him.

"I mean exactly that... Any drug doesn't work on me. Whether a poison or medicinal, I'm resistant to them. It's only rarely that they mess with a few of my senses. Those are the powerful ones though... Which I think the girl has used against me..." he explained.

"And you expect me to turn a blind eye at something like that..."

"Someone's acting like a bigshot. What exactly can you do against me, little pup? Rumour has it that you're so new to being a wolf that you don't even know how to shift. I'll swallow you whole little pup," Crysta's voice came again.

"I can rip your head off your shoulders," Katie replied, anger threatening to get the better of her. As a trained hunter, that was only something she could do if she was facing a rogue, but Crysta didn't have to know that.

Crysta began to laugh upon hearing this, "Oh, I doubt that. Even Lina has trouble fighting me. The Sirius females are really lacking in physical strength. The only difference is that you are more inexperienced. There is nothing you can do to hurt me," Crysta said, "As for the claim of being mated to Cole. No one is going to take that crap for long."

"What was that, Crysta?" Cole's voice broke through the argument, "What delusions have you gotten yourself convinced about? I was going to let the poisoning slide, but not accusing Katie of lying..."

"You'll come to your senses soon enough, Cole," Crysta smirked before prancing away from the bar, her friends in tow.

"Let's get you something to eat," Cole told the girl, who just nodded and let the male take the lead. Ashley chose that moment to return from her self-imposed restraints. 'I just want to shove that girl's head five feet into the ground...'

'What's stopping you?' Katie giggled.

'Well, royals have many rules that bind them. If that wasn't the case, I would have taught her a lesson. Until we know just how much we are allowed to do without tripping any alarms, I can't act on my emotions. Which is why you are to use that hunter training that turned you into a killing machine for a while now...'

'Killing machine... Did you have to say it like that?' the girl groaned, before getting invaded by the smell of seasoned barbecue.

“Okay, that’s amazing,” she swooned, getting the plate Cole had brought to her. It was comprised of only meat. There was nothing else to supplement... “Is this even legal?”

“What do you mean, ‘legal’?” Cole asked as he took her up to a table. The ‘gentleman’ in him made him pull out a chair for her to take a seat.

“It’s only meat... No fries... Nothing else, but meat...”

“Did you want me to add something else...”

“No, this will do just fine,” Cole chuckled at her reaction before she began to dig in.

“It is hard to rear animals with rogues still out there, but the capitals are some of the places where the rogues don’t attack for purposes as small as stealing cattle. That would be suicidal of them. So the meat here is quite abundant. When you couple that with hunting, there is just enough for everyone. I expect you to eat to your fill,” he explained.

“Mm-hmm, I hear you, Cole. You should as well,” she replied, absentmindedly (partly Ashley’s fault)

“I’m surprised no one is asking you how you are walking yet,” he mused.

“They are all focused on keeping this event perfect. I bet they will have that question on their mind tomorrow morning. Or maybe if...”

Cole had to look up from his meal when Katie went silent. The girl looked about the backyard frantically. Her eyes scanned the environment fast, but didn’t seem to pick up on anything. “Katie, what is it?”

“I don’t know. There is someone here. Someone who wasn’t here before but...”

“So that’s the famous Katie Sirius,” a voice came from behind Katie. Cole hadn’t noticed the man’s approach even when he was the one who would have been first to see him, “Are you looking for someone?”

Unlike King Sirius, this man was dressed in a black suit of the same design and looked significantly older than the king. His eyes glowed a bright yellow that announced his status all too well. Cole couldn’t recognise him, which only meant he was a royal in the Sirius family. He was well built and exuded an aura that rivalled that of the rogue king himself.

The few wrinkles in his face did nothing to make him look weakened by age. As Katie took in the man’s appearance, she got a deep sense of insecurity. ‘This man is powerful,’ she thought to herself. Ashley silently agreed with her... “Umm, no one in particular...” she replied. Could he have been the one that she was sensing the entire time? Either way, she looked at it, this man was beyond her capabilities. She hadn’t assessed the other members of the royal family and hadn’t intended to as they were her family, but this man gave her chills.

The king came rushing towards them, “Hey, how did you get here so fast? Hey, Katie... yeesh, that’s a lot of meat. Not princessy of you... Meet my brother... Alpha Sean of the Sirius pack... Once again, how the hell did you get here so fast?” Davin continued, pulling his brother away from the two of them before they had time to be acquainted.

“I’ve heard of him, but I’d never seen him up close,” Cole mentioned, keeping his eyes on the man.

“What’s his story? He gives me chills,” Katie asked him.

“Well, he’s Davin’s brother... That’s what everyone says, but he also looks older than Davin which is odd. I would think that the firstborn of the King would take the throne. So I can’t tell you I know what’s going on between them,” he explained, “Is something the matter...”

“I don’t know...” Katie said, poking the food before her, “I just can’t shake the feeling that I can’t trust him. There is a lot of ‘complicated’ here that it’s suffocating. If it wasn’t because of the trouble I caused my parents by using the Royal tone, I would have broken that girl’s nose,” she sighed.

“I would have liked to see that, but that’s just about how far I’d let you go. Has anyone told you how beautiful you look tonight?” Cole began.

“Well, no one that I cared to hear it from,” the girl replied, finding it harder to look the royal straight in the eye. Just then, Katie noticed the change in their surroundings that had gotten Cole to compliment her. Music played in the background and a few couples had gotten up to dance. The party, she realised was a gathering with no specific agenda besides having fun... Beautiful flowers lined the walls and trees, bringing the place alive in an array of beautiful flowers and lights carefully placed amongst them.

Katie saw it coming a mile away, “Would you grant me this dance, Katie?”

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The couple swayed together to the music enjoying the peace that came with being in each other’s arms. Cole’s senses were starting to clear up as the poison left his system. He could take in her scent much easier... an aphrodisiac scent that had him fighting his wolf for control. Katie hadn’t dressed before with her hair tied up and he’d known the effect that one time that she’d let him put a necklace on him. He’d wanted to mark her without her knowledge then even without knowing if she was his mate.

“Umm, Katie, what made you tie up your hair this time?” he asked.

“Do you not like it?” she asked him, “I thought I’d show off the necklace you got me back then.”

The sapphire necklace hung loosely upon the girl’s chest. “That’s not it... You look... stunning. I just remembered you tying your hair up once before with a hairband. What was that about?”

“Oh, that. I tie my hair when I’m going to take a fight seriously. That’s why I carry that around with me. That way, I can’t have that much of an excuse. Cole, are you sure you’re okay?”

“Yes, I’m fine... You have your gifts... Well, I have mine as well,” this caught the girl off guard. She knew he was one of the moon goddess’ chosen, just like she was. But she’d never thought they’d be perks to that.

“What’s that supposed to mean?”

“You’ll find out soon enough,” Cole winked at her. The girl groaned at the meaning behind his words. ‘Why do I have to wait?’

‘I wonder if his gifts are...’ Ashley asked, in deep thought spiralling entirely in the wrong direction.

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'Is this seriously one of those times when you have to go back to your primal instincts?' Katie asked the wolf, peeking into the thoughts of the wolf.

'Hey, you never know what it is. He did say that you'd see soon enough. One of those times happens to be today night... in the bedroom,' she replied.

'You need a hobby, Ashley,' Katie giggled, bringing herself back to the present.

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Davin sat in a table on the balcony of his office, looking to the backyard and overseeing the entire party below. Opposite him was the wolf that everyone knew to be his brother. To his right, his mate who he wrapped one hand around, just like he always wanted. "What brings you here, Uncle?" he asked the man.

"Now why would I miss the return of my granddaughter? I heard of quite the scuffle that you went through back in Brigadia. Now, why would a small town like that give you so much trouble? You were there for nearly a week. You're growing soft, Davin," he said.-

"What might be your point, Uncle? I'd also really like to know where you got your information from," Davin said.

"Oh, my source doesn't really matter. He's been instructed to stay hidden from you anyway. As for the girl over there, what can she do besides be pretty and wary of everything around her? I heard she was supposed to be moving about in a wheelchair. How come she's walking around normally?"

Sean was full of questions... and Davin was hesitant to answer any of them. This was the one royal that was never accounted for. He didn't cause trouble, but he didn't show any interest in accomplishing the mission of the royals. In fact, he enjoyed the fear the humans had for royals.

"I'm about to ask her about that myself. It does bring me joy that she can walk again though. For now, let's leave it at that," Davin tried to take the attention off her daughter.

"Oh, Davin, you always try to turn a blind eye to everything that seems to bring down your mission. This mission of yours... It makes you soft. I watched the girl hold back while a slut tried to mess with her mate. All of you are pathetic. If that were me, the girl would be six feet under along with anyone who would oppose me," Sean said, looking at the people at the party. He scanned through the crowd and frowned when his eyes fell upon beta Raymond.

"Where is my champion hunter?" the man asked.

"Who do you speak of?" Davin asked, "Oh, you mean Jeremiah. I don't really know. I haven't seen him in a while."

"Well, I sent him to Brigadia to stand in for me at the Founder's festival. He hasn't contacted me since then," Sean announced. After the suspicions that Katie made about the boy, Davin had kept out an eye for him, but hadn't been able to find anything. Jeremiah had vanished like mist... the Hunter's Society claimed to have let him go after he caused quite the scene at the festival and that was the last they saw of him.

“Why don’t you ask his family? I believe you placed them in a town not far from the capital. If they went back there like I suspect they did, then you should be able to find out what happened from them instead of chasing a man on the run,” Davin said.

“I didn’t say anything about Jeremiah being on the run, Davin,” Sean spoke in a low voice, narrowing his eyes at the alpha, “Now tell me what actually happened to Jeremiah?”

The two royals stared at the two discerning different ways to approach the situation without breaking into a fight. Martha noticed the tension and chose this moment to step in. She placed her hand on her husband’s hand, “Let’s calm down, boys. I’ll narrate what we know... To help your investigation go along smoothly...”

“Why would you hide anything from me in the first place?” Sean grumbled.

“Well, that’s easy... Jeremiah shot Katie with four arrows... You might want to rethink your champion’s position,” Davin said to him.

“That’s not possible. Did you see him yourself committing the act?” he asked, fury pouring out of him upon hearing the accusation.

“Katie saw him before she was downed by four arrows heavily dosed with wolfsbane. We don’t need more proof than that. You can check her memories if you want although I don’t think you’ll find anything other than what we’ve just told you. If that wasn’t the case, then where is Jeremiah right now?” Davin countered.

The older royal looked back into the crowd and spotted the girl who’d reported Jeremiah’s actions. Katie wasn’t one to miss lurking eyes and she looked up at him amidst her dance with Cole. The look on Sean Sirius’ face was one of amusement... “You have that much confidence in what she can do. How did she come to be shot by Jeremiah then? Do you have an explanation of what might have coerced him to do something so foolish?”

“I don’t know what game he was playing at, but Katie was shot when she’d just confronted the Rouge king,” Davin said. It was like everything he said unlocked another door to boundless information that the man wanted to hear.

“It sounds like you have quite the story right there. Might we get some more refreshments? I want to hear all about what happened in Brigadia,” the man said, taking a seat. His feelings about the traitorous champion seemed all but history now.

“What do you plan to do about your champion?” the King asked.

“I plan to have him interrogated. That’s if he ever shows his face again. I would have ordered his death since I’m not nearly as soft as you, but since it was I who recommended him and his family to be awarded the status of nobles, I would like an answer before having him hanged,” he explained.

“I find your ways to be ugly. Werewolves killing a hunter... It will turn the tide in this war. We won’t have the full allegiance of the hunters if that happens,” Davin said.

“Oh, does that mean we are supposed to just sit back while the hunters themselves shoot down royals? Are you going to tell me that Katie was only grazed by those arrows? That you do not feel any sense of

revenge boiling up within you every time you realised your baby girl almost died when you'd only got her back a second time..."

"Enough Sean... We get your point," Martha raised her voice for the first time in weeks. The royal knew to hold his tongue when the Queen got agitated, out of respect for the lady.

"I'm glad we can see eye-to-eye on this. Honestly, each generation of kings is weaker than the last. It's like you want the humans to forget their place and assume superiority over the werewolves," the man sighed.

"That is not what this is about and you know that. Humans will always know that they are not the same as werewolves and they will always witness their weaknesses. When I look down there, I see our future closer than we ever thought it'd come to be. Once their union is complete, it will only be a matter of time before all the rogues have been purged from the world," Davin said.

"I've heard your scriptures, Davin. No need to go over them again. Now tell me what happened in Brigadia before my tea gets cold," the man said, pouring himself a cup from the kettle that had been brought to him. The air of hostility was finally clearing... The two finally getting comfortable around each other... The Queen sighed at the oddity before her, "You boys are a handful..."

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The remainder of the night, fortunately for Cole, went uneventfully and they were able to enjoy the celebration. Unbeknownst to the hunter that had sent her pupil on a near-impossible errand, Sandra had gone, along with Jason as her escort to the one and only place that this big city had in common with Brigadia (Well, the only thing they had in common of the things that the girls cared about)

"Are you sure you want to go in there?" Jason asked the girl as they stood by the colossal gate of the Hunter's Agency.

"Well, I'm a hunter... Junior hunter with Katie Chase as her mentor. Of course, I have to go in there and test this alcohol for any... drugs. I don't even know what she's suspecting. Cole looked fine to me," Sandra started, about to go off in a string of complaints.

"Cole is immune to drugs. The strong ones only dull his senses, but that's it. You can't use him to find out whether something was drugged or not," Jason informed, forgetting how abnormal it was for Cole to have such an ability.

"Is that a normal occurrence in werewolves? And when you say drugs, do you also mean wolfsbane doesn't work on him?" Sandra asked, suddenly interested in the new topic of distraction.

Using the distraction, Jason rang the alarm at the gate and continued with his explanation, "No, it's not normal, but considering he was one of the two children that were born with the mission of ending the war with the Rogue King, we all figured he'd come with some added abilities. I haven't seen him depending on them so much these days though..."

"Is it possible that he drank all that knowing that it was poisoned?" Sandra asked.

"No, it's not..."

"Huh, that was blunt. Is that carelessness or something else?"

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“Not really... Alcohol itself can’t get him drunk so... He doesn’t really mind what he drinks anyway. Unless his nose can pick up on the drug, it’s safe for him. If it still smells and tastes like alcohol, he will drink it. It won’t get him drunk and he honestly gets bored by the drink in the end and you won’t find him drinking any form of it if there is no occasion to do so,” Jason rambled, trying to finish the explanation and dispel the nerves he was getting from standing at the entrance of a facility full of highly trained werewolf hunters.

The gate began to unlock in a series of clicking sounds coming from the locks inside. With one loud click, the gate began to slide open. On the other side of the gate, an oddity of a man stood before them. He was dressed in tight pink clothes from top to bottom that had Jason wondering if they were custom made... ‘Who wastes their time turning leather pink?’ the man tried comprehending...

What was more threatening about the man, however, were the quivers he carried. He carries four quivers in total, two at his hips strapped to his thighs and two on his back, making the arrows appear from both sides of his shoulders. His bow was firmly in his hands, folded at odd angles to make it more portable.

“And who might you lovelies be? It’s rare for a werewolf, much less one that’s an alpha to show their faces at the doorstep of an esteemed hunter’s agency,” the man’s voice came out with a girlish ring to it and he carried himself with a bounce in his step until he was in front of the visitors.

“My name is Sandra Alastair. This is my friend, Jason...”

“What’s with the rushed introductions? Slow down, dear. It’s not like I’m going to bite you,” the man giggled at Sandra’s lack of composure. The girl couldn’t quite place her finger on it, but this man scared her a lot and she couldn’t figure out why. That was before she took another look at the arrows in the man’s quiver. The tails had been made to take on the shape of a heart. His entire pink theme going on was starting to make sense.

“Would you happen to be Cupid Shooter?” the girl asked him, hoping he would say he was the one.

“Oh my... I had no idea I was this much of a celebrity. How in the world did you know, girl?” the man replied, fanning himself with his free hand.

“It feels like the most obvious thing in the world now that she’s said it,” Jason groaned, forgetting the person he was talking to. Sandra felt like digging a hole and escaping... The worst part was... Jason wasn’t done, “Isn’t Cupid Shooter supposed to be some old dude though?”

This earned the boy a smack on the head that rang through the entire Agency regardless of their position at the entrance. The hunters that moved about inside the agency stopped to see what had happened, but only chuckled at the sight, continuing with their activities.

“You were sort of asking for it,” Sandra told Jason, walking up to him. Whether it was by instinct or because she wanted to was unknown to the girl. For she didn’t think twice about it before pulling Jason into her embrace.

“Are you two a couple?” Cupid Shooter asked.

Heat rushed to the girl's cheeks, "I would like to think so," Jason replied, hugging her back, the pain of the slap to the head completely forgotten.

"Oh, I love a good story. Why don't you tell me what brought you here and I might just help you out? But on one condition... You two are going to have to tell me all about how you met," a mischievous grin took form on the man's face as he couldn't wait to hear everything the two had to tell him.

"Why do things always have to get complicated? And what are the odds that I would be meeting more than one of the four Mighty Hunters in less than a month? There are people who see one in a lifetime... I must be lucky," Jason cooed, his mind half focused on the caring girl in his arms.

"What do you mean 'two'? Oh, I was right about you two. Come on in, now. Don't be shy," the two broke out of their hug to follow the 'Embodiment of the colour Pink.'

"My mentor sent me to get this alcohol tested for any kind of drug. It smells just fine to me and I honestly think she's being paranoid, but I still have to get it tested. She can tell if I were to lie to her, not that I would lie to her if she couldn't tell," Sandra began.

"What makes her think it's been drugged? Has someone been found to have odd symptoms of a poison? It might help the lab know what they are looking for," Cupid Shooter tried.

"She's a peculiar character. Her hunches are usually right anyway. I wouldn't be surprised if she was right about this. And no, there was no one that showed symptoms of being drugged," Sandra was wondering how much she was allowed to reveal to the man. It was like every question would lead to something else. If she really wanted to hide something, then she was going to have to mind the way she spoke, "Is this where you always work, Mr Cupid Shooter?"

"You know I have a name, right. The name's Frank Silver... Though I honestly wish it was Frank Pink instead. Parents lacked the kind of style I'd like to go for. I don't work here. I was told to come here and keep an eye out. Anything beyond that is still a mystery to me. Apparently, something interesting is going to be happening in this capital," the man explained, taking them on a detour from the main building to what appeared more like a hospital ward... the smell of medicine and drugs just wouldn't spare Jason's nose.

"Who sent you here then?" Jason asked him.

"That's a complicated question. There is a council that handles those details. I have never bothered to know who those are," he mentioned.

"I didn't know we had visitors... Frank, what have I said about letting in unauthorised personnel," a feminine voice came from behind them, forcing the two to turn around and Frank to groan in frustration.

"Oh, Beatrice darling, why would anyone I bring in here think of crossing me? It's like committing suicide. And you know I wouldn't have brought them in without a reason," Frank began his explanation, walking up to Beatrice and holding her hand, bearing the fakest serious expression known to mankind.

Beatrice was dressed in the normal casual black that hunters normally wore and had hair that fell to the same height as Katie's. However, she had brown hair and looked well out of her teens. There was no

dismissing the air of power that surrounded these two figures aside from the fact that the Mighty Hunter was significantly stronger than Beatrice.

"I know you would bring a rogue in here just for the gossip," she lashed out at him.

Frank backed up dramatically with his hand on his chest, "I'm offended, Beatrice. I had no idea you think so little of me and them... Messengers of the Royal family itself," he faked tears and pointed to the two visitors, "To have them reduced to lowly rogues is nothing short of heartbreaking..."

"Okay, enough of your antics... They are so embarrassing. How do you even pull them off? Don't answer that... I just want to know who they are and what they are doing here," she finished the summary of what she wanted for him and gestured for him to speak.

"You're no fun, Beatrice..."

"How did you know we'd come from the Royal family?" Jason asked.

"Well, first, you're an alpha that I don't know of. Second, your girl there spoke of drugged alcohol which I'm assuming is from the barbecue party they are hosting right now. It's not that hard to connect the dots. I do have a few inquiries though. You spoke of your mentor and I'm quite sure hunters weren't invited to that party. Now that you've confirmed my first suspicions, what were you doing there?" the man asked.

Suddenly this was against them and Frank had already switched from friendly to hostile in the blink of an eye. His fingers casually caressed the tail of one of the arrows in the quiver by his hip. The bow in his hands unfurling to its full length and stretching the string taught... 'The fastest arrow in the world was now aimed at them...'

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Silence took over the vicinity, along with the other hunters that were minding their own business. Sandra knew all the stories that sang the Mighty Hunter's praises. After witnessing the Thunderclap only a week before, she knew they were more than stories. It didn't matter whether he had the arrow nocked or not, there was nothing that could stop him from firing his arrow true to his target. It made up for him lacking the agility gift.

"Let's not do anything we'll regret here. No one's an enemy here," Jason tried.

"Says the werewolf that led a girl into a Hunter's Agency and almost got away with seeing everything inside it," Beatrice began.

"Let's start over. I'm Jason... I came to the capital of Sirius with my best friend, Cole Lycaon. We mean no trouble by being here... This girl here is a junior hunter," he tried.

"Any one of you can say a variety of things to get out of trouble. I would like to speak to you 'mentor', if you have one at all," Cupid Shooter began.

"Why can't we just check the database of hunters? My name will be there. As for my mentor, you might know the name already. She doesn't like receiving much attention which is why I was trying to keep her identity under wraps," Sandra began, calming her nerves. 'We are not in trouble... We are not in trouble... If anything goes wrong, I can just call Katie.'

“What the name of this mentor you speak of?” Beatrice raised her voice, cutting Sandra out of her thoughts, “I have never seen your face around here. There hasn’t been news of a hunter coming here. Just the return of the Werewolf King. I heard he was returning with his... Can you believe it, Frank? He was supposed to be returning with his daughter,” the woman pinched the bridge of her nose.

“I heard of that as well. Jim Gordon was among the people the advocated for me coming here, by the way. Something about making sure this place was safe for the first month of the Royals’ return. I am supposed to be keeping an eye on the girl and making sure she doesn’t get into trouble. In fact, I was on my way to the palace to see this marvel for myself,” Frank said.

“We are having a serious communication problem right now,” Jason sighed, “And yet we are on the same side...”

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“Huh, what’s that supposed to mean?” Beatrice asked this time, taking an interest in the change in Jason’s composure.

“Well, we came along with the Werewolf King and just dropped here from the party to test a sample of alcohol that the princess thought might be poisoned, nothing more, nothing less,” he summarised.

“Would you happen to have proof of your whereabouts?”

“Why don’t you call the king himself? If that’s too cumbersome, you could try calling Drake or Lina... Or even Cole. I’m sure that hoodlum isn’t doing anything worthwhile,” Jason continued, forcing a chuckle out of Sandra.

“Can we test the beer or not? We’ve taken a lot off your time as it is,” Sandra pitched in, holding up a vial of the liquid for them to see.

Sighing deeply, Frank deactivated his bow and took the vial from the girl, leading the way into the hospital ward in search of the lab. “You two handled yourselves well. Take a seat there and we’ll test the vial as well as check out your alibis. Try anything funny and you won’t see my arrows coming.”

With that said, the man left them in the sofas of the lobby waiting for the lab results. After a short period of silence, Jason spoke up, “Katie makes giving orders look so easy.”

“Yeah, she does. It’s only the messy jobs that she never lets me do... Unless she is ordered to let me do them,” Sandra answered, leaning into her seat for comfort.

“What kind of messy jobs?”

“The kind that you saw in the dungeon back in Brigadia. She does the torturing herself and only lets me do anything connected to harming wolves when she needs my help,” the girl’s mind flashed back to the time they’d been invaded by rogues and had to protect a large number of people from them. “It feels like a long time ago when we were defending Brigadia from an all-out rogue attack. My muscles still ache from that day...”

“I thought you got better,” Jason asked in a caring tone, moving closer to the girl.

"I'll be fine in a few days. They are only dull aches left," she said, allowing herself to lean into the man's shoulder, "Katie's walking again..."

"Yeah, she is... We haven't asked her how, but I'm glad she is," Jason replied, wrapping his arm around her.

"I'm not..." this caught the man off-guard.

"Why is that?" his mind soared through all possibilities of why a friend would want the other to stay crippled, but it all boiled down to jealousy and all other sorts of negative conclusions.

"She's going to start pushing herself again. Harder than she's ever pushed herself before. You didn't see her while we were growing up as children. She'd train so hard she'd fail to walk for days and even then, she would still find ways to train herself. It was only after she got her Prometheus gifts that she learnt to slow down. She was allowed to take on me as my mentor and trained me while making herself better. After the attack that night, she was subjected to a fear that she thought she'd taken care of. The fear of not being able to protect those she cared about," there wasn't a better way she could put it as she kept remembering the past... Before Katie even got close to the title, Rogue Killer...

"It must have been hard for her to get where she was at such a young age. To be shown that she wasn't where she needed to be yet in a way as cruel... Makes you wonder what she'll do next. At least she has you two," Jason spoke up, rubbing circles into the girl's back.

"What about me? What are you talking about?"

"I'm talking about you and Cole. You're not planning on letting her drown in training again. You can help her regulate and not overdo it. She might just miss everything important in her life if that's all she ever does," he explained, "I should know. I watched Cole almost do the same thing when he was told of the way his mate died."

The last statement erased Jason's speech from the girl's mind, blinding her with curiosity, "How old was he when he found out she was dead," she asked.

"I'm not sure... Caden and I became friends with him when he was twelve. He was a loner who would only speak when he wanted to challenge pack warriors. His parents were trying to get him to be more social with the other werewolves, but we soon found out why he didn't like doing that. It's not every day that you learn you won't have a mate when you turn eighteen. Everyone around starts looking like the lucky ones. Every girl that comes your way is basically not yours and already planned for by the moon goddess. It shouldn't have affected him when he was young, but the rumours are hard to keep down," Jason explained.

"Would that happen to be how he found out he was immune to drugs?" Sandra asked.

"Oh no... That's another story," Jason burst out into laughter, "And a hilarious one at that... The first time I saw someone apologizing so much to his friend after shooting him with an arrow laced with wolfsbane..."

"That does not sound like a funny story..." Sandra narrowed her eyes at the man.

“Well, it doesn’t sound funny when you don’t know the details, of course. Besides, Cole is basically impenetrable. The arrow barely scratched him...” he argued, holding back more of his laughter.

Sandra pinched the bridge of her nose once more finding something he’s said interesting. One statement just led to another and another and another... “What do you mean by impenetrable?”

Jason stopped laughing to analyse their conversation, “I have just realised you know nothing about what Cole can do. The rogue killer really knows how to steal the spotlight of the winner of the Royal games. Didn’t it ever bother you that Cole won against Drake in the Royal games and yet Drake is older than him by about four years give or take a few?”

“I’ve never been to the Royal games and barely had any interest in them growing up. Partly because I had no idea what they are about,” she answered innocently, gracing her face with the widest smile she could manage.

“The results are back and your alibis check out... I don’t know how your mentor or whatever found out, but there was definitely a drug in this. A dangerous one too... I actually thought it was out of circulation,” Frank spoke up, walking up to them with a bunch of papers and an envelope to put them in.

“What drug was it?”

“Well, it’s an aphrodisiac. Although it is designed to affect werewolves only and make them obsess over one person in particular. It fakes the symptoms of a mate bond gone wrong... I call it that because of how catastrophic it always turns out. In the wrong dosage, it can be very dangerous to both the victim and the one that has drugged them.

“What you’re saying is that a werewolf that takes this will fall head over heels for whoever served it?” Sandra asked.

“Well, basically yes and no... The drug must contain the DNA of the person serving it if it is to work for them. Otherwise, it makes the wolf attracted to the person that has rigged it with their DNA. It is dangerous and wears off in a matter of hours. Excessive use of it has been known to cause problems such as nose bleeding, headaches, nausea and a lot of other nasty things. You said that there was no one who had been affected yet, so I ask that you warn whoever is at that party of what is in that drink. There could be more...

“No, I doubt they are more... considering I might know who spiked the drink and who the target was,” Sandra stopped him. Sighing deeply, the girl received the envelope from the hunter, “The big city is going to be a handful...”

129 Chapter One Hundred Twenty Nine

The slow dancing time finally came to an end and whoever was chosen to handle the music decided it was best to spice things up. The mood changed the moment the music changed, switching it to the fast-paced and clearing the stage of romantic couples. With the slow ageing process amongst the werewolves, it was times like this that many of them forgot just what boundaries lay between teenagers and youth. Well, the two had something in common when it came to enjoying the thrill of a rave, but the age bracket might have been a little bit larger than human limits dictated.

A forty-year-old werewolf could just as well be mistaken for a twenty-year-old and so the chaos began, shoving the Royal couple off the stage and to the side where they watched the werewolves go wild with smiles on their faces. "Have you seen Sandra?" Katie yelled over the sound of the music.

"Not really... It would be hard to find her in this crowd if she's in it. Let me try talking to Jason," Cole replied, keeping his voice levelled as though there was no music. When Katie strained to hear him, she was surprised by how clear he sounded even with the music that was blazing. The lights in the trees had also taken on an entirely different array of lights and flashes, perfectly simulating the lighting of disco in the open space.

"Did you enjoy the drinks with that she-wolf?" Katie asked him, trying to figure out what must have been going through his mind.

"Well, I don't get drunk and I don't like the taste of alcohol that much. So I don't think I did," he replied, keeping his eyes in the crowd. His eyes searched the crowd relentlessly, "Have you seen Caden?"

"No, I haven't. What do you mean you don't get drunk and what did Jason say?" Katie asked, following the wolf that was now walking about the compound in search of his friend.

"Jason said they ran into someone at the Hunter's Agency who is helping them get the beer tested. Other than that, they are fine," he replied, finally getting his eyes on a group of males around a pool table.

"Hey Gunther, I heard you were beaten by a human girl in a game of pool," one of the men spoke up, smirking mischievously while he said it. The others looked at him questioningly. All he had to do was fall for his friend's trap and he would be eaten by the wolves of friends that he had gathered around him.

Amongst the crowd that was watching the game was Caden. He held a bottle in his hand and continued to watch the game, staying silent whilst listening to the conversation. "Oh, come on guys. You can't bring this up again. I don't know what a human was doing here or where in the hell she had such badass skills at the pool, but I was about to ask her for a rematch. If only she hadn't been interrupted, I wouldn't have..."

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"Oh, stop running your mouth, man. We saw you get beaten without getting the chance to even defend yourself. It was sad to watch, you know," another one of them cut him off, "What was her name, anyway?"

Caden chose this moment to walk away from the group, Cole choosing this moment to approach him, "Hey, Caden, where have you been?"

"Oh, hey Cole," his expression remained blank while he spoke, "I've been here and there... did a bit of exploration. This place is really huge. Did you need me for something?"

After thinking through his thoughts, "Was just checking on you. Now when was the last time you beat me at anything other than pool?"

"If you are asking for a Royal beat-down in the one thing that you lack talent in, then who am I to reject you," Caden smirked.

“Oh, you’ll eat those words. This time, I have a good luck-”

“Don’t finish that statement. Luck will only get you so far, Cole,” Katie cut him off and to Caden, “Don’t go easy on him.”

“I won’t, Your Highness. You have my word,” Caden replied with a slight bow.

“Oh, is that how it is...”

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“Cole Lycaon, the heir to the Lycaon throne, stares at the odds stacked against him in a match against his subordinate, Alpha Caden. It’s been a tough game. We’ve seen extraordinary games tonight, but this might just be the second most epic that we’ve seen since the start. With five red balls on the table and one yellow, Alpha Caden is running out of chances to...”

“Do you have to add the commentary?” Cole raised his voice at Gunther’s antics. Caden hadn’t been kind when they were playing and had done quite a number of moves that had gotten Cole backed up against a corner in a short but intense game of pool.

“I like the commentary. It helps me know who is winning,” Caden came to the man’s defence, rousing cheers in the slowly growing crowd.

‘How did we get to this point?’ Katie sighed, watching the two men-now-boys to her battling it out in a game of pool.

“Alpha Caden braced for the victory, can only stare at his adversary with pity as the...”

“Nope, the commentary has to go,” Cole snapped out of his focus upon hearing how pathetic Gunther was determined to make him look, “It sounds so biased. Who’s side are you on, Gunther?”

“I’m on the winning side,” Gunther replied bluntly, drawing laughter from the crowd.

“Ouch... Might we have an unbiased commentator now?” Cole tried.

“Cole, you don’t have so many shots left and a long way before you can beat me at a game of pool,” Caden pointed out, tearing the royal’s focus from the commentator once again. Cole didn’t have a choice, but to continue the game regardless of what was being said. Gunther hovered over the two of them making sure to turn every small detail into an extremely over-exaggerated scenario. The commentary brought a bigger audience and all watched as Cole was defeated in one game of pool...

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“Come on, Cole. It wasn’t that bad. You’re the one who asked for it,” Caden tried cheering up his friends while they sat as yet another makeshift bar away from the pool table.

“It was a disaster, but I will be graceful in my defeat. You won the game fairly even though you were slightly under the influence of alcohol,” Cole said, puffing out his chest.

“You noticed, huh. How does it feel to be unable to get drunk?” Caden replied, letting his washed-out state through his facade. He’d been trying to act normal the entire time, but Cole had been able to see through it.

“Of course, I would notice if you were drunk. You aren’t the best at hiding it,” Cole answered, getting his friend up and pushing the bottle in his hand away from him, “Let’s get you out of here.”

Helping out seemed to be the only natural thing to do for the hunter, followed by the swarming questions in her mind, “I’ve heard it a few times now. What do they mean by you aren’t resistant to drugs?”

“Oh, I hadn’t told you. I can be poisoned, can’t get drunk and basically can’t be affected by any drugs in my system. Perks of being one of the moon goddess’ chosen,” he replied.

“What seems to be the problem?” Drake’s voice caught their attention, “Let me, Scary sister.” He said, relieving Katie from having to carry one side of the alpha.

“He might have drunk a bit too much,” Cole replied. the four of them went back into the palace. Following Cole’s instruction, they made their way to the guest room Caden had been allocated when they arrived.

“He was fine during the game of pool and even after. How is he barely able to stand now?” Katie asked.

“Well, it could be that he was straining himself to stay awake and sober, but when he was already highly under the influence of the alcohol. It’s rare and happens most when a Royal or alpha is involved. The moment they are discovered, it works like allowing them to let loose and this happens,” Drake explained. The two managed to get him onto the bed. Caden was asleep by the time they placed him on the bed, “This is not the Caden I remember from the time when you had them help you in the Royal games.

“He has been down lately. I don’t know how to turn things back to the way they were. I guess we’ll just have to let time heal him,” Cole replied.

“Who’s Ashley?” Drake asked. When he noticed the weird looks he was getting, he continued, “He talked about her when he was talking to the rogues that night. They knew her as well, but I was clueless about the whole thing.”

“Ashley was a rogue that managed to renounce her rogue status during a Prometheus evaluation. After her death, we found that Caden had heard her entire story...”

“He’d chosen to protect her and lost her anyway,” Drake surmised the remainder of the story, “I’ve heard of such a thing. If it was his mate, he would be dead or at least about to. I’m glad that’s not the case. Cole still needs someone to be there for him when the Sirius family wins the Royal games this year.”

“Just when you were starting to sound like a compassionate person, you go and say something so useless,” Cole sighed, rousing the angelic laughter of his mate(Well, one could say it was highly exaggerated by the mate bond between them...)

130 Chapter One Hundred Thirty

Fortunately for Katie, the rest of the night went uneventfully and the couple slept peacefully. Katie considered this fortunate when she woke up without the urge to kill Crysta that morning. It was a

refreshing feeling. Letting go of the anger from that incident had proved impossible the night before and she'd gone quiet just to conceal it. It wasn't like there was much she had to say anyway.

"It's five in the morning and you're awake already?" Cole groaned when he felt her roll out of the bed.

"Says the man that's awake at the same exact time," she countered, rolling back so that she faced him.

"Well, I have to make sure to put Caden through hell in today's pack training. Waking up at this time is just a small price to pay for that," he answered.

"I don't even know what to say right now. You woke up this early for revenge... on your best friend... after losing a game of pool where he was drunk... the last part is quite embarrassing though," Katie giggled.

"That is not helping. I would have thought you'd be trying to save him from his torment," Cole tried, pulling the girl closer to him, a mistake that he realised later. His wolf surged forward and tried to seize control of him.

"Umm Cole, am I imagining things or does something happen to you every time we hug?" Katie asked, after noticing the silence that took over them. Every time he embraced her, she would feel him go tense and he'd go silent. His scent got stronger as well and she'd notice how hard it was for him to let go of her.

"I do remember you asking for some time before we got to that," Cole explained, "Even though it gets harder to watch you walk around without my mark on your neck."

Fear coursed through Katie's body chilling her to the bone at the mention of being marked. She'd only heard rumours about how werewolves bit their mates to signify that they'd been claimed by another. It was something they took pride in, but at the time, all she saw was a painful barbaric practise that wasn't even logical to her. At the time, she was human, but now...

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"Cole..." she whispered into his ear, forgetting everything she'd learnt in hunter training. Cole wasn't a random wolf that she could beat up at the slightest sign of trouble. This was Cole... the last person that would ever want to hurt her. The same person that was able to save her from her coma when she nearly died a week ago.

"I can hold my wolf back, but there is a limit to how many times I can deny him the opportunity of marking you. You must make up your mind about this soon, Katie. Receiving a mark is nearly painless when there is consent. If I lose control and mark you against your will..."

"What makes you think you can... Why wouldn't I fight back?" Katie's voice had never sounded smaller. It was like the Prometheus gifts that made her powerful simply refused to intervene...

Cole placed a kiss on the girl's neck and marvelled at the effect it had on the girl sending shivers through her entire body, "Do you still think you'd fight back?"

"Would you really lose control of your wolf if I take long to accept your mark?" Katie asked.

"I honestly don't know... I've heard of werewolves losing control and doing things I would never dream of doing to you. I don't think I would let my wolf stoop to a level that low," he explained to her, however, the more he took in her scent, the more he realised just how hard it was to keep his word, "How ironic?"

"What's ironic?"

"I can't be affected by poisons and drugs... and yet, your scent has an overwhelming effect on me," he replied. His wolf began to calm down and retreat having confirmed the difficulty level of the task at hand. Katie felt the man's hands finally relax around her and she was able to relax as well.

'You better let him do it soon. I know it's scary, but we can't put him through all that,' Ashley piped in, smitten by the man who had his arms wrapped around them.

"Cole, you said something about pack training," Katie asked all of a sudden, pulling away from their hug to look him in the eye.

"Oh yeah, that. It's common for all packs. The able males and females are trained in combat and everything else required to keep them capable of protecting the pack from a variety of enemies," he explained.

"Well then, what are we waiting for? You have your whole revenge thing going on and I have to find Sandra and get the results of the drug you drank yesterday," with that, she broke out of their embrace and began to prepare for a morning training session.

Cole sighed, craving the warmth of her near him, but unable to complain about it, "I might just let Caden off the hook. I'm interested in challenging Drake once again. He says he's gotten a lot better since the last time we trained," Cole mused, trying to formulate a plan for the morning.

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The morning was cold and refreshing against the hunter's skin. Sandra's parents weren't kidding when they said the place was cold this time of the day. She'd found the junior hunter's room and woken her friend up for training. Like her mentor, she was responsible for all her training and she'd been slacking off in her duties.

Sandra rubbed her palms against her bare arms in an effort to generate some kind of heat. Katie had insisted they train with less clothing so that the girl would get used to the cold, but Sandra held underlying suspicions that the girl had ulterior motives. They finally walked out of the palace and into the backyard, which had already been cleared. Werewolves were scattered about the place in small clusters, all dressed in similar outfits.

"You made it. I thought Sandra woke up as early as you," Cole called out to them while he jogged up to them, his two 'henchmen' in tow.

"I'm human, Cole. Do not compare me to your monstrous girlfriend," Sandra barked at him, wiping her eyes once more, "I should be fine after a few minutes of jogging."

"You're still an exceptional human," Jason spoke up, placing a kiss at the back of Sandra's hand, with a smirk on his face.

“Good morning, Jason,” Sandra replied, “Caden, what’s wrong with you?”

Caden rubbed his forehead and grimaced in pain, “Just a terrible headache. Nothing a few painkillers won’t be able to fix. That’s if I don’t heal by the time we reach the training grounds.”

“Training grounds?” Katie asked.

“Yeah, that’s where we are headed. I hope you can keep up big sister,” a new voice joined them. Lina walked up to them dressed in a baggy tracksuit. Her face beamed when she realised she would have to run with her sister.

“No, no, no... She just started walking again. You are not going to push her to your insane speeds so early,” Cole complained, stepping in between the two of them.

“I agree with Cole. Little sister, take it easy on your Monstrous Sister for a bit. When we are sure that she’s fine, we’ll let you race with her,” Drake pitched in.

“Did you just call me...”

“Still working on it... I’ll soon find the right title for you. Until that time comes, you will have to endure the choices I’ve drawn up. Isn’t that fine, Murderous Sister?”

“Lead the way, Cole. I am not having this conversation,” Katie screamed, pushing the alpha to start jogging out of there. The rest laughed at her before falling in line. Lina groaned when she realised just how slow they were going and decided to run ahead. Katie couldn’t help but overhear her mumbling complaints, ‘First, they dress me like a dead body in a body bag, then they stop me from having fun with my big sister... What more will they stop me from doing?’

After a while, they’d split into two after Caden challenged Jason to a race. “Lina is treated like Daddy’s little girl,” Katie couldn’t help, but point out.

“Oh yeah... Father would never let anything happen to her. She used to hate it until Mother told her the story of your disappearance eighteen years ago. When Mother and Father were blessed with another daughter, Father vowed against failing her the way he feels he failed you,” Drake explained.

“But he didn’t...”

“We’ve tried to convince him otherwise, but there is nothing that can be done about it. He loves his daughter too much,” Drake cut her off.

Katie almost let the thoughts get to her before something else hit her mind, “Hey Sandra, what did you find out yesterday? I heard you went all the way to the Hunter’s Agency. I appreciate that. Now, what did you find out?”

“Oh, is the cripple trying to join us in training as well... That’s going to be interesting,” a feminine voice pitched in before Sandra could answer her. The hunter looked up into the early morning sky... ‘Are you up there, Celeste? Forgive me if I end up dismembering one of you werewolves...’

‘I don’t think prayers work like that... You know what... Never mind,’ Ashley sighed upon hearing the girl’s utterly ridiculous silent prayer.

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Celeste, on the other hand, was having a fit of laughter when the prayer reached her. Seth sighed heavily at the oddly phrased prayer...