

Chosen 381

Chapter 381 A Rogue... General?!!!

The golden orb in the sky finally touched the horizon in the distance as though settling to fondly watch the couple's love blossom, Jason seized the moment and kissed the hunter before him. Not allowing her shock to keep her still too long, Sandra kissed him back.

Sparks went off between them, sending rushing waves of emotion and love through the special mind link they shared, intensifying their already deep love for each other. The odd mind link that had connected them for so long now felt natural, almost like it was always meant to be there. 'Perhaps it is I who's the lucky one,' Sandra thought to herself. For a brief moment, Jason was all that mattered. That brief moment felt like an eternity, and a blink in time all at the same time etched into her memory in great detail.

The couple stood together until the warmth of the sunset had left them. Jason had never found himself in a situation where he had nothing to say, but here he was... 'What are the odds of me not having words to say to my mate?' he mentally chuckled.

"You missed the sunset," Sandra spoke up, turning to the darkening sky.

Jason chuckled, "I had something more beautiful to stare at... and the best part, this gem doesn't vanish at the end of the day."

Sandra turned red once more, "Do you have some sort of handbook or did you take a crash course in cheesy lines?" she finally asked.

"It comes naturally, I guess. It's not hard for me to praise someone so wonderful," he replied. Pulling away from their embrace, Jason held out his hand for her to take. It was time for them to go.

Sandra glanced to the far west, where the sun had just disappeared. The dark veil of night was quickly approaching. Turning away from the dissipating red rays, she turned to the small crescent that was now making its elegant climb into the night sky.

'I guess all good days come to an end. I managed to make it to eighteen as a hunter... And I have a mate too, just like you did, Katie. Not that a mate's something a human would be looking forward to. I hope you're watching me... Katie.'

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Jason then led her to the car where he opened the door once more for the girl to enter. Sandra was reluctant to enter the car, "The day is coming to an end already. Everything goes back to normal tomorrow, doesn't it?"

"Hmm, if you call me having to kiss you every morning and constantly boast about having the most beautiful and loving mate in the world normal, then yes, it will go back to normal," he chuckled.

The hunter smiled at the thought and entered the car, "You won't actually keep bragging to everyone everywhere you go, will you?"

“Why wouldn’t I? The looks on their faces when they realise I’m not as single as the rest of them. Oh, that will be golden,” the man smirked, his mind running various simulations of him trampling over the other pack warriors.

When he’d closed the door, she sighed, “I guess becoming an official beta alpha didn’t make you any more mature,” watching the jolly beta alpha rush over to the driver’s seat

“I thought you would hire someone to drive the car.”

“I would have liked to do the same, but Cole was early to call on everyone today... and quick to dismiss me. Honestly, I’ve never seen the castle this empty before.”

“What happened?” Sandra asked, concern seeping into her voice.

“He said he found one of the rogue generals while he was out hunting with a few of the pack warriors. Yes, I was shocked as well. Shocked to see him alive, that is, but considering the man’s practically indestructible, I couldn’t rule out the possibility. The fight was brutal and Cole had claw and bite marks all over him. He had a slight limp in his step and I could tell he was still healing.

I don’t know what amount of luck he had to manage to bring the monster down, but he’s doing well. When I asked him if I could help out, he shot me down, along with the queen. Considering you were trained by the Luna, he asked that I keep you in the dark about this and enjoy my date.

Kyle offered to help keep the date going smoothly. He’s the one who’s been running around making preparations before we got everywhere we intended to,” Jason explained, gripping the steering wheel a little tight while he did.

“In that case, let’s hurry back to the palace. We need to make sure they’ve returned. I would also like to personally scold him for being so stupid. Honestly, how is a date more important than the king’s life?” the girl pinched the bridge of her nose in frustration.

Jason chuckled, “After finding out I had found my mate and that mate was you, you’d be surprised how different the reasoning between humans and werewolves gets?”

“So I’ve heard. I’m not sure I understand it fully either. Let’s just hurry back. That alpha owes me a good smack to the head,” the girl sighed, leaning back into her chair as the car sped through the city. With how fast Jason was driving, Sandra was sure they would hit something on their way home.

The look of seriousness and concern on his face and the speed he drove only brought her more worry and panic. At times like this, she often found herself checking to see if her seatbelt was fastened. ‘A rogue general, huh... If that monster is anything like the thing the wolf that attacked us in the reserve that time, he could have been killed... That’s if he can be killed. I don’t even know what to think. He was able to put Silver in the hospital. So... maybe he can stand a chance against a general. Still, it’s foolish to deal with a monster like that without all the help one can get.’

“How did Cole come across the general?”

“He was out on a morning run. I didn’t even notice him leaving the palace. Caden woke me up to look for him and that’s when we found him at the main entrance, covered in scratches from top to bottom

and breathing badly. He took his time to catch his breath. When he was finally able to talk, he was giving orders. I understand he didn't want to cause mass panic, but still... It was a grave matter."

Sandra didn't ask any more questions after that...

It took them half the time it normally would have to get back to the palace. The beta alpha, following his mate's orders to waste no more time, rushed out of the car to get to her door.

Sandra groaned and pushed the door open herself, "Oh, for goddess's sake, Jason, we don't have time for that routine."

"There is always time for chivalry, my dear. Follow me," somehow, Jason managed to sound serious as he said this and led her from the courtyard with a sincere sense of urgency. They hadn't even parked in the designated parking lot, not that it mattered. Jason opened the large double doors only to be met by silence.

The palace was eerily silent. There wasn't a sign of life in the palace at all, "If they are not in the palace, who knows where they could be? I'm starting to worry. I've been trying the mind link and no one will answer me. At first, I thought it was obvious we would find them here, but now I don't know what to think," Jason spoke in a tone unfamiliar to his usual laid-back character.

Following as fast as she could in her yellow dress, the hunter followed behind him, terror starting to flood her system with adrenaline. She now started to wish she'd brought some weapons with her. Her memory flashed to the small knife that was hidden in her bag, but even that had been left behind in the car in haste. Jason silently led her through the first floor of the colossal palace. Judging by the direction he was following, he was going to... 'The throne room? Did they start using it again... or are they hiding there?'

'The weather was nice today, wasn't it?' was Sandra's last thought before the large double doors of the palace throne room swung wide open. On the other side, darkness... but only for a moment.

The darkness lasted only a second long enough for the girl to get into the right spot before bright lights flashed through the whole room. The doors opened to reveal the largest crowd of familiar faces she'd ever been graced to see in a single place.

All at once, so loud she thought her ears would burst, they shouted, "Happy Birthday," stunning the girl. This was followed by music, noisy poppers and celebratory ululations from the guests.

Jason smiled at the stunned girl frozen in the halls, "Surprise... Happy Birthday, Sandra."

'Why... why is my birthday being held in the Lycaon Throne Room?' shocked Sandra was once again overwhelmed by the attention she was getting. She wasn't that important, was she?

Chapter 382 Surprise Celebration

Sandra walked into the room, too stunned to remember to scold her mate for lying to her. The throne was filled with a large gathering of both familiar and unfamiliar faces she found it dizzying to identify them all. From hunters she'd grown up with in Brigadia, to those she'd met in Sirius, not to mention everyone she'd ever known who mattered to her former mentor as well.

The first group of people she reacted to, however, were her parents. Spotting them in the crowded mess, the girl ran up to the two of them and leapt into their arms, "You remembered. How did you make it here without me knowing about it?"

"Cole just dropped by Brigadia and asked that we come here. It was a shocking and very sudden surprise though," her mother's voice sang. Overjoyed, the girl almost forgot there were plenty more people to greet in the throne room, "Congratulations, sweetie. On finally becoming a hunter and happy eighteenth birthday. We have a lot to talk about, my dear."

Sandra pulled away from her mother's embrace. The woman was smirking, an expression Sandra found odd on her mother's face, "Well, don't leave me hanging. What's he like? Do I have to tell him how much you love your beauty sleep and never to wake you up on a Sunday morning or is he smart enough to figure that out by himself?"

'That's more like it,' Sandra grimaced. "He'll be fine, mother. He knows better than to mess with my sleep. More than a certain hunter I knew..."

"I'm so confused, who are we talking about now?" Sandra's father pitched in, confusion written all over his face. Alas, Sandra had many more people to greet and her mother noticed it.

"I'll explain everything, honey," to Sandra, "Do spare some time and meet with us when the party is over." The woman glanced to the side and pulled her daughter close, "We'll talk about you and that beta alpha later." With that, the Alastair family walked away from their daughter, leaving her and her mate speechless.

"That sounds terrifying," Jason groaned from behind her.

"You'll be fine. There is nothing to worry about... I hope."

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Before the beta alpha could complain, a female voice pitched in somewhat loudly, "There she is. Sandra Alastair, in all her glory." Samantha's voice sparked a glint of fondness Sandra released her parents before leaving them to welcome the hunters of Brigadia.

Sandra turned in time to see a group of hunters walking her way. Samantha, Jackeline, Frost and Kenneth had all managed to come to the party. The girl embraced Samantha first and the others in succession, "I'm so glad you guys could make it."

The older hunters beamed with delight, "Yeah, we're glad we could come here as well. This party was meant to be huge after all. We wouldn't miss it. On the other hand, Anthony decided to stay behind to... 'protect' Brigadia. He sends his regards."

"It's fine, really. I wish he could have made it though. I know how much he loves eating," the girl joked.

"Agreed. He was second to one person alone," Samantha joined in.

"Sandra," Jason suddenly interrupted, "Allow me to step away for a moment. His majesty summons me."

“No problem. Do come back as soon as you can,” Sandra replied, already feeling his absence. The beta alpha placed a kiss on her lips before leaving her to the hunters of Brigadia.

“Oh my... They grow up so fast, don’t they?” Jackeline swooned.

“Wh... what do... What about you and Frost?” Sandra blurted out in an effort to escape the spotlight. Thankfully, this worked like a charm. Jackeline was turning red while Kenneth and Samantha regarded the two.

“Now that I think of it, I have wanted to know what your relationship is like, Frost... Jackeline?” Kenneth narrowed her eyes at the two.

Frost kept his calm, but Jackeline wouldn’t meet their eyes. The man didn’t show any signs of answering them. His guard was up, but that wasn’t the same for Jackeline. Sighing, “We were looking for the right time to tell you, but we’ll be getting married in a few months.”

Suddenly, the union of Jason and Sandra was nothing but old news. Jackeline and Frost were finally together. Who would have thought?

The hunters spoke for a bit before a blue-eyed girl made her way to them, “Hey Sandra,” Lina interrupted them.

“Oh my, Lina... How many people made it here tonight?” Sandra asked, surprised to see the princess of Sirius present as well.

“I believe everyone came. Everyone that ever meant something to the two of you... and a few more,” the girl exclaimed, “The mood’s been gloomy since she left. This was a nice way for us all to let loose a little. Everyone that ever cared for her.

You were Katie’s best friend. The two of you were inseparable even though sometimes it didn’t seem that way.”

“How are you doing, Lina?” Sandra hugged the royal, the girl needed it. Something felt odd about the royal, but she couldn’t quite figure it out. Lina was still the same emotional girl Sandra had come to know... but she seemed a little more... determined. There was a rare fire in her eyes.

“Better than I was,” Lina replied. In a hushed tone, she added, “Hey, I heard you and Jason are...”

“Yeah, we’re mates,” Sandra finished the statement for the royal.

“No way. You’re kidding,” this did not come from Lina. And the two girls turned to a green-eyed delta holding a glass of fruit punch in her hand. Sandra was tempted to ask if it was pure fruit punch, knowing Crysta’s tendencies to desecrate drinks. She’d even been confident enough to spike the king’s drink once before, “I thought it was a joke of some sort. So have the two of you...”

“Oh my goodness, Crysta. Do you have to jump to conclusions that quickly? Your hunger for gossip hasn’t gone down one bit,” Honour smacked the delta at the back of the head, making her presence known as well as she scolded the girl who’d almost asked something too private for comfort.

“So, this is the mighty Sandra Alastair,” another girl spoke up before making a well-practised curtsy.

The hunter giggled, "Perhaps you should save the curtsy for the day you meet the Luna of Lycaon, I'm just an ordinary hunter," with that, the hunter returned the gesture with a wobbly curtsy of her own. 'Who knew that required practice?'

This brief moment of embarrassment was wiped away by the next thing she saw. All of a sudden, the girl's amber eyes flashed grey before returning to their original amber. 'Odd... but cool too,' Sandra kept these thoughts to herself.

"And you are..."

"This is Madeline. She's the daughter of a... Oh my, we can't speak of her so lightly now that I think of it, but she's been living with us for a while. She appeared shortly after Katie rushed over to Lycaon. She's wanted to meet you and Katie for a while now. All she has to go on are the stories that have been told," Lina explained.

"Is it fine if we speak of her like a legend... or perhaps a hero? She was unbelievable. I know she will come back, but I can't go a single day without hearing someone say her name. If that's not a legendary hero, I don't know what is," Crysta rambled.

"I wouldn't casually refer to her as a legend. After all, one needs to die to become a legend," Cole's deep voice came from behind Sandra, frightening the oblivious hunter. Sandra turned to see the king behind her smiling brightly, "Happy birthday, Sandra. I hope you are having a blast."

Sighing, "I wish she could be here to celebrate it with me. I was there for her birthday. It would have been fun. I don't think I can eat that much cake without a bottomless pit to help me."

Cole chuckled at her comment, "Yeah, that cake didn't know who it was messing with. Close your eyes for me, Sandra." This one phrase got the whole room quiet down. The volume of those talking had already started dropping when the two started talking, but Sandra hadn't paid much attention to it.

The changing colours of the wall lights slowed and took on deeper shades of deep blue, red and green. Sandra looked about and noticed the change in the atmosphere. While she knew there was something they had to hide, she couldn't quite figure it out, "Did I do something?"

"Did you do something?" Cole raised a brow at her.

Noticing her error, she wiped any thoughts that crept up, "No, nothing. I did nothing."

"I'd be surprised if you did. Will you close your eyes now?" he asked once more. This time the girl noticed he meant no harm in asking her to close her eyes and she complied. 'How many surprises will they keep coming up with? They've already done more than enough. And wasn't Cole supposed to be hunting some... Ohhh...'

"I see someone survived a Rogue general," the girl grumbled.

"Well, it was a close call. If I'd even been a tad bit unprepared, I would have been a goner," Cole smirked, "But I'd say it was worth it."

Cole took the confused girl's hands and guided her through the colossal throne room heading for the centre. The girl strained her hearing, but couldn't tell what was going on.

Everyone had gone completely silent and there wasn't a clue as to what was happening. The suspense was killing her and she almost opened her eyes. The moment the thought of opening her eyes crossed her mind, a beta alpha's hands covered them, "You might ruin a miracle without meaning to."

Chapter 383 A New Beginning

Sandra sighed, giving up her futile resistance and followed the two werewolves patiently, trusting Jason and Cole to guide her through the throne room blindly. She couldn't see... and yet, Jason's consciousness assured her of each step she took forward, almost like she could see through his eyes.

'This is freakier than a trust fall,' she thought to herself. Soon enough, the two wolves of them came to a stop. Since Sandra couldn't hear a thing, her other senses began to heighten, trying to discern her surroundings. She could tell something big was about to happen. Maybe they had prepared something astonishing for her to see. 'Maybe it's new hunting gear, but no... That's so Katie... I wonder.'

Sandra tried gleaning through the mind link she shared with Jason for some form of an answer, but nothing came through. When she had just given up on figuring it out, she heard a whisper..., "You can open your eyes now."

The hands on her eyes came free, giving her the chance to see what they wanted to show her. Sandra kept her eyes closed for a moment, suddenly frightened to open her eyes. The voice that had just whispered to her wasn't male at all.

The hunter opened her eyes, going mute at what she saw. Standing before her was a blue-eyed girl dressed in a blue dress that was an identical copy of the red one she'd given up on wearing earlier that day. For a brief moment, Sandra forgot to breathe. It was Katie... the last person she expected to see on her birthday, "Happy Birthday, Sandra."

The sound of her voice itself lingered in her mind. It was a sound she never thought she would get to hear again... not in a long time from that night. Sandra embraced the girl before her, "Y-you came... but how?"

"I wouldn't miss it for the world. Congratulations on turning eighteen," Katie giggled, hugging her friend back.

The slight hint of sadness in her voice told her all she needed to know. This wasn't permanent... but that's what made this even more special, "It's a miracle you're here at all. I don't want to know the details. Thank you for coming."

"You're welcome... Umm, Sandra, I can't breathe," Katie struggled as her friend held onto her tighter.

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"You might vanish again. I'm just making sure," the girl whined.

"Well, I won't vanish until midnight, so let's try to have fun," Katie replied, tapping her friend rapidly for the chance at relief.

Sandra finally let go of her friend and studied her. She didn't look much different from the day she had vanished which was somewhat disappointing. She didn't know what she was supposed to expect, but

hey... her friend had just come from the realm of immortals... there must have been some form of change, right...?

The rest of the party was now resuming the conversation now that the surprise was over, "The two of you look cute together. Are you sure you're not mates?" Frank's voice sang through the air, breaking the tension in the air... and replacing it with several mixed reactions.

"Frank," Cole and Jason turned to the hunter at the same time with looks of anger.

"Oh my... I was only kidding. Alphas can be so uptight," Frank raised his free hand daintily in the air while the other brought the wine glass he was holding to his lips for a sip.

Katie giggled, "I'm glad you could make it, Frank."

"Yeah, I had to. When I heard that I would get a chance to see my student, I just had to make it. It's a surprise that goes beyond your best friend's birthday. Then again, Sandra, you do realise how lucky you are, right?"

"I don't," Katie responded before Sandra could, trampling any insinuations that were about to be made clear, "I wouldn't miss my best friend's birthday. If you ask me, I would say she's loved very much."

Sandra's eyes watered at the girl's response, "You've never let me forget it." Memories of the times they'd spent with each other rang clear in her mind. The one that shone the brightest was the one on the day that Katie had killed a rogue to protect her.

The look in the girl's eyes was not so different from the one that she had right now. She wouldn't let anything happen to her best friend. 'Oh, Katie! You don't change no matter what form you take,' she thought to herself.

"Looks like I've been forgotten," a dejected voice interrupted the two friends, followed by a loud sigh. Katie and Sandra, startled, took a step away from the source and turned to witness the saddest-looking Kyle to ever grace the planet.

The beta alpha, for some reason, had gone unnoticed since the party had started. Cole looked around for Caden but gave up when he couldn't find his other right-hand man. Kyle should have been noticeable in the crowd, but as it had turned out, no one had, "How long have you been standing there?" Katie asked.

"Now he's resorting to being a creep," Sandra mumbled.

"I just got here. Happy birthday Sandra. Also, that hurts... I would never stoop as low as that," the new beta alpha announced, "It's so good to see you, Katie." The characteristics of a beta alpha had finally gotten to him.

"It's nice to see you doing well too. Is it just me or have you... gained weight? You should start working out," Katie suggested, eyeing the man before them.

Kyle looked himself down. He'd buffed up since the last time the two of them had spoken and this was simply an insult, "It's not my fault I have a huge appetite. At this rate, I'll be bigger than Caden," an evil smirk graced his countenance, "then the tables could finally turn around."

"I had no idea you would like to torture him for a change," Sandra chuckled.

"Not torture him, but finally send him flying in the ring. Just imagine... Me, of all people, bringing down one of the steel tank's beta alpha's," he mused.

"Yeah, I don't see that happening. But hey, you're also allowed to dream," Sandra countered.

"Oh, mark my words, Sandra. You just sit tight and watch," the boy huffed, "Enough about me though. Let's get this party started."

"I agree... It's not like we have all night, now do we?" a woman's voice called for their attention.

"What's that supposed to mean?" Sandra turned to Katie, failing to discern the direction from which this voice had come from.

"If the three of you would follow me, please?" a feminine voice interrupted. Sandra turned to see Samantha dressed in a power suit. Her hair had been tied back and her smile curved into a wicked one. The night was only getting started and it seemed a lot had been prepared for them that night.

Katie smiled fondly at the female hunter from her home town. Hooking her arm around the hunter and beta alpha, "This is going to be fun, let's go," she giggled, pulling the two of them with her, following Samantha out of the throne room.

Back in the throne room, Jason approached his alpha, "Is this what you would have wanted to spend the only chance she gets to come here on?"

"It's a special day for Sandra. One that Katie wouldn't have liked to miss. I'll spend the rest of my life with Katie, which won't be the same for Sandra. This was the best time for her to use this chance," Cole replied. While his words sounded sincere, his face told a different story and Jason didn't pry any further.

"That's very selfless of you. Thank you," Jason thanked the man with a bow, "It's the greatest present you could have gotten Sandra... and one she'll never forget."

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The aftermath of the party was written clearly in the minds and memories of all those that had been present that night, etched into their heads as the night their Luna returned to congratulate her best friend on turning eighteen and finding her mate.

Sandra was lying fast asleep when the sound of curtains being drawn cut through the comfortable silence of the room. The warmth of the sun's rays soon covered her face, forcing her eyebrows to scrunch in irritation, "Who is in my room this early?" she grumbled, turning within the covers.

'Wait... how did I even get into my bed?' she wondered before forcing one eye open.

The white sheets in her bed were unfamiliar to her. The bed itself was much larger than her own... despite all that though, she felt like it was where she was meant to be... 'Wait.'

Before she could say much, a pair of strong arms scooped her with her covers, "Who knew you could sleep this long?" Jason's voice rumbled. The alpha pulled the girl into an embrace. This gesture was met with next to no resistance. In fact, the girl cuddled closer to him.

"I had a long night, Jason. Where...? Oh..." she stopped her question in half, suddenly feeling sad. Memories of the night before came into her mind.

"She went back to the Moon Palace. After you passed out, she met with Cole five minutes before midnight and that was the last we saw of her," Jason said to her.

"Oh, I see..." the girl breathed in deeply, "I'll never forget... my eighteenth birthday. I see the sun is out."

"Yeah... I guess Cole was able to come to peace with all of this," Jason replied. After this, Sandra had a mountain of questions waiting for him.

The beta alpha explained everything that had happened that day. From the lies that involved a rogue general to the games that had been prepared for the girls that night.

Cole had started preparing it much earlier, travelling to Brigadia where he communicated with the moon goddess and had her agree to let Katie come down once for Sandra's birthday. When this happened, the king invited everyone that was interested to attend the birthday that night.

The royal family of Sirius, the hunters of Brigadia and the Chase hunters along with Sandra's parents were the most important people on the guest list. Still, it had gradually grown, harbouring some other unexpected personalities like Lionel Haelstrom and the Mighty Warriors.

After returning to the palace, they then spent the whole day that she was not around preparing the palace for the event. The surprise, the games, the food and everything was taken care of while Jason had taken her out through the capital on their first date. It explained how the beta alpha hadn't had a single job to do that whole day and where the king had been the night before while they worked on his work.

In the end, the night was a success and the girls had enjoyed the night to the fullest, tiring themselves out so much right before midnight. Sandra remembered passing out on a sofa, but couldn't remember what happened after. She could only assume Jason had brought her to his room after that and she'd slept soundly.

"Did Katie tell you anything?" Jason asked her suddenly.

"Oh... Yeah, she did. Gave me quite a lot to think about actually. I can't just sit still forever, now can I?" the answer was as vague as she could make it, but Jason understood what she meant him to. Even with Katie gone, nothing had stopped, "I'll catch up to her... like I always said I would... I might even surpass her. Who knows?"

The beta alpha sighed in contentment, "That's the hunter I've always known." Chasing Katie... that's what she'd always been doing. The only difference now... was that she didn't sound like she was trying to achieve the impossible. She had a Prometheus gift now... and this heavily changed the game.

Chapter 384 Timeless Healing

Lying motionless in a pool of water was a girl in a blue dress. This pool had no definite depth, for it could act as a portal to the realm of mortals or as a simple looking glass through which the goddess watched over the werewolves. The water bore special properties... and was currently being used to sustain the life of a human.

The human mind wandered about its thoughts. Unconsciously trying to discern what was real and what wasn't. Her imagination ran rampant with memories from random parts of her life. Her childhood, the time she spent in the Sirius empire and the short time she got to spend with her mate when she was in the Lycaon empire.

Happy memories caused her unconscious floating body to smile while sad ones did the opposite. Impulses tore at her mind trying to get her to see to her mission, but the strong hands of sleep held her back and kept her still in the magical pool of water. Time was incalculable and when the day came that her eyes did flutter open, she was unaware and incapable of calculating how long she'd been lying there adrift in the pool.

"Careful now, Katie. You don't want to sink when you've only regained consciousness," a sweet feminine voice sang into her ear. The alluring voice would have commanded her attention if she hadn't been in presence of the divine entity for a long time. It was unmistakable.

Maybe it was this same commanding effect that forced her limbs to remain still or the way she felt her wolf relax and felt the tension leave her shoulders. In the presence of the goddess, everything made sense... and didn't make any sense at the same time. It was all as it was. The mess of memories and thoughts stilled and her desperate need to grab control of time and what was happening in her life ceased at once.

"How long have I been asleep?" Katie's voice resounded hoarsely through the white room.

"It's good to see you too," the goddess was now floating in the air above the girl lateral to her horizontal floating body. The two of them stared into each other's eyes while speaking in the almost empty room.

"Forgive me, goddess," the Luna replied humbly. Without a way to bow, she hoped simply averting her gaze would do the trick.

"You're being oddly respectful. It's unnerving," Celeste replied with a giggle.

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"Would you rather I didn't give a hoot what you said or did then?" Katie returned a questioning gaze.

"It's not like it matters, but I would like it if you showed me a little more respect," the goddess replied, folding her arms across her chest.

"I do respect you. Although the first time we met, you sort of come across as someone that cared so much about their looks and to an obnoxious level. With the way Ashley couldn't take her eyes off you, it was obvious that was your intention."

"Huh, fair enough. However, as a goddess, I must look my best when appearing to my champions. Tell me, Katie. How do you feel now?" the goddess asked her.

The girl noticed the goddess had dodged her question, but couldn't bring herself to snap at her. It soon became clear to her why she wouldn't simply lash out. When the girl reached out to the woman above her, the hand she felt was trying to reach out didn't move an inch. The girl turned to her side, observing how her fingertips twitched at the slightest effort to move them, "I'm... I can't move. No..." Katie began panicking.

“Hush little one,” the goddess placed a hand on the girl’s chest, “Relax, we had to do it to keep your muscles from being exerted every time you moved. It was a necessary precaution. Thankfully, your body is well-preserved that you won’t awaken weaker than you were before,” the goddess explained to her.

Feeling the touch of the goddess, the girl’s attention was snapped away from her paralysed body and to the goddess. She was a mortal... being touched by one of the beings that was considered divine, “How long have I been here? Would you please tell me that at least? Is Cole fine? What about the others? Sandra? I was at her birthday...”

“I see some habits never change. All in good time, warrior princess. You will get your answers all in good time. For now, you shall heal,” the goddess finally released the girl’s chest and returned her hands to her chest, “While that happens though, I would like to have a chat with you.”

Katie searched the goddess’s eyes for an ounce of pity, but there wasn’t a single speck. Either that or the woman before her was trying to protect herself, “Goddess of the Moon!” the girl stopped her from proceeding with her narration. A one-sided conversation was simply too unbearable for Katie, even in her state. If they were going to talk, she wanted to at least have her questions answered.

Celeste sighed at the mention of her title. The girl was weak, but it didn’t stop her from being as stubborn as she always had, “I would like to tell you, but to the gods, time is tricky. I can’t tell you how long you’ve been here.”

“You just won’t tell me, will you?” the girl asked her. The mask that the goddess had been keeping collapsed and was replaced with a look of sadness.

She shook her head in disapproval, “I can’t tell you how long you’ve been here. It’s better that way,” she replied.

“I see you won’t let my patient rest,” a male voice interrupted them. Looking to the left, Katie noticed a handsome man walking up to them with a silver staff in his hand. He was dressed in white robes and the staff itself had two snakes coiling along its shaft. It was a caduceus, a symbol that Katie was sure to have seen somewhere. She couldn’t remember where it had been. In place of the man’s eyes were two white orbs... with no iris to stare back at her.

The man raised the serpent staff and waved it above the girl’s paralysed body. The eyes of the two snakes began to glow, red in one and blue in the other. The same happened to his eyes, one turning blue and the other red, as he seemed to have an internal conversation for a short moment. When the staff had returned to its normal state, he sat by the pool cross-legged and stared at the two snakes on his staff, going perfectly still.

“Who is he?” Katie asked the goddess. The Luna could have sworn she saw the man’s lips twitch at the question. ‘Can he hear me or is he pretending...?’

Chapter 385 Infuriating Request

“And what’s wrong with his eyes?” Katie continued to think out loud, “I wonder if those snakes bite.” Unknown to her, the goddess was starting to turn pale.

With a nervous tone, Celeste spoke up, “This is Asclepius, my nephew and the god of medicine. I asked him for a favour. He’s the one overseeing your treatment,” the moon goddess replied.

“Well, that’s nice to know. How long till I’m good to run about, Doc?” Katie grinned, completely switching her attention to the male beside her.

“First of all, never as a god for his name. You might just get yourself vaporized. Secondly, do not call me... ‘doc.’ I’d rather have my forceps thrown into a volcano than hear such an obnoxious acronym used to address me?”

“Yes, sir,” Katie replied in a small voice, drawing her lips into a tight line and staying quiet.

The god of medicine sighed, “Your situation is a complicated one. I’ve rarely spent this much time on a patient. I never thought it was possible for a human to injure themselves the way you did.”

“You’re trying to tell me that I’m reckless, aren’t you?” the girl groaned.

“Reckless has its limits. You were desperate,” Asclepius replied without a hint of emotion in his voice.

“Oh, come on, Ace. She was reckless if she could mess herself up this bad,” the goddess argued.

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“It’s only my opinion, but I say she was selfless. She thought more of others when the time came which is more honourable than reckless,” the man replied, “From what I’ve heard, the rogue king didn’t pose her much of a threat as he did everyone else and please, don’t call me ‘Ace’ in front of a mortal.”

“Did you hear that, Celeste? I’m selfless... and honourable... Oh-nah-ray-bow,” Katie wiggled her brows at the goddess floating above her.

Celeste giggled, “I’ve known that since you started training under the Chase family. You trained until your muscles were...”

“This is curious,” the caduceus-wielding god interrupted them.

“What is it, Ace?” the goddess asked and watched one of his flawless brows twitch in frustration.

“I know she damaged her spiritual vessel, but her natural body is in such good condition. It’s remarkable. At this rate, she would have been a force to reckon with even if she wasn’t one of the chosen... although, that’s only the case if she ever got the rest she needed and healed right,” the man responded.

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

“Well, it only means you’ve never had enough rest. Never had a real vacation. Either that or your body gave up on trying to heal itself completely because of the intense training you put yourself through. There is so much untapped potential packed in this body of yours,” the man replied before taking his eyes off the snakes for the first time.

“We stick to the original plan, Ace,” the goddess spoke sternly.

“Very well, my lady,” he bowed and waved the caduceus over the girl once more, “I’ll try to speak as simply as I can. The spiritual vessel is what one develops once one starts to tamper with the divine aspects and entities of this world.

In other words, gods... It allows you to wield divine energy. Depending on how strong of a vessel you are, the more power you can wield. Divine energy can be increased to a certain degree and the amount of power that one can contain within themselves can also be increased. What's with this muscle structure though..."

"Asclepius!" the goddess snapped at the male god. Asclepius stopped his rambling and returned to his explanation.

"Sorry, I've just never seen anything like it. It's almost impossible to ignore," the man responded with a sigh, "Alright, what you, Katie achieved has never happened before, for someone to command more power than they should be able to. It's no wonder you ruptured your spiritual vessel."

"How long will it take for you to help me out? For my... 'spiritual vessel' to be healed," Katie asked the man.

The man paused at the sudden question, taking his time to think it through, "Mortals are always trying to find out how much time it needs to do something. Not knowing that the less time you give something, the worse it turns out. If a tree is not nurtured with love and care, as well as patience, it would only wither or grow deformed. It explains why your body shows signs of so much exertion and next to no time for proper healing. Then again, I sometimes forget that human lives are so short."

"You're also dodging my question," Katie sighed.

"If I was to make a rough estimate, I would advise you to get comfortable. You're going to be here for a few years," the man said to her, "From a year to a decade, it's hard to determine how long, depending on how your body responds to my powers."

Katie gasped at the time the man mentioned. It was a very long time he spoke of compared to how long she thought she would be returning to the earth, "That's far too long."

"Settle down, Katie. You brought this upon yourself, so you must live with it. There is another way for you to leave here quicker, but it might just bring the world to an end instead," the woman replied.

"How do I ensure I heal in the least time possible?" the girl asked.

"Well, you do that by going to sleep the entire time," Asclepius smirked, "I know that would give me all the peace and quiet I need to focus."

Katie sighed and closed her eyes, "Wait, before you sleep. There is something I'd like to discuss. It's something concerning the rogue king... and the way I would like you to bring him down."

"Weren't we supposed to just kill him and be done with it?" the girl groaned.

The goddess paused before speaking more softly, "I would like it if you didn't kill him..."

Katie's eyes snapped open, displaying a fury that burned deep within her. If it wasn't for her paralysis, she felt like she would have thrust her fist in the goddess's gut, "That makes no sense at all."

Chapter 386 [Bonus chapter] War Council

“It will all make sense in a moment. You can rest now and I’ll let your mind wander to the past... To a time before the rogue king existed... and let you see how he came to be. I’m hoping this will help you see some reason behind my request,” the goddess sounded sure of her demands.

“That’s one selfish demand. I guess death is just too much of a release for him though. I’ll see what you want me to see. It’s not like I have a choice in the matter,” Katie responded, allowing her eyes to finally close. The goddess sighed, pinching the bridge of her nose, but kept her thoughts to herself.

Asclepius waved his caduceus over the Luna’s body. Almost instantly, Katie’s body and mind went still all at once, sent into a deep state of stasis with her mind operating at minimum brain function. In this state, she was unable to dream on her own. Without the goddess’s intervention, her mind would be completely blank.

In this kind of slumber he’d sent her into, she could even be considered more dead than alive, “Isn’t that taking it a little too far, Ace?” the goddess asked.

“No, it’s not. I am eager to see what this human is like in her peak condition. You’ve commanded quite the audience among the gods. Many of the minor gods are watching to see what will happen next. It’s like watching a tale of the heroes of the past, but in the present,” the young god responded with amusement filling his voice. Now that the goddess thought of it, Asclepius was probably helping her to keep this ‘show’ going on longer.

The Moon Goddess only sighed, thankful that he was at least taking his role seriously, “Very well... I’ll just take her mind delving through the past in this state of deep sleep. It makes no difference... except that the memories will be rooted deep within her mind. She’ll know it all by heart.”

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The journey to the past was not at all expected. In this deepened state of sleep, consciousness was difficult to determine initially. It felt like watching a movie in high definition while not being aware that one was a mere spectre watching the events of the past. Feeling as though one was a part of the story and yet not expecting themselves to participate in these events.

“If we attack different small towns and bolster our forces with more humans, we’ll be more powerful. The hunters won’t stand a chance against us one bit and we can finally wipe them out once and for all. Don’t forget that they cannot easily multiply the way we can,” a man slammed his hand on the long table, commanding others to listen to him. His searing red eyes burned with a hatred for mankind. One that Katie had never had the chance to witness.

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She took a moment to recognize where she was but was soon able to distinguish this as the Lycaon palace’s throne room they were seated in. Many alphas were seated at a table with maps strewn across the table, discussing war plans with the king who was seated on his throne watching and listening. The king of Lycaon looked young, but his eyes told a different story and the aura about him was scarier than the royals that Katie had met in her own time.

“Your majesty, this is preposterous. Continuing to create rogues is going to make it impossible to control the empire. Not to mention it takes time to train them into werewolves worth a grain to the empire. Our

purpose is to put an end to humanity. I say we attack the humans where they are weak and wipe them all out while we still have the chance.

Using well-calculated attacks, we can throw the hunters off their balance and get them off guard. We have the advantage in this war. We must take it," another alpha stood up, challenging the one that had just spoken.

"No, that's counterproductive. Without numbers, it will take longer to rebuild once the war is over and that's something none of us wants to be put through," another growled.

"We might take a long to rebuild after that, but we won't have so many to worry about. Fewer mouths to feed. Have you ever tried rebuilding with an over-bloated population? It's like starting a quest with no end in sight,"

"Silence," the king's voice boomed through the halls, "Watching you bicker like children gives me a headache worse than what I get from arguing with Jeanie... which is quite impressive in its own way."

The king's beta alpha chuckled beside him, "They have the empire's best interests at heart, your majesty. We all do."

"This much I know, Davion, but with the way things stand at the moment, I'm not even sure what the empire's best interests are," the king rubbed his temples in disappointment. The room went silent, the bickering alphas turning their concerns to their king.

"What's that supposed to mean, your Majesty?" one of the alphas asked.

"I've been having dreams lately. The goddess commands an audience with the two Emperors. Sirius and I will be leaving our kingdoms to speak to her at the Origin later today," the king replied with a sigh, "Something won't stop turning in my stomach if you know what I mean."

"It's the goddess. She would never wish anything bad to happen to the empire, would she?" a man's voice rumbled through the throne room. At the entrance of the throne room, a man with striking blue eyes leaned against the large doorframe with his hands folded across his chest.

"It's been a while, brother. I trust you had fruitful travels," the king raised his voice rising from his seat and walking to meet his brother. "The rest of you are dismissed. Until I return from the Origin, there will be no further discussions on the war. Use the time to recuperate and prepare your troops for what's to come."

"This is new, even for you, brother. To dismiss the War council with an order to relax when going on a trip to the Origin. Normally, you'd tell them to wreak havoc. What's with the sudden change?" the man asked. The king's brother appeared younger than him, with shorter hair and curious blue eyes. While the king looked wizened, this man looked ambitious and eager to get back into action.

"Cirrus, walk with me," the king sighed, walking past his brother and out of the throne room. The other royal followed diligently, suddenly concerned for his older brother.

Chapter 387 Jeanie Sirius

The two royals exited the throne room, leaving the members of the War Council behind. Outside the throne room stood a beta alpha that served the king's brother, Cirrus. The man was as hulking as all beta

alphas were, but something about his face raised several red flags within Katie's mind. Unfortunately, she had no control over how these events unfolded and could only spare a second to try and remember where she'd seen him before returning her attention to the events before her.

"You're dismissed, for now, Rana," Cirrus told the crimson-eyed man. With a bow, Rana walked away from the two of them, not saying a word, "You have one diligent beta alpha."

"Yes, I'm lucky to have him," Cirrus responded, "What is it you wish to discuss?"

The king searched the halls for eavesdroppers before visibly relaxing. In a grave tone, he answered, "The dreams of the goddess that I've been having lately. They are not the same as they used to be. She doesn't speak to me with hate in her voice anymore. I have been noticing the change in her behaviour. I don't know what's gotten a hold of her or if she's simply growing tired of war, but I can tell she's not so inclined to kill the humans as she's always been," the king said to Cirrus.

Cirrus began to laugh out, lightly at first before he started to sound borderline deranged that the king cast him a worried glance, "Are you okay, Cirrus?"

"Yes, I am fine. The question is... 'are you?'" Cirrus returned, touching his brother's forehead with the back of his palm as though checking for a fever.

"I am fine, Cirrus. You know that."

"Then what would possess you to believe a goddess's hatred could be quenched that easily? She's an immortal being... time doesn't wear down their grudges," the man snapped at his brother. Something about what the king had just suggested rubbed him the wrong way.

"You know what it's like Cirrus. We all want to follow what the goddess wants us to do, the royals more than anyone else. That way, we don't risk angering her any further than she already is. If I'm not feeling up to war after talking to the goddess, then surely it must mean something," the king replied ignoring his brother's disrespectful tendencies. If anyone else had raised their voice at him, a number of punishments would have been in order.

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"We don't know the mind of the goddess. We cannot know because we are mortals, unlike her and don't pretend to understand her either," Cirrus argued. His frustration displayed on his face easily, causing deep lines to distort his otherwise handsome face.

"It's not like you to rush to anger. You're usually the cool-headed one of the two of us. I would prefer if it remained that way, Cirrus. Now, would you take over the palace for me while I'm gone? Make sure they follow my orders. I would not like to use my authority as a royal to force my subjects to adhere to my will," the two of them had finally exited the large doors of the palace, making their way outside the colossal gates of the Lycaon fortress-palace.

The king of Lycaon shifted into his large grey wolf and was gone in a flash, dashing faster than Katie thought was possible for the werewolves... even for a royal, the grey wolf had vanished too fast.

Cirrus watched the king disappear into the forest surrounding the palace with narrowed eyes, "What do you mean, you don't want to command your subjects? Did you hit your head in the night? Your power

was meant to command your subjects,” the man spoke to himself. His hands balled into fists periodically unclenching as he formulated a plan.

“Your Highness, is something the matter?” a deep voice interrupted him. Cirrus looked to his side and noticed his most trusted beta alpha already approaching him. The man bowed to the prince when he was an arm’s length from him.

“No, Rana. At the moment, nothing is wrong, but something might be soon enough,” the man replied, “Would you watch the palace in my stead? I will be going after my brother and the queen of Sirius. I have to see it for myself or at least, hear it for myself,” Cirrus asked.

“You needn’t ask, my king. Just give the order and it will be done,” Rana bowed to him once more and turned in the direction of the palace. Cirrus watched his beta alpha as he retreated to the palace. Shaking away his thoughts, he shifted into an auburn wolf and vanished into the woods, following the grey who’d left only moments later.

The journey to the Origin was a long one that took them the better of four to five days to make. On the journey, they followed the Great Sirius river downstream at top speed and hunted in the evening before they rested. They would pick up where they left off in the morning and run many miles as fast as their legs could carry them, covering such large distances at once that this feat was nothing short of astounding.

The Great River met at a confluence before leading further to a thick forest overflowing with divine energy. The king of Lycaon found a snow-white wolf lazily lying by the river bank at the confluence and growled at her. This wolf didn’t flinch at his threatening tone. She merely stood and stretched lazily before opening her eyes.

The white wolf’s striking blue eyes complemented the coat beautifully, giving her the appearance of a divine wolf pulled straight from the covers of a fictional novel. Katie dismissed her stunning resemblance as the connection she shared with the wolf through blood. She quickly composed herself, having gone dumb from the breathtaking sight of the white wolf.

However, what happened next had her mentally gawking once more. The wolf shifted into its human form and in its place stood a beautiful woman with white hair, “You certainly took your time,” the woman’s voice sang out.

“Oh, shut it, Jeanie. You know there isn’t a wolf in the entire world as fast as you,” the king snapped at her, having shifted back into his human form as well. He stretched the stiffness out of his shoulders and started the remainder of the journey on foot.

“Oh, I know how fast I am,” the woman replied with an air of accomplishment or was it boastfulness?

“Yeah, it probably took you two days to get here instead of the normal four,” the man replied.

“One and a half days. I had the time to rest while you made your way here. Can’t you find some way to become as fast as me?” the woman groaned, “It gets boring when I have to wait for you.”

“No, I can’t and if you’re so fast, then why don’t you just start the journey two days after we choose to set off?” the king argued.

“Wow, you used your head! I’m shocked.”

“You’re still as insufferable as always,” the king was now pinching the bridge of his nose.

“Only when I’m talking to you,” Jeanie’s voice sang out, leaping from one side of the king to the other. She was all over the place and unlike the king who was dressed in respectable luxurious clothes fit for a king and that barely allowed much movement, this woman was dressed light and leapt from one thing to the next, occasionally moving through trees as they made their way to the Origin.

Jeanie did not hesitate to mix a bit of banter into their conversation as they travelled. She never once asked about war or death, but rather some other topics that the king found bizarre and utterly useless to their cause. In addition, she had grown a habit of infuriating him so much that he reached his limit... and yet he couldn’t attack her. She was a free spirit Katie had seen once before.

“Do you have an idea why the goddess could have summoned us?” she finally asked.

The king massaged his growing headache and sighed, “I don’t know what she called us for, but... it might have something to do with the reduced bloodlust that we’ve been sensing from her.”

“Yeah, I have been wondering that exact same thing. So you’ve been paying attention as well. Congrats, Hamedale. You’re not a mindless brute after all,” Jeanie giggled.

“I am royal, aren’t I? Of course, I would have dreams to receive instruction from the goddess herself. That’s obvious. And what do you mean by, ‘Mindless brute?’”

“Her changed mood is not as obvious as you might think though. My sisters stopped receiving dreams of the goddess a while back and if I ask you, I think you’ll find that Cirrus hasn’t either.”

The king hadn’t thought about it that way and was shocked by her observation, “You don’t think...” he stopped speaking, keeping his speculations to himself. At this point, he could easily say something that could be found blasphemous. Cirrus was right about one thing, ‘We don’t know the mind of the goddess.’

Chapter 388 Object of the Moon’s Redemption

The two royals continued their journey to the Origin, shifting the topic of conversation to lighter subjects. Incidentally, the king was now interested in Jeanie’s ‘pointless’ topics of discussion. He didn’t groan when she talked about her sisters and potential mates in court.

This change in attitude didn’t stop Hamedale from inquiring about military matters within the Sirius empire. And likewise, the queen asked about what kind of women flocked around him or if he had picked out a mate at all. When the king showed his discomfort with the topic, she groaned loudly, “Come on. You can’t tell me you’ll be single your whole life!”

“Can we change the subject, please?” Hamedale had asked, adding the first hint of politeness to his voice in a long time.

Sighing, Jeanie obliged and asked about his brother and the beta alphas in the Lycaon empire as well as his ‘War council’. Surprisingly, Hamedale entertained all her questions and answered them dutifully while she also answered his as well. As it turned out, Sirius wasn’t as powerful as Lycaon in terms of military might, but the king respected his world-dominating counterpart just the same.

She might have been less vicious than he was but that did not fool him one bit. To the king, Jeanie was by far one of the most dangerous werewolves on the planet and he could admit this without a second thought.

Eventually, they made it to the forest that loomed ahead of them and without hesitation, walked into it. The river flowed into this forest, prompting them to follow in the direction of its guidance. The river continued on and on and soon enough split into numerous streams and rivulets, spreading outward and covering more ground.

The flow of the river had slowed considerably and started to encroach on the land about it more almost like a failed attempt at forming a lake.

The king and queen leapt over the streams and rivers, using stepping stones that seemed too conveniently positioned. For a period of time, it seemed as though they were trying to follow the river from the stones that stuck out of it. A boat would not have helped either, since the streams only continued to get smaller.

Eventually, when the streams were too small and there was more land than water, they all seemed to completely turn away from their destination and split into a 'Y' shape, taking random left or right directions and strictly avoiding on destination... straight ahead.

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Watching out for each other's steps in the soggy soil, they crossed the numerous streams without incident and started in the direction that the river seemed to be masterfully avoiding. A large grove of trees hid a clearing at the end of their road, a bright blue ethereal light peeping through the trees and inviting them through.

"How long has it been?" the king whispered, keeping his eyes on the distant light beyond the cover of the thick oak trees.

"A few months honestly... although, I thought we would take longer to return to this place," the woman replied with a slight shiver. Meeting the goddess in their dreams was one thing, but standing in the presence of the immortal celestial was something else entirely. Just keeping control of their wolves proved to be a chore in the goddess's presence.

"Yeah, same here. Let's go and see what she has to say. Standing around won't get us anywhere," the king chided, forging forward and breaking through the circlet of trees that surrounded the beautiful field of moon lotuses. At the centre of the field was a woman kneeling stroking the soft divine petals of the beautiful flowers... the smile on her face was one they were not used to. "It's just like it is in the dreams... That smile..."

They both tried to take a step forward, but their eyes landed on a body on the ground and went still at the sight of someone else in the goddess's presence.

Hamedale turned to Jeanie, searching her eyes for some sort of answer, but the woman was just as clueless as he was. She shook her head and suggested they keep going. Taking a few steps forward, they were both able to witness the man that lay in the field resting in front of the moon goddess. None of them was sure if he was asleep or otherwise. What they did know, however, was that the goddess had a

connection to him. Something of an emotional tie... which didn't make sense. The goddess of the moon had no emotional tie with a human, "Our lady, we came as fast as we could after hearing your summons."

The goddess looked up from the man on the ground and regarded her two guests who'd bowed down with one knee to the ground, "Sirius and Lycaon, you both came. I'm sure Hamedale travelled as fast as he could. Jeanie, on the other hand... You don't look the slightest bit worn out," the goddess greeted them, "Thank you for heeding my summons."

Jeanie would have chuckled at the light tone the goddess was using if it wasn't for the deep-rooted respect their wolves held for the goddess of the moon. It was almost suffocating to have another entity within your force you to act dignified in front of a deity, "We wouldn't have it any other way, our Lady. Forgive my intrusion, my Lady, but who is the man lying on the ground before you?" Hamedale spoke up, curiosity winning the battle against his wolf.

"Oh, him... He's a werewolf named Seth and I intend to make him my immortal husband," the goddess replied.

The two of them gasped at the thought of their goddess taking an immortal husband. Jeanie was the first to speak up, "Is there a reason why you wouldn't have picked a royal to be your immortal husband instead? For all I know, he could be a peasant in comparison."

Hamedale turned to the queen, mortified. She'd already skipped the fact that their goddess had even considered taking on a lover. This was an outrage.

"Mortals always look at the person's status and appearance before making a judgement, not considering the happiness they seek in the first place. I will correct that among the kind that I created," the goddess spoke, her voice both icy and cold yet kind and gentle, like that of a parent teaching their child a lesson while they sat around a warm fire.

"I don't think I understand," Hamedale spoke up, significantly more confused than Jeanie.

"I called the two of you here so that I might tell you what's about to change among the wolves. I trust that you ordered the werewolves under your command to cease all attacks until you returned," they both nodded in confirmation before letting the goddess continue her speech, "Everything is about to change, my dear one."

The goddess rose to her full height, "In light of recent events, I've found something stronger than my hate and was able to conquer it... in exchange for something greater. Something I can't just dismiss now that I've seen it with my own eyes and felt it with my ageless heart. Something that eludes the gods for millennia before they find it again.

I thought that by cursing the Man god's creation, he would lose what was most dear to him, but I guess he didn't have to fight back. I just had to watch as something beautiful emerged from my own darkness."

"I don't follow, my Lady," Lycaon stated.

"Ugh, seriously Hamedale, are you this much of a dunce? The goddess has found love. I'm just as shocked as you are, but even I'm not that blind," Jeanie snapped at the man beside her.

“A goddess doesn’t just fall in love with a mortal. That’s just not how it works,” Hamedale snapped as well. How was Jeanie taking all this so lightly? She almost sounded... delighted, proud, and happy that the goddess was spewing such nonsense.

“I know that... which is why this specific person must have been really special if he could charm the goddess...”

“Charm would not be the word I’m looking for,” the goddess interrupted.

“Huh, you weren’t charmed. How did this happen then?” Jeanie asked. Hamedale facepalmed, ‘What’s going through that head of yours, Jeanie? You almost sounded like you were happy someone had bewitched our goddess,’ Hamedale mentally screamed.

Thinking more about it, he realised this was beyond the kind queen. She wasn’t one to think along the lines of treachery. Instead, he figured she must have used that thinking to justify the goddess’s drastic change in behaviour.

“During one of the raids on the human settlements, he protected his sister from a rogue that attacked them in their village. The rogue was an alpha, but he didn’t stop protecting his sister even after being turned himself. It was only a matter of time before the alpha commanded him to change her as well, so the two of them ran when they got the chance. I’ve been watching him since then... His name is Seth... the blind gladiator.

Chapter 389 Goddess of Regret

“His newfound strength got him a decent job as a gladiator amongst the humans. Humans crave entertainment in these dark times. It’s a wonder they are still alive when they are such natural brutes at heart.

Humans are cruel, but the two of them weren’t the same as the others. One was a werewolf while the other was human and it didn’t matter to them one bit. All that mattered was the bond that joined them and nothing else.

A bond of love that was stronger than anything I thought possible for them. He deserved more than he got. In any case, everything was going well for a while until... he was discovered.

I’d been indirectly living in his life, unable to interfere and happened to run into him on his way to the underworld. This mortal, for reasons I’m still dying to understand, agreed to become my immortal husband when I asked him and here we are,” the goddess explained, blowing through the man’s entire life in a few short sentences.

The two of them were speechless after hearing the goddess’s story. Being mortal, they could decipher the look she wore each time she stared at the unconscious gladiator before her.

Seth had sharp features and well-defined muscles that could only be achieved by a seasoned warrior. Despite his appearance, however, he bore a kind expression on his lifeless face. ‘I’d have a better time believing the goddess had been charmed instead,’ Hamedale mentally sighed. He simply couldn’t wrap his head around this whole situation.

The two of them had made the long journey to hear the goddess's new plans for the war. Nothing could have prepared them for what she actually had to say. That she'd fallen in love... Preposterous! And yet, no matter how much they wished it weren't true, Seth's body wouldn't disappear. He remained there, still and unmoving... as solid as ever. He wasn't going anywhere.

"What about the war, your Majesty?" Jeanie spoke up in a shaky tone. There was so much wrong with this situation.

"The war will come to an end. Lord Prometheus had already agreed to have the humans meet with the royals and decide on a peace that will grace the two races... No more bloodshed," Celeste responded.

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Hamedale stood up abruptly, "And this..." he visibly struggled for a fitting description, "...excuse of a werewolf is the reason you've chosen to end the war?"

"Hamedale, shut up. It's not our place to question our Lady," Jeanie snapped at her fellow monarch.

"Of course, it's not your place Jeanie. You've not been taking your duty seriously this whole time. Instead of preparing for war, you've been slacking off with your sisters and slowing down in your divine mission," Hamedale fumed.

The white-haired woman was tongue-tied at the accusation. They'd shared stories on their way to the Origin, but not once had the king mocked what was happening in Sirius, "I am a queen with people of my own. If caring more for their happiness than meaningless war makes me weak and incompetent, then so be it, but I will not have you disrespect our Lady in my presence."

"And what would a queen as small as you do about it? You barely have the strength to lift a human or lay a finger on your enemy," the man's words stung. Surprisingly, they didn't bring Jeanie down one bit and Hamedale was used to this headstrong woman's indomitable spirit.

The woman vanished right before his eyes, leaving a small gust of wind in her previous position. Hamedale's instincts kicked in. The goddess was too slow to stop the argument. Before she knew it, the two of them were fighting right before her.

The king, following his sense of hearing, spun on his heel with his fist outstretched in an arc meant to strike the lightning-fast werewolf attacking him, but he was a second too late, despite how fast he was.

Jeanie's body vanished right before him before a kick to his back updated his knowledge of her position. Turning to attack only brought him a similar result, this time, a scratch to his face had him grunting in frustration. The wounds started healing immediately and he easily ignored the pain, searching for her next move.

No matter how fast he tried to anticipate her movements or how quickly he reacted, Jeanie always countered and dealt her own damage. The only reason the king was not down yet was that Jeanie's attacks were like scratches to him. She wasn't stronger than him and his body could withstand far more than she was able to deliver.

The queen had a speed and agility advantage, which gave her the upper hand, but that wasn't enough to make Hamedale submit to her. The king might have been slower than her, but he had no intention of losing their duel.

Her attacks did not pack a punch and she continued to assault the king and began aiming for specific points of his body. Jeanie aimed for his knees, face, back, gut and insides of his elbows whilst dashing about his confused form.

The numerous strikes to his weak points were taking their toll and the king dropped to his knees soon, panting with exhaustion. Flailing about after what he thought was her location had not worked for him. If anything, it only made him look like a madman trying to fight off a swarm of bees.

"You claim to be strong, but you can't even land a single hit on me. Who's on his knees now, Hamedale?" the blurred royal finally came to a stop in front of the king, a miscalculation on her part. For the king lunged at her and delivered a full-force punch to the gut knocking the air right out of her lungs.

"That's enough," Celeste's voice boomed. Vines erupted from the ground, seizing the king and raising him from the ground before violently pinning him to a tree at the edge of the field of lotuses. The goddess glided over to the coughing woman and waved her hand above her. Her coughing stopped and Jeanie quickly regained her breath and composure.

"Thank you, my Lady," the woman bowed.

The goddess looked away from her and to the king struggling against the hold of the vines, "Explain yourself, Hamedale."

Finally realising he had no way out, the king stopped struggling and let his hands go limp, "Before coming here, I was reminded of the reason all this began. I don't think it's wrong for you to do what you're doing, but I don't think we can just forget what happened either."

"I said nothing about forgetting I was wronged either. That much is clear, however, the matters between the Man god and I are simply what they are. Having humans die for something their patron god did won't solve anything. Not to mention, Lord Prometheus apologized and erased the humans of the knowledge that could bring that abomination back into existence."

"I don't understand," the man said through gritted teeth.

Celeste went still and silent for a while, her eyes glazing over while her mind was swept back to the past. Back to a time when she almost found the happiness she'd craved for so long. Everything was going so well for her back then, "The humans were testing something that day. Something perilous and catastrophic and thought there was no one in their testing area. Humans can't perceive the divine if we do not intend them to, anyway.

My hunters happened to be nearby. The casualties that resulted from this experiment had not been their intention. I was consumed by rage that I cast this curse. Prometheus, instead of arming the humans with more knowledge, robbed them of the very knowledge that could defend them. The knowledge of how to create any more of that... abomination," the woman explained.

"Do you mean to tell me that you've reconciled with the Man god already?" Hamedale asked, allowing himself to finally relax.

“The Man god has not retaliated. He never intended to attack me, I see that now and he’s only given them ways to defend themselves. His creations did and he tried to correct what he did. However, bringing my hunters back is beyond his abilities, so he got rid of what killed them. Nevertheless, I proceeded with my onslaught. And he stood by and watched it happen,” the goddess explained.

“In more ways than one, the man before you showed me the similarity behind the Man god and his creations. They make mistakes, they accept them and they live with the consequences no matter how harsh. They heal, rebuild and love again. It’s a beautiful cycle that makes their short lives worth living. The gods spend ages searching for what they find in less than a century.

They find it so fast. I’d spent so long in search of it, and when I’d just found it, I let my pride and rage get the better of me... and lost everything.”

Chapter 390 Separate Entity

After Artemis’s explanation, King Hamedale calmed down. They’d both been fighting in honour of their goddess with only their different opinions to blame, “I don’t mean to be a bother, but the whole purpose of this curse that brought my kind was to wipe out humanity. Without that purpose, what happens to us then?”

The goddess smiled, “I’ve been thinking of something. Humans are flawed in so many ways, but every once in a while... once in a blue moon, there is a union amongst them that’s so perfect that even the gods in the heavens above watch in awe. I want that to be the case for my wolves albeit more frequently.

Perhaps there can be happiness born from the darkness that brought this curse upon the world of mortals. I want to pair them the right way so that they never have to go through the pain humans go through when pursuing what they keep mistaking for love,” she explained.

“That feels totally beside the point, but please, do go on,” the king replied, sighing.

“I’ve decided that whenever a wolf reaches the age of eighteen, they will receive a mate that they must seek out. There will be no happiness otherwise should they choose to mate with one other than the one I have chosen for them,” the goddess replied with a grin.

“You’re giving us quite a lot to think about this time, aren’t you, my Lady?” Jeanie giggled, sitting in the field cross-legged, “A mate that every one of us looks forward to meeting. One that you’re fated to be with till the end. If you don’t mind me asking, what happens when your mate dies after the two of you have met or if your mate dies before the two of you ever meet? I have so many questions now. What happens if you don’t find your mate? And how does one find their mates anyway?”

Hamedale was stunned by the woman’s enthusiasm towards the idea the goddess had just brought upon them. ‘Isn’t she supposed to be thinking of things like... What happens to the war now? What will I do with my War Council? What happens if the humans attack us again? What happens if they betray us and try to take revenge on the werewolves?’ The vines restraining him weakened and shed away, letting him drop to the ground.

“Oh, I can answer all your questions. Like I said, I’ve been thinking a lot about life after the war...” the goddess piped up, getting closer to the Sirius Queen.

'I guess we are not talking about the possibilities of a civil war or human uprising then...' the king mentally groaned, 'Maybe I'm just being paranoid... Maybe...'

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In silence, he listened to the two females' exchange and learned all that he could about the goddess's new intentions. In the end, she didn't seem like she wanted to discuss anything military at all. In fact, she spoke like a completely different person. So much that he couldn't keep his mouth shut, "Goddess, you're different. Where is your bow?"

The goddess smile fell from her face the instant he'd asked, "How can I say this? Hmm, I think it would be better if you did not refer to me as Artemis and only as Celeste from now on. The two of us... aren't exactly the same anymore. I am the goddess of the Moon and the patron goddess of the werewolves."

"That's how much you've put this war behind you, huh?" he asked. The goddess merely nodded in response.

"Well, in that case then, we shall carry out your orders to the letter and reconcile with the humans. There will be no more bloodshed from either of the two sides and we shall strive to build a peaceful world where the two species can live together in peace and harmony," the man bowed to the goddess. In the end, Hamedale wasn't a fan of war either. Not after everything he'd seen so far.

The goddess before him smiled warmly at the two royals, the standing direct descendants of Sirius and Lycaon. When Lycaon was one to follow her orders to the letter and without much resistance, Sirius had always been the free spirit who questioned all her decisions. For Sirius, she had to make sure she'd understood the order given. Celeste was glad when Jeanie reacted positively towards her abrupt change.

This change in her behaviour had not been sudden though. Celeste had just taken her time to show it. She'd been watching the blind gladiator for a while and every now and then, his pure heart had chipped away at her darkness, allowing room for something new to emerge, "I'm glad. Now depart from the Origin and bring forth a new era of peace."

The two werewolves shifted before their goddess, a large but slender white wolf and a large bulky black wolf. Before they could leave, however, the white wolf's feminine voice rang through their minds. Jeanie stared at the man on the ground while she asked, "Oh, by the way, I remember you saying something about him being called, 'The Blind Gladiator.' What did you mean by that?" Jeanie asked.

"Oh yeah... He needed some way to hide the colour of his eyes, so he would cover his eyes with a cloth wrapped around his head, sealing away his vision. His sister was actually the one that would help him tie it on every morning. His other senses were sharp enough for him to perceive his surroundings well enough. For a time, he was an enigma and a very entertaining fighter to watch. Defeating your opponents without sight is quite entertaining.

But then again, that's also where the suspicions started later on. And when the humans found out about him, neither he nor his sister was spared," the goddess responded sadly.

"That's so cruel... Why?"

“They could risk him getting a command from an alpha. He was simply too dangerous. At least, that’s what I tell myself of their reasoning... It doesn’t matter anymore. He’ll be fine now. Now go. Tend to your people and make sure something like this never happens again,” she urged them with a bright smile.

‘There it is again. The image of the goddess smiling,’ Jeanie whispered into Hamedale’s mind.

‘I know, Jeanie. It’s new, but I think it suits her better than the scowl of anger she wore back then,’ Hamedale replied, noticing the significant change in his goddess’s demeanour. To the two werewolves, she’d transformed into a completely different person in such a short time.

The two royals didn’t need much persuasion to leave the Origin. After receiving their dismissal, they vanished in the next moment to carry out the goddess’s bidding. Katie couldn’t believe her eyes as she watched the slender wolf vanish seconds before the king’s wolf, raising a mini-tornado in her wake. The colour of the wolf, the speed and the attitude were almost an exact match with someone else deep within her memory.

She grasped for the memory but found she was unable to do much in this deep unconscious state. Her memory wasn’t as accessible as she would have liked. Finally deciding it was a problem for another time, she returned her attention to the goddess who’d now floated back to the sleeping man on the ground.

Celeste gently stroked his hair with a smile on her face. It seemed like the goddess was going to wait for Seth to wake up. The reason he was asleep in the first place eluded Katie’s mind, so she looked around in search of another detail of more interest, but found nothing.

‘Isn’t something supposed to be happening right about now? Well, other than watching the goddess fawn over Seth like he’s a diamond the size of an apple,’ the girl asked herself. She’d seen the two of them before, but she didn’t know how much the goddess thought of her mate. Just when she thought there was nothing more to watch from this scene, a sudden rustle of grass reached the girl’s ears. There was no draft of wind that could cause it and she was sure there were no animals in this part of the world because of the intense divine energy.

Her eyes or better, her focus darted about in search of the source of the sound. Something was obscured by the darkness created by the cover of trees. Someone else was out there. Someone else had come to the Origin that day... Katie wanted to believe that one of the two monarchs had returned with more questions, but something deep in her gut told her this was not the case...

And this gut feeling only turned worse... It was the same feeling she got whenever something evil was about to happen. The same feeling she had many months ago when the King of Rogues had shown up in Brigadia. She shivered at the thought of this evil and strained to pierce the darkness obscuring this image.

If Katie could choose one word to describe this feeling, it would be ‘ominous.’