

Chosen 311

Chapter 311 Captive

Bree and Sean were running from the capital for many hours before the girl was certain they were far enough from the capital to be tracked.

After having made their getaway, they were now stranded in the middle of nowhere. Sean was not sure if this was part of the girl's plan or if there was something else she had prepared.

The prince remained quiet through their entire journey, never once voicing his opinion about her actions and the silence was starting to irritate her. If anything, the prince was impressed by her endurance. He was sure the average wolf was not supposed to be able to keep this pace for more than an hour, but the girl was proving him wrong.

While she was visibly tired and more winded than he was, she was still in incredible shape in comparison to the pack warriors her age that was of the same rank.

The prince didn't give Bree any directions or advice and never once complained about her decisions. The woods were dangerous, but the prince never once warned her of any dangers.

Bree was convinced he would do nothing if she found herself trapped by the creatures in the wild the moment he didn't warn her of a bear she almost awoke.

When she asked why he hadn't helped her, he merely shrugged. It wasn't hard to see the logic behind why he'd done nothing. Prince Sean was not even a little bit repulsed by his actions.

From the girl's point of view, she somewhat understood why he would feel that way. After all, seeing her dead would only free him from her.

Eventually, the girl got tired and rested on the large root of a random colossal tree in the forest.

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Sean leaned against a tree opposite her and sighed. Listening to her breath, he could tell she was getting exhausted, but then again, the pack she had been carrying along with her the entire time, could just as well contain what she needed to acquire more strength.

"Why don't you say anything?" the girl barked at him.

"What's there to say? You broke me out of the dungeon and endangered the werewolves in the dungeons without batting an eyelash. There's nothing for me to tell you," the man scoffed, sliding down the tree and taking a seat as well.

The girl didn't miss the disappointment laced in the royal's voice. It irked her to think he would judge her. 'You're no saint either,' she wanted to retort, "What about you? You escaped from the dungeon after betraying the royals. You can't exactly go back to the palace."

"I am not worried about myself. I used to be a lone wolf so I have no trouble returning to that life," the man shrugged.

"Whatever, none of that matters anyway. You're going to call your girlfriend," the girl told him.

“Hmm, how is that going to help you?” Sean, skipping over Amanda’s newfound title, narrowed his eyes at her.

“No questions. I’m the one in charge right now. Call her,” the girl ordered, her eyes holding only hate toward the royal.

Sean had had just about enough of her attitude and he was now drawing the line to her disrespect. In an attempt to get up and summon power from his wolf, the royal fell to his knees, losing the feeling in his legs and soon after, his whole body.

His legs seemed to have given up the moment he’d stood up, “Oh, you haven’t noticed yet, have you?” the girl smirked, “I poisoned you too. Come on... I’m not stupid to break a royal out of the dungeon without a backup plan.”

The numbness in the royal’s limbs continued to spread through his body, “What kind of poison is this?” Sean asked her. He hunted through his mind, but there was nothing that reacted the way this poison did towards him.

His wolf normally fought all toxins that entered his body, making him almost immune to all poisons. And even those that worked weren’t this effective. The poison that had rendered him immovable at the moment was stronger than any he had ever experienced.

What was worse was that he couldn’t tell when it was that he had been poisoned. He knew he hadn’t been infected and that he hadn’t breathed in the gas from the dungeons...

“It’s a poison that inhibits the flow of divine energy. The hunters have learnt a lot concerning the power of the moon lotuses. This one was my personal favourite out of all of them,” the girl chuckled.

“I don’t understand what you’re saying. What does the moon lotus have to do with any of this?” the man asked her.

“Oh, you don’t know, do you? The hunters really do keep a lot of information from the royals. Luckily for me, I have done my homework. Unlike Ginger, I was not going to do something that would get me killed that easily.

That girl was so impatient. I’m not so different, but I wouldn’t go in that blind. She didn’t even the rogue she had hired. Enough of that though. In any case, I made my research. There are many places you can get what you want for the right price.

Wolfsbane, information, wolfsbane deployment devices... Most of them don’t make it through because of the diligence of the hunters, but just a few are enough to cause the damage I needed,” the girl narrated.

From what the girl had said, the king was still at a loss on how to get movement back into his system, “What about the drug you’ve just used on me?” the king asked her.

“Oh, that. It’s a new one that inhibits the use of divine energy, which means the more divine energy one has, the more effective it is. I had no doubt it would work for you. The royals have the most divine energy out of all the werewolves and probably even more than the hunters, so it was bound to work on you for sure. Now... call your girlfriend,” the girl said to her.

“What makes you think I can call her,” the man asked her indifferently.

“Don’t play dumb with me. She only showed up because she couldn’t contact you. I can only imagine that was because of the punishment the king gave you. I tested it out. That cell wouldn’t let you mind link anyone outside the cell.

You couldn’t communicate from inside those dungeons and she came to see what was going on. Now, call her,” the girl ordered once more.

“From the looks of it, you seem to know far more than I do. So how about you answer my questions...” the man stopped talking when he heard the tearing sound of fabric. Something was completely wrong... He couldn’t feel anything because of the odd drug that had paralysed his body, but the sudden movement of his shirt explained what was going on. The girl had ripped his shirt at the back. “Hey, what are you doing?”

“Hmm, I never thought you would be completely paralyzed by this. It seems you can’t even feel a thing. I don’t have all day, Sean. Call her or else I start cutting up your back. I know you won’t be able to feel it which, honestly, I don’t care about...” the girl smirked, “but I bet she can feel it.”

“What makes you think our connection is that strong for us to be able to share the pain?” the prince’s voice had gone up in volume. ‘This girl is insane.’

“Oh, I can’t even begin to count the number of ways she proved that to me. Was it the way she spoke about you or maybe the way she could change the colour of her eyes? You can take your pick. Besides...” the girl scraped the edge of her knife over the scar of bite mark set on his shoulder, “I don’t think anyone has ever had the chance to see this.”

Shivers went through the man’s body as the nerves under the mark intensified the light touch of the knife, “If you don’t call her, I will start to cause her pain. I don’t think you would...”

“You’ve made your point, girl,” the king sighed.

“Now wasn’t that much easier?” Bree replied triumphantly before replacing her smirk with a deep scowl.

“Try to get her to bring you a shirt as well. I don’t want to have to look at your shirtless self for the entirety of this trip,” the girl added, walking away from the prince.

“Are you going to just leave me here?” Sean called out.

“Oh, all the poison does is inhibit the use of divine energy. The more you draw on your wolf, the worst it gets. You should be fine as long as you keep your wolf back,” the girl mentioned to the man, “Just in case you try something else, I have wolfsbane... the real thing.”

‘Did she just threaten me?’ the prince was dumbfounded. Shaking the thoughts from his head, he asked another burning question, “And how do I take the poison out of my body?”

“I didn’t ask for those details. Your body might just reject the poison like every other useless thing that enters your body, but I’ll have given you a new dose of the drug by then,” the girl yawned, settling down under a tree as she had before.

"I'm not going to just let you inject me with some kind of drug," the man argued while the girl merely chuckled at his statement. He could feel malice in her voice as well as the mocking attitude in her mind.

"Just go ahead and call Amanda already," the girl chuckled to the man. Sean was defeated at the moment. He had his wolf go to the back of his mind and as he did, the feeling began to return to his body. It was cool in the night air, however, it wasn't as humid as he would have expected of a kingdom that had received a deluge of rain for an entire week.

Focusing on the connection he shared with the rogue the girl was referring to, Sean called out to her, "Hey, General Amanda. I would like you to meet me in Sirius. You know how to find my location."

After a moment of silence, a reply came through, "It was far too quiet without your voice in my head. You're being formal. I'm guessing you're in trouble. Stay put, I will be there."

Sean thought of warning the woman of the girl but held back his worries. She was more than powerful enough to deal with the girl on her own. The prince finally regained control of his body and rose from his place on the ground. The girl before him was starting to fall asleep in the darkness of night. The king saw this as an opportunity and stood up to approach her.

If he only could... his thoughts were stopped by a sudden tug at his leg. Looking back, his eyes noticed a chain going around his leg and to the tree he'd been leaning against not long ago.

Without his wolf's strength, it would be impossible to break the chain. Just to try, the king went held the chain and summoned all his strength in an attempt to snap it, but the more his wolf was drawn out, the weaker he got. Before he could tell what was happening, he collapsed on his back, his entire body had gone numb once more.

"Don't bother, Sean. You won't be able to break the chain. I make the rules now," the girl's cold voice broke the silence of the night.

"I thought you were asleep," the king asked her.

"I had to pretend for a bit to see what you would do. I guess I was right. You would probably kill me if you were given the chance," the girl sighed.

Sean stared off at the canopy. Next to no light from the moon made it to the forest floor, but the light that did make it seem like there was an entirely different collection of stars in the sky that night, "You'd be surprised," he replied, as his last words of the night.

'In truth, I wouldn't care what would happen to you if I took you back to the capital. The rest would be up to them.' His own thoughts brought questions to his mind, 'Can I even make it back to the capital myself? Would the king listen to me if I tried? No, Davin has his limits. He wouldn't... I'm not sure I'd even get the chance to plead my case one bit,' he chuckled to himself.

Chapter 312 The Prince's Rogue Mate

Amanda spent her night in one of the numerous caves the rogues had become accustomed to in no-man's-land. She had been doing this for a while.

Following the king's latest orders was hard to accomplish and worry about Sean at the same time. Luckily for her, this time, her mission was in the same place as her mate.

At least, that's what she'd thought. The news about him being locked up in a prison was like a stab in her heart. In her rush to find someone who would tell her about Sean's situation, she had only crossed paths with Ginger, a bitter girl who wanted to use her to achieve her own selfish and treacherous goals. She could have just ignored the obnoxious girl, but after hearing the girl's intention, her plan to do so had changed completely.

However, that situation had gone by. She had killed the traitor and resumed her mission. Everything was supposed to proceed normally.

The royals were bound to understand why she did what she did. After all, they all didn't think twice before killing rogues. That had been no different.

Her hopes, however, had been crushed that night when a familiar voice invaded her mind.

The message from the prince that night worried her so much that she barely got any sleep that night. When it was soon clear that she wasn't going to get any sleep, she left the cave and started her run through the night following the location of the royal through her mind. His power was weaker than she was used to and this fact only scared her more.

The wolf came to stop when she caught the scent of someone else near Sean's location. She slowly circled the area, staying as quiet as she could and staying downwind in the almost still air and keeping to the deepest shadows to hide her form.

Her stalking paid off when she saw a girl resting not far from a sleeping royal. The girl's sleeping form held a knife in one hand and the other rested on a bag. Within the bag, she could barely make out the contents. 'Is that a gas mask? Whatever...' she took her eyes off the girl's bag and froze when she recognised the person before her, 'Wait, what is she doing here?'

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Almost as though he'd sensed her presence, the king snapped awake and looked around, staying silent even after waking up from the deepest depths of his slumber. The general sighed, relieved and proud of the man's diligence. Their eyes soon locked with one another. The female wolf was about to approach him when his eyes began speaking a different language.

The woman took note of the chain that was tied to the man's ankle but was now confused as to why he hadn't yet broken it, "What's the problem? This girl is barely powerful enough to bring you down even with your hands tied behind your back and a blindfold covering your eyes," the woman asked him through the mind link they shared.

"She poisoned me, but I don't know when. I can't use any power from my wolf side. Using the mind link alone makes me dizzy," the man replied, his voice sounding strained.

Amanda's eyes snapped back to the girl as she regarded her in a new light. She was among the ones she'd captured not so long ago. She'd just gone and betrayed the kingdom that had saved her. 'Is the other one just the same? No, that one seemed to be the victim of that situation.' The woman was trying to judge Crysta, but found no reason to believe her capable of this same kind of action, "I should have killed her as well. It doesn't matter. I'll put her down right now," she said through the mind link.

Just as she was coming out of her hiding place, the girl stirred awake and rubbed her eyes, "Are you going to just stand there and look at me? Shift back into your human form already. Unless you want to faint and experience unimaginable pain," the girl yawned.

"What's that supposed to mean?" the prince asked.

"Oh, haven't you noticed it yet? You're definitely dense. She'll collapse soon if she continues to use the divine energy coming from her wolf. So I would ask that you tell her to shift back into her human form," the girl spoke again, this time adding emphasis to her words.

Sean's eyes darted around and landed on the gas mask that was peeking from her bag. It was when he squinted that he finally saw what he'd been looking for. It was almost imperceptible, but small wisps of pale white gas were escaping the gas mask's inlets, "That gas mask... It's constantly spraying poison into the air."

"So your brain works after all. It cost me a ton to get these, so I would ask that your mate not waste my time," the girl said, walking up to the prince.

Amanda made an effort to rush to the girl, but her legs gave the moment she thought of exerting herself. The black wolf before them collapsed to the ground, "Amanda, shift back into your human form. The poison has no effect on you in that state," the man said to her.

Amanda followed his instructions and shifted back into her human form. Sean went silent when he saw her shift back. The woman lifted herself to her knees, "That's one neat poison she's got there," she cursed, however, the words flew in one ear and out the other for the prince.

"It's been long, little Alexa," Sean greeted.

The woman froze at the nickname he'd used to call her, deep memories of the past spreading through her mind. She felt as though something of a shell had cracked to reveal her true self. Tears tinged her eyes... "It's been so long indeed."

"Oh, this is rich. I was sure this was all impossible, but the royal actually has a rogue mate!" Bree exclaimed as he watched the two of them.

However, neither of them paid her any attention. Sean had his attention completely taken by his mate before him. The two of them hadn't met in a long time... So long that Amanda found herself letting her tears through.

"When is this all going to end, Sean?" was one of the questions she had burning in her mind.

"I haven't spoken to her in a while. I don't know. She doesn't actually speak much these days," Sean replied.

"I haven't spoken to her either. The king is looking for her, by the way," the woman replied.

"Isn't that supposed to be impossible? It's not like there is a place on earth that can take you straight to the moon palace. That would be impossible," the man scoffed, but he felt his words were somewhat more wishful thinking.

"I don't know about going to the moon palace. I don't know what he hopes to achieve by going where he is going, but if he manages to somehow contact her, I don't know what that might bring him. It might just spell doom for the rest of the world," the woman replied.

"Nothing... It would get him nothing," Sean replied firmly.

"You might be wrong about that. There is a new goddess. From what I can tell, this might be what he's gone to find out," the woman replied.

"What are the two of you talking about?" Bree yelled, "I didn't call you here so that you might have a lovers' quarrel."

The two mates stopped their discussion and turned to the girl they'd completely forgotten about, "That reminds me... you've now captured two royals, what do you hope to achieve? Do you now plan on capturing all the royals and having the one called Lina sacrifice herself for them?" the woman asked.

"That would be impractical," the girl yelled back, "And no, that's not what I'm going to do. I only need one dead. There is several ways for me to do that..."

"Become a rogue already," Amanda snapped at her.

The girl was taken aback by the invitation, "What...???"

"Yeah, I would like to ask the same question," Sean now turned to his mate with a quizzical expression.

"Honestly, I don't care what you want to do. I'm going to kill you whether I'm poisoned or not. That's just how it is for you at the moment. Become a rogue because I won't let you choose any other option," the woman said to her.

"You're insane. I'll have my wishes fulfilled by you. There is a girl that doesn't deserve the family she was born into and I will see her put to an end," the girl gritted her teeth in anger, but continued, "We are going to find the rogue king..."

"Out of the question... The rogue king will kill you the moment he talks to you," Sean intervened. With Amanda by his side, he felt the fog over his mind finally lift. There weren't many more secrets to keep and the two royals now outnumbered the girl. Not to mention how long he'd wanted to be reunited with Amanda.

"Not necessarily... She has information and she has a conviction to have the royals put down. Maybe she just hates one of the royals... It's more than enough for a king with almost no army," the woman observed thoughtfully, once again confusing her mate.

"Why are you telling her that?" Sean asked his mate. 'Who's side are you on?' he wanted to yell at her.

"Because I want her to know more about her options. I, won't let her rejoin the Sirius pack. She'll be taken down just like her friend earlier, but if she joins the rogue king, that's different," the woman replied.

"I don't understand you one bit. Are you on the side of the rogues or the royal family?" the girl asked.

"I am on the side of balance. The rogue army is full of angry wolves that live in chaos. There is a constant struggle to rise to the top and be more important to the king. Greed, bloodlust, malice, and so many negative emotions that make up one side of this war.

The other one, however, is full of people that only seek peace in this world. You only get to choose one and when I find anyone that claims to be on the side of the empires yet they don't fit in, I offer them only two options... if they can take them.

That anger will allow you grow stronger as a rogue, but if you choose to go after the royal family as you are now, you will only become weak and you will be captured and taken to the dungeons like all the other criminals who've tried," the woman explained.

"Aren't the rogues scattered now? The hunters are going to sweep through no-man's-land and completely cleanse the world of the rogues," Sean replied.

"It's that operation that has spread the rogues out this much. They are to blend in with the common population and pretend to normal. Clear themselves of any form of malicious emotions so that the empire won't be able to use the Chase family to filter them out," the woman explained.

"Alexa, what are you trying to tell me?" Sean asked her.

"I know you weren't supposed to break out of that dungeon. This girl cannot go back either. As it looks right now, the three of us are stranded with nowhere to go," the woman spoke up.

"I do have where to go. I'm..."

"Just going to get yourself killed. I'll strike a deal with you, young girl. You either join us... Dump that silly poison of yours... The three of us will pretend to be a model family while we await the rogue king's orders. Until then, none of us can accomplish anything."

"What's happened to the rogue king? Why do you speak of him like he's inaccessible?" the girl asked the woman, panic setting into her voice.

It wasn't just that, however. The fact that the woman and man weren't in the least bit worried even after she had the upper hand only told her she was cornered. She knew the power of the poison she had procured, but the two wolves before her were still moving like normal. It wasn't like they had gone lame. They could still move just fine.

"The rogue king... is not available at the moment," Amanda's voice was blunt and emotionless, like the ruthless voice of a mother that was finally tired with her child's stubborn and meaningless antics, "That was what we were talking about when you so rudely interrupted us."

Chapter 313 Finding the Origin

The journey to the south, following the legends of their origins, proved to be more perilous than the rogue king had initially thought.

The vegetation in this unclaimed land was impossible to deal with. Impenetrable vines that seemed to grow back the moment he cut them. More vicious animals that didn't pay the king any respect because of the power he emitted.

The man was utterly fed up with it... and yet, he showed no signs of turning back. His trip further south, however, only continued to get worse.

On their way, Beatrice noted how the trees started to grow closer to each other, getting more difficult to walk through. Since the start of their journey, it was the most bizarre thing they were seeing.

Without giving themselves room to grow, these trees were getting dangerously close to each other and the deeper into the woods they went, the closer they got still... almost like they were trying to merge at their trunks.

Soon enough, the light from the sun was completely blocked out, leaving these wolves to travel with the power of their enhanced sight. Their eyes glowed in the dark like ominous torches.

The woods got even more interesting, however, when they offered them different routes through the forest. The king was the first to notice it when they found themselves at a y-junction of trees. Left and right was a thing now... It was either they went left or right...

And the trees only grew closer the more they went in.

Stranded between the closest tree trunks the rogue king had ever thought to squeeze through, the man kept his breaths short for fear of cracking a rib or worse, "Hey, Thane, are you having better progress with getting through?" the man yelled at the top of his voice.

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"No, your majesty. Are you sure this is the place?" the beta alpha yelled back.

"Absolutely. Haven't you noticed how nature itself won't let us through? We followed that damned river. I had no idea it would take us this long to make it here, but this is definitely the place," the king sounded delusional as he forced his way even further through the impossibly tiny space.

"Your majesty, you shouldn't push yourself too far. What happens if you get completely stuck?" Thane yelled, sensing the king's strain. The large man tried retracing his steps in the maze of tight compact trees, but could barely tell where he'd come from. It was like someone had curved out a confusing labyrinth using trees.

"You won't be able to make it to the Origin at this rate," the woman they had brought along for the journey sighed.

"Oh, so now you're being cooperative. I don't remember asking you to speak this time. You've not even been that much of a help," Thane yelled at the woman beside him. The king had ordered him to keep a close eye on the woman. Something bothered him though, "Why haven't you tried to run away?"

"Oh? And what would that get me? The gateway to our goddess is not so far from me and you're wondering why I'm not running off in the opposite direction?" the woman raised her brow, "Are you dumb or just full of it?"

"No, that's not what I meant. Haven't you noticed there are pathways that I can't get through? Why haven't you tried to escape? I know you're not stupid. You could have made a break for it the moment I wasn't paying attention," the beta alpha countered.

“You expect me to believe that when you’ve been ordered by your king to keep me contained. Do I look that dumb to you?” the woman scoffed.

Thane found himself laughing loudly at her reply. His laughter echoed through the maze of trees, “Oh my, I haven’t laughed that hard in a while. You’re smarter than I was giving you credit for.”

“Honestly, it’s like you have war for brains,” the woman sighed.

“Let me get this straight. Simply because I was ordered to keep you still, you haven’t tried to get away?” Thane asked for clarity.

“It’s because you were ordered to keep me contained that makes it nearly impossible for me to escape and you’ve kept your guard up since then. It’s almost impressive,” she shrugged.

“The two of you seem to be having a good time,” the king’s groaning voice bounced off many sides of the maze.

“We were just having a short chat, your majesty. Have you been able to make any progress?” Thane asked, dragging the woman with him through the maze and relying on his acute hearing to try and trace where the king was. Eventually, they found him just dislodging from another opening in the maze that was far too small for him.

“Damn it... It’s like the openings visibly get smaller the more I try to get through,” the blue-eyed man cursed.

“Well, it might just be that the moon goddess doesn’t want to see you,” Beatrice shrugged, “You can never know what’s going in a goddess’s mind.”

“On the contrary, I know the goddess would not deny someone with the colour of my eyes a visit,” the rogue king replied, barely noticing the mocking tone in the woman’s voice, “But then again, this maze is getting us nowhere.”

The king was getting angrier at the moment. Seeing the anger in the man’s eyes, Beatrice took a step back. “Damn it, this is getting us nowhere,” the man yelled into at nothing in particular. Out of the blue, he began to punch the tree bark before him, not with as much strength as Beatrice had thought he would... at first, “My Lord, what are we to do now?”

“We’ll get through one way or another, Thane. There is no doubt about that. The Seeker has done more than I could have hoped from her, considering her stubborn attitude.

The woman sighed, “I told you nothing.”

“Deny it all you want, you can’t stop yourself from giving off the subtle signs of an answer. Your powers guided us here and you didn’t even notice it,” the king chuckled, continuing his assault on the tree bark in front of him. The more he did this, the calmer he seemed to become, however, his punches only increased in energy.

“I don’t quite...”

"It's your eyes," Thane cut her off, "They glow brighter the closer we get to the Origin. I'm sure you could feel it yourself and each time we took a turn in the right direction, your heart would skip a beat. You didn't even have to say a word."

The woman was stunned by the observation they'd kept from her. After having taught her granddaughter to change the colour of her eyes to keep from being discovered, it felt somewhat ironic that she would be the one that needed the ability more in the end.

Beatrice went silent and watched the king spend all his frustration on something that wouldn't feel pain, 'For someone that's meant to be killing everything in sight, you think quite a bit.'

Thane leaned against the tree beside her, "Does he always get like this when he's frustrated?" Beatrice asked him.

"I don't always know what's happening in the mind of the king. Sometimes, it's like he's not even here. That is just one of the things he does when he needs to think," Thane sighed, half wishing he could read more into the king's mind sometimes. The king's punches began to take on a much stronger tone, the vibrations of each one shaking the tree-maze as a whole.

"That's insane strength," Beatrice mused.

"Yeah... I guess you could say that. I don't even understand the hunters praising their puny gifts when royals are capable of matching them and surpassing them in a much shorter time," the man spoke. Beatrice simply took this to be his way of showing off the power the rogue king possessed.

Not long after silence had taken over them, the rogue king stopped his tantrum and took a look at his knuckles. His face bore a smile that only made Beatrice's stomach churn in fear, something was wrong, "Have you figured out something, my Lord?" Thane asked expectantly.

"It's just like I thought. There is divine energy keeping us from going through to the Origin," the king replied.

"What? How shall we get through if..."

"Not to worry, Thane. I've taken care of it," as soon as the king said it, the ground began to rumble even more vigorously than it had when he was punching the wall of trees. Beatrice stumbled in search of something to hold onto but found nothing. Everything was trembling and the closest branches were high up creating a canopy that sealed them in the natural somewhat unnatural maze.

Watching in shock, the woman watched the great trees slowly shift against their groaning complaints. They moved away from each other, those that had merged splitting in half and unravelling until the forest was spread out normally. Enough for a full-grown bear to walk through unrestricted. "At this point, we could just as well as bid the world farewell," Beatrice sighed.

"Any idea what the rogue king gets to do here?" Thane asked.

"No clue... this place has never been found since the beginning of our race. I never thought it would look like this though," the woman commented, taking in the clearing the woods had appeared before them. The rogue king walked through the clearing. The sun was setting far over the horizon, the first sign of light they were seeing since entering the maze.

“Thane, we shall wait for the moon to come up. The moon goddess can be summoned in a field of glowing moon lotuses such as this one,” the rogue said absentmindedly.

“How do you know that?” Beatrice asked him, “Information about the ways of communicating with the moon goddess has long been forgotten.”

“You should really stop thinking of me as an ordinary werewolf. I am the rogue king... The true king of the werewolves and I know everything to do with our history,” the man replied, sitting cross-legged at the centre of the field of moon lotuses, “Now... we wait.”

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Nightfall came quicker than Beatrice would have liked. She’d hoped time would stand still and deny the rogue king a meeting with the moon goddess. She wondered what a meeting with the goddess could get him considering she was the one that had created the special wolves meant to bring about his end.

It didn’t make sense one bit for him to be so hopeful about meeting her, “You make it sound like the goddess favours you. The rogues don’t even get the chance to have mates. You know... I could help you find yours if you let me...”

“I’m not falling for that, Seeker. If the goddess is to choose someone for me, it will be in the future after I’ve purged this world of all humanity,” the man replied strongly.

“Your obsession amuses me. What do you hope to achieve by killing the humans?” the woman asked him.

“You don’t get it and you probably never will. I will speak to the one that gave me the mission to bring them to an end,” the man replied without sparing her a glance.

He’d been seated since they’d arrived and the woman was starting to wonder if he never felt the muscle pains that were already starting to get a hold of her back muscles. Getting up, she started the walk to the edge of the clearing.

However, her gait was cut short by a rather sudden rush of blood. Her breath went erratic and she found herself in need of much more air just to stay conscious. A calm serene breeze blew past the clearing before all the air went completely still. It was like someone had exhaled.

Her wolf was more active than she’d ever felt it in her entire life. As if on cue, the dull flowers that littered the clearing began to glow a dim blue that got stronger with time. They all bloomed and grew in number, springing to life and lighting up the entire clearing in a dazzling azure hue. “It’s been forever... Rana,” a soft beautiful voice reached Beatrice’s ears. She turned ever so slowly and came face to face with the most beautiful woman she’d ever laid her eyes on. Her actions were not her own anymore as she bowed to the goddess before her.

The rogue king was not shaken by her sudden appearance or if he was, he didn’t show it, “It’s been very long indeed, dear Celeste.” His tone was friendly and so was hers... ‘What’s going on right now?’ Beatrice couldn’t help but ask herself as she watched the two beings greet each other like old friends instead of rivals.

Chapter 314 Negotiations with a Goddess

The rogue king got up from his spot on the ground and began pacing about the clearing in front of the goddess. Celeste remained patient and followed his movement with her celestial gaze as the man gathered his thoughts, "I have so many questions."

"And I can answer some of them, but not all," the goddess replied.

"Okay then... are you against me?" the man asked her.

"You would believe that while you still breathe right in front of me?" the goddess sounded offended.

"Yes, I would. Countless of my people have died and you've brought up others to oppose me," the man argued.

"But alas, you're still standing even after everything that's come after you. What does that tell you? If I wanted you dead, I would merely order you to choke," the goddess shrugged.

"Then explain it to me. Why do you continue to tolerate their laziness? Why do you continue to let them live when they turned their backs against you?" the rogue king asked, abandoning his former doubts of the goddess's loyalties.

Celeste's eyes suddenly flashed in anger at his words, "They haven't turned their backs on me and you know it. If anything, you're the one that's not listening to what I have been telling you for over two hundred years," Celeste was livid.

"Oh, I have been listening alright. All I see is someone who wants peace when she should seek revenge instead. I'll never accept what you said all those years ago. I will follow his wishes to the letter and bring an end to that destructive race," even after annoying the moon goddess, the rogue king continued talking to her casually.

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"You continue to underestimate the Man god. I stopped the war because I knew what he was capable of. The hunters are working with the werewolves that listened to me to bring down the rest of you. I watched you before. I know you don't have much power left after that defeat in Lycaon," the goddess countered.

"You have been watching then. You continue to let them do what they want. I will not stop until every one of them is dead or a rogue just like your original wishes suggested and I have no doubts that you still feel the same way about them," once the rogue king had started talking this way, Celeste was pretty sure he was too far gone.

"No, I don't and you shouldn't either. How long will you keep this up? How much longer will it take you to stop this madness?" the moon goddess argued. She was getting even more frustrated with the man, but he didn't seem to let any of her words through.

"Tell me, Celeste. Have you really forgotten what happened?" the king walked up to the goddess until he was too close to her for comfort. However, the goddess did not take a step back. She'd been rooted to the place she'd appeared since the moment she'd come, "Have you really forgotten what he did to you all that time ago? Do you not remember the sight of your fallen sisters?"

The goddess's eyes began to well up with tears as she stared off into nothing, "I know what happened, Rana. Unlike you, I was there."

"And I can tell from the tears in your eyes that you've never once forgiven him for what he did to you," the rogue king grinned.

"I found something worth more than senseless revenge, Rana and it is something I wished to bestow on all of you. Why did you reject the blessing I gave you?"

"You speak of that gladiator, don't you?" the rogue king spat, "What more has he ever done for you other than hang on your every word and follow you like a lost puppy? He's nothing more than a tool for you and you call that a gift. What worth is he compared to the sisters you lost in one of the Man god's experiments?"

The rogue king's words were like sharp blades to the goddess's heart and even when she was being disrespected like this, she couldn't bring herself to reprimand him for his way of thinking. The goddess fell to her knees and sighed, "I have really grown tolerant of my creations over the years, haven't I?"

The rogue king chuckled at her obvious words, "You should put it bluntly and say you've grown soft. I can barely call you the goddess that brought my kind into existence. On another note, I would like to ask you about a second moon goddess."

"I don't have long, Rana. I've devoted so much time to you with the hope that you would see past the anger I showed all those years ago, but you haven't moved forward one bit," the woman sighed.

"I have moved forward a lot actually. I've learnt so much about divine energy and how the royals have an abundance of it. I've been able to reach heights that no one has in two hundred years. Not even that pawn of yours will be able to stop you," the man chuckled.

"Oh, do you mean Katie? What did you think of her?" the goddess asked, her face lighting up.

"She's definitely impressive, but after that desperate show of power, I'm not worried about her anymore. She'll gradually fade away and die from lack of divine energy in a body that has been trained to run on it," the man smiled wickedly, "So much for that attempt at stopping me. Do you really wish me dead that much?"

The goddess facepalmed, sighing heavily, "You misunderstand a lot, but I won't blame you and won't bother explaining myself either. You've never listened to me anyway. Talking to you now would never change that fact. What brought you here, Rana?"

The rogue king had finally stopped pacing and noticed the change in the goddess's demeanour as she asked him the question, "I came to ask about the second goddess. Somehow you are dodging the question."

"I don't have much time left, Rana. It's like I told you... I dedicated my time to you, but you've failed to see it," the woman replied.

"I have been watching. I have been listening. My enemies have been doing so as well. None of your actions has been engineered towards helping me," the rogue king answered coldly.

“Then why are you here? Why are you speaking to me as you know me? Why do you reject everything I tell you and come back to me all the same? Have I not proven to you that I am not your enemy?” the goddess yelled at him.

“You have done so... many times, but I don’t understand your actions. They are quite contradictory,” Rana replied, “One day, you try to bring me down with force, then the other, you whisper into my ear. You spout nonsense of a world with no violence. What has happened to you? Have you already forgotten how the Man god slaughtered your...”

“Watch your tongue, Rana. You’re not speaking to the right goddess about that. What happened to the goddess of the hunt has nothing to do with what happens to the werewolves,” the goddess snapped.

The conversation had now lost its calm flow and the two beings were openly arguing with each other. The rogue king was barely shaken by the goddess’s sudden outburst... if not a little shaken.

“Now you’re trying to ignore the past. You’re a mess, Celeste, while my mind is clear. I know what’s wrong and right in this world. I know what’s evil and that there is injustice in letting their crime go unpunished,” the rogue king suggested.

“It’s like talking to...” the moon goddess rubbed her temples, remembering another one of her royals that was just like this one, “There will be a moon goddess that will replace me. I hoped that the world is at peace when that time comes.”

“So you hope for my death at that time,” Rana responded.

“Everything I tell you goes in one ear and out the other. It wouldn’t make a difference even if I told...”

“Just tell me where the goddess is,” the king commanded. This was not lost on the moon goddess and she visibly scowled.

“I tell you a lot because of the colour of your eyes, but I don’t have the power to tell you where Selene is. She’s hidden well... even from me,” the goddess explained. In a dangerously low voice, “And I would ask you to watch your tone.”

Rana skipped over the warning...

“You say you’re not against me. I will ask you to give me the power to spread our kind once again. How’s that sound?” the king smirked.

“It sounds like something I wouldn’t let you have. Why would I do such a thing?” the moon goddess asked, slightly bored.

“You know how reasonable I can be. I could have that girl executed right before your eyes. It would be a waste of her talent and not to mention the fact that she is one of the kinds you blessed. And you know you wouldn’t be able to do a thing about it,” the man continued.

The goddess sighed, finally locking eyes with the Seeker that had been frozen the entire time they spoke. It was just like all werewolves to do so when they saw the goddess for the first time, “I’ll grant you that power then... However, it will be on a condition.”

Rana took his time considering her words, "I know you grant my requests, however, you grant theirs as well. What aren't you telling me?" the king asked.

"The condition is that you'll be the only one with this gift. Aren't you afraid that I'll be able to command you if you get a blessing straight from me?" the goddess smirked.

"You wouldn't command me to something I don't want to," the king replied.

"Who's contradicting who now?" the goddess chuckled.

"One more thing... Do you hate me for what I'm doing?" Rana asked.

"I don't hate any of my people, Rana. I might hate what you have allowed yourself to become and hate what you have done, but I would never hate you," the goddess's reply was even more twisted.

"Now that we've agreed and you've acknowledged the last question you had for me, I will do as I please," the goddess took on a colder tone, "You will get the power you've asked for, but you will be the only one with this ability and you will not be able to spread it.

Every being you bite will become a werewolf, but they won't be able to spread this curse for you. I created this place to allow any royal to come in, but that's all I did." As she spoke, the goddess began to ascend into the sky, the light of the moon was particularly brighter around her.

'Run, little one,' the goddess' voice reached Beatrice's ear, snapping her mind back into reality with a sense of urgency that spurred her into action. Her wolf reacted faster than she did, shifting and making a break for it.

The trees had begun to rumble and groan at the power that summoned them to move closer to each other once more. The king picked up on the goddess's tone and meaning and so did Thane, launching straight for the trees.

With a wave of her hand, the creeping vines of the trees barred the king's way and let the Seeker through all at the same time. Thane weaved past the first tree that barred his way only to be hit by a branch from another, hurling him back to the centre of the clearing. The canopy crept back up from the top of the clearing obscuring the moon's light. The blue glow of the lotuses died down.

Beatrice ran as fast as she could, her heart bursting with excitement and fear. But none of that was as dominant as another feeling that gripped her every fibre... Freedom.

She didn't look back and as the groaning sounds of the trees died down, so did the foreboding presence of the beta alpha that had been holding her captive... 'I'm free of them. Thank the goddess... finally,' she cried, immediately shifting her goal to finding her missing granddaughter.

Chapter 315 Luna's Mind

Katie woke up to the feeling of an empty bed, her hand reaching out to the somewhat warm spot beside her. The same spot that Cole's body was meant to be.

Sighing, she searched the mind link in her groggy state for her mate, "Someone finally woke up," Cole's soothing voice wafted into her mind.

“Yeah, and to an empty bed no less. What’s got you up so early? It’s not like the sun is up yet,” the girl complained.

A king had many duties, but Cole wouldn’t have minded making time for the beauty lying alone in his chambers, however, “Jason called me early this morning to go through the training drills with him. The former beta alphas had a system that wasn’t that easy to follow, so I’m helping him rewrite it before he has to take the Pack Warriors through it.”

“Ugh, that’s also a part of your life you have to take care of?” the girl groaned through the mind link, her frustration wafting through their mental connection in soft waves. The amused grin on the king’s face was not going anywhere.

“You sound disappointed. I had no doubt you would enjoy this part of my life more than the average person,” the blue-eyed male countered. Katie was almost sure she heard him grunt, which got her curious.

“Are you sparring with him right now?” she asked, her eyes still closed and her hands unconsciously cuddling the pillow that was drenched in her mate’s scent.

“Yeah, how did you notice?” while Cole had tried to keep his voice calm and soothing, devoid of any of the physical strain he was putting his body through, the girl had seen through this facade.

“So predictable. Boys do love to flex their muscles,” the girl chuckled before rolling out of the bed.

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“Speak for yourself. I remember someone that downed a tree just to prove she had the strength to put me down,” Cole replied, his voice going up in pitch and losing every ounce of calmness it previously had. Might as well, since the girl had already figured it out.

“I think I will come and watch today,” the girl replied, walking into the shower for a morning bath. Her hands shuddered at the thought of going to the training arena where the Warriors spent their time honing their skills. The capital of Lycaon was protected by much more than hunters and since their decrease in number after the battle against the rogues in the capital, the wolves had to work more to improve their security.

“Will you be okay?” Cole asked her, concern laced in his voice.

“Yes, I will be fine, Cole. Don’t worry about me. I wouldn’t want Jason to get ahead of himself,” the girl sighed before turning on the shower and feeling it roll off her fingers while she adjusted the taps, in search of the right temperature. A thin veil of steam came off the water, dimming the bathroom and covering the girl in comforting warmth.

When the water was just right, she stepped into the tub and drew the curtains.

“Oh, that won’t be happening. Indestructible, remember,” the man replied through the mind link.

“Yeah, I remember. I wonder if you can be injured by other things that aren’t so physical... Maybe lightning could have done a number on you, but I guess that’s out of the question now,” the girl mused.

"I don't think someone would hurl a lightning bolt at me and what do you mean it's out of the question?" he called back.

"Your tone tells me you know what I'm talking about. You have to learn how to control it you know. It could be quite useful in bringing him down. It could also make up for your lack of speed," the girl suggested.

Cole was quiet for a moment, "I guess a hunter remains a hunter." What the king didn't know was how the girl recoiled in the bath and sank till only her face was just above the surface. The water allowed her to feel better even after everything she was going through.

The wolf she'd used to help them find the missing people, Ashley hadn't spoken a word since then and her eyes had stayed dark blue since that day. It had been two days since then and her mind was starting to feel far too quiet.

"I've changed a lot since I got my werewolf side, you know..." she paused, however, nothing else would escape her mind, "...Now let me bathe. I'll meet you in a few."

The mind link went quiet once more and there it was. The feeling of loneliness that Katie had never had the chance to feel. 'Damn it. I spent my whole life with a clear mind. Why is so hard for me to get used to her being gone? She's just resting after all. It's not like she's dead or something worse, right...?' her thoughts stopped when images of a rogue girl who'd been killed by her blade flashed through her mind.

The girl closed her eyes and submerged herself into the water with the hopes that the rush would get her mind clear. However, the more she sank into the water, the worse it got. There was no escaping the darkness that crept into her lonely mind.

It was almost suffocating. The lack of oxygen under the water surface seemed to be the least of her problems. She was used to holding her breath for long periods of time as part of her training. She'd also been trained to control her emotions to a scary degree, however, all those lessons seemed to fail her now.

The girl tried to think of the teachings she'd been given, 'Breathe once... Breathe twice...' rising to the surface, she tried, but... it never worked.

Outside the surface of the water, a heavy mist filled the bathroom, dulling her sight. She couldn't tell if there was anyone in her room. She had lost the ability to detect those around her. Her mind was so quiet... The sound of the disturbed water she was emerging from screamed louder than she normally perceived it. Just when she thought she couldn't take much more of the excruciation silence, a warm voice tore into her mind, "Hey, Katie."

"What is it, Cole?" she tried to sound calm, achieving her goal of fooling him.

"Open your mind to the collective mind link of the pack. I don't know if you're capable of ignoring it, but wolves are known for running mad when they spend too long on their own. The only one that has ever succeeded in ignoring the social nature of our kind gained the title of the Lone wolf. His name eludes me, but I know he was a royal of the Sirius pack," the male replied casually.

His casual tone and the oblivious nature of his reply were enough to banish the darkness that her mind had conjured up. "Oh, okay... I'll open up in a moment then."

“Sure,” after that, he went silent again. Once he’d slipped out of her mind, she noticed the change in her mood. It was like day and night. Without any voice in her mind, she was completely alone. She had no one. While it was not true, the lack of that reminder was enough to allow her to forget it.

Sighing deeply, the girl let her mind free to wander to the rest of the wolves in the kingdom. It was the first time she was opening up at all. The action was as simple as it was when she spoke with Cole. She didn’t have to do anything much, but let her walls down.

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Jason was just about to get the jump on his alpha. After working so hard to find a weakness in his defence, he was finally going to get in. He was going to land a hit on his king for the first time. Excitement gripped him as he crouched to deliver the uppercut that was almost inevitable to dodge.

His legs flexed, gathering all the energy that he would need to make this effective and decisive. Just as he was about to rise up, his heart pounded harder in his chest as a wave went through the whole mind link. Dizziness gripped him as he felt a new presence within the mind link.

Cole staggered back, likely from the same effect, “Cole, who... who is that?” his voice trembled, feeling the overwhelming power that demanded attention in the mind link. He couldn’t bring himself to ignore the person that had just been added to the mind link.

“It’s... It’s Katie,” Cole laughed out loud, “I had no idea she’d never opened herself up to the mind link before. Her presence is overwhelming.”

“You’re kidding. That’s impressive,” Jason replied, retrieving water from the side of the ring they were sparring in, “Not even the king and queen have that commanding of a presence. The Chosen of the Moon Goddess are really in their own league.”

“Do you mean to say my presence is as imposing as hers?” Cole narrowed his eyes to slits.

“Well... we’re used to you. You barely exert your power on your subordinates, so when the king passed away, we barely noticed you’d taken his place. You were in grief more than the rest of us. The transition was almost seamless,” the beta alpha replied, getting deep in thought as he explained.

“That’s nice to hear. I wonder what will happen now though,” the king smiled. Just as he’d said that footsteps echoed through the halls that led to the training arena. The two wolves turned their attention to the entrance and were almost shocked to see the person that came in. Holding a duffel bag was Bella. The delta was dressed in a sports bra and sweatpants, ready for the morning drill.

“Talk about being more than ready to pummel someone,” Jason commented.

Cole chuckled at his comment and directed his voice to the delta, “You’re quite early, Bella.”

The girl sighed, “I was hoping to find more than just the two of you. Not long before the week of rain we had, this place would be full by now, with pack warriors training their butts off. I hope it’s as fun as it used to be.”

“Well, we’re new to this whole managing the pack Warriors thing, so you’ll have to be patient with my beta alpha,” Cole replied.

“Oh, they will have to keep up with me. I don’t plan on going easy on any of them,” Jason replied. His reply brought a smirk to the girl’s face.

“That’s what I would like to hear,” with that, she started warming up with a few jogs around the large training hall as well as perfectly executed stretching exercises. By the time she was done warming up, the room was starting to fill up with quite a number of wolves all going through the warm-up drills.

Jason stood up and called the whole room to attention. The wolves turned to face him as he was going to talk. The sudden silence got the better of him, “I was not expecting that quick of a reaction,” the man joked. Ripples of laughter went through the gathering.

However, before he could speak, a presence made itself known to all the wolves in the training arena. They all turned instinctively to the entrance waiting in anticipation for the person that was headed their way. The sound from the other side of the door was rather jolly. “You should have told me you would be bringing me along to this. This time I don’t want to fight another royal. That’s the one ground rule I don’t want you to break.”

“Yeah yeah, Sandra, you know I’m not going to do anything here. You can relax. Seeing as I’m not your mentor anymore, I don’t have to...” the absent-minded girl quieted down when she noticed the silence in the room they’d just walked into.

The ceiling was much higher than she expected and the room was quite spacious, holding four rings at its centre and a lot of training equipment all around the room. Unlike Sandra who nearly cowered under the attention they were attracting, Katie sounded oblivious, “Now this is impressive, don’t you think, Sandra?”

“Y-yeah...” the new hunter replied nervously.

Katie finally took note of the watchful eyes that filled the room. She looked from one wolf to the other, trying to figure out what had caused them to be so interested in the two of them, “Did we interrupt something?” was all she could ask bringing a wide smile to Cole’s face. ‘I would have been freakishly nervous if I was in her shoes. Now, this is a Luna.’ He thought to himself.

Chapter 316 What are the Odds!

The girl’s question broke most of the wolves from their trances and they shifted their attention back to the beta alpha that had been previously addressing them, “Not really, but... what are you wearing?” a feminine voice cut through the tension in the air. Despite the respect Katie’s presence commanded, this particular voice managed to pull off a bewildered tone, almost filled with disappointment.

Katie searched for the source of the voice until shortly after, she came face to face with Bella. The delta had made herself known to Katie for quite some time... even when she had done her best to vanish from the public eye in the past few weeks.

Katie had no strong opinion of the girl... yet, but was constantly reminded of how similar she was to Crysta when they’d met for the first time. Drawing from that experience, Katie couldn’t bring herself to be mad at Bella’s obnoxious behaviour... yet.

Katie then looked herself up and down quizzically, “A jacket and a wonderful one might I add, a shirt and heavy sweat pants... Is something wrong?”

“Very wrong. Who trains dressed like that? Do you want to drench those clothes or do you want to boil within them?” the girl continued to ask her, now implying something was wrong with the Luna.

“Oh no... You misunderstand. I’m not training with you today,” Katie hastily explained, starting to see that they were being a major distraction. Considering she was not going to train with them, she would have preferred to be invisible.

“Now, if I could have your attention,” Jason coughed, breaking their short argument. Katie silently thanked the man for saving her and dragged Sandra away from the delta and closer to the ring containing her mate and a very loved Jason.

Bella narrowed her eyes at the two, but said nothing and walked away. Everyone then turned their attention back to Alpha Jason, “Alpha Cross had several drills he would take you through. While I agree that they were essential, it’s not the training I’m used to as an individual and I honestly think we can do better.”

There were murmurs through the crowd, mostly of disapproval, until one of the wolves spoke up, “Alpha Cross’s drills were especially difficult to keep up with. Do you mean to tell us they are simply too easy for you?” a man asked. From the red hue in his eyes, Katie could tell he was able to speak up solely from his authority as an alpha, even though he didn’t carry the aura of an alpha that was also the head of a pack.

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“Cross’s drills were aimed at improving your strength and core endurance. However, that was all they were focused on. Nothing on here was meant to improve your coordination, agility or even your reflexes. There is a lot I could go on about what was wrong with his system, but I won’t get into that since this was still the stronger empire,”

‘Hey,’ Katie complained in the background, springing a smile to the alpha’s face. However, Jason continued with only a glance.

“For the first session of the morning, we shall...”

“I don’t see anything wrong with what Alpha Cross was training the Pack Warriors. They were particularly the strongest in the kingdom. Our Warriors are much stronger than those from the Sirius empire,” Bella was the one to object this time.

Katie found herself chuckling at her claim. Unfortunately for her, the whole room seemed to have gone quiet at the exact same moment she laughed. Noticing her error, her eyes darted about the room, “Did I say something funny?”

“No, you spoke the truth, but I didn’t think you would like to compare yourselves to them,” Katie replied casually.

“Why not?” the delta rolled her eyes. At this point, Katie was wondering whether to be impressed by her forwardness when speaking to high-ranking werewolves. It was rare for a delta to speak up to an alpha, not to mention... a beta alpha.

Thinking harder on it, she was also one of the few werewolves that could achieve a half shift. Katie wondered if there was a boost that it gave someone, but shelved the suspicion for later.

“Well, they don’t train to be able to handle themselves in a fight. They train to be better in self-defence. That said, they wouldn’t do well against hunters but can hold their own against average rogues. Not to mention, the hunters there will protect them from any threat worth the trouble.

They train just about everyone in the pack, not just the Pack Warriors. The differences are quite many, come to think of it. Looking at this gathering, I can tell there is a large chunk of the Lycaon pack missing,” Katie replied, “Carry on, Jason. I’m sorry for the interruption.”

After apologising to Jason, Katie thought she imagined a gasp going through the crowd. Nevertheless, Jason picked up from where he’d left off without letting Bella counter. Katie could see the girl visibly holding back more of her... ‘opinions’.

“Luna Katie is right. We cannot compare ourselves to the wolves of the Sirius empire. It’s a much more docile...” ‘Wait, what...’ Katie mentally stormed the alpha’s mind.

Jason didn’t even show a sign of having heard her this time, “...pack and they choose to train everyone in the pack in the art of self-defence. The powerful pack Warriors from their pack have a separate training regimen that allows them to learn much more than just self-defence, but that can only get them so far when they also have to train with the rest of the pack.

All of you are to pair up now. Since I’m sure you all have fighting experience, I’m going to have you face off against each other. One of you will be on the offence while the other will be on evasion... And I mean evasion, not defence,” The alpha then turned to Katie and her best friend and called, “Sandra...”

“Yes, Jason,” another chorus of murmurs went through the crowd. ‘Did she forget he’s an alpha or is she naturally a brat?’ ‘I saw them holding hands the other day.’ ‘No way, you don’t think...’ ‘But she’s a hunter, she could at least show some respect.’

Ignoring the murmuring chaos that was starting to get louder, Jason spoke louder, commanding silence, “I would like you to help me with this one.”

Sandra paled at the request and started looking between Jason and Katie, accusingly.

Katie raised her hands in surrender, “Hey, you said I didn’t have to make you do anything and I didn’t... I’ll just get out of your line of sight, okay?”

The blue-eyed girl was out of her friend’s presence a moment later. Jason’s awaiting silence stopped Sandra from pulling the Luna back. Katie stepped away from them and watched as she was called into the training ring, grinning widely, ‘What are the odds?’

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Chapter 317 Thawing a Bitter Heart

An hour later, boredom racked the girl’s mind as she watched the training go on and on. She was getting tired of watching this go on and on. Not to mention the involuntary shivers that went through her the more she felt like sparring with someone.

She wanted to let loose for once, but she also knew the strain she would be putting on her body if she chose to go all out along with the earful she would be getting from her mate. Cole was helping Jason out but had taken a role as his deputy during this exercise and this clearly showed the rest of the pack who was to be in charge of this morning's drills.

"You're certainly living a comfortable life," a feminine voice interrupted her train of thought.

Without paying attention to the person that had spoken, she replied, "Hardly. I hate that I can't do anything. Would be fun to spar with someone for once?"

"Oh, does that mean you can fight?" the voice came again.

"Well... I could fight but now if I tried, I don't think I would be much good. I'd probably collapse five minutes later from exhaustion," the Luna sighed.

Katie finally turned to see her companion and froze at the sight of a sweaty Bella wiping her face with a face towel. The girl was well-built and seeing her up close made Katie realise how much she'd underestimated her physique.

"What would you say about me, then? Am I a worthy opponent?" the girl asked her.

"I'm not so sure. Your strength is impressive for a delta and you have the endurance to back it up, but I'm afraid your movements are too slow," Katie commented, sighing, "I'm not saying I'll fight you since that would defeat the whole purpose of me trying to get better."

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"You've been resting for more than a week now. I haven't seen you do anything that suggests you're the rogue killer the rumours talk about. I think you're too scared to get back into fighting him. He must have scared you... the rogue king. I saw what his generals could do... but only for a second," her hand passed over the scar of a ruthless bite mark that marred her belly, never to disappear.

The fact that she'd done nothing to try and hide the scar told more than Katie wished to let her know and from the number of deep canine marks, Katie could tell that she'd been bitten by one of the generals, "Who knows? Maybe you're right," the Luna admitted.

Just then... another person came jogging up to them and collapsed right next to Katie, panting his lungs out. Kyle was beyond exhausted and turning pale as a ghost.

He looked like he was breathing in far more than his lungs could hold, "I was wondering if you were still in the land of the living," the Luna chuckled, starting to wonder how she hadn't seen him this entire time. Her eyes had been fixated on Jason and Sandra training the rest of the pack... and a certainly dashing king.

"You have no idea, Katie. I've tried following your orders, but... but..."

"Where is he?" a voice boomed from the other side of the large training hall. Caden came jogging up to them and for a moment, ignored Katie, "Hey, you fail to fight me, then run for your life like a frightened gazelle? Are you even tired or are you simply pretending to be?" the alpha berated his charge.

“Caden, please, I’ll do any of your beta chores. I’m so exhausted. I’ll even do one of those... What do you call them... Hearings, yes, those boring hearings that go on for hours,” Kyle argued, bowing at his feet.

“Yikes, you’re not ready for one of those yet... and they are extremely boring. I won’t let you near any of them until you learn to keep your eyes open through one. Hmm, the fact that you’re begging me for mercy means I’m doing a good job,” Caden boasted, puffing out his chest and for a moment, Katie wasn’t sure if the boy was going through the torture of apprenticeship.

“Good morning, Caden,” Katie called out.

“Good morning, Luna Katie,” the alpha bowed respectfully before turning to Bella, “Bella, a pleasure to see you here.”

“I can’t believe you’re still torturing that one,” the girl sighed, shaking her head.

Katie found her speed to judge astounding and it made her chuckle. The Luna reached for the beta alpha bowing to Caden on the ground, ruffling his hair like a little child. In a caring tone that Kyle had now learnt to discern, she asked, “How is it going, Kyle?”

Kyle lifted his head from the ground and made eye contact with his alpha. The fear that had been written all over his face vanished instantly and his tense shoulders relaxed, “Oh, it’s gruesome and painful. Although it doesn’t feel like torture anymore so that’s a good thing, I guess.”

“That’s probably because it wasn’t meant to be torture in the first place,” Katie chuckled.

“Huh, what’s that supposed to mean?” Kyle was confused.

“Ugh, what’s wrong with you, Kyle? I stopped torturing you a long time ago. If you’re going to protect Katie at all, I can’t have you remain a weakling,” Caden groaned, “Now get up and follow me. Katie, thanks for nothing.”

“You’re welcome, Caden. Train him well for me,” the girl replied with a smile, watching the two of them walking away with a joyous heart.

Katie could tell Kyle was getting accustomed to his new life and that he was finally growing close to Caden in a different way than they’d initially viewed each other. She only hoped this friendship would continue in the way she’d hoped it would.

When Caden had switched from torturing Kyle to training him was still lost on the wise Luna.

“You’re one sneaky Luna,” Bella chuckled.

“I have no idea what you’re talking about, Bella,” the Luna winked.

Sandra was the next to come up to the two of them, panting just like Kyle had been doing so a moment ago. However, this girl didn’t collapse on the floor beside them as Kyle had.

Instead, she wrapped her arms around her friend in a damp embrace, “It’s like deja vu. Sandra.... Ah, why would you do this to me when you’re so sweaty?” Katie screamed, trying to get away from her friend. Sandra’s grip was iron-clad.

“This is payback for putting me against Lina last time and now for leaving me to that beta alpha. Have you ever fought Jason before? It’s like fighting an immovable monster,” she laughed in response to her friend’s squirming.

Bella was dumbfounded... There was nothing wrong with her Luna... at all. In fact, she was everything right with the world, or at least, that’s what it felt like in that moment.

Chapter 318 A Lonely Morning in Katie’s Weakened State

Sandra only had a short time to rest before she was called to help the beta alpha. As it had turned out, the beta alpha was trying to adopt a more flexible way of training that would train the warriors to be better warriors and teach them a little more about martial arts and the use of agility.

Since they were agile in their wolf forms, nothing was keeping them from adapting the same in their human forms as well.

Katie watched it all, her connection to the mind link keeping her from the creeping darkness that threatened to swallow her whole. The impenetrable mental fortitude she’d spent a long time building had started to crumble the moment her wolf-side was allowed to manifest... and it was no more.

However, when she was connected to the mind link, it was impossible for her to feel left out. Her consciousness brushed with that of many other wolves in the pack. Many who she hadn’t known were in the pack. The Lycaon pack that she’d been staying away from... welcomed her presence warmly.

It was also more interesting when she felt the frustration of all the Warriors that found the training to be more gruesome and unnecessary. (This she kept to herself and promised to point out to Jason later on.)

Bella left her after getting a bit of rest and returned to her sparring partner. The two of them were impressive compared to what Katie had originally thought them to be... or was she simply getting softer on the girl.

Nevertheless, they were well within the limits she’d personally set for averagely high-performing deltas. It would take far much more work for them to get in a league capable of facing up against an alpha that had done their training right. It was a predicament that was unfair, but the world was set that way.

When they started stretching at the end of it all, Katie stood up and walked toward her mate, who was working with the alphas that lived within the Lycaon empire.

“Come on, Coville. I’ve heard more from your parents concerning your abilities than what you’re showing me now. Surely you don’t think you can beat me if you gave it your all. Show me what you’re made of,” she found Cole goading another wolf as they faced off.

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The young man was already drenched in his own sweat and panting tiredly and Cole still looked like he was only warming up.

“It’s like asking someone to keep going at a steel wall,” the Luna chuckled.

Cole was surprised by her sudden arrival that he took his attention away from the man for a second. Coville took the chance... They say opportunity comes once in a blue moon...

And he seized it, launching into a well-timed attack that Cole had already seen coming. There were several ways that Katie could have seen Cole evading the man's attack.

While the young alpha was still rough around the edges, he was stronger than the betas Katie had been watching and his stance proved he knew how to maximise his body weight to deliver a full-force blow.

If Cole had been a normal werewolf, he would have been in trouble indeed. However, the royal simply turned his back to the alpha and waited for the impact.

There was a small crunch that resounded after the impact. Shortly after, Coville was grunting in pain, clutching his throbbing fist. With a pained expression, he cursed, "What the hell are you made of?"

"Quit complaining, it only means you haven't strengthened your body enough," Cole replied smugly. The rest of the alphas that were meant to go up against him inched further away.

"So the rumours about the steel tank are true," one murmured.

"Well, yeah, they are true. Wait, wasn't it our pack that came up with those rumours? Why are you in doubt?" Cole argued with them. With Katie present, the alphas were less inclined to speak their minds.

"Are you still going at it?" she asked him.

"I hoped not, but they are so terrible it's maddening," the royal replied, placing a kiss on his mate's forehead, "Don't get too busy this evening."

The girl smiled in return to his gesture, "Very well. I'll just..." exhaustion set into her limbs at that moment, setting a deep frown on her brow, "...just go and lay down for a bit."

Cole's expression turned to that of worry. Katie bowed her head slightly and excused herself from the training arena... colossal gym...

She was now convinced it was just the largest gym she'd ever seen. The Luna made her way to the royal chambers with next to no resistance.

The wolves she passed bowed to her in respect and she smiled along, greeting the few she could before proceeding further up the palace.

Katie made it to the king's chambers and flopped onto the large bed. Just like she'd expected, her body was already requesting rest... Her muscles screamed joyously at the end of her exertion. 'At this rate, I'll be as worried as Cole is... No, that king is definitely the king of worry. I'd need the training to defeat him,' the girl chuckled at her internal joke.

Normally, Ashley would be the one to laugh in response to this, but the wolf was not there to cheer her on. 'I miss you, Ashley. I hope you're fine.' As expected, there wasn't a reply from the wolf... just like it had been for the past two days.

Katie ordered breakfast to be brought to her room before letting herself relax. Tears stung her eyes as she thought of how useless she was getting with each passing day.

Bound by the promise she made to keep herself from exerting herself beyond her limits, there wasn't much she could do. A knock at the door later let in a young woman pushing a cart with an assortment of breakfast delicacies for the Luna to enjoy.

"I hope it's to your liking," the woman said with an elegant curtsy. Katie sat up and opened her eyes wide in shock. There were at least ten different types of bread on the cart alone.

"It's honestly... much," the girl laughed nervously.

The maid shuddered at the comment, "I can... take... Oh no, the head cook will have my head."

"It's fine. I'll eat what I can and force a little down Cole's throat before sending what's left back down," the Luna hurriedly suggested.

The maid giggled, "Very well. Have a nice meal, your majesty," the woman curtsied once more before heading for the door.

"Oh, one more thing... If there is something on that table that you would like, please take it with you. I know Cole's tummy is too shallow for what I have in store for him," the Luna said with a broad smile.

Awkwardly, the maid sauntered back to the cart and picked a lavish loaf of frosted bread. When she was gone, this was Katie's first choice. Katie picked up the bread and bit into it. A burst of sweet goodness assaulted her tastebuds, spurring her to eat more than she'd initially thought herself capable of.

When she was done, she returned to the bed and dropped into it again, sighing happily, 'That was good. More than I expected...' her thoughts were interrupted by a flutter of wings at the balcony.

'That's odd...' She turned to see a pair of pigeons perching by the railing.

Chapter 319 Unexpected Guests

As expected of one of her abilities, she heard one speak, "So you mean she's meant to be in this room?"

"Yes, she is in this room. I can tell. I can smell one of the blessed wolves just by being in the same place as them," the other cooed, sounding feminine unlike the other.

"What... Our kind doesn't have any significant sense of smell. Stop lying," the male argued.

"We do too. Just because you spent your entire time last week getting pelted by the rain doesn't make the rest of us unable to detect scents like you?" the female countered.

"Hey, I was scouting for water nymphs. They could have just been pouring rain over our nest," the male replied.

"Yeah yeah yeah, and look what that got you?"

"Might I ask why you chose my balcony to be the place for your argument?" the girl called out from her spot on the bed.

"Oh my God, you weren't kidding. She is the one..." the pigeons flapped into the room and landed on the bed beside her, "And now I'm in the king's chambers. Hey, Darla, do you have one of those things the humans carry around when they are having fun?"

“You mean cameras, Finn,” the female replied, standing still as she watched the male walk about the bed in an odd rhythm that wasn’t meant for pigeons.

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“Yeah yeah, one of those. I would like to pose beside this rare beauty here and all go ‘Chilling with the Luna’” the pigeon exclaimed, hopping over till he was too close to Katie’s face for comfort. The Luna sneezed, getting a rich scent of rain from the pigeon.

“Your partner wasn’t joking. You smell of rain,” the girl exclaimed, sitting up to avoid the pigeon’s feathers.

“Well, I’ll be... It felt like I’d been imagining it earlier, but you really do understand our speech. And you speak just like your kind should,” the two birds on her bed shocked her, even more, when she turned to see that they were bowing to her. It felt like a practised pose but splendidly executed, nonetheless.

“You can stop that now. I was only getting used to hearing animals talk. Seeing them bowing is another thing entirely,” the girl sighed, “Is there a specific reason the two of you came here?”

Katie lay down on the bed a little further from the male pigeon in hopes of avoiding sneezing once more, “Yes, we did. Well, we’ve been stalking you and we’ve noticed you’re very sad,” Darla spoke up, completely skipping over the ton of creepiness in her phrasing.

“What does that have to do with anything?” Katie asked.

“Well, we want to cheer you up. Is there anything you would like us to do for you, your majesty? We could put on a show or bring you nuts to feast on,” the male pigeon picked up excitedly.

Katie turned to the cart filled with breakfast foods, “I’m quite full, thank you. And I’m also just fine. If one of you could get me a way to return my powers to the way they are supposed to be, that would be much appreciated,” the girl said, drawing a tight smile.

As expected, “That’s not something we can do, unfortunately.”

“I figured. I can’t find any other way for you to help me then,” the girl cut Darla off and turned her attention to the ceiling above.

The birds went quiet for a bit as the girl stared at the ceiling, “Well, we didn’t come with giving up in mind. So, we shall cheer you up even if it means we drag the smile out of you.”

“What could a couple of birds do?” the girl asked, missing the insult behind her words.

“I’ll ignore the obvious implication of what you have just said. As an apology, I would ask that you follow us, your majesty,” Darla said, anger radiating through her words.

Katie found the spectacle rather amusing, but complied, “If it will make you happy.” The proud method of speaking she had to adopt when she was talking to animals clashed with her current mood in ways she didn’t want to think about...

Katie wasn’t feeling particularly proud of herself at the moment...

Ignoring the strain it took to keep up the facade, she followed the birds as they fluttered to the balcony. The female flew out to the forest while the other stayed behind, "What's she going to do?"

"She's gone to call for backup. We chose this time to come because there is no one below. If it came to it, sneaking you out would be no problem," Finn answered in a chipper tone.

The Luna sighed and waited with her eyes closed. Just when she was about to ask how they would be sneaking out, the rhythmic beating sound of massive wing beats reached her ears.

The girl's eyes snapped open and turned to the balcony. Approaching her balcony were two giant eagles with the pigeon that had flown away moments ago leading them. The scene almost looked like it had been plucked out from a movie.

"What's all this?" she asked.

"This is your way out of here," Darla replied, staying in the air. The two eagles set their massive talons on the railing and took the time to bow to the girl.

"I don't quite under..."

"Oh, you're quite slow on the uptake. Put out your arms and these two will carry you from here," the pigeon spoke hurriedly. Katie couldn't believe her ears. She thought to herself, wondering whether it was safe for her to follow through with what this pigeon was telling her.

She had no idea where they would be taking her and without her power to detect ill will, she couldn't decipher the intentions behind these creatures' actions.

'Believe in them, Katie. Creatures of the wild have never needed to lie. They do what they feel like doing, not like humans do and just as I will. When I get my next opportunity to... to kiss Cole,' was all the girl heard from her sleeping wolf before Ashley went silent once more.

'Wait, what...' Katie turned red.

Chapter 320 Flying Luna... and a Frightening Realisation

Katie expected the eagles' talons to be rough and bring her bruises and squeezed her eyes shut, waiting for them to roughly yank her from the balcony. To her surprise, however, her feet left the ground before she felt any significant pressure on her arms.

Peeking through one eye, she found they had long taken off from the balcony. When she did though, her second eye opened as well, taking in the marvel before her.

She had long left the balcony and was gracefully soaring higher into the sky. The feeling of breaking free of the restraints of gravity washed a wave of excitement through her.

She looked up at the eagles, musing over their graceful wing strokes that swiftly carried them up without seeming like a burden in the slightest. The two majestic kings of the skies flapped their wings in perfect sync and soared through the air calmly. Their grip on her hands was soft and barely perceptible.

"Just relax. We'll be there in no time," Darla commented over the roar of the wind. The little pigeon was floating behind them, keeping up them on the stream of air that was let through by one of the eagles.

The two pigeons had taken two positions behind the eagles. It almost looked like they were being carried by the eagles as well.

The eagles flew lower and closer to the beautiful greenery of the forest, going further and further away from the city. If she didn't think of the eagles that were carrying her, the Luna could feel as though she was the one flying. Feeling the need for more speed, she muttered, "A little rush would be good."

Darla was not one to lose focus on the person she was tending to and had heard her speak to herself, "That's not a tone for a werewolf to have," the pigeon huffed.

However, before the Luna could reply, the eagles suddenly tucked their wings into a short drop before beginning a vicious climb, ascending higher and higher into the air at incredible speed. The sudden rush frightened the girl for a second before she relaxed.

"What's wrong?"

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"Well, you did ask for a bit of a rush and that is what you shall have," Finn chuckled. That being said, the eagles only accelerated faster and took the Luna further into the sky.

Katie's initial shock was gone and now replaced with exciting anticipation. She looked back to the capital and gawked at how small it already appeared. They'd only been flying a short time, but the castle was already farther than she'd thought it to be.

"I'll be able to go back before evening, won't I?"

"We swear it on our lives, your majesty. You'll make it home in time for your date with the king," one of the great eagles' voices rumbled deeply above her. The voice startled her, but not enough for her to miss the admittance to another invasion of privacy.

"You guys have a stalking problem," she chuckled, "Let's see what you can do."

The eagles' wingbeats got even stronger at the sound of a challenge. When they were high into the sky that the forest itself was just a patch of green, they hovered for a moment, turning to their desired destination before tucking their wings slightly close to their bodies.

Everything was frozen for a moment as they reached their peak height. Katie's body continued up just for a bit, completely horizontal in the air. The two eagles, however, began angling their streamlined bodies to the ground.

Katie was sure they would be falling straight down, but that wasn't quite the case, the eagles soared almost horizontally, losing only the slightest of altitude.

It was slow at first, but soon, Katie realised it was only momentary. The Luna was soon screaming in delight as their speed started to pick up and the acceleration had the wind roaring at her.

While the Luna was enjoying her flight, she missed the point when the eagles angled down and tucked their wings completely into a sharp nose dive. The wind was so vicious it wouldn't let Katie open her eyes, but the feeling of freedom... was not lost on this seasoned hunter.

The joyride lasted a short time, but for the Luna enjoying it, it took much longer. She could feel the freedom the eagles felt when they were in the sky. Gravity was not a force to be worried about.

Instead, it was something to help them merely tell up from down. If she had it her way, she would have stayed in that moment for eternity. Alas, the flight came to an end and the eagles slowed down gradually.

The sound of rushing water was the most significant when the blurring of green finally came to a stop and the wind calmed down. The eagles came closer to the canopies and began to follow the river downstream until the water began to pick up speed.

Katie felt she would be swept away by the current from simply looking at it. Looking further ahead, she saw the river come to an end. The moment of realisation came a bit late when they were passing right above the waterfall that fell a few hundred metres. The sudden change in altitude sent a dizzying feeling through the girl... suddenly she was very grateful they were flying.

“Don’t struggle. You’ll bruise your hands,” one of the eagles warned the squirming Luna, easing the tension that had gripped her in place.

“Oh, right... I had almost forgotten...”

The rest of her words were lost to the roar of song and fluttering wings as a multitude of birds erupted from the trees on the other side of the waterfall, flying high into the air and flocking around them.

Katie was astounded by their sheer number. Her ears picked up on the different sounds of excitement... ‘Is that her?’ ‘Oh my, she’s so pretty.’ ‘I wonder if she can talk to every one of us... maybe she only speaks to wolves?’ ‘It’s one thing to see her, I can’t wait to hear her speak.’ ‘Do you think she sounds like the wolves do?’ ‘Alphas can be intimidating, you know...’

The excitement warmed the girl’s heart and relaxed her earlier tension. The eagles took her down and set her by the river bank. As soon as they’d set the girl down, the entire gathering of birds quieted down and perched in the different trees that bordered the river. The vibrant colours from the different species of birds brought a smile to the girl’s face, “Now this would be picture-perfect,” she said to herself, checking her pocket. It was empty.

From the silence came the sound of a low growl. Katie turned, curious to find out why the growl had not inspired fear in her. From the cover of the trees emerged a lion. The creature was completely out of place in the forest, but then again, it was right in front of her, as clear as day. The birds bowed to the creature nonetheless, ‘So it wasn’t practised!’ she wondered internally, remembering the gesture from the pigeons.

“What’s a lion doing in this kind of place?”

“The power that resides within someone like you is more than enough to adjust the ecosystem,” the lion’s voice boomed across the low-lying riverbank they stood on. When the lion was a safe distance before her, it bowed low, “We welcome you, Katie Sirius.”

“I am honoured although I don’t exactly know what I’m doing here,” the girl smiled nervously.

A pigeon fluttered from the trees and landed atop the lion's golden mane, "It's like I told you before. The creatures of the wild are at your service. You were sad... so that's what we are here to fix."

The girl was stunned by the pigeon's words that she lost her words for a moment. 'Isn't this a bit much?' the girl wondered.

She looked around, seeing the different species of birds and relishing in their vibrant plumages, however, something crept into her mind. Even with the vast numbers of these birds, none of them had the power to return her to her former self, "What can you all possibly do for me? I mean no offence by it, but I can't think of a..."

"You don't know how to rely on others, do you? I heard of it, but I didn't think it was this bad?" the lion cut her off, chuckling deeply, "Didn't you realise how much help you had back in the reserve? If it wasn't for the creatures there, a number of the wolves you were trying to protect would have died."

'How much do these creatures know?' the girl was shocked they knew about what happened in the reserve. She held off the question of how they'd found out about it. After all, two eagles had brought her here from the palace.

There was no telling what kind of birds had made the journey to spread the information. "I will make it a point to thank them the next time I see them. However, we were in a reserve. That was their territory. This is different. I'm getting weaker with each passing day and I don't know what to do about it. Sending a lion into the capital would only cause mass panic."

"Who said anything about sending a lion? Your creativity needs a little work," the lion chuckled, "there is always room to learn something new."

The lion turned away from the girl and gestured for her to follow it. Katie walked alongside the creature and into the woods. The air in the forest was full of energy. The creatures about her were all in high spirits that she found contagious. The stubborn light smile on her face was proof of that.

"Doesn't it bother you to serve under someone who doesn't see your use?" the girl asked.

"You don't mince words, do you?" the lion laughed this time. His voice was akin to that of a wise king... A king similar to King Davin. The similarity brought a feeling of nostalgia into the girl.

"Saying things the way they are usually helps the conversation make progress," she replied, trying to fight the fatigue making its way into her body. The lion noticed her rugged breathing and offered to carry her. To this, she declined and instead asked if she could pet him... which was beside the point, but she found it irresistible, 'This must have been how Uncle Thorrin felt back then.'

Against his pride, the lion accepted, "Your mane is silky and smooth," the girl commented, shock in her voice, "It would make a nice pillow."

"I do not intend to become someone's pillow. Even if that person is you, your majesty."

"I was only messing around..."

After a short pause, the girl came to a stop and took a seat by a tree, breathing out sharply. Sweat had already started trickling down her face.

She focused on keeping her breath calm and steady, but her exhaustion was already visible. The flight through the air and the time she had spent in the gym had been enough to rob her of all her strength, 'Where is that breakfast I had earlier?' she mentally yelled.

She was, however, aware that the food would have done nothing in providing her strength. She could still eat, but she didn't recover. The exhaustion she felt had nothing to do with her diet, "This is bad. You're running out of divine energy," the lion observed. Even worried, the lion was able to pull off his proud royal tone.

"What does that have to do with anything?"

"We heard what happened in your battle against the evil werewolf. The scourge that disrupts the natural order of the wild as well. He was the one you went up against and I'm afraid... During that battle, you might have pushed yourself past what you're supposed to. You're going to lose all your divine energy," the lion explained.

"Oh..."

"And that's what we're doing here. We came to help you," the lion tried, "For starters, what plagues your mind when you're on your own?"

"A lot really... but mostly, I feel useless for not being able to help anyone in my current state. The kingdom is under attack and I can't do anything about it. Cole won't even tell me what's going on because he doesn't want me to worry, but he doesn't realise that's impossible. I am worried," the girl spilt her mind out, "My wolf has almost gone completely silent..."

She didn't know why she was so open with the creatures around her, but she didn't feel guarded towards them either. Without being able to sense someone's ill will, she couldn't tell whether they meant to help her, but that all didn't seem to matter one bit...

Just then, the thought she'd dreaded most this entire time was able to form in her mind... and it spilt out just as soon as it was formed, "Why does it feel... like I'm running out of time?"