

## Chosen 191

### 191 Chapter One Hundred Ninety One

Trevor let go of the wolf, pushing him away as though Wyatt was a filthy rag that he didn't know was on him. Katie was impressed although she had no intention of expressing it to the boy. However, the short display of power wasn't enough to quell the anger that raged on within the royal. "You will be assigned to the patrols with the rest of the junior hunters. We are a little short on human resources. I'm sure that will be no problem for you," Trevor spoke up, folding his hands across his chest.

"Yeah, whatever..." Wyatt let his head fall into his hands. Right beside him, Katie had stopped pacing, "and why is Lina hanging over me?"

"I'm right here, Wyatt," Lina spoke up, raising his mind for added effect. Wyatt's expression fell as reality finally came crashing down on him. The wolf beside him shifted back into her human form... Well, she was far too angry to make it that far and stopped in her half-shifted form which Wyatt found much scarier. The creature beside him had white hair(fur) that came down in a thinning line down to her nose. Her eyes were bright blue and clearly furious.

"Katie..." Cole called out to her.

"Not another word, Cole," the girl ordered.

"Think about what you're doing, Katie. You can't make irrational decisions when..." the royal tried to reach her.

"I am perfectly aware of that, Cole. More than most of you, but I cannot let this go like I didn't find my sister about to be prey to a bear," Katie yelled at him. The images only then flowed into the man's mind.

Cole had nothing more to say on the matter. After the unbridled rage he'd read from his mate, he knew his sway on her was limited. He only hoped there would be a body to return at least. He wanted to rush to her and stop her, but his wolf disagreed with that course of action. 'If you go too far...' he started through the mind link.

'Have a little faith in me, Cole...'

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'I find that hard to do when Crysta almost lost her life...' the girl was taken aback by this response. She mentally sighed before getting back to reality to pass her judgement. "The royals have let the rest of the alphas do what they want for a long time that you are all starting to act a little out of line," Katie spoke up.

"You're one to talk. You've only been a royal for a few weeks," Wyatt spat at her while she walked about. The girl's mind had already come up with a solution that could quell her anger without having to get violent with the boys.

"Well, I am a royal nonetheless. I have done my research, surprising as it might be, but I have done so. Alpha Wyatt and Alpha Liam are henceforth stripped of the right to take the position of alpha of their packs. Until you prove yourselves worthy of leading a pack, you will not be able to take over from your fathers," Katie said to them.

Wyatt rose from his spot on the ground, "That's outrageous. You don't have the right to do such a thing." He bellowed at the girl, his eyes flashing bright red.

"I have half a mind to completely strip of your title and have you demoted straight to a normal werewolf," the girl snapped back at him. The two of them stared at each other intently, tension building through the air.

"She doesn't have the power to do such a thing," Liam's voice cut through the air, "Does she?"

"She does... I have rarely seen it being done, but she can do it," Cole sighed. "And she is the only one that can revoke it. Your parents will be unable to help you out of this. Until the royal that declared this revokes it, you cannot be crowned heir to your pack."

"That's ridiculous. It breaks the rule of the royals renouncing the control they have over the rest of the werewolves," Wyatt argued.

"It does... if Katie used her tone to enforce this law. To keep the peace, your parents will have to abide by the rules and end all procedures to have you crowned," Katie was able to calm down as her mate made the necessary explanations. She walked up to her sister and in a soft tone, "Let's get you to your room."

Katie walked away with her sister, "What about Crysta?" Liam mumbled.

"Don't lump me in with the likes of you. You can lick the wounds of your stupidity on your own," the delta huffed, walking away from them. When she'd just reached the entrance to the hotel, a mind link came through to her from Liam, 'Is that how much we mean to you?'

'Don't try to guilt-trip me, Liam. I told you what's happening. It's up to you to accept the truth and find a way to fit into the world as it was meant to be. The life you thought you would lead... That's not what happens in the real world. You had your fun... Now wake up, unless you enjoy drowning,' Crysta replied, feeling a pang of pain that she'd left them there.

Cole gave his mate a tight hug as she passed by him, "I didn't know..." he began whispering.

"It's okay, Cole. I blocked you out when I noticed how much trouble the girl was in. I didn't want you to worry about it," The two of them parted and Cole stayed behind with the three boys. Trevor watched the scene with a look of interest.

"Katie and Cole make everything here so much more interesting. I only recently heard of someone giving a Mighty Warrior the beating of his life," Trevor piped up when the girls were gone and burst into laughter of his own. When no one laughed with him, he only shrugged and continued to laugh on his own. The others only looked at him with looks of surprise... 'Talk of weird...'

"What are you still doing here?" Wyatt spat at the royal.

"I will make sure the two of you make it to your rooms as well. Who knows what could happen this late in the night?" Cole replied with a sarcastic smile on his face.

Liam was the first to start the walk back to the hotel, "The room won't find us waiting out here. Damn you, Katie Sirius." Even as the alpha walked, he could feel the sudden decrease in the power he held. The boost given to him by his status was starting to fade. He could feel that he was weaker and this only

made his anger burn brighter, 'She thinks she's above the law and can walk around doing whatever she wants.'

"You will be careful what you say about the future Luna to the Lycaon empire," Cole said to him, following behind Wyatt.

"I will say whatever I wish should be said..."

"Liam, that's enough," Wyatt spoke up, cutting his friend off before he could make everything worse. Cole smiled at the smart move from the alpha. There was nothing good that could have come from saying more about the matter.

"It's never too late to choose a different path. Have you heard of an alpha's hunt?" the royal asked them.

"We have heard of it, but it's only something the royals go through. The alphas compete in the woods, performing various tasks that can only be accomplished by the one who is destined to become king. It's a foolish tradition that I find useless," Liam replied.

"Well, only someone that would find it useless would be this bad at ruling a pack. Until Katie deems you worthy of taking over your pack, you won't be able to. Your powers as an alpha diminished. You're a stubborn one..."

"Quiet, all of you... Just... shut it..." Wyatt snapped at the two of them. Cole spared him a glance and took notice of his crestfallen expression. His anger softened at the sight of the alpha. Unlike Liam, Wyatt looked sad about what had happened. 'There might be hope for them yet...'

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The three girls walked together, Crysta staying behind them while they made their way to Lina's room. The sound of their footsteps echoed through the halls. The sounds coming from the other rooms were limited and few. 'These students are quiet... If only those in Brigadia were this quiet during lunch hours. They would make the meal so much more enjoyable...'

"Do you have to follow us all the way, Crysta?" Katie asked the tail following them.

"Well, if it doesn't bother you, I would also like to see that the princess makes it back to her room," the delta replied, sending them into another short silence, "...along with one other thing."

"I was almost impressed," Lina chuckled.

"Well, I would have done this anyway, but what I've seen today has left me curious. Every day with the moon goddess' chosen is a day of new surprises," Crysta argued, calming down while she finished.

"Well, then out with it then. What are you asking?" Katie asked her.

"Well, I saw you come from the forest with Lina. You looked just like her and I don't mean you were white. I mean..."

"Thin, slender... malnourished..." Lina interrupted.

"I said nothing about that last one and it's not true," Crysta snapped at her.

"If only I'd heard that these past years, I would believe you," Crysta was silenced. It was finally coming out. Lina was not going to make her redemption easy and she'd known it. It still didn't prepare her for what was to happen, "I'm sorry, Lina. It was never true."

Lina was taken aback by the sudden apology, "No..." she replied, her voice breaking, "You don't get to apologize for that easily after all this time. People don't just turn a new leaf the moment someone new walks into town." Katie was surprised by the sudden outburst and found herself going over the words that had just been spoken or more like yelled. 'Huh, someone's new is in town, who came into... Oh, they just talked about me and I didn't even notice...' she shrugged.

192 Chapter One Hundred Ninety Two

Katie stepped away from the two girls and leaned against the wall aside from them. If only there was a way she could become invisible, this would have been a good time to do it. Lina glared at the delta before her, an expression Katie found hard to decipher plastered on her sister's face. Emotions were mixed into her countenance as though she was deciding how to feel about the person before her.

"I know that Lina... and I won't try to pretend I didn't do anything to make your life terrible these past years. I know what I have done and I know what I should have done, but still..." the delta bit her lip and looked away from the royal. The words couldn't quite get out of her.

"Still what, Crysta?" Lina called out to her.

The delta sighed, "I won't let it go on the way it's been all this time. I might be too late. I might be on time, but I will do what I must to put an end to this," her voice was almost a whisper.

"Sounds more like something you tell yourself to sleep at night," Katie pitched in all of a sudden.

Crysta snapped at her, a look of shock on her face, "That's..."

"Cruel, I know," the girl said, pushing off the wall and walking up to the delta, "However, if you want to accomplish the small dream I just heard you whisper, you'll have to be a lot louder than that."

"I will do it," Crysta growled at Katie.

"Oh, I know you will try. I'll just be watching to see how far you're willing to go," Katie replied, "Good night, Crysta. We've reached Crysta's room." Katie put her arm around her sister and steered her away from the seething delta. A smirk that she hid from Lina appeared on her face. She was happy to finally see someone step up amidst the unfairness that surrounded her sister.

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The door of the green floral room opened the moment they reached it, revealing a slim girl dressed in a green night gown. She didn't bother with greeting them as she was very sleepy to take pleasantries into consideration, "You spend a really long time in the bathroom, Lina," Honour yawned, rubbing her eyes.

"You opened this door before we knocked. Stop pretending to be sleepy," Lina scoffed and pushed past her friend. Honour got out of the girl's way just in time to avoid being shoved back into the room. Lina stomped over to one of the two beds and allowed herself to fall into the bed.

Katie stepped into the room and closed the door beside her, sighing, "I would tell you not to forget where the shower is, but there are more important things to talk about than that."

"I will take a bath, no problem. What are you still doing here, Katie?" Lina asked.

"Well..." she stalled, "I wanted us to be clear that I won that small race we had."

Lina perked up from her bed and faced the hunter, "No, that is not true. I won it and we both know you cheated. Since when does your wolf look exactly like mine."

"Oh, that was cool, wasn't it?" the hunter swooned, remembering the feel of the wind when she ran in her new form. She cut through the air with so much ease that she didn't realise how much the air itself had been holding her back. Her mind soared back to the experience and finally to the point where she was sure she had beaten the girl to the clearing before the hotel.

"No, it's not good. You don't know what happens to werewolves that look weird like me. You don't have to be happy about having a form that's..."

"I'm getting tired of hearing you putting yourself down," Katie snapped at her. When she noticed the look of fear on her sister's face, she calmed down, rubbing her temples, "You're the fastest of all of them. I've been a hunter the biggest part of my life. I know what speed means for those of us that have hunted down rogues. I hope Sandra has been teaching you well."

Lina's eyes widened at the realisation, "I thought..."

"I don't like the idea of watching werewolves fighting werewolves when rogues still roam the planet killing both races. It's pointless and childish... However, I didn't say I was against it. Do your best tomorrow," Katie told her, searching for the door. 'This would be a good time for an exit...' Ashley sang in her head.

'And now it feels like you've just ruined it...'

'Well, I would be thinking of where Cole was right about now if I were you,' Ashley stirred her focus. "I need to go check on Cole and the two rejects..." Katie mentioned before opening the door, "Have a good night."

The two of them replied and with that, the girl walked out of the room and into the hallway. She let her bond open up to her mate and began to follow where it is she felt he would be, 'See, I told you it was much easier for you to look for someone through...'

'Oh, would you stop praising your abilities already? He's not in our room and that is what should be causing you reason to worry,' Katie tried.

'Oh, you haven't seen what I have. Cole is more than capable of taking care of himself,' Ashley replied.

'What's that supposed to mean?' the wolf was silent and non-respondent after that, earning a loud groan from Katie as they neared a room that radiated testosterone.

The door was open and five werewolves occupied it. Cole stood with his alphas facing Liam and Wyatt who were seated still on a bed paying attention to the royal that spoke to them. The voices from the

room went silent as soon as the girl had seen them. Cole turned to face her, "Hey honey. Is something wrong?"

"No, I was just wondering where you were," she replied, staying at the threshold of the doorway, "Jason, where did Sandra sleep?"

"Wondering where many people are is more like it," Cole smirked.

"Well, if I'm not mistaken, your follower is bunking with Crysta. I'm not sure if that's a wise combination, but it is what it is. The delta wouldn't have it any other way. It was either Honour or Sandra and that was final. I felt sorry for Bree and Ginger. Crysta barely pays them much attention these days..." Jason communicated.

Sensing his mate's unrest, "You understand what we've just discussed. I don't think I need to add anymore on the matter," Cole summarised the confrontation and walked up to her, "Are you okay?"

"Yeah, I just realised there are a lot of people to watch out for and I can't be in all those places at once," she replied as they walked away.

"I can vouch for Crysta. She has purely good intentions," Caden spoke up, keeping emotion out of his voice while he did.

"I'll take your word for it," Katie responded without sparing it a second thought, "Would you get me to their room at least. That should be my last stop before I get to bed."

"It's quite late, Katie. You should get some rest," Cole tried, even though he was well aware of her response to his suggestion.

"I will get the rest I need, Cole. All in good time," it was no use arguing with her. 'You're impossible, my love,' Cole's voice echoed in her mind bringing a smile to her face. She pecked him on the cheek, "I will make my way back to you when I'm done."

"Don't take too long," Cole replied, taking the stairs up. Katie followed the two alphas down the stairs. The care with which the royal spoke brought warmth to her heart. 'It's nice to get tired knowing you're going to end up in bed with someone as amazing as...'

'Your thoughts leave me speechless sometimes, Ashley...'

'And yet you never let me finish them,' the wolf groaned, 'One of these days, I will take over your body and do the things that we were meant to...'

'And then you wonder why I stop you from finishing thoughts of that kind,' Katie cut her off once again. This time Ashley remained quiet and started to recede to the back of her mind, 'We aren't so different though...' Katie could feel a smile coming from the wolf.

"What are you smiling about?" Jason asked the royal. He'd been watching her, along with Caden, but the two had chosen to remain silent. It wasn't the first time the girl had made expressions without provocation.

"Oh, nothing. An inside joke with my wolf," Katie replied.

“Figures...”

“What’s that supposed to mean?” the girl asked.

“Well, Luna Katie, you tend to let the emotions that come from your conversations with your wolf slip out. It’s clear for many people to see and also a little bit...”

“Spit it out...”

“Creepy...” Caden gasped at the word that had just escaped his comrade’s mouth. He stepped away from the two of them.

“Do you guys need a room?” he asked. Jason flashed him an angry look, but the man only shrugged at his friend. He wasn’t the one in trouble after all.

“No, not really. I like Jason’s honesty. What about you, Caden? Do you think I look creepy when I make expressions from the conversations with my wolf?” Katie turned to the alpha, ignoring a now-swelling Jason. The alpha looked as though he was about to explode with pride for his noble deed of honesty, while his counterpart turned blue with fear of insulting his Luna.

193 Chapter One Hundred Ninety Three

The air in this part of the world was humid and the heat was intense, although just enough to remind you to walk with an umbrella or a cap at least. A black SUV cruised across the highway at dizzying speeds. The highway was void of any cars allowing them to drive at speeds one would otherwise advise against. The inhabitants of the car were headed somewhere urgently and they didn’t mind the speed the driver used.

A couple in the back seats spoke in hushed tones, “Do you think they are all there this time?” the man asked.

“Well, that would be one rare oddity. We’ll be lucky to find Thorrin there at all,” the woman replied.

“Oh, he’s far too busy to come to a family meeting. Who can blame him anyway?” the man replied as though it was obvious that the mentioned person was fond of missing such rare occasions. The woman at his side stretched for what felt like the hundredth time since the start of the car ride and lay on his lap. “You remind me of a cat,” he chuckled.

“Oh, shut up. I sometimes wonder what you’re made of. That was one hell of a flight. Why did Brigadia have to be on the other side of the world?” the woman groaned, making herself more comfortable best she could. The car was spacious and they were the only inhabitants, a luxury they hadn’t enjoyed in eighteen years.

A window separating them from the driver slid down to allow them to view the other side of the car, “We are reaching the Chase mansion, my lord,” the driver spoke.

“Thank you, Marx. Stop the car at the main gates. We’d like to take the scenic route to the house,” Tom ordered before the window closed once more. It didn’t take long before the car came to a stop. They got out of the car and watched Marx drive away.

"It's been long, hasn't it?" Marie spoke up. Tom looked into the gardens that barred their direct path to the luxurious mansion that lay a safe distance of five hundred metres away from them.

He sighed, his senses picking up on everyone that was inside. He doubted part of the information that came into his mind but didn't mention a thing to his wife, "Yes, it has been a long time since we were here. I wonder what has changed."

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The couple took their time while they walked through the gardens, taking the time to look at everything that didn't look the same. "Remember the time you fought Alice when she was still a novice one time."

"Oh, that... We were just having fun as girls," Marie replied when they came across a metallic bench with a dented armrest. The woman ran her hand across the dented metal armrest. I remember panicking after she hit her head on this. I thought I'd killed a hunter. It was the hunters' gravest crime, and I seemed to have stumbled upon it," Marie thought back.

"I was surprisingly calm that time. The girl was too stubborn to go out that way. She must be in her thirties right about now," Tom replied with a smile on his face. However, his wife didn't smile back.

"That's all we can do, isn't it? Guess at her age without even knowing where she is or if she's even alive," Marie spoke sadly.

"We will meet her again, you know. She might look older than us when that time comes, but nothing will be different," Tom tried to comfort her, but his voice wasn't as convincing as he wished it could be. Hunters were stationed in different parts of the world the moment they turned professional and there was nothing they could do about it. Those that got better as professionals were even harder to find. There was no guarantee that they would see their comrade ever again.

Instead, the man turned his face to look at the mansion, "We should get going. The family is waiting for us," he said. Rubbing the tears from her face, Marie stood up and turned to the mansion.

"You're right... Let's go..." the couple braced themselves, holding hands and making their way for the mansion ahead. They came to the large wooden doors and pushed them open to reveal the group of people on the inside of the mansion.

"And the prodigal duo returns after eighteen years. Long time no see Thomas," a man lounging on a sofa spoke up, keeping his eyes plastered on the cards in his hands. He wanted nothing to break his concentration and yet, that seemed to be an impossibility in the family he had been born into.

"I see he's no different," Tom mentioned.

"Oh, don't mind him, dear brother. We are happy to have you," a woman got up from her seat followed by the other two seated in the same game of cards.

"Thank you, Evelyn," Tom replied as he embraced his sister.

"You're welcome, little brother. So you weren't kidding when you said you weren't going to age one bit," Evelyn mused, taking in the young look of her brother. He barely looked a day older than the last time she'd seen him.



“So you’re back now, are you? Do we have a hunter or a werewolf?” a voice interrupted.

“Nice to see you too, Lazarus,” Tom smiled at his uncle walking up to the new arrival and hugging him, “Is Thorrin here?”

The room went dead silent at the mention of Thorrin. They all looked uncomfortable at the mention of the man, “Umm, it has been a long time... And for once he actually showed up to a family meeting,” Lazarus said.

“Uncle, it’s not like anything bad has happened to him. He’s the...”

“Most powerful hunter in the world... and also the most paranoid Chase hunter you will ever find. Go easy on him when you see him. So much rides on his shoulders that he doesn’t know how to hold it all,” Uncle Lazarus cut him off. Their uncle was a bulky man and a retired hunter that had trained them growing up. He knew them inside out and if he’d noticed something wrong with the Mighty Warrior in their family, there was definitely something wrong with him.

Signalling to his wife, the two of them ascended the stairs, guided by Thomas’ uncle to meet the last of their family. Thorrin Chase stood at the balcony that was raised highest in the highest part of the mansion overlooking the landscape. The sun was high in the air and the scenery posed no reason for such scrutiny and yet the man continued to stare out at it, “You’ve been gone a long while,” Thorrin’s voice sounded. It was deeper than Tom remembered and held more power than he could fathom.

“I guess we have been gone quite a while. It was a little after our wedding when we got called for a mission to save on the...”

“I know the details, brother,” Thorrin cut him off.

Thomas went quiet and watched his brother closely. Noticing the silence, Uncle Lazarus chose this moment to leave the room. When the man was well out of listening range, Tom walked onto the balcony to take a closer look at his brother. The man before him looked much older than him despite their two year age difference.

Even with the time that Tom had spent unable to age, his brother looked to be ageing faster than he should have, “What’s on your mind, brother?”

Thorrin finally took the time to look at his brother. He looked him up and down, sighed and set his eyes back on the horizon, “I’ve been trying to track him with no success. I think of a lot of things these days. I feel I have the power to bring an end to him but lack the means or the blessing from Prometheus to do it.”

“Well, I do know someone with that exact same dream. The only difference is that she already set her eyes on the Rogue King and lived to tell the tale,” Tom replied.

“I heard that story a while ago. I wanted to hear you confirm it yourself...” he said quietly, “Are you still the same as you left, Tom?”

“Yes, I am. Why would I be any different?”

“We didn’t bother to disturb the two of you because you had been chained by the moon goddess to a responsibility that was worth it, but now I can only wonder whether you’re back, but chained by the goddess in a different way,” the man responded.

Thomas drew a short breath at the statement. He had something else in relation to addressing, but now seemed to be the wrong time, having driven the conversation in this direction, “I was thinking of going to Sirius.”

The man tore his gaze from the clouds and looked at his brother with a confused expression, “Whatever for?”

“I don’t know yet, but I know there is trouble brewing there as well. We all know how the foresight of the Chase family works. It’s never clear and yet, it never lets us down,” Tom explained.

“I feel no danger associated in that place. It’s well protected,” Thorrin said to him before his eyes widened in realisation, “Oh, so she’s about to do something stupid again.”

Tom nodded in response to the man’s words, “I’m afraid that’s a possibility.”

“Haven’t you taught her anything? For someone who was raised by the Chase family, she is very disappointing. I would give her a thrashing if I ever got to...”

“She reminds me of you, Thorrin,” Marie stopped him this time.

The man turned and set his eyes on the woman for the first time since they had got into the room. Saying he hadn’t noticed her presence would be a grave error. He seemed to be aware of everything miles and miles within the mansion. However, with his concentration split, he couldn’t do everything that was required of him. Pleasantries were amongst the things he’d taken out of his responsibilities to compensate for the strain he put on himself on a daily basis.

Seeing her face after all these years, however, seemed to release all the tense veins that pulsed in his head. He looked visibly relaxed for the first time since they’d met him on this balcony and he seemed to look younger when he relaxed, “Marie...” was all he could say.

194 Chapter One Hundred Ninety Four

“It’s been long, Thorrin. You look awful,” she replied flashing the man a kind smile before getting enveloped in a hug that lasted longer than anyone could have withstood.

“What happened to you, Thorrin?” she asked him.

“Well, not much really. I’ve been stationed in so many places and trying to keep myself busy. Slaying as many rogues as I could to make this world a better place. Now that I think of it, I haven’t thought much about anything else since I set out to purge the rogues.

“Could you still be angry at me?” the woman asked him.

“No, that’s not it. I was at first, but... I couldn’t do anything about that. I found solace in performing my job and honing my abilities. I earned the title of Mightiest Warrior because of it,” he responded.

Tom couldn't read into him anymore after he'd seen his wife. The story of their lives had been burned to the back of his mind. None of his reactions to his wife surprised him. He only sighed and smiled at his brother's much more relaxed state. 'Eighteen years and you're still trying to walk away from all this. I don't think I would have taken that long getting over it...'

"Are you going to Sirius with him as well?" the man asked her.

"Yes, I am. I have to check on Katie before she gets herself into more trouble. I thought I'd lost her the last time. Why can't you feel anything going wrong in Sirius?" she asked.

"I can feel everything about to happen in Lycaon. I have ordered for hunters to be deployed in Sirius, however, the readings I'm getting from Lycaon show more signs of 'him' being here," Thorrin replied.

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"I see. I hope you find him this time," she replied.

"Why do you have to go? You aren't responsible for that werewolf anymore. She has parents now. If she gets into trouble, it should be on them, not you," Thorrin huffed.

"Well, I might have lost my responsibility to the goddess, but I gained a daughter in those eighteen years. If she ever comes here, she is to be treated like family," Marie replied.

"A Chase werewolf... We'll see how that will go," the man responded, "Now if you would follow me, we have a meeting to start." The Mighty Warrior, in much higher spirits, sauntered out of the room and led them downstairs to the lobby where the rest of the family had gathered. There were more people in the room. An old couple greeted Marie and Tom as they were seeing them for the first time.

"I'm glad we are all here. As the main branch of the Chase family that still stays on the right path of producing quality hunters, and I, as the head of this family, call for this meeting to start," Thorrin called to all of them.

"Since when was Thorrin crowned the head of the family?" Marie found herself whispering to Evelyn.

"Well, that was right after he became a Mighty Warrior. We were all surprised by our father's decision, but it was final and there was nothing any of us could do against it. He is the most powerful Chase. None of us has the power to oppose him. I see your presence did him some good," Evelyn whispered back, winking at the end.

The woman sighed at her friend's statement and paid attention to the 'Head' of the family. 'So the head of the family is the same person that has never attended a family meeting. Nice reputation,' the woman thought, 'Is he really that busy or did he give up everything in his life when we left?'

"It warms my heart to see that the family can come together once again after such a long time. I don't know what the rest of you had organised and I know that we are in the middle of a crisis at the moment. Rogues flooding the woods surrounding the Lycaon capital. The locals barely feel safe in their homes and there has been nothing done to curb their numbers. I could say that I'm disappointed in what the hunters have become after all this time. Perhaps the peaceful times have made them go soft..."

“Would you refrain from insulting the very organisation you work for, Thorrin? It’s beneath you,” Uncle Lazarus spoke up. Refreshments were brought into the room and set on the table while the meeting continued.

“You’re right about that. Anyway, I asked around and heard that there has been a group of hunters deployed to investigate the movements of the rogues,” Thorrin spoke up.

“Clever...” Tom replied, his gaze set on nothing in particular as he deciphered the situation.

“Enlighten me, dear brother,” Thorrin spoke up, taking a seat and staring at his ‘all-knowing’ brother.

Tom noticed all eyes had been shifted to him and cleared his throat, “Well, with this many rogues in one place, there stands a chance that ‘he’ could appear. The hunters have gathered most of their resources to protect Lycaon. If they wanted, an all-out attack on the rogues could wither the rogues in number more than we ever have since this all started. But if there is to be a chance of getting the rogue king, spooking the rogues would not be the right move for this kind of thing. Sending a small group of hunters to investigate and make sure if the rogue king was around would be a clever move. That’s all my opinion though.”

Thorrin rubbed his temples, “I guess you’re still the same as you’ve always been. That’s the same thing they said. I don’t think it’s important that they send spies when the Chase family can just feel for the abomination pinpoint his position.”

“You make it sound so easy brother and yet here we are, fighting a war that our predecessors have been fighting for years. The Chase family has been around for generations and yet we aren’t any closer to bringing this war to an end,” Micah spoke up.

“What’s that supposed to mean? We finally have someone amongst us that possesses both of the man god’s gifts. We have never been closer to bringing the rogue king down than we are now,” Thorrin bellowed at the man.

“I’m just saying the obvious brother. When Tom and Marie sensed him the last time, there was nothing they could do about it and you surely couldn’t make it to them in time. That was the one time we were sure the rogue king was going to make an appearance and Jim Gordon was only in time to save Katie Sirius from meeting the furies,” Micah replied.

“Oh, don’t be so hard on the man, Micah. You know he ran to Brigadia at a pace that can only be matched by Thorrin. Isn’t that right, brother?” Thorrin stared between Evelyn and Micah, before shrugging.

“I guess that’s what happened,” he sighed. “Micah might be right about one thing. We don’t seem to be making progress in bringing the rogue king down. In other news, the new arrivals will be leaving immediately. I’ve been informed that they feel they will be needed elsewhere.”

The table looked in the direction of the couple, “What am I hearing, Thomas?” the man’s parents spoke for the first time since the meeting had begun.

“Father, mother, there is trouble in Sirius that we must attend to,” Tom spoke up, tension clear in his voice. Marie noticed and placed her hand on his hand, easing his uneasiness.

“What he meant to say is that we are going to check on a troublemaker that might have gotten herself in more than she can handle once again,” Marie spoke calmer than her husband could manage.

“That’s a very quick departure. Could you at least stay for a few nights so that we can catch up?” Tom’s mother asked. The man finally relaxed. They hadn’t chosen to chain them down instead which had been his fear. (Well, the fear of all children leaving their homes after just making it back after a long time)

“We’ll come back as soon as everything is done, mother, but we don’t have much time. She’ll get herself in trouble in no time and Sirius is a great distance from here,” Tom spoke up much calmer.

“Very well... I must ask you something, son. Are you finally back with us or are you still under an agreement with the goddess?” his mother asked him.

“We are hunters again. Our powers have been fully restored and we plan to get back to work,” Tom replied.

“So you gained a daughter,” she replied. Tom was shocked by her reply. The rest of the family smiled as they caught up in their mother’s trap.

“Don’t keep her from us for too long. She’s responsible for your eighteen-year disappearance. We must see the person who’s so important you’d detect she was in danger from the other half of the world,” Micah winked.

Tom was, once again, speechless. His brother had given a completely misleading perspective on the situation and now that he stared at the ‘Head’ of the family, he noticed the evil smirk on his face, “Welcome back, Tom.” Thorrin stood up from his seat and clapped his hands loudly. Large double doors at the other side of the lobby swung open to reveal a large white cake. The cake was far too large to be eaten by those that were in the room, and yet, it brought with it a nostalgic feeling. The ornament at the top of the cake that mimicked a couple at their wedding sparked the memory this cake induced.

It was a replica of the wedding cake that had been made for Thomas’ wedding to Marie. “We thought we’d order the cake you had on the last event for this family as a whole,” Thorrin spoke up.

“Yeah, that and the fact that none of us got to taste it that day,” Evelyn added.

Tom chuckled at the memory, “I forget what happened to the cake that day.”

“Oh, I would so much like to tell this tale,” Micah’s face glowed. His moment of glory had arrived. It wasn’t just any moment of glory. It was the moment of glory he would need to stump on his perfect older brother. “There we all were... well, almost all of us. The cake stood at the centre of the gardens in its glory. The couple was about to be escorted to make the first...”

“Oh, can we skip this one? There is not a soul in this room that doesn’t know the story,” Thorrin rubbed his temple.

195 Chapter One Hundred Ninety Five

“Eighteen years is a long time, Thorrin. My memory isn’t what it used to be. Go on, Micah. I love your storytelling...”

“Why, thank you, mother...” the man bowed low as though he stood before royals, “If you don’t mind, I will continue my ballad. Each and every one of us stared at the pair as they took slow and I mean painfully slow steps towards the cake. After all, this was the moment everyone waited for in the ceremony. The cake shared the couple that was being wed and a demonstration of undying love. Anticipation and excitement were all that we could think of.

There was no doubt the couple themselves had been waiting for this moment. It was clear as they held onto each other with so much tenderness it could make Aphrodite jealous. The only person missing at this event was dear Thorrin. The hunter had claimed to be handling a last-minute call to work and missed the wedding deliberately.

None of us would have expected what happened next. Right before the couple could reach the delicious cake, a thunderclap and a tempest of wind invaded the gardens, taking with them the cake and the hopes and dreams of the onlookers. Spread into thousands of crumps and clumps of whipped cream and icing sugar, sticking to a humanoid figure was the cake that the family had been saving their appetites for.

The hunter that had just crashed the party stood from the wreckage...”

“Enough... How many times must I apologize for that one mistake? I didn’t want to miss my brother’s wedding. I came rushing to the party as soon as I finished the work I was doing and happened to miss my step,” Thorrin bellowed.

“Yeah yeah, brother. That is what happened and we love you for the sentiment. However, you did rob a scrumptious meal from everyone that attended that party,” Micah snapped out of his acting to respond to his brother.

“And I paid for the damages that were caused. What more do you want from me?” he replied.

“Calm down, son. You know you’re brother was jesting. We know your intentions were true,” their father spoke up, noticing the rising anger in his son and its inability to simmer down.

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“Whatever... This meeting was meant to end the moment that cake came in anyway. You can all do whatever you want now. This meeting is over...” with that, Thorrin stormed out of the lobby and outside the mansion.

“Hmm, I wonder what kind of mask he wears when he’s working out in the field. He’s far too short-tempered to...”

“He can handle work just fine, Micah. It’s this place that brings up all the emotions. I think it’s a beautiful thing actually,” Marie cut him off, getting up, “Honey, might we do what we never got the chance to do?” the woman offered her husband a hand. Evelyn looked into the book that she’d been writing notes into.

“Writing minutes of this meeting is going to be harder than killing the Rogue King himself,” she tossed the book away and retrieved the cake knife that rested neatly on a plate beside the cake.

She brought the knife up to the couple and presented it to them with a short bow, "This might be long overdue, but hey, you haven't aged a bit. It's like you only paused the wedding and forced everyone out before going on with the event," the woman smiled.

Marie picked the knife from the woman's hand, "Thank you, Evelyn." Her husband brought his hand to his wife's and held the knife with her. The family stood around them once again and watched them as they walked up to it to make the first cut. Unbeknownst to the rest of the family, memories of the couple's time with their daughter flashed between them.

They'd raised the werewolf for eighteen years and had gone through a lot in the time. No matter what they tried, it wasn't just the two of them... It was the three of them. It always had been... A bright white flash made everyone aware of the camera in the room. The couple inwardly thanked the owner of the camera and proceeded with the ceremony. They would cut the first slice of the cake into many pieces and feed each other a piece and seal it with a kiss.

Claps filled the room from the small crowd of Chase hunters that watched this happy couple display their undying love for each other. When the lovebirds were done, a loud pop sounded, snapping everyone's attention from the couple. A sloshing sound and the thick smell of champagne reached their nostrils. Music, albeit unexpected, filled the room and set the family into a partying mood faster than they could have thought. It was only after many minutes that the couple noticed a group of hunters had come in with the cake to celebrate their arrival.

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The hunters sat on the sofas spreading stories of the past and laughing at the numerous jokes that were made about their past. Some were new faces while others were old friends that the couple hadn't thought about in a while. However, Alice wasn't one of them as Marie had hoped. She stood up to leave the gathering, "What is it, honey?" Tom asked his wife.

"Oh, it's nothing. I'm just going to check on Thorrin. He hasn't returned since the meeting and I'm getting worried. I just want to make sure he's okay," she said to him.

"Very well... Don't let him keep you too long. If you can get him to come back here, that would be great," Tom replied.

Marie nodded and walked out of the lobby and out into the gardens. The fresh air did a lot to bring her out of the haze the party had caused her. She was walking through the winding paths of the gardens for a while before she finally found him. Thorrin... the most powerful hunter in the world, sat on a park bench by a fountain, his eyes on the water as it splashed down into the pool. He had a few seeds in his hand that he threw into the water at random.

"Sounds like a blast in there," his voice came out sadly.

"Yeah, only one more person and it would be a blast for the history books," the woman replied.

"Well, one good entertainer would definitely put a spin on that party. Micah tries his best, but I can't imagine the chaos that two of him could cause," he mused.

"I wasn't talking about your brother or..."

"I know... I was just messing with you. However, you misjudge me. I wouldn't be a good thing at that party, so just forget it," he replied.

"Now what would make you say something like that?" the woman asked him, "Your family loves you, more than you care to notice. You wouldn't have been made head of the family if it wasn't for that exact reason, but you snap at everything in your path."

"And yet, for some reason, they won't let me be," he replied, "Why are you out here, Marie?"

"I'm here to check up on you," she responded, sitting next to him. Thorrin pushed over putting the space of a whole-body between them. "Is something wrong?"

He remained quiet for a bit almost forgetting that he had to reply, "No... Nothing is wrong. I'll be fine."

196 Chapter One Hundred Ninety Six

Marie wished she could ignore the sadness in Thorrin's voice. He sounded sadder than she'd ever seen him and she would know. After all, she'd nearly grown up in this household. She'd been in the lives of the Chase family as she grew up and had even learnt their ways while she'd been there. In all that time, she hadn't had the chance to see Thorrin fall this far into a depressed state, "You didn't ram into that cake by mistake, did you?" he nodded to confirm her suspicions.

"I couldn't withstand the thought of you going through something like that with my brother. I would like it if no one knew that I did that on purpose. Alas, I am sure the very thing I tried to prevent that day just happened today," he replied.

"Thorrin, it's been eighteen years..."

"And you don't look a day older, dear Marie. It's even worse that way. You look exactly the same as you did the last time that I saw you. I guess we both don't want to change in one way or another," he cut her off. Frustration, along with a myriad of other emotions that he didn't have a mind to decipher assaulted him and he lacked the will to hold it all back before the woman that sat across from him, "You should get back in there. Tom will be getting worried if you spend too much time out here."

"What does he have to worry about? There isn't a rogue in a mile's distance and..."

"Me... He has me to worry about..." he cut her off, "I'll be fine out here on my own. I have my own thoughts to worry about. Probably stop them from swallowing me whole."

"That won't be happening, brother," a male voice interrupted them.

Thorrin sighed, getting up from the bench and walking up to the fountain, away from his brother, "I see you haven't forgotten to utilize your potential to sneak up on your family," Thorrin spoke up.

"That wasn't my intention, but I did come out here to bring you back into the party. The cake is amazing. I'm afraid Micah might have invited monstrous devourers. They just keep bringing it down in size like little mice," Tom responded.

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"I won't be..."



“Thorrin... It’s been eighteen years. You should use this time to be with the people you abandoned for eighteen years,” he replied. The Mighty Warrior snapped his eyes at his brother, “Yes, Micah told me everything. The moment we left, you were gone without another thought. The family hasn’t been the same since then. Father made you the head of the family with the hopes that you would come home once in a while, but you stayed away.”

“I’ve been busy, Tom. You wouldn’t know a thing. You’ve been playing house for eighteen years. Do you even remember how to wield a weapon,” Thorrin snapped at the boy.

“Boys, that’s enough. You don’t have to argue about this,” Marie snapped at the both of them sealing them both immediately. Thorrin stared at Tom with a look torn between hate and something they couldn’t decipher.

“Boy wonder, they keep saying... And yet, the one who always gets his way is right in front of me,” Thorrin said in a lower tone.

Marie snapped at Tom as he readied a counter for his brother. She glared daggers at him despite the words that threatened to come from him, “Just come back in the house, Thorrin. It’s not the same when the family is not full...”

Thorrin stared at the mansion and then to the ground. The music coming from the mansion could barely be heard from this far, but it was clear there was a party going on inside. The more he looked at the mansion, the more he felt more distant from them. They celebrated the union of his brother with a woman he’d only wanted for himself, “How am I supposed to act normal in a party between the two of you. Don’t you realise what torture that is?”

“You misunderstand, Thorrin. We see someone who hasn’t been able to move on after eighteen years. We don’t live as long as the werewolves do. If attending this party can bring you closer to moving on, then it’s worth it,” Tom replied, approaching his brother.

Tom’s presence brought so many things out of Thorrin. The two of them stared into their eyes for a while, “I miss my big brother. Don’t you wish we could go back to the way we used to be,” Tom tried.

“Your voice sounds like that of a siren. Trying to lure me into a trap, promising riches and comfort,” Thorrin responded sadly. Taking his brother’s offer meant he would be letting go of their past and accepting it. His heart had clung to it for a very long time and all for what. He’d been hurting for so long. The rogues that he’d killed in the time that he wasn’t with his family had faced his fury, but after everything he’d done, he was still the same. Nothing he’d tried had worked... ‘Why not try this path?’

“It won’t be easy, Thorrin. It’s been eighteen years after all. We can’t forget that all that time has passed since the last time you showed your face here, but we are family. Not even time or the gods can change that,” Tom continued.

“Our father... at one point, asked if I was ever going to get married. Apparently, Micah and you were wasting his time. He wanted a grandchild sooner rather than later...” Thorrin spoke out of the blue. For him, it was one of the only few moments in his eighteen lonely years that had breathed some life back into him. He’d cut everyone off and yet, they still tried to reach out to him. Facing them wasn’t easy, but he felt guilty every time they let him in without any resistance. It felt so hard and yet, they always made it sound so easy and called it hard once again.

“What did you tell him?”

“I told him I’d sleep on it... But that was about seven years ago. He didn’t talk about it again. I don’t know if the stories of my exploits reached his ears or if he simply figured I was in no mood to think about getting to know someone else,” he replied, plunging them into silence.

“Well, I wish you could have talked more about it. It would have given the old man some entertainment,” Tom chuckled.

“What’s she like... the girl you raised,” Thorrin spoke up all of a sudden.

“Well, she reminds me a lot of you. Although, she might just be a tad bit too hardworking. It’s insane,” Tom replied.

“I find that hard to believe. I know one other person that used to train as hard as I did. If you’d never been called to raise that girl, you would probably be the one holding the title of Mightiest Warrior and not me...”

“We can never know what could have been, Thorrin. What we can do is realise what has happened and embrace wherever the future takes us,” Tom lectured, pausing before inviting his brother once again, “The cake is better than advertised. You’ll like it.” He stretched out his hand and allowed the man to call his brother to him.

Thorrin disregarded his brother’s hand and pulled him into a strong hug. Shocked at the sudden show of affection, Tom was frozen for a moment before hugging his brother once again. “It will all get better... We shall be the last generation to see the rogue king... This, I can promise you...”

“You speak of the girl you raised. Is she as good as you advertise?” Thorrin asked him.

“Well... She has the potential to become something impossible and that’s what I intend to see her become. She might just be the one to bring him down and bring an end to all of this,” Tom replied, “We’d finally be able to go fishing and camping without authorisation from the Hunter’s Agency.”

“It sounds like a dream when you say it, but a dream that for once, feels touchable...” Thorrin replied, breaking from their embrace.

“Come in, brother. I don’t trust Micah with cake. He could have some hidden for future consumption regardless of the consequences,” Tom chuckled.

Marie stayed as insignificant as she could and barely noticed when a tear rolled down her eye. Choosing Tom over the other brother had broken the family. Drama amongst the three of them had been at its peak years ago and she was now glad that the sun was finally shining down on them. They walked back into the mansion and the party continued. Thorrin, as expected, fit into the crowd almost seamlessly. With help from Micah and Evelyn, the air of awkwardness had barely lasted a second.

Thorrin’s lighter mood was a surprise to everyone, but they all chose to keep it to themselves and enjoy the party. They played games of all kinds and filled the night with different challenges that brought them closer. Most of them were from his memory of the things they used to do for fun as they were children. Their parents worked as referees for most of the games and all disputes were settled by a coin toss. The

night moved faster than they could have hoped it to and they were soon fast asleep. Bringing morning to them even quicker than they wished.

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197 Chapter One Hundred Ninety Seven

The car was packed once again waiting for the two Chase hunters that had only just arrived a day before. Evelyn pulled her fellow woman into a hug, "You know, you look like eighteen freaking years younger than me, missy," the woman squeezed her friend.

"I know, Evelyn. Although I feel a lot older than that. After all, I have raised a child," she replied.

"Oh, shut up... You've not done much. From what I've heard, the girl is so obedient and tame that you almost missed her when she caught a fever and didn't say anything," the two had slept later than the men and had taken the liberty to actually sleep in a bedroom, unlike the boys that had slept in their lobby, sprawled on sofas. The house was in complete disarray and she saw mountains of chores, but alas, it had all been worth it. "Thank you, Marie."

"Huh, where did that come from?"

"You fixed them... the boy wonders," Evelyn whispered into the woman's ears.

Marie took a while to interpret her statement, "Oh no, that wasn't me. It was all them."

"You give yourself far too little credit. What happened to them was never your fault and it could have been worse. You have always been one of the many things that make the bond between them so strong," she replied.

"I didn't do..."

"Tom walked out last night to go find you. Depending on what he saw, you started all of this," Evelyn cut her off, "Promise me you'll visit. It's been far too long."

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"I will, Evelyn. We don't plan on staying in Sirius for too long. It's only for a short time. We'll be back as soon as we make sure the girl's safe," Marie replied.

At the back of the car, the three boys loaded the car with the bags that belonged to Tom and Marie, along with everything the two thought would be needed, "You're taking a lot of weapons for a short mission. What do you need katanas for? None of you has ever liked them," Micah asked, staring at the collection of weapons that filled the trunk.

"Well, those are not for us and I don't think she will need them. Although, she is skilled with the blades and if it would help make her work easier, then why not?" Tom shrugged.

"That girl sounds scarier every time you talk about her. Is there anything she isn't good at?" Thorrin replied, zipping up the bag Micah simply wouldn't let go of.

“Well, she is terrible at relaxing. I’m quite sure that comes from her constant need to protect her own. It’s not fun to watch. She also doesn’t like using weapons even though she’s good at using them,” Tom replied.

“So she’s gifted. Do you think it could be one of the gifts she possesses as one of the Moon Goddess’ Chosen?” Micah asked. This bit of information sparked an interest in Tom.

“What’s that supposed to mean? Does Cole Lycaon have some gifts of his own?” he asked them. They both looked at him with a look of disbelief. Thorrin nodded in disappointment.

“So that’s what happens when you cage yourself from the world for eighteen years,” he sighed, “It was in the royal games two years ago when we realised he wasn’t like the other werewolves. He was different. He wasn’t as skilled as Drake Sirius at the time, but for some reason, the crown prince of Sirius submitted to an uninjured Cole Lycaon.

It wasn’t noticed by many, but the wolf was impervious to all the attacks that were thrown at him. Those that noticed the oddity were asked to keep it to themselves by the king of Sirius. The hunters took it to heart that they were preventing a leak of information similar to what had happened only sixteen years prior and nothing was spoken of the matter.”

Tom was astounded by the information he’d just received. He tried going through his memories looking for something out of the ordinary, but there was nothing he could think of that was odd from the child that he’d raised with his wife, “I can’t think of anything out of the ordinary with Katie. Without her werewolf side, she was basically your average human being.”

“Well, there is no use in dwelling on that. You can ask her about it when you meet her next. For now, just focus on saving her reckless behind and I will be seeing you as soon as you can return to us, brother,” Thorrin spoke up, pulling Tom into a heartfelt hug.

“I know the two of you are like twins, but this hug has got to be a group hug,” Evelyn’s voice interrupted them, joining the brothers. Thorrin chuckled at her childishness.

“Hey, don’t leave me out of it. It’s always been a life-long mission of mine to oppress the boy-wonders whenever I get a chance,” Micah piped in, joining them.

“What’s that supposed to me-... Micah, that’s too much energy for a...”

“Oh, suck it in, brother. I’ve missed you for eighteen freaking years. I ought to squeeze the life out of you,” Micah replied.

A flash brought the siblings into reality, “Oh, this is one for the ages.” Turning around, they all set their eyes on Marie who couldn’t get her eyes off the picture she’d just taken, “So cute...”

“Is she going to...”

“Just let it go, brother. That picture is probably backed up to her hunter’s account or something even harder to get it away from,” Tom sighed, closing the boot of the car. His senses began to flare up, a warning that they’d already taken enough time out of their chances of protecting one of the people they held most dear.

“Make sure you give the rogues in Sirius a thrashing for the ages and make it clear that their time is coming to an end. I, on the other hand, will be on the lookout for the rogue king,” Thorrin told his brother as he got into the car. It was both an encouragement and an order from the head of the family.

“I will do everything in my power, brother,” Tom replied to him.

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Katie stood in the middle of a room much different from what she was used to. This room was ventilated by one window to one side and a door on the opposite side that had been sealed shut. A lamp lit the room dimly and a boy sat next to it writing down notes that came to his mind. She knew who he was and had come to see him through the same methods many times before. This time there was no pain in her body... Instead, she was eager, an emotion that was usually coming from the boy until she found the strength to push their connection to the back of her mind.

“I like the new prison. Did you manage to get out of the cell once your eyes were fixed?” she asked him.

The boy barely looked up from his writing, “Yeah, I was able to do what you asked of me. Thankfully, the rogue king did not suspect...”

“You’ve seen him?” she asked, cutting him off.

“Yes, I have,” the boy spoke, pausing in his writing. He could barely proceed from that point. Only earlier he looked as though he had lots to tell her and yet he’d gone quiet all of a sudden.

“Well, what happened? Spill it...”

“He left this camp in the morning. I had only just met him and given my report on the rogue killer before he left in a rush. Katie, I must warn you. I’ve never seen a wolf quite like him. He doesn’t radiate a dangerous aura, just like all the other royals I’ve met, but he scares me half to death by merely shifting. He’s strong, Katie, really strong...” he said to her.

“If I wasn’t sure you’d seen my strength, I wouldn’t have been scared by that, but now that you say it, I can see what you’re trying to say about him,” she replied, thinking through what he’d just said.

“Well, I had to see him for myself and I couldn’t believe a wolf could achieve that kind of power. I guess there was a reason the hunters in the past never managed to kill a royal. It was always an alpha and very rarely, a beta alpha, but the royals proved to be a challenge for them. However, the royals right now might be a little weaker than the royals back then,” he replied.

“I wouldn’t be too sure about that. Would you mind sharing an image of the rogue king with me? I need to know if I should keep an eye out for him,” she asked.

“I wish it were that easy, but I don’t think you know the rogue king,” he said but shared the image anyway. She had never seen the man before and there wasn’t a doubt in her mind that this was the image they were looking for.

“I haven’t seen such a man either,” a voice interrupted them. The scent and allure that came with the owner of the voice that came beside her only meant one person. Cole’s form materialised into the room with him standing before the boy, “Hmm, can I see his eyes?”

“Well, Kyle, go ahead and show him the real colour of your eyes. They are to return to normal once he’s done checking them,” the boy complied with his alpha’s commands. Well, there was no way he could disobey, however much he might have wished.

“Huh, he really is your beta alpha,” Cole replied with a shrug, “We need to get him out of here before the rest of the signs begin to show.”

“What are you saying, Cole?”

“I’m saying he’s going to start getting stronger than an average wolf and get bigger so that he can fit into his role of beta alpha. If they find out what he is, they won’t hesitate to kill him. You don’t want to feel the pain of losing a beta alpha. It’s excruciating,” he replied.

“A way to break him out of this place...”

“You should forget about me, you know. I was a dead man the moment I got bitten by her. I might want to get out of here and live the life I rejected. Protect the Luna that I am now dutybound to serve...” he paused, sighing, “But I know the crimes I’ve committed. You might have forgotten Ash’s innocent face, but it was I that slit her throat and let her bleed out in that classroom. You would choose well to let me die.”

“He makes it so hard to reason with him, doesn’t he?” Cole sighed.

“You’re not going to make any more progress than I’ve made,” Katie chuckled, “Listen to me, Kyle. You have never been forgiven for the crimes you’ve committed. Don’t forget that. Even if we save you from the hellhole, your life won’t be easy. Out there, you’re a dead man... a wanted man. And well, in here, you’ll soon be a dead man. The choice is yours though. Out there, we can keep you from dying. I can’t make any promises and say you won’t be uninjured because you are going to be put through a lot, however, death will be off the table.”

The boy looked between the two of these people wondering which one of them was more insane than the other and if he was worse than them for loving that insanity.

“I’m not sure if that will be possible...” Kyle replied.

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## 198 Chapter One Hundred Ninety Eight

The students in the reserve awoke the next day to an outdoor room organised by the hotel. Long tables had been set up in the gardens outside, with seats enough to take all of them and the food already spread out. The teachers in charge of them were already up and making sure everything was in order. Katie looked down from the window and yawned, letting in the noise from the students gossiping.

“Oh, just look at all of them down there. Not a care in the world for the rogues that want to capture their princess... or is it because of the mighty hunters that are protecting them that they feel there isn’t need to panic or fear anything?” Katie mused.

Cole stirred awake and rolled towards the clock, “Your oversleeping tendencies are starting to get into me.” He groaned.

“Oh, you’re just embracing your inborn talents to be lazy, my dear. Good morning,” Katie replied, walking into the bathroom to start her morning ablutions.

“Good morning... One of these days we are going to take a vacation and escape the world,” Cole mused.

“I had no idea you were capable of dreaming, Cole. Do you have anywhere specific in mind?” his mate indulged him. Before it had been a passing thought, but she seemed to be following his line of thinking without any resistance.

“Well, maybe we can think of that when we finish our mission. There haven’t been any decent vacation places to visit like I’ve read of in books. An island resort perhaps... Without rogues, that would have been a perfect idea,” he replied.

Katie’s voice didn’t come from the bathroom for a bit. Right before the alpha was going to worry about it, she spoke up, “I’ve always wondered what the rogues even use for transport. Do they just run from one part of the world to another or do they have some sort of transport system? Black market vehicles that allow them to move from one place to another. If we were to go to an island for a vacation, would they swim their way to the island or would they use a boat... And if they used a boat, wouldn’t we be able to detect it before it got to the shore.”

“This sounds like talk from someone who actually wants to have a vacation,” Cole got up from the bed and walked into the bathroom. Katie stared into the mirror with her hair pulled up so that she saw her appearance in the mirror without it falling down her shoulders. Cole’s wolf pushed forward in his mind, trying to gain control of the royal to no avail.

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“Well... I think about it once in a while. It would be nice to allow myself to forget about trouble for a little while...” Katie replied.

“Did you detect the rogues?” he asked her, noticing the worry that leaked through their bond.

“Yes, I did. They made it here last night,” the girl responded. Cole drew a short sigh upon hearing her reply. So much for a trip without rogues to worry about, “I could have been able to tell their exact positions if I had the time to do that. I can’t transmit their positions to any of you and with these many, I can’t keep track of all of them at once. It’s frustrating...” the girl stopped rambling when a pair of strong hands wrapped around her.

“Where?” Cole whispered. His mind invaded hers and she closed her eyes to let him in better.

“Most of them are crowded miles from here, close to the cave I found my sister in. They keep moving, but I don’t know what for. There is another group that scouted the hotel yesterday and retreated beyond my field of detection,” Katie replied.

“How did you know about the ones that were near the cave your sister was in?” Cole asked her, “That’s miles from here. Last I checked...”

“They reached there while Lina and I left yesterday. Yesterday was a close call... If we hadn’t gone for those troublemakers sooner, the rogues would have gotten to them,” she replied.

Cole was quiet for a bit, “You’re trying to be more careful this time.”

“Yes, Cole. I am trying. That’s not a talent I have though, so don’t count on it so much,” she replied with a heavy sigh.

“I know that. I can tell how much you want to snuff the life from the rogues in the forest. They’ve put themselves far enough to fool your senses. Since we are low on hunters, we won’t be able to know where they are camping out, so we are travelling blind. It would be best to make sure everyone is protected at all times,” Cole replied.

“Yeah... That feels like a lot of work though,” Katie replied with a groan.

“Oh, I can see your inborn talents of laziness awakening as well,” Cole chuckled, lifting the girl up abruptly. The hunter, who was now used to anticipating his whims, wasn’t shaken by the sudden gestures.

“I am not lazy, Cole Lycaon,” she replied with a huff...

“Yeah yeah, that’s right, Luna Katie,” the title brought goosebumps and ran a shiver down the girl’s spine. ‘Do you have to use that title too? I have Caden and Jason already using it. It’s overwhelming enough with just the two of them.’

“Well, you should get used to it. You are mine and you will be my Luna. Among the many uncertainties that stand ahead of us, that is not one of them,” Cole replied, placing her down in the shower and tugging her buttons off one by one.

Katie sighed, “Even then, there is no rule that says I have to get comfortable with it.”

“You’ll do fine, honey. You’re a natural leader,” he replied, “I can see it in your eyes.”

“Hahaha, very funny, Alpha Lycaon...” she replied with a smirk on her face...

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Trevor sighed when he saw the famous power couple reaching the tables when half the students were already done with their meals. Cole’s alphas, along with Sandra sat together, talking about a multitude of things the junior hunter had no intention of getting to know about. “What’s the problem, Waters?” a feminine voice came to him.

He looked to his side and took note of the woman and man that had been assigned to work with him in protecting the children. They were both hunters and good ones, as recommended by the manager of the hotel. “The other hunter we’ve been waiting for has a tendency to be late for just about everything that her life calls her to. It gets frustrating, but she does what she wants.”

“That doesn’t sound like much like a hunter. Point me in the right direction. I would like to see this imposter. Perhaps she’s a junior posing for a real hunter and...”

“Alice, just look for the beautiful girl with blue eyes that isn’t Lina Sirius,” Trevor cut her off, rubbing his temples.

The woman scanned through the crowd and set her eyes on a couple of werewolves. They were royals and from the looks of it, mates to each other. She recognised the girl but had no idea what to think of



the scene before her. The two of them made their way to a group of alphas and... "Is that a human with them? Who is that girl?"

Trevor stole a glance at the table, "That would be, Sandra Alastair. I can't find anything special about her, but she comes as a package deal. Where the hunter goes, she goes and that's how it's been for as long as I've seen them. They don't seem particularly tight. The girl spends her time with one of the alphas and Katie pretty much does anything she wants."

"That's odd. I would think the hunter was the girl's mentor, but if they barely interact, I can't see a relation there," the man replied.

"It baffles me, but she doesn't tell me much, so I can only say what I've devised for myself," he replied.

"You juniors are always trying to get some information one way or another and let you know that you are better off without it," the woman chuckled, popping another fork of food into her mouth.

"Well, yeah, the pros won't tell us anything. I know the rule is that no one is to be trusted with information until Prometheus himself grants them access to it through a gift, but that only separates the two sections of the hunters. The junior hunters can't work with the..."

"Just listen to what your mentor tells you and keep at your training until you prove your worth. Once you have your gift, you can then be able to ask all the questions you have," the man cut him off.

"I see... Are the rules so absolute that no one is above them?" the boy asked.

"Yes, they are absolute. What are you getting at?" the man asked.

"Well, Katie Sirius acts as though the rules don't apply to her. She barely does anything that a hunter would do. I haven't seen her going to the hunter's agency. I haven't seen her patrolling around the capital like the others and she isn't in any of the rosters that are set up at the agency," he responded.

"You sound jealous, lead junior hunter. Shouldn't you be pleased that she hasn't replaced your position as the head-hunter," Alice asked him.

"I don't know what to think anymore. I asked the agency to send the students off with a number of hunters to protect them, but the moment they realised Katie Sirius was going to be a part of the group, they shut me down claiming it would be a waste to send another hunter when the situation in Lycaon was already stretching their forces thin," he sighed.

"Lycaon... Now there are some memories," Alice spiralled off into her memories.

199 Chapter One Hundred Ninety Nine

"That is beside the point, Alice. They left me with an eighteen-year-old werewolf that seems to be getting more and more occupied by her love life than worry about trying to protect the students that she was put in charge of," he responded.

"You might be giving her far less credit than she deserves. Some hunters show their effectiveness when the time comes. I know a few that don't need to be woken up in case of a werewolf attack, no matter the time," Alice replied.

“Morgan, try to help me out with this one,” Trevor rubbed his forehead.

“Well, I would if I hadn’t seen Evelyn Chase in action one time. The woman was shooting arrows with her eyes closed in the middle of the night as though it was broad daylight,” he replied.

“The Chase family is off-limits when it comes to oddities,” Alice commented, chuckling while she flowed through her memories of the family.

“Yes, that is true. If I’m not mistaken, you had Thorrin Chase as your mentor once. Did you pick up on their odd skills while you were there?”

“Oh yeah, I picked up a feel of some of them. Well, it’s just one ability really that they seem to have that’s out of the ordinary. That same ability and the fact that they are multitalented. It’s like they were all built to do this job,” the woman replied.

“You make them sound like mythical creatures. Stop creeping me out, all of you,” Trevor snapped at them, rousing a chuckle from them.

“I heard that two of them went missing on some top-secret mission to raise a child to be a hunter and the ultimate weapon against the rogue king,” the man whispered.

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“Morgan, perhaps you’re putting a little booze into your coffee this morning,” Trevor mused peeping into the man’s cup.

“He speaks of a rumour that moved through the hunters. It was never confirmed by the Chase family so it took on so many different forms as it went through the pros. Some of them said the two hunters that had left were looking for a location of the moon goddess so they could sever her connection to the werewolves, making all of them human once more,” Alice continued.

“That sounds even more like a dream compared to the first one,” Trevor mentioned.

“Meh, you barely heard the others. Some were just plain hilarious,” Morgan shrugged, “Anyway, did you draft the list of all the junior hunters you have and split them into the three groups that are going to be guarding the three groups that we are taking through the reserve?”

“Oh, yeah, I finished all that. Here is the list of the names. I made sure to give more of the junior hunters to the group with Katie in it, considering I don’t believe in her skills whatsoever,” Trevor groaned.

“Then in that case, I will be switching with her and taking the group with more junior hunters,” Morgan spoke up, taking a sip of his coffee.

“Do you have any idea what she did when the bus set off from the school yesterday? I was sure she would be alert and make sure nothing interrupted us or that nothing went wrong,” he seethed.

“What did she do?” the others indulged.

“She slept... The whole way. There wasn’t a single point in the journey when she was awake. Something bad could have happened in that time and yet she just slept. I have to tell you. I don’t know what to make of her just yet. She’s more of a wolf than she is a hunter,” the boy replied.

“Watch your tongue, boy. You know hunters do not look down on each other. Every hunter chosen by the Man god had the potential to protect people should the need arise,” Alice replied.

Trevor sighed, “Prometheus be with us... This is going to be one long school trip.” With that said, he set his eyes on the seemingly carefree royal and self-proclaimed hunter that was meant to protect a third of the students they had gone with. He’d seen signs of the respect she was given by the werewolves that were always around her, along with Sandra, the junior hunter that spent more time than any human in the company of werewolves. The whole group was a bunch of oddities that didn’t make any sense to him in the slightest.

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The meal finally came to an end and the teachers requested the students to gather at the front of the hotel where they would receive instructions and a whole rundown of the agenda of the day. To excite the students, a bonfire that night was promised by the hotel staff. This got their moods up and made them more compliant with everything the teachers said. A tactic that had been suggested by Morgan.

Katie bid her gang of werewolves and humans a short goodbye and broke away from them to find Trevor. She still had no idea what the agenda of the day was going to be like and yet she was sure she was supposed to be helping out. “Hey, Trevor, what’s up? Good morning, Alice and man that I have not yet been introduced to.”

“His name is Morgan and you will do well to remember it. When were you planning to come to me for this?” Trevor asked, showing her the copy of the list the teachers had just gone with. Katie snatched it from his hands and skimmed through the names...

“This list is so boring. You separated me from everyone I know. It looks clear that you were making groups based on people that get along, but you separated me from my family and friends. What’s the meaning of this?” Katie asked him.

“What is that I hear? Are you playing favourites? You’re a hunter...” he responded.

“Yes, I am a hunter, but this list is all wrong. You should at least place me in the group that contains Lina and Honour so that I can...”

“Good morning, Luna Katie,” a voice cut her off. The girl sighed at the title. The voice was feminine and Katie’s mind paired a face to it. She turned around to find Crysta standing with her two friends beside her. Looking back at the list, she found that Crysta’s name was in the list that had Lina. “I will do everything I can to protect her.”

“Well, you better. If you hear me tell you to keep your guard up, you better. That’s my sister you’re protecting,” Katie replied.

“I love how much faith has been put in me and the junior hunters that are in charge of protecting this group,” Morgan sighed.

Katie turned around to face the man. If it hadn’t been for the rogues she detected in the forest, she would have laughed at his comment, “Keep your guard up, Morgan.”

“Is that a threat or a warning?” the hunter asked.

Katie thought about her words before responding, “How about a word of advice?”

Alice covered her mouth to muffle the outburst that nearly escaped her. Morgan turned to her and hit her shoulder, “Hey, you’re on my side here, aren’t you?”

“I am just watching you get ordered by an eighteen-year-old... I cannot take sides in this one,” she said drawing her lips into a tight line, keeping her laughter to herself.

“Anyway, we better get going. The tour is about to begin. Besides everything, I hope you don’t forget what brought you here. Have some fun with this? This reserve is a beautiful place,” Morgan mentioned before walking away from them. When he was far from them, he rubbed his temples, clearly disturbed by the royal’s words.

The students found three oddly designed vehicles outside the hotel. They were wider than their buses and given larger tyres to allow them to move on the underdeveloped roads spread throughout the reserves. There wasn’t a sign of a roof on these vehicles. Each one could hold a number of up to fifty students. The colour scheme was cream mixed with many shades of brown.

Once they were all grouped up into their respective groups, they were ready to move about. Katie noticed one thing that was bound to make her trip even worse than it already was... The two troublemakers that were meant to serve their time with Trevor had been added to the group of hunters that were going to help her in protecting the group she’d been assigned. ‘This should be interesting. All the junior hunters sat in the back seats of the car and kept their eyes peeled in all directions... Well, that was the protocol Katie had devised but made sure to remind them to check out the sights as well.

“What’s in the bag?” Wyatt asked her, noticing the bag she had brought along with her.

Katie looked at the bag beside her, “Well, it’s something that you’ll never find a use for. Although something that I will find a use for.”

“That’s too vague, even for you. Just show me what it is and let’s be done with it,” he continued.

“Wyatt, read the mood and back off,” Liam spoke in an irritated tone without sparing his friend a glance.

Wyatt stopped his retort from leaving him and looked the other way. Katie looked from one side to the other. She’d never seen a rift between the two werewolves and yet here they were... “This should be fun...” she sighed as the engine roared to life and wheeled them away from the hotel.

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200 Chapter Two Hundred

“Who wrote this list?” Cole asked the hunter that had been assigned to their car.

“It was your head hunter. He seemed to think it was perfectly drafted so that everyone was in the right order,” the woman replied, “Is there a problem here? I could make sure you get left at the hotel, your highness.”

“Oh, you have one attitude. If this was drafted so well, then why would he separate mates for a full day?” Cole asked with annoyance laced in his voice...

“Oops... That might be my bad. Sorry about that. We’d probably switch if she was still here, but I guess you’re stuck with me for now,” the woman said to him with a smile. Cole regarded her appearance for a moment and decided against making this such a big deal. Her black leather clothes and odd piercings gave her a rebellious look and spelt danger, a word that he didn’t want to cause at the very beginning of the trip.

‘Katie...’ the royal called out to his mate.

‘Yes, alpha Cole,’ she called back after a short pause.

The alpha cringed at the title for one of the first times in his life. When his friends used it, he could tolerate, however, it was different with his Luna, “You can cut that out for now,’ he tried.

‘Cut what out exactly,’ Katie feigned innocence. Cole sighed heavily and got into the car, taking a seat beside Jason. “Where is Sandra?” the alpha his friend, noticing the girl wasn’t at his side for what looked like the first time in a while.

“Well, she has been assigned to protect the car we’re in. The hunters get to sit at the back of the car and that means I can’t be by her side. Duty calls and all that. Where is Luna Katie?” he asked.

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“I would assume you already know that. Don’t think I haven’t noticed the close eye you’ve been keeping on the both of us. You and Caden both... Speaking of Caden, where is...”

The royal was stopped by an ear-piercing transmission that cuts through the mind link and into the minds of all the werewolves that were around. It was the strongest and loudest mind link he’d heard in a while and it was coming from none other than Katie Sirius.

‘This transmission goes to all werewolves. You’re all obligated to make sure the humans are in close proximity to at least two werewolves so that we can be able to track anyone that gets lost. The mind link is to be open for all werewolves and those that have their mind link closed off are to open it up immediately unless they would like to risk their lives in the reserve. This is for the safety of everyone in the reserve, nothing else. Your private conversations can still be shielded, but you are not to block out the communications from the rest of the wolves. Inform the humans of these developments to ensure we work together in making this work,’ her voice was clear and demanding of all werewolves that heard her.

‘Isn’t that a bit extreme? If you don’t know how to handle your job, just tell us so that we might put our trust in someone else?’ a voice came through the mind link. There was an unbearable silence among the werewolves before the girl replied.

‘I will communicate the positions of the rogues as soon as they get too close to one group of werewolves. Considering we’ve been split up like this, going after the rogues would only give them the room they need to cause more harm to the wolves and humans here. Keep in a group to stay safe. If you’d kept your mouth shut, Liam, I would not have been forced to tell you this last part. The humans mustn’t know of this or else we shall have a mass panic on our hands. I don’t think any one of us wants to watch someone die on this trip, now would we?’ Katie replied.

'I don't understand your logic, alpha Katie. How does doing nothing about the rogues keep us safe?' another wolf asked this time.

'I could have done something if we were dealing with a few rogues that were moving in a small group, but they have split up. If I go for one of them, the others get an opening to attack the group that I'm protecting. Rogues won't attack unless they know the power of the group they are fighting. As long as a hunter is in your sight, you should be fine,' Katie replied.

'Why don't you just let us kill the rogues and be done with it? What's the use of the training that we go through every morning of every day from the moment we start to shift,' another wolf replied, raising some chaos over the meeting.

'Well, I don't know about the training that you've been put through. I haven't gone through the different things that Alpha Jackson has you doing. If it happens to be the very thing that I see every morning, then I would say that training was meant to teach you how to protect yourselves. You won't be able to use that same amount of training to kill rogues, let alone attack them,' Katie replied.

'What do you know?' another asked. This voice was familiar, but Cole couldn't seem to quite place it. The other wolves went quiet when the voice spoke. Katie didn't seem to notice who it was that had spoken through the mind link.

'Hmm... that would be a story for another time, I guess. Rogues don't go down easy... Well, when the person fighting them is a basic human or an average werewolf. They train so hard that they have fully mastered the power that their shift gives them. I don't think any of you have ever been trained to fight a beast that cares nothing about the life it brings down. Rogues won't hesitate to kill you once they have the chance. My instructions were clear. Every werewolf is to keep the humans in sight. I didn't ask anything else of you,' Katie replied.

With that said, the meeting came to a halt. The mind link remained as open as the royal left it and gossip from those of the wolves that didn't shield their conversations started to leak into the mind link. Cole listened to a few of the words that came from the other wolves and backed away immediately, "Hey, Katie..."

"What is it... Cole?" she asked him.

"Are you okay?"

"As well as I can be. I'm counting on you to keep an eye on that car..."

"Slow down, Katie. What has you on edge, Katie?" Cole asked her, cutting her off. On the other side of the communication, the girl tried to focus on her mate's voice. She barely showed a reaction on her face, but within her mind, a mental fight to sort through a multitude of information that continuously bombarded her mind.

'Katie, you have to turn off that weird power of yours. It's going to give you... I mean, us one hell of a headache,' Ashley complained, trying to block the noise from her ears to no avail. The sounds were coming from everywhere and all of them were jumbled. What was worse was the fact that each and every sound that cut through her senses was interpreted immediately and thrown into the mess of information that she could barely sort through.

'I need to find a way to separate these two powers or else we'll be moving around blind, Ashley,' Katie yelled back at her.

'No, that's not true. You can still tell if there is going to be dangerous without having to focus on finding out the rogue's positions,' she replied.

'And what good will that do me if there is going to be someone about to die at that moment and I don't even know which group of rogues attacked whatever group of children,' Katie replied.

'Katie, calm down then. Calm down and concentrate. Don't force the animal sounds out. Let them in and focus on using both powers at the same time. It will be no different from you concentrating on your powers in a noisy club,' the wolf replied.

"Katie, are you okay?" Cole's voice came again through the mind link.

The girl took in a deep breath and tried to do what the wolf had just told her. The animal sounds wouldn't stop. Instead, the crease in her brow lessened as she let the voices in. The animals made the same kind of din that the students made in the car even though they had the oddest of analogies when they spoke to each other. After embracing the fact that she would never be able to hear plane animal sounds again, she switched her mind to the mate she'd not been able to answer.

"Yes, Cole, I'm fine," the girl replied. She could finally use her power again. She could tell where the rogues were, however, it was all clearer. She could feel her radius had stretched to take a wider area.

'Would you look at that? The Chase family borrowed power from nature, huh,' Ashley scoffed, 'Who would have known?'

'Are you really the same person that was reincarnated if that is at all what happened? I would like to think you're just as ignorant as I am sometimes, but there are things you know that I don't expect you to have a clue about. I need an Ash-education,' Katie sighed. She noticed she didn't even have to focus to keep her radius of detection up. She could feel everything without an ounce of focus from her. That included the different animals that were in the preserve.

"If you could look to your right, you will see the Colossal Great White Rhino. These creatures are very rare. They were hunted in the old days for sport until they became endangered. Annoy that big boy there and he will be looking to throw this car on its side," the teacher, teaming up with a ranger, told them all they knew about the animals in the reserve.

"So many humans this time. Do they ever get off their lazy butts and use their legs?" the rhino's deep guttural voice came through to the girl's mind while it continued to munch on a patch of grass. The car paused for those that had phones to take the necessary pictures...

"Lazy doesn't even compare..." Katie sighed. The rhino looked up from the patch of grass and at the hunter, locking eyes with her... 'Crap,' the girl mentally cursed.