

## Chosen 41

Chapter 41:

“Why is she adding him adrenaline?” Caden asked.

“Adrenaline heightens one’s senses and increases their awareness of something. That way they can respond to stimulus faster,” he said.

“Yeah, but adrenaline, in some cases, also dulls pain,” Caden said.

“Yes, that may be true, but what happens when adrenaline runs out when you have major injuries,” Anthony asked.

“The pain comes rushing back to you,” Caden said, “but why would someone do that? It’s sadistic.”

“No, it’s mercy... Katie will torture him all she wants with him feeling barely any pain... the rest you will have to see for yourself,” Anthony said, his voice wasn’t loud anymore as he watched this happen. It was clear that even within the Hunter’s Agency, Katie was not normal in the slightest. Cole watched with more concerned eyes... ‘Katie, what have you been turned into?’

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“You’re adding me more adrenaline... You’re dumber than you look, Chase. This will only make me numb to any of the torture tactics you have in store for me...” the hysterical laughing continued, the boy becoming evidently more confident, “Show me your worst, Chase.”

“Well, if you insist then... I’ll just leave this electricity running. I won’t lecture you on how much voltage a human can handle or on when it is that a werewolf can also stop feeling... I’ll just turn it up to your satisfaction,” she said.

“What do you mean when you...” he stopped as Katie turned it up to an insane voltage.

“You see, you have adrenaline coursing through you. So you can withstand more than an average wolf can... You won’t even notice when the meat on your bones even begins to get charred until right before you’re dead, a quick painful death if you ask me...” she said.

“Is this how you plan to get information out of me...” Chandler screamed, “It’s certainly an uninformed way of doing it... You think this is pain. Look at me, my limbs are practically useless and rotting. What is this going to get you? Didn’t you come here for information?”

“You know...” Katie said, in a sing-song tone, taking her time with her words. A seat next to the panel proved convenient to drive this point into his head, “I really don’t care how I walk out of here. With or without information, it doesn’t matter. I’m not obligated to turn off that dial at any one point. I can already smell your roasting carcass even now,” she said, smirking at him as he turned red.

“You’re a monster... get to the point...” he yelled through gritted teeth when he noticed Katie was not going to turn down the electricity.

“Katie, that’s enough. You’ll kill him without getting anything out of him,” Anthony yelled through a microphone.

“That is not my concern, Director Anthony. It’s up to him if he gets to live longer really. I definitely don’t feel motivated to turn down that power,” she said, yawning within her seat.

Chandler’s body was begin to smoke as the electricity continued to go through him. Katie did not show a single sign of bluffing and Chandler was starting to see just how worthless he was to her. “If I die, you will never know what I know about who killed that... traitor,” Chandler yelled.

Katie crossed her legs and leaned back into the chair rocking herself slightly, her composure that of someone that was sitting on their front porch watching fields of wheat in the countryside. “Even if I keep you alive, there is nothing that guarantees that you will tell me. To be honest, you’re just wasting my time. If I cannot get information out of you, then you’re better off dead, but if you do tell me something, then things can change. You don’t have much time though. I honestly don’t care about your life and I have other leads and sources to chase. So, I would say you have about three minutes before you die from the electricity. In two, you...”

“Fine, I’ll tell you what I called you here. I am the one who called you here, wasn’t I?” he yelled out at the top of his lungs. Katie stood up calmly and scrolled down the panel.

“Where was it... Or here it is...” she said, casually lowering the voltage and pumping more adrenaline into his system.

“No, please, no more adrenaline...”

“I don’t want you passing out in the middle of your big reveal...”

Chandler chuckled darkly, “You’re a true monster. The boss will enjoy snuffing the life out of you... I’m a dead man, but there is still something that I have to tell you...” he said, laughing once more, “It gives me a rush thinking of it every time I do... every time I think of just how surrounded you are. You will never see it coming... You will be so surprised when you find out who killed that poor traitor... someone who has been in that school for far longer than you have. You will never see them coming. I pity you, Chase... no, all I regret is not having the opportunity to see the look on your face when you find out. My best bet is that now that all of this has happened, he won’t need to stay in hiding for so long.”

“Is there anything else you intend to say to me?” Katie asked.

“What’s with that look on your face? Why do you look so calm? Why isn’t any of this bothering you? I’ve been watching you for a long time now... Why do you still look at me with that same bored expression?” the boy continued to yell out.

Katie walked up to the panel scrolling through the controls, “You know, you must have known what you were getting yourself into when you became a rogue and decided to carry out this kind of work. Instead of choosing a life that would get you a happy ending, you chose one that was most likely to get you killed... and look at you now, strapped to a chair with no limbs, on the brink of a gruesome death. I wonder if you ever ask yourself if you could take it all back and finally live a life that brings you joy rather than...”

“Spare me the pep talk... I know all of that. Those sweet words and empty promises are probably what got that traitor on your side in the first place. Just because you have me in this state of weakness doesn't mean my resolve will change so easily. I see you still have the same empathy I deduced while I studied you all these years. Don't take pity on rogues, Chase. We'll kill you without a second thought because that's our one and only purpose. To rid this world of all humans and the werewolves that betrayed their moon goddess' original will,” with that he fell silent, staring at Katie with a defiant look in his eye.

Katie tapped something on the panel. A syringe began to inject a colourless fluid into his system. “What's that?” Cole asked the director from the other side of the glass pane.

“A drug that will give Chandler a painless death... It seems he wasn't as capable of breaking through Katie's will as he'd hoped or maybe he did. With Katie, one cannot be very sure of anything, because she can hide it if she wants to,” the man said.

Katie watched Chandler's body go limp, his gaze going lifeless and his head lolling back when his muscles went slack. She walked up to him and shut his eyes with her right palm before walking out of the room, her face still expressionless.

“Why did you kill him?” Anthony asked her once she was out of the torture chamber.

“He was useless to us at that point,” she said.

“Who let you decide that?”

“It was I who decided to capture him alive in the first place. His prolonged life was decided by me. I am not wrong when I decide he's no longer of use to us...”

“You lost those privileges when you handed him over to the Hunter's Agency,” he said.

“Would it give you more comfort to know that he was already going to die regardless of what you could have done to prolong his life?”

“Elaborate...”

“His body had already been put under a voltage higher than his normal body was capable of. When the adrenaline wore off, he was going to die immediately. His healing was no longer functional as most of his cells were already halfbaked. He was living on borrowed time and he had already given up on trying to draw a satisfactory reaction out of me,” she explained.

The two stared each other down for a while, tension building in the room, “You forget that you are still a prime...”

“We just confirmed right now that it was a rogue that killed Ash Myster,” she stopped him before he could finish his statement.

“That information only works to prove your case worthy of investigation. Other than that, it was your blade that cut through the boy and led to his unfortunate demise...”

“Why are you fighting?” Cole spoke up, stopping the exchange, “Ash's killer is still on the loose and you are bickering amongst yourselves over trivial matters that shouldn't be your concern at all. What do you

care what the people think about this? I just want the killer found. If anything, my say on the matter goes because Ash was my subordinate..."

The director didn't have anything to say to that but apologize for his behaviour. "What's your next step, Katie?" Cole asked. Katie walked out of the room without another word. Sandra followed her to find out what was going on with her best friend. 'Could it be that she was affected by what that scoundrel said?' Cole thought to himself. It was undeniable that she still wore an expressionless to hide something. He thought he managed when she left out the main door, a teardrop falling from her cheeks.

Chapter 42:

Sandra finally caught up to Katie's fast-paced walking. Tears were flowing down her cheeks, "I have to get out of here, Sandra. I'll see you later. Just let me go for a run," she said, speeding up to the front door and palming it.

"You can talk to me, you know that right," Katie was gone in a flash as soon as the large stone door could fit a human being, having slipped out faster than the eye could follow. 'I hope you are fine, Katie.'

Sandra got out of the dungeon and waited for the rest to come out. After all, without Katie, she couldn't open any of the doors that were within it. If she went back in, she wouldn't even have been able to enter the door to the room she'd left the other werewolves in.

Back in the control room, Anthony paced about trying to think himself. "We didn't even get to question the guy ourselves," Jason whined.

"You sure you wanted to be in the same room as someone who had been that heavily dosed on wolfsbane. I'm sure you'd puke your guts out," Caden replied.

"Hey, I'm not the only one who would have that reaction," he complained.

"Anthony, what is the information going to help us with? Katie was upset when she left," Cole spoke up.

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"The information that Chandler was withholding can only be used by Katie because it was personal to her. If she hadn't kept her cool while she was in there, he would have gotten what he wanted. All we can do now is wait for her to figure it out. Don't trust anyone who is close to her though, my best guess is that there is someone close to her that committed this atrocity," Anthony said.

"Would you show us out now? This place is not one a werewolf can find any kind of comfort in," Cole said, silently cursing the numerous security measures that were taken in making this place. The three followed Anthony out, finding Sandra waiting diligently outside the facility.

"Where did Katie go?" Anthony asked her.

"She went for a run. She'll communicate when she feels like it. Is there anything else that we are required to attend to here at the agency?"

"You say 'we' as though you particularly came here with these werewolves," Anthony observed, narrowing his eyes at Cole and the others, getting a naughty smirk from Jason.

"You could say that. I have some arrangements if you may... Besides, today is a day of rest for many and tomorrow, the Founder's Festival will happen," she said. This placed a look of worry on Anthony's face.

"Oh yes, the Founder's festival, I'll have to tell you this. Get all the rest you can. Tomorrow is going to be a long day. The same goes to you three," turning to the werewolves, "I'll overlook the insults that you threw to my guards while you were waiting for Katie's arrival. That tongue of yours needs a serious washout, Jason."

"What is going to happen tomorrow?" Caden asked, making it his first indulgence in the conversation since they had arrived.

"That is something that cannot be revealed prematurely for a numerous number of reasons, I'm afraid. You will be briefed when it happens," he said.

"Okay then, we'll take our leave now," Cole's mood had started to turn sour and he only wished he could go for a run. The scents that lingered on the outer parts of the gas masks as they returned them made him feel even more nauseous and disgusted by the operation that was going on in this place. He understood clearly that rogues were unreasonable in the way they thought and couldn't be spared much mercy, but some methods the hunters resorted to could turn one's stomach.

What bothered him above everything else was the way Katie wasn't affected by the things that they saw. She had shocked the rogue and half-cooked him while keeping her composure as though this was something that she'd done all her life. "Was Katie trained in the art of torture as well?" Caden was the one to ask they turned to leave.

Anthony smirked, turning back to them as he was meant to get back into the open dungeon. It was surprising that the smell of wolfsbane that was in the dungeon was not leaking out. "I was wondering if that was nagging you in any way. The answer to your question is yes... The Chase family has been graced with one of the most powerful hunters of this generation. She's been trained in every aspect of our not-so-pretty job. If that is all you were asking, I bid you farewell."

The guards heaved as they shut the stone door once again, "I know you guys probably have Strength Prometheus gifts but do you still have to strain when closing that door?"

"Do you want to try it out?" one of them asked, stretching out his shoulder to relieve himself from the aches of having to close and open the impossible entrance.

"No, thank you. I'm good, but if it's that hard to move, then how was it put there in the first place?" Jason asked.

"It was installed using machines, but once it was in place, all mechanizations were removed and the door was made manual so that it was impossible to open unless two professional hunters with the strength Prometheus gifts could open it," the guard explained.

"Oh, so there are hunters that are stationed here with the purpose of opening and closing this thing?"

"Only when there is something that is being done here, otherwise, there are better things that I could be wasting my time with. It's just that this door can only be opened from the outside... only one person has ever opened it from the inside and it was because it had not been shut," the man said, "Even then, it shouldn't have been possible for them to open it alone."

"I won't try to ask who did that. For some reason, everything that sounds impossible points to her," Cole said, sighing and starting the walk that would lead them out of the facility.

"I can't argue with that logic. She's a far cry from ordinary... and something tells me she is still growing. She's not even eighteen yet..." the guard sighed.

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They walked on in silence, or rather Cole walked on in silence listening to the others. They passed by the statue of the hunter that was facing an alpha. When they entered this facility, this whole statue looked impossible and much like a dream. The werewolves have always doubted the power of the hunters and that was because they always took the hunters to be not much different from humans. "So do you have some free time on your hands?" Sandra asked Jason and Caden.

"Yeah, I think we are fine. What did you have in mind... Oh, that... someone's fired up," Jason said.

"Yeah, I agree... Are you really that eager?"

"You guys can have your fun. I'm going for a run," Cole spoke up as the gates came into sight.

"Going for a run or looking for Katie?"

"I'm going for a run. I need to clear my mind and get the scent of wolfsbane off me," he said, waving the others off once they were out of the gate and sprinting into the forest leaping right at the forest and shifting into his massive black wolf mid-air. Cole was not in a chatty mood anymore and couldn't wait to get out of the facility. Looking back on the mood that he'd arrived with, eager to question the rogue in captivity, he felt like slapping himself when he saw what the rogue had been put through. 'Those rogues have some resolve. It's impossible to believe he went through all that and still didn't give up any information.'

Cole ran through the forest, his thoughts a mushed mess. It was this day that he was finally coming to the realization of just how ugly the life of a hunter really was. It was common knowledge to know that hunters were trained from their childhood. 'How is making a spy out of young rogues any more cruel from what the hunters were doing to their children that they trained to become weapons. These thoughts and worries troubled him every time he saw Katie put on an expressionless face and sealed her emotions from all that were around her.

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"What has got into him?" Sandra asked, sounding puzzled by Cole's sour mood.

"We really do live in different worlds," Jason chuckled when he heard the question. The fact that Sandra didn't see anything wrong with everything that was going on in the dungeon of the Hunter's Agency was amusing to the two werewolves that stayed with her. "Sometimes I forget that. Caden, perhaps we shouldn't take her so lightly. She could actually be more powerful than she looks."

"I was thinking the exact same thing, Jason. What I have seen today has taught me a lot about hunters. It's no wonder we don't treat them like humans. They just aren't..." Sandra looked between the two.

"I'm glad you guys finally realized that," she said, smiling. 'Maybe now they will realise just how much hunters go through in the name of peace between the wolves and humans. "Do you know why some

hunters take years before attaining a Prometheus gift?" she answered, taking their silence as a sign to continue, "It's simply because it's not so simple to give up the innocent part of one's humanity and still remain basically normal.

Some don't get their gifts until they know the balance and can dive into the depths of darkness and come out unscathed. I want to catch up to Katie... but, Katie is different. She took in everything she was taught about the organization without getting that affected. It's not every day that someone looks at their first werewolf carcass comes through the ordeal without puking their guts out. Katie was taught not to feel sympathy towards them after understanding the way they thought."

Chapter 43:

Katie let loose when she ran this fast. She zipped through the trees summoning the furious ferocity of her agility Prometheus gift. This gift gave one an incredible boost in speed even if that is not what it was meant to do, thus its name being agility and not speed. However, when she ran free and untethered, everything passed by in a blur. Her mind was a mess of thoughts as memories of the words Chandler washed through her mind.

It was true that she knew the names of each and every student in her school. She made sure she knew them so that no one would feel out of her scope. Some thought they hid well from her, but with full access to the surveillance room and the student files, she was able to keep at least get a glance of each and every student in the school just for the sake of doing so. As a result, she knew everyone. She had noticed the drop in the number of students in the school, but there had never been a stir.

Had the rogues thought that much about their targets and only got rid of those that would not raise any suspicion. The revelation of there being far more deaths than one was not allowing her any measure of peace. She kept her eyes to the ground as she powered through the forest at top speed. Her anger threatened to pour out of her. She wanted nothing more than to release it.

Something within her stirred as a heavy heart-stopping headache hammered into her head out of nowhere. She tripped, her focus stolen from her by the pain in her head. The white wolf that was chained down by the drugs that she'd been taking threatened to break from its shackles, growling louder in her mind... her anger had fueled the repulsive nature of the beast within her.

Her vision flickered from red to normal numerous times. She squirmed on the ground, her anger unwavering. It was proving impossible to shake it off. The pain came again racking her whole body this time and not just her head. A scream threatened to escape her lips as she continued drowning deeper and deeper into her anger. The headache and pain were coming from the inhibitions that her wolf was fighting from the drugs that she took.

Far from her position, the scent of one's mate reached the nostrils of a black wolf that ran absentminded. Thoughts of finding the owner of this scent filled Cole's mind as he changed direction and went straight for the source. This time he wasn't going to let whomever the scent belonged to escape him. He ran forward at top speed with one destination in mind, the troubling thoughts from the Hunter's Agency completely wiped from his mind. Cole along with his wolf shared the same unique goal and that was to get to the owner of this alluring scent that even haunted their dreams.

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Seated by the pool that looked down to the realm of the living, the husband of the moon goddess watched in her absence, boredom racking his brain while he continued to watch the girl that his wife had kept an eye on this entire time. "What gives... Do they have to torture werewolves that much?"

"Well, there is nothing they can do about it. The hunters are at liberty to carry out all the research on werewolves and end the Rogue King by any means necessary. It's an ugly way to get the job done, but they still have to do it," she said over the mind link they shared.

"How long are you going to put on your makeup? It's not like this is some party you have to attend. They should be blessed to just see you in your nightgown for all I care. Although I will kill anyone who ever sees that," he said.

"Thanks, honey. Nonetheless, these two are the ones I chose. It's only fair that I meet them when I look my absolute best..." she said.

"It's not like you dress up for me every day," the man mumbled to himself, allowing the complaint to reach his mate.

"Oh, don't complain, you like me better when I'm the opposite of dressed or are you forgetting?"

"You caught me there. Now hurry up and come here. Something tells me there are about to leave that gut-wrenching place they call the Hunter's Agency," he ushered her as he watched, his head calmly resting in his hands, propped up on his knees. He couldn't get the emotions that flowed out of the girl well because of the drugs that sealed her wolf, but he could tell that not all was well.

"I'm coming, don't rush me..." she laughed.

"Yeah, but you might want to get here faster... something is wrong..." the man said, noticing the behaviour of the girl becoming more emotional than controlled for the first time in what seemed like ages. The two had never seen her lose her cool before and when she did, she was on her own. This was not a good thing considering her birthday was only a day away and thus the shackles holding her wolf were quite frail.

The moon goddess rushed her final touches and rushed to her husband's side on time to see Katie trip, her eyes flickering from navy blue to a brilliant glowing blue. She twisted in pain and a scream threatened to escape her. Immense anger radiated from her even in the pain she was in. "Is that bad?"

"Yes, it is... At this rate, she will shift prematurely... Her wolf can't fight the inhibitions of the drugs she's taking. She'll be in unimaginable pain..." she said, raising her hand over the pool of water and changing the view. A distance of three miles from Katie, a massive black wolf approached at a blinding speed. It was only a matter of minutes before he would get to her.

"What are you..." the man's sentence was cut short when he watched his wife dive into the pool. The pool made a portal to the world they watched over. "Wait, seriously, now..."

The moon goddess descended from her place in the heavens at a time that was unusual for her. She had watched the girl and boy their whole lives, but they had never needed her as much as they did at the



moment. "You're only allowed to intervene directly three times and once during the day. Why are you squandering that ability now that they are still immature?"

"There are reasons I am the moon goddess and you aren't, Damon. I don't regret what I'm doing," she said through the mind link and descended to the scene below her. 'I have to get to them before they meet,' she thought while she accelerated faster. Cole is the reason for her rush to their rescue.

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Cole ran faster feeling the scent getting stronger this time, there was nothing like the scent getting away from him this time. He could feel himself getting closer and closer. A rush of joy came over him spurring him there faster. He was so focused that he didn't notice the flash of light heading for him until something crashed before him.

He hit the brakes, bracing his claws into the ground, but inevitable tumbling forward and rolling into a more stable position. He clawed the ground and skidded to a halt. The first thing he noticed when he came to was that the scent was gone. He snapped his head to the new intruder only to lose all his anger at the sight before him. A lady stood before him, day plunging into the darkness of night as though it was an eclipse.

Power radiated from her in pulses as she was covered in a bright white halo, her flawless features illuminated in a light that compared to one thing, the moon. She wore a white dress with her black hair flowing and blowing freely in the now cold wind. Cole's wolf forcibly bowed down to the person before them. Cole was still too stunned for words. His mind was filled with images of the lady before them. He wanted to do anything for her.

"Get up, Cole Lycaon and here's what your patron goddess has to say to you," Cole lingered on every word that rolled off her tongue. It was impossible for anyone to hold that much control over someone else... well, that's what Cole thought before he met this woman. He couldn't pay attention to anything else but the being beyond her and her unimaginable radiance. Her feet did not touch the ground and she floated effortlessly before him, not taking her eyes off him either. "At times, I forget how much control I have over my champions. I release you from those mental shackles."

Like a switch had been flipped, thoughts other than those of the moon goddess rushed back into his mind. He could remember why he was running so fast. Why he was angry when the scent he was suddenly disappeared. The hopes he had of finding his mate at the source of that trail. The numerous attempts that now had him at a wits-end of finding out who that scent belonged to. He wanted to know who it belonged to, but now that the scent was gone, he was at a loss. He looked up to see the moon goddess before him and realized it was easier to ask her instead. 'What a convenient turn of events!'

"Are you still marvelling over my radiance? I know I'm pretty, but I was sure I released you from that," the moon goddess spoke before him. Her voice was softer than he had ever had, the words rolling off her tongue effortlessly. This form of speech reminded her of her mother who said she had been trained to speak that flawlessly. This, however, was something else. If it wasn't for the freedom of mind she had finally granted him, he wouldn't have been able to reply.

"No, I'm fine now. And yes, your radiance is beyond what I've ever envisioned," he said.

"You flatter me, son of Lycaon," she said, chuckling.

“My words are not worthy of being taken as mere flattery. I say it as a fact... as for the character, I’m at a loss of words,” he replied.

“I feel as though that is partly an insult, but that doesn’t matter as of right now. I don’t have all the time in the world to speak to you since I’ve come to you in the middle of the day,” she said.

“What are you doing here? Why come to me during the day?”

“I was meant to appear to you tonight, but I had to come now...”

“Why is that?”

“To stop you...” she paused, “from finding the source of the scent that you were following.” The look on her face was one of sadness which only made Cole more suspicious and his wolf a bit irritated. He’d been so intent on finding the source of the scent even after Caden had told him to stop hunting it, and here he was being advised against this by the moon goddess herself.

Chapter 44: x

A tear flowed down Aunt Marie’s face as she watched the door Katie had only just exited. “She’s gone now,” she yelled when it had been five minutes. A set of footsteps sounded after that, walking towards her. Hands wrapped around her in a tight hug allowing her to weep silently into the warm embrace of her husband, the one person she ever allowed to peer into her emotions. A fellow hunter she’d been partnered with years ago to save a group of children that had been abducted by rogues.

She’d fallen in love with the hunter not long after. One thing led to another and the man gained the name of the prestigious Chase family. Their family had gained enough popularity to gain the rights of usurping the rule of a woman inheriting the man’s name. They were ranked like nobles in the world that they lived in.

“I’m sorry you had to face her by yourself. I couldn’t...”

“It’s okay. She wouldn’t have been ready to hear what it was that we had to say. Where are they?” she asked.

“I got them a suite in the same hotel that the Lycans are residing in. The only images they have of Katie are those on her Hunter profile and the ones that I was able to get that was of her. I made sure I didn’t give them the chance to meet her now that all this was occupying her,” he explained.

“Let’s go and meet them. I’m sure they would want to see us together at least after the journey they have heard,” Aunt Marie told her husband.

“Yeah, I guess so. The last time we saw the queen was when she handed us Katie when she was an infant. It’s been a long time, but it feels like it blew over in a flash. Thinking back to when she took her first steps and the numerous hospital visits we took her to so that she could be checked up, just because she never used to cry,” he reminisced.

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“Yeah, that girl didn’t know the purpose of parents. She made our lives easy and difficult because we could never tell if she was sick until she either passed out or went numb with body weakness,” Aunt Marie chuckled.

After wiping her tears, the two walked out through the back door and got into the SUV that had been hidden from sight at the back in the cover of trees. She got in the passenger seat and enjoyed the peaceful drive to the prestigious Brigade Hotel. Everything in that town that was named after it was maintained and kept at the best standards possible. Though this was easy since most of them were owned by resident hunters who had the money to run the facilities.

The ride was a short one as they got there in ten minutes. Tension gripped Marie as she saw the entrance of the hotel. Expensive cars littered the parking lot indicating the presence of numerous important people that occupied the hotel. They walked in and up to the reception. Tom spoke with the receptionist who called the suite. After being cleared of entry, they got into the elevator and punched in the one-time passcode that would give them access to the level they were going to.

The elevator doors opened up to reveal a lady who flew straight into Marie’s arms engulfing her in a tight bear hug, “Oh Marie, it’s been so long.” The jumpy human being that was being cheery was the queen. Her beautiful voice rang out like a beautiful melody draining Marie of all of her worries and tension. She reluctantly but thankfully returned the gesture and hugged her back.

“It sure has been long since we last met, Martha,” she replied, taking the time to enjoy the moment with her friend.

“So that is the Chase you entrusted our child to eighteen years ago,” a voice tore through the peaceful moment.

“Oh honey, how many times should I apologise for not informing you about the arrangement? I already told you that I was instructed to keep the meeting to myself and my handler at the time until everything settled down,” she said, finally letting go of Marie.

“I’ll introduce the people before you. This is...”

“She already knows our names, Tom. Who in the world hasn’t heard of King Davin of the Sirius family?” the king said smirking as though he was in the spotlight. Tom couldn’t help but smile at the man’s aptitude for flair. He was dressed to kill in an expensive white suit that fitted him perfectly and did nothing to hide his muscular build.

“Yeah, about that... we made sure not to tell her about your Royal lives so that she wouldn’t grow up watching the faces you displayed in the media. It would be better if she got to know you personally and not from the news or television,” Marie said. The air grew tense when she revealed this.

“Well, that makes sense. I would also want to know my little sister without having to hear her go on and on about the news she would have heard about me on the news,” a new voice came tore through the tension damaging everyone’s opinion of the matter.

“Name’s Drake, I’m firstborn of the Sirius family. How is my little sister doing?” the boy... well, more like the twenty-two-year-old male that made his presence known introduced himself, dressed in a similar outfit to his father except that he had his coat off and stayed in just the shirt and white tie. ‘Yes, the

entire suite was white-themed with luxuriously designed gold pieces littered on its shoulders and chest, a pricy part of the coat.

“Yeah, I also want to meet Katie. She sounds like fun. How is she?” a young girl made herself known from the cover of the sofa that looked to the television in the living room of the suite. As such, she was out of view from Tom and Marie.

“Hey, Lina, can’t you get over her and greet our guests in a more princess-worthy manner?” Drake yelled.

“I’m not joining you and Dad’s dress up game. It’s childish, besides, I don’t see how princely it is to yell at the top of your voice in front of your guests,” she yelled back.

“I know that, but isn’t that part of your plan to destroy Dad’s plan?”

“Kids, can you behave? You’re embarrassing yourselves in front of our guests,” King Davin spoke up, rubbing his temples. Martha couldn’t help but chuckle.

“Follow me to the living room. We’ve been expecting you,” Queen Martha said to them. Unlike the suit her husband wore, she was dressed in an ordinary crop-top and shorts. She looked the same as she did eighteen years ago, something humans envied about the werewolves. On one side of this coin, this was an ordinary family that had come to meet their long-lost daughter, but at the back of Marie’s hunter mind, this was the largest collection of Royals. The strongest kind of werewolves who were descended from the very first Royals... the most direct connections to the Sirius bloodline.

These thoughts were however drowned out of her mind by their warm outgoing nature. The werewolves in the Royal families were doing all they could to keep the memory of their ancestors’ crimes buried and in the past. As it was now, it was becoming common knowledge to know that behaviour like that was not to be expected from a wolf that wasn’t a rogue. Martha, Davin and Drake led them to the living room where a sixteen-year-old lay in a three-seat sofa watching the television with a sheet covering her bare legs.

“You shouldn’t wear clothes that are so revealing, my dear,” Martha said warmly.

“Mum, we are in our home. They came in, not me. You don’t see me walking around the town dressed like this, besides, I have a sheet... I have a sheet,” the sheet seeming to act like some sort of driver’s license when Lina emphasized its presence.

“Okay then, at least take on less seating space. If you haven’t noticed, you aren’t in the palace anymore. This place can’t contain you, Drake and your father,” Martha spoke again.

“Oh, mum, I love your honesty. I thought you weren’t going to rope my father into this,” Drake said, taking a seat. Lina sat up and took the appropriate seat covering her legs more appropriately before greeting Tom and Marie.

Tom and Marie sat together in a two-seater while the King and Queen sat beside their daughter. Lina switched muted the television but left it on to provide her with an alternative object to look at if things got weird and she didn’t want to look anyone in the eye. “Katie is going through a lot right now. That’s why I didn’t want you all to meet him while she was in the middle of this.”

“What is she going through that’s so urgent?”

“She is currently in the middle of an investigation that puts her in a terrible position if she doesn’t get results,” Marie said.

“What kind of investigation?”

“A murder investigation,” the statement caused the tension in the room to rise rapidly. The king and queen were not pleased to hear this.

“What happened?”

“One of the werewolves at the school was murdered with one of the blades that belonged to her. It doesn’t look good at all. Keep in mind that she’s a hunter,” she said.

“How is she a hunter?” the queen laughed at hearing the information.

“Tom, I thought you told them all of this,” she asked.

“They were tired from their flight here and I didn’t want them to have to hear all of this while they were in that state,” he said.

“What aren’t you telling us?”

“We trained Katie to be a hunter so that she could protect herself if need be. At the time, we were training her to become strong and not a pushover. The plan was that all would be revealed once she was about to turn eighteen and she would stop her training to join the werewolves, but we never could have foreseen what happened,” Marie spoke.

“What happened?” Drake asked. Lina turned off the distracting images that flashed on the television screen to hear the tale of her beloved lost sister.

“She took in everything she was taught and advanced through her training at an astonishing speed. She just kept learning faster and faster. Improving in everything she was taught, it was scary at times how fast she learnt. She quickly surpassed the other junior hunters and began to even challenge the skill of some of the pros. Of course, they were stronger than her because of having Prometheus gifts. This was until she was witnessed taking down an escaped rogue.”

“What do you mean by escaped?” King Davin said.

One day while she was training with her best friend, Cassandra, a few rogues were being transported to the Hunter’s Agency and there was an accident. The rogue escaped and ran in a random direction, but its route led it straight to the two little girls. We were in time to watch Katie snap its neck,” Sandra was scared out of her mind.

A few days later, Katie started exhibiting signs of increased abilities and not long after we realized she had been granted what we thought was impossible. She had Prometheus gifts.”

“You say it in the plural sense. Is that a mistake?” Martha asked.

“No, it’s not. Your daughter, Katie Sirius, possesses both gifts of strength and speed and continues, to this day, to make them even stronger,” Marie said.

“That’s a lot to take in,” the king said, looking down in thought, “What is this about a murder investigation? Did a wolf kill a human after losing control?”

“No, worse than that... an undercover rogue stole one of her weapons and silenced another that had passed a Prometheus evaluation,” she said.

“Okay, hold on, you’re blowing my mind. Start from the beginning... How did we get to a Prometheus evaluation?” Martha said, rubbing her temples. Drake rushed to the kitchen and humbly returned with a bowl of popcorns.

“Little sister has a very interesting tale. She sounds scary,” he said, throwing one into his mouth.

Marie took a deep breath, “Fine then, I’ll start from the point that seemed to pick up from... the arrival of Cole Lycaon...”

Chapter 45:

“That statement alone sounds like a storm of disaster,” the king said, earning chuckles from the rest present. Tom and Marie took turns narrating the story of events that had occurred to the best of their knowledge on the situation as it stood, throwing the Royals back to the events that occurred on the day that followed Cole’s arrival. The commotion that had occurred in the school was reported while it happened. The principal had watched everything happen and left it all to Katie who handled it marvellously, but what worried everyone was the behaviour of the hunter that was causing the commotion.

Katie did not know it as it stood, but the Hunter’s Agency had carried out an investigation of its own on the matter. Due to the interest of the Royals in Katie, the issue was sidelined and they continued to tell them what happened with the seven werewolves they confronted during the fight there. It was confirmed that this was a set-up and that the junior hunter had been used by the werewolves to get that many civilians in that one place for a massacre.

It didn’t make sense why the Rogues would do that unless they really didn’t know the true strength of Katie ‘Chase’ hinting that this was only a name she was using for the depth of the story. Katie, with the help of the other werewolves and the junior hunters, were able to protect everyone and dispose of five of the werewolves. One of the wolves surrendered to go through a Prometheus evaluation and the other was captured alive for interrogation purposes in case the other did not make it through the Prometheus evaluation.

The story of Ash Myster was an interesting one that was summarized in bullet points so as not to take up too much time. Nonetheless, the Royals showed interest in getting to know his story as well and asked to be indulged. It came as no surprise to them that Ash was a woman as rogues treated females in a manner that left nothing to be desired. As a result, female runaway rogues usually passed the Prometheus test. It was rare, however, for female runaways to turn up.

They then got to the point where Ash Myster was gruesomely murdered in a classroom while she was trying to go about her new life. There was the probability that she was even bound to reveal the truth about her gender not long after she was killed. This incident made the Royals angry even though they concealed their anger with the hope of getting this story finished. After narrating the events of that,

they then told them of Katie's current location which was the interrogation room as per their assumptions.

After a moment of silence, the King got up and walked about the living room towards the balcony curtains drawing them to let the light in. "That's quite a story... I don't blame you for keeping it from us while we were tired yesterday."

"I'm glad you see it that way..." Tom spoke up.

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"She's been through quite the ordeal..." Drake said, placing his nearly-full bowl of popcorns on the table. He'd lost his appetite when he was halfway through the story.

"Yes, she has... But now, we are here..." the king spoke, his voice shaky with rage. He opened the balcony doors to let in some wind. The wind calmed him while it blew in with a chilling rush.

"Father, do you think he's near," Drake asked.

"He's probably near, but if that's not the case, then it's one of his generals. For this much rogue action to be taking place here. It appears he stationed rogues in places that were far from our scope as well," the king spoke. It was obvious who they spoke of, for this was the one enemy that both the Royals and the hunters shared in common... the Rogue King.

"When can we meet Katie?" Martha asked.

"Katie's birthday is tomorrow. We plan to tell Cole Lycaon of her identity tomorrow so that he will be ready to help her shift back when the moon comes out tomorrow," Marie said.

"So that is why you cancelled your initial plans of taking her to him..." Martha said in realization.

"Yes, it was utterly convenient for him to show up when he did. After she has gone through her first shift, you can then all meet her and we can introduce her to what was set into motion eighteen years ago," Tom said.

"Yeah, we can finally bring the end of this war into view. This can all come to an end. It feels like a dream," Martha said, leaning back into the chair with a smile on her face.

"Don't get too comfortable yet... a storm is coming and we must be ready for it," the king spoke.

"Yes, Davin... I know that," Martha confirmed.

"How does Katie do it?" Lina asked, "Could she be as powerful as a Royal... No, that doesn't sound normal. She's not even eighteen yet. What will happen to her when her wolf is unleashed? What kind of creature will that be? Will she even have wolfsbane as her weakness?"

"Wolfsbane will still be a weakness. I heard that one of the base components of the drug that she takes is wolfsbane. So I wouldn't doubt that she will have weaknesses to it. However, she didn't need her weapons to dispose of rogues. I don't think she will miss them all that much," Tom said.

"I'll have to see her for myself to determine if she's really that powerful," Drake spoke up, "Some of what I'm hearing doesn't sound normal at all."

“Even as I narrate it myself, I have trouble believing what I say. It’s not something that words can convey in a meaningful way. You’ll definitely have to see her on your own,” he said.

“My love, the forest doesn’t look right,” the King said, taking a step outside to take a closer look.

“What’s that supposed to mean?” Martha asked, getting up from her seat to go check out what the king was seeing. The others followed suit, the balcony allowing a clear view of the forest before them. Something wasn’t right, as he had supposedly meant for the trees all swayed in unison, looking oddly uniform while they did. “What in the... something feels... right... Hey, Marie, do you see that?” the Queen froze when she on seeing the two hunters.

“Mum, they just froze up,” Lina said, from her seat, “What’s going on?”

“I think I know...” the King spoke, “whispers of this sort of thing aren’t unheard of among the Royals that have experienced it. It happens rarely... and every time that it does, only Royals remain with the ability to move because we are directly related to the being that causes it.

“What is it that you are talking about?” Martha asked him.

“I’m talking about the descent of the moon goddess,” he said. As if on cue, darkness covered the entire sky like someone had snuffed the sun out. The full moon shone with a flash of intense brilliance. The family watched as a single being clothed completely in light descended from the same position of the moon in the sky.

“Is that...” the king cut his wife off.

“Yes, that is the moon goddess. She very rarely does this... almost once in every century and she only did it when in crisis to aid the Royals that nearly messed up astronomically in our quest to bring about peace. Something has either happened to Cole or Katie to call on her attention,” he explained as they watched the comet-like being crush into the forest bathing the trees in the moonlight. The part of the forest that she had landed glowed with a pulsing presence of power that was irresistible to the werewolves. They couldn’t look away from the place even if they wanted to.

“Should we go check out what it is that is happening?” Drake asked his father.

“No, we will honour the will of the Chase hunters and wait until Katie has gone through the shift,” the king said with a hint of finality.

“So this is what it means to be in the presence of the moon goddess. I can tell from this distance that the intensity is overwhelming if she were right in front of her. Her power is overwhelming and intimidating,” Lina said.

“Yes, it is. That we can agree on, little sister,” Drake spoke up, keeping his eyes on the glow that covered the forest in a neat circle.

“Rumour has it that she can’t be located in that glow and that it actually represent how far her consciousness spreads,” Queen Martha said.

“What’s that supposed to mean?”



“That she can appear anywhere that the moonlight is... It doesn’t matter how many people are in it. She controls what happens there and can appear to more than one person individually and attend to all of them without any problem,” the king said.

“You think Katie is in there,” Lina asked.

“There is not a doubt in my mind...”

Chapter 46:

Katie groaned in pain as more of it shot through her body, a change threatening to shatter every bone in her body and an inhibition resisting it with an equal amount of force. This was the product of her anger when left unchecked. The pain was immense, but Katie didn’t mind it considering she was certain it was not going to kill her. Instead, she thought of all the students that were potentially dead by now without her even noticing it.

Katie was in so much agony that she didn’t notice the changes around her. Even when the moon goddess landed beside her with a heavy thud, she barely noticed her. She only focused on the pain and the memories that rocked her, generating more of the pain. The wolf within her tried to retract shunning its master’s fury to reduce the pain she was being put through. However, the anger and sense of justice that Katie had did not allow that so easily.

Fury gripped the werewolf as well forcing the transformation to progress even further. It was almost like Katie was punishing herself for what she had let happen right beneath her nose. She didn’t notice when a glowing hand settled calmly on her head, dispelling all the pain that coursed through her body almost in an instant. She collapsed, her body shivering with contractions from the ordeal she’d just been through. Her breath came out in shallow gasps as she regained her composure.

She looked up and had to shield her eyes from the light that glowed off the being that was currently in her presence, “Did someone turn out the lights or something?” she asked, trying to get up and failing.

“Don’t get up just yet. You’ve been through a lot of time and haven’t fully recovered yet,” a beautiful voice filled her ears, taking with it part of her senses with its lulling nature.

“What are you?” Katie asked, finally realizing the bizarre traits of the person she still couldn’t look at while her eyes adjusted to the fact that it was not night, “Why can’t I see anything? It’s like it’s midnight.”

“Maybe you could tell who I was if you just looked at me,” the voice came again, carrying with it a compelling desire to comply with the woman’s wishes.

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“You aren’t normal, that’s for sure. You are dulling my senses just by talking to me. You...”

“Just look at me already,” the lady commanded this time, Katie’s body involuntarily turning to meet the gaze of the flawless goddess before her. It was instant recognition. The thoughts of doubt completely vanished while she looked at the moon goddess. Her thoughts about the interrogation slipped out of her mind. She was slowly losing track of everything she had in her mind and filling it with images of the woman before who glowed with an otherworldly radiance.

“So you’re the moon goddess... I finally get to meet you,” she said.

“Yes, you do and I will answer any questions that you have. I have healed your affliction and taken care of your wolf. He will sleep until seven tomorrow when the effects of an eighteenth birthday start to take root. Before that time, even emotions of anger will not spur your wolf awake. I would hate for you to shift prematurely. I want to tell you that you also won’t need those pills after what I have done. So you can stop taking them now. In fact, I would prefer it if you completely forgot those pills for they will make your first shift even more painful.”

“What are you doing here?” Katie asked bluntly, shocking the moon goddess with her ignorance.

“I came to your rescue in a time of need. Why else do you think I’m here?”

“I was not in a time of need. I wasn’t going to die. The person that deserved this kind of intervention was Ash. Were you even watching when she was killed?” Katie asked.

“What I have done right now can only be done once in a generation of Royals? There will never be another time that I will appear to you during the day because I have squandered that opportunity,” she said.

“Oh, that sounds really smart. Of all the times you could have chosen, you chose now. When Shaemus’ mother lies in captivity, Ash is dead, the rogues have been infiltrating the school all this time and potentially been killing people. What makes now that no one is in danger so important that you would squander such a trump card?” Katie did not realise she was yelling as she talked back to the goddess who slowly backed away from the fuming teenager.

“Are you looking for someone to blame?” the moon goddess asked her calmly.

Katie took her time to think over her actions and words, realizing all that had happened wasn’t the moon goddess’ fault, for she had to watch much more than the town of Brigade. A power that came only once could not be squandered on one wolf that lay within her jurisdiction when multitudes of others all over the globe would have been in a similar situation. She struck her fist into the ground in frustration, “No, I’m not. I’m just so angry. I’ve never been this furious. I want to... I want to kill him.”

The moon goddess watched Katie stutter and cry through sad eyes and floated towards her, “Oh my child, you’ve been through so much. I’ve been watching, but I’ve been unable to touch you for a number of reasons. Do not despair in this situation. Learn from it. Anger is something you should never let get the better of you,” she said.

“How can I be calm after all that he said? Even for me, it seemed impossible. That’s why I had to get out of there. I don’t know how to move on from this,” Katie answered.

“Breathe in two times, breathe out consequently. Destroy the images that attempt to crush your mental fortitude. Clear your mind of all negativities. Keep a smile on your face...”

“And when that all fails, punch yourself in the gut for your incompetence,” Katie finished the mantra that had been imprinted in her mind since she was a child. It was the way they were trained to deal with anger. The philosophy in the Chase family was that anger was merely a product of the mind that made people jump to the worst-case scenarios of everything and generated negative energy. It was true that anger provided adrenaline, but it also provided a clouded judgement.

Katie found herself going through the steps that she had just been reciting, the training she'd been through kicking in and bringing her back to normal. In a few seconds, she had stopped crying and sat cross-legged panting with exhaustion. "That fast, huh..." the moon goddess said, shaking her head in amusement by the speed of recovery.

"I've just done it so many times. Until you actually go through those motions, it feels impossible, but I know the power of that mantra well and I thank you. I don't know what would have become of me. Losing control of myself made you squander such an important power on me. It should have been used for a more important event," Katie rambled apologetically.

"I don't get it. Why isn't your mind flooded with thoughts of my flawless beauty?" the moon goddess whined, posing like a model and batting her eyelashes.

Katie couldn't help, but burst into laughter at the action, "Probably because you put my wolf to sleep..." between laughs, "do you always like it when people fawn over you?"

"No, just my people, mainly the Royals," she replied.

"Oh, in that case, oh dear goddess, there is none more beautiful than thee. Thou radiance shines upon the..."

"Okay, that's enough of that. I'm even embarrassed I brought it up," the two laughed at the sheer silliness of the acting. After having a good laugh, the moon goddess was able to relax after what she'd just witnessed.

"I know that you wouldn't have come all this way just to save me from shifting. To you, I should be just another random werewolf. Do I get the full explanation?" Katie asked, leaning against a tree to listen to the goddess before her. Her beauty was undeniable and the glow that was constantly around her just made it seem unfair for anyone that had hopes of competing. Katie had finally calmed down to notice that night had descended upon the sky and that the moon stood high in the sky even though she was sure it was broad daylight.

"You're right. I didn't come all this way just to save you, say hello and leave. I'll also explain why it was crucial that I came here," she started, "You are half of the pair that I chose to bring this war into sight of an ending."

"What's that supposed to mean?" Katie asked.

"Eighteen years ago, a prophecy descended from the heavens, one from me, of course. I had chosen two children to be born from the two royal families. These children came with them a power that would put an end to this war between the rogues and the entire world," she said.

"How is that supposed to work?"

"Upon the union of these two children when they've come of age, the Royals along with all the alphas in the world will lose the power of the curse that I place on them centuries ago and will not be able to turn a human into a werewolf ever again," she said.

The information hit like a stone brick. Something like this would stop the increasing number of werewolves tremendously. "That sounds... too good to be true."

"I know it does and not many believed it, but the Rogue King certainly did. And a few days after these children were born, the two palaces, homes to Sirius and Lycaon families were attacked. The Lycaons were able to fend off the attack, dispensing the entirety of the Chase family that was present as well as the head of the Chase family. On the other hand, the Sirius family was not so fortunate. I took numerous measures to protect you myself because you were in the most danger at the time. Your mother was tasked with secretly taking you away and handing you over to a handpicked couple of hunters also belonging to the Chase family," she explained.

"That's why they always reminded me to refer to them as my guardians and not my real parents..."

"Yes, that is why. It wouldn't be ideal if your real parents showed up years later when you were capable of protecting yourself just to hear you refer to someone else as your mother and father," the moon goddess said.

"You do realise how messed up this all is, don't you?"

"Yes, I do. I realise that very much, but it couldn't be helped. The Royal families are constantly watched by the public eye. Any contact they would have made with you would immediately leak out. Besides, your parents were asked to conceal your location as well. It's only of recent that news of the famed Katie Chase has begun to spread that has caught their eye," she said.

"I see... Is the other child the same one that I think it is?"

"Yes, Cole Lycaon is indeed your mate..." the moon goddess replied, "and if I had arrived a moment later, he would have found that out."

Katie's eyes widened in shock, "What's that supposed to mean?"

"Every time your wolf is released... so is your scent. And every time that happens, Cole gets it and starts running your way. Today, since you lacked the mobility to escape, he almost caught up to you, but I came just in time to stop him," she said.

"Why did you stop him?"

"So that you don't have one more thing to deal with in this state you are in. Figure out Ash's killer. I know you can. If you can do that before seven tomorrow, then you can gladly let one more thing into your mind. Focus, Katie," she said. The moon was starting to dim while she spoke, her appearance becoming more and more translucent.

"Will I see you again?" Katie asked her.

"Yes, yes you will. I'll be watching over you," with that said, the moon goddess vanished and the light from the sun erupted once more violating Katie's sensitive eyes and forcing her to cover them with her palm, 'Something tells me, I'm only getting started,' she thought before letting herself lean back into the tree.

Chapter 47:

Cole was at a loss of words, "Why? Aren't you the reason for the existence of that scent?"

“Yes, I am. I am merely here to stop you from making an inconvenient encounter. The next time you catch that scent, you will find its source. And this time, the scent will not disappear,” the moon goddess said.

“Are you the reason the scent is always appearing and vanishing? Do you keep masking it? Who does it belong to?”

“So full of questions... I don’t want to give you the one phrase that everyone has been giving you since you came here. So I will give you two choices, Cole. Either I wipe your memory and let you find the source of that scent the next time you catch it or you accept that this was not the time you were supposed to find out and wait a little bit longer?” the moon goddess said.

“You want me... to wait,” this phrase was familiar to him. Although he could not pinpoint it now that it was dawning on him that every time he’d chased down that scent, he was never meant to catch it, “I’m tired of waiting. How about I just let go of these delusions as everyone seems to call them?”

“Would that make you any happier? I am promising you your mate the next time you detect her. Why doesn’t that make you happy?” she asked, floating up to him. Cole stayed down, the energy drained out of him. After the effort he’d put in to try and find her even knowing that she was dead, he was ready to give it up.

“My mate is dead. You don’t grant second chance mates this early,” Cole said.

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“What makes you say that? You don’t know how I operate,” she said.

“Why won’t you just tell me who it is?”

“Because that would not be good for either of you,” she replied.

“How long do I have to wait, then?” he asked.

“It might just be sooner than you think,” she replied, “in the meantime, you should be recuperating from what you’ve been through.”

“You’re hiding something, aren’t you? You can’t have come all this way for something like this,” he asked.

“Actually... I did. That’s how important it was. But while I’m here, I could tell you more about yourself and the story behind the struggle that ensued during the time of your birth eighteen years ago,” she said.

“I’m not very interested in that. Katie Sirius is dead. I’ve been doing everything I could to forget that,” he turned away from the moon goddess to leave.

“Oh, so that’s it then. You have no idea what was lost when she died...” the statement froze him in his tracks.

“What’s that supposed to mean?”

“Do you have any idea why I would suddenly place a mate bond between two Royals. As far as you’re concerned, I’ve never done that in the history of werewolves. Haven’t you ever asked yourself why I did it with you?” she asked.

“All I ever wondered is why I was given a mate at birth only to have them be killed without me being able to protect them myself. That cruelty alone dulled everything else that might have mattered at that point, but please, do indulge me with the details of our failed union,” he spat.

“Well, the two of you were my trump card in bringing this war close to an end,” she said.

“What do you mean by that?” this captured his interest.

“Did you think that I would randomly announce the birth of two children destined to be united when they turned of age? Didn’t you think there was a reason behind all that? Didn’t the efforts the Rogue King put up to avoid all tell you that he was afraid of those children?”

“I’m sorry I didn’t think about it that much,” Cole replied, thinking back to how he only allowed himself to drown in his own anguish and take it out through training with the pack warriors.

“There is nothing you could have done, Cole. Besides, what they told you helped you grow stronger,” she said.

“And what’s that strength going to get me when the person I needed it for is already dead,” he huffed.

“Well, you could use it to protect the one that lies at the source of the scent you were chasing down. The next time you catch that scent, you will reach its source,” she said.

“Fine then, I’ll take you at your word. How was the union of the two children supposed to bring an end to the war,” Cole asked.

“Well, we all know that werewolves that aren’t either alphas or Royals can only give birth with their mates. We also know that alphas and Royals possess the power to turn humans into werewolves. As a result of this, the rogues have been constantly increasing in number and becoming impossible to snuff out. Upon the union of these children, the royals and the alphas were to lose their power to transmit the werewolf gene. The curse that I placed on them centuries ago would finally be lifted,” she said.

“That would mean the hierarchy of the rogues would break up. Chaos and disorder would spread amongst their ranks and we’ll finally start thinning down their numbers until none of them is left. They will no longer be able to capture women and use them as breeders either,” Cole couldn’t believe what he was hearing. The sound of this was like a dream to him. Nonetheless, this didn’t mean much with his mate dead. “Although, there is no use reminiscing about such a possibility if my mate is already dead.”

“Yeah, I guess that would be the case. I would ask that you not give up hope,” she said to him.

“This town has been one swarm of secrets from the moment I got here. The very first hunter that I met seemed to hold a secret and everything started to pile up from there. Am I supposed to sit idly by while a lot of things happen around me and pretend it doesn’t bother me one bit?” memories of the times his questions had been sidelined flashed through his mind. Cole knew how to play the oblivious card to throw someone off his trail just in case he intended to investigate further.

This was the longest he had ever held out without investigating something that he wanted to find out this badly. The only reason he was staying on the sidelines this entire time was that this town was not exactly something he could call home. Meddling in such affairs when his stay in the town was temporary felt more like a hassle than he'd intended when he came to the town of Brigade.

"That is true. You'd think a town this far out of the werewolf territories would be peaceful and lack secrets of any real magnitude, but that's not the case. I'm afraid that was probably my doing. I notice how oblivious you are and how frustrating it is, so I will at least let you in on one thing," she said, getting his attention. He turned back to her, his attempts at leaving completely cancelled, "All will be revealed late in the evening of Saturday before the clock strikes midnight."

"What's so special about..." he stopped when he realized the moon goddess couldn't tell him any more than that considering she had now given him a clue about the time he was expecting to find the answers to all his questions. "Fine, then. I'll keep out and give all the space required. After all, one day is not something that I cannot wait for. Tomorrow, I will find out the answers to all my questions."

"I'm glad you understand the situation," she replied.

"I wouldn't doubt the judgement of the moon goddess..."

"I'm not all that perfect considering my beloved creation, the werewolves were an act of revenge," she replied.

"Nonetheless, ever since then, there is nothing you haven't done that wasn't in the werewolves' interest. Once you took control of your creation, you never made another mistake," Cole continued.

"You give me far too much credit, son of Lycaon..."

"Do you have to call me that? It sounds like 'Son of Adam.' How will you be able to distinguish me from my father... 'Son of Lycaon One or Junior and Son of Lycaon Two or Senior'?"

"I'm quite sure your father would never accept me to call him any of those two names. Cole, it is then," she said with a hint of finality. Cole bid her farewell and watched the goddess ascend, leaving him on the ground. Something about being in the presence of the moon goddess put Cole's wolf at ease and made him docile despite the anger that had erupted from losing the trail that they had been following.

Despite his promise to the moon goddess, impatience and curiosity racked his mind the longer he ran into the forest heading for the hotel that he was staying in. However, an unusual scent hit his nostrils as he continued on his way there. It wasn't hostile, but it was something that he could ignore as well. His guard went up as he tried to figure out the source of the scent. It took him a few minutes to reach the hotel and was soon shifting to get back in. However, the scent that he was being cautious of was stronger here. In fact, it wasn't one and instead, they were many of them and each one of them was at a power that rivalled Cole's.

Chapter 48:

After all that transpired that morning, Katie made the decision to walk back to the school and check through the attendance list. Her gait wasn't as perfect as it should have been once she got up, aches riddled her body from the strain she had just gone through. It wasn't like she wasn't used to the pain of

muscle aches, but it was an old feeling that stirred up old memories. Memories of the time she was aiming for heights that felt like mere dreams.

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“Katie, hurry up or we’ll leave you behind,” Sandra called back to her friend. Katie was having trouble walking even though she did not want to trouble the adults with the details. She was secretly prolonging her training so that she could learn more and faster than the average student. Relaxation just wasn’t a part of her vocabulary.

It was just a matter of time before they found out unless she did everything in her power to conceal the fact that she was in this much pain from the intense training they were going through. All junior hunters in training at the time were required to be present for one joint training session where they would spar with each other and receive quizzes to test how much they’d improved during that week.

Katie had been training too hard for an eleven-year-old, and the signs were quite clear. However, the adults that led them through the forest to the Hunter’s Training Ground were not about to let her skip a very crucial part of the Hunter training scheme. There was no way out of this one. “I’m coming, Sandra.”

“Katie, when you get there, you don’t have to push yourself too hard,” one of the adult handlers said to her. On this occasion, parents and mentors weren’t allowed to be present as the children were being tested on what they themselves had learnt and truly mastered. They were to know what kind of level of mastery they had attained in the skills that were being imparted.

A few more minutes, the children found themselves at their destination. Many of the junior hunters in training used this time to show off to the rest of their peers that they had learnt more than the other. For some of these children, this was a time to show off their skills. None of it, however, impressed Katie for as long as she was unable to take down a werewolf, those measly skills were just what they were and all the same useless in the real world.

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No one knew just how much this little girl understood about the cruelty of war or how much it haunted her dreams to be useless in the time of an attack and watch someone die because she was unable to save them. The adults got the tests shortly after and had the hunters go through drills. First, there were drills of endurance which meant they’d have to be running a really long distance and making it to the finish line in the shortest possible time without passing out or burning out.

In a way, the jog helped alleviate the stress that Katie’s muscles were under if only to make the next activities easier for her. Next, were stretching exercises which the supervisors handled themselves. They made sure everyone stretched past their previous limit and kept in the best of shape. Those that had slacked off during their training were given a warning. It wasn’t unheard of for someone to be kicked out of Hunter’s training. It was harder if that person didn’t come from a Hunter family.

Lastly came the one-on-one battles where junior hunters were paired against others that the handlers thought were their equals based on their assessment. This was not a place that showed much compassion. The handlers had too many juniors to deal with that they didn’t have time to look at every detail. They’d make an assessment and make a match and this kept the children either constantly improving under the tough conditions or the other way round.



Once a child's body simply denied the improvements they were trying to grind into it or if the child happened to be too busy that week that he wasn't able to keep up with his previous progress, it was usually a tipping point when they were ashamed in front of everyone in this last session. The fights took place one at a time for three minutes each with the partner everyone was assigned. This meant that everyone was watching as well. Working under such pressure was also something that they were supposed to overcome for emotions meant nothing but slack to a hunter and so they were to be shut out when in such situations.

Katie's match was announced and she was to face off against a fourteen-year-old in the shape she was in. She knew the system and that this was someone who either matched her in combat abilities or was much stronger than she was. The older boys that got matched up with her carried looks of resentment in their eyes each time they got to fight her and this had been their downfall as they'd undermined her every time.

But this one was different, the boy carried a look of amusement when he saw his opponent. "Many have made the mistake of undermining you, but I've been wondering just how far up you are willing to advance."

"Are we going to talk or fight?" Katie asked him.

"Is fighting all this is to you?"

"I just want to get this over with. If you want to talk, then maybe after it's over," Katie knew the power of speech quite well and didn't want to allow the boy a chance to get into her head. Their fight raged on for the entirety of the three minutes, Katie collapsing once they were over, but something wasn't right. Throughout the whole of it, the boy didn't do anything serious to fight her and merely evaded or blocked her attacks. It was frustrating and he made it seem like she was weak.

Once the fight was done, he approached her, serious for the first time with the intention of pinning her down. This wasn't going to count now that the three minutes were done, but he didn't expect Katie to collapse before he even touched her. The girl was panting heavily on the ground and a look of frustration was stuck on her face, "Get up. That's no honourable way to end a fight. Get up," he said.

"What are you mad about? You should have defeated me. You had the power to. Rogues won't spare you just because they are weaker than you," she said.

"But I'm still weaker than them. I expected more from you though. You let me down," he said. Katie got up only to get back down on her knees.

"I did not come here to impress anyone," she replied before another attempt at standing. Her muscles had never screamed fatigue louder than they did on that day. Sandra ran up to her to help her stand.

"Katie, what's wrong? You're not usually like this," she tried. The handlers surrounded them and one of them began checking Katie. The man looked like he knew what was going on. He merely needed to give any one of her muscles a squeeze and watch Katie flinch in pain.

"You aren't allowed to push yourself that hard. You know it's not good for you. Honestly, don't your parents teach you anything about muscle fatigue," the man asked, "Sandra, escort her back to her home and make sure she gets to rest."

“So that’s it. A pat on the back for mere muscle fatigue,” the boy mused.

“It’s as I said, you should have defeated me when you had the chance. You won’t have the pleasure of fighting me in a weakened state again,” I said.

“Big words coming from someone who can’t stand...”

“You disgust me. We are here to get better, not care about whether or not someone is impressive. We are here to train and push ourselves further so that we might someday become hunters and bring an end to this war. Trying to make small talk... talking about honour when our enemy kills without a second thought. I don’t even know what you’re doing here,” Katie’s words were harsh, but the message reached the boy. Katie cared about nothing, but getting better. That was her purpose for training. Everything else was minor to her and she cared nothing of it. Her current weakened state was a reminder of that.

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Katie snapped back to reality, the memory of that day was still clear in her memory. She’d looked for the boy to apologise and been told that he quit trying to be a hunter on that day. He had left a message, however, saying that he was sure she’d make the youngest hunter of their generation and he wasn’t wrong. She’d then hunted for his name, Jeremiah.

He wasn’t from a hunter family and he had hoped to be the first hunter in their family, but what Katie had told him that day had made him realise that he had no business being a hunter or so that’s what she had been told. She continued walking to the school and soon enough she was there. Balloons, ribbons and decorations of all sorts covered the school in an organized manner. The preparations for the festival the next day were done and she was going to do everything she could to enjoy that day.

Chapter 49:

Cole ran back to the suite, his heart a mess of emotions and his mind a storm of thoughts. Nothing had made sense ever since he’d stepped into this town and there seemed to be a multitude of secrets involved in it. When his parents sent him to study at the safest school that had been ranked so regardless of its remote location, he’d not expected much from the place.

Rogues had more interest in the big cities because they could take advantage of the commotion there and make his getaway. This, however, was too much activity for such a small town. Well, it wasn’t so small, but compared to the place he’d grown accustomed to, this place was small and adorable in its own way. ‘Hunters act like they aren’t that many, but if an agency like the one here can exist in such a remote region, then clearly they aren’t as few as they claim to be.

Memories of his morning were far from his memory as he kept recounting his meeting with the moon goddess. The moon goddess had fallen from the heavens just to stop him from meeting his mate. ‘That was extreme... Perhaps there really is a good reason for all that.’

The hotel that Cole was running to soon came into view before a collection of scents struck his nose making him stop dead in his tracks. He breathed them in deeply concluding once and for all exactly what guests he had. Black SUVs filled the parking lot confirming his thoughts on the matter. ‘What is the Sirius family doing here?’

Cole shifted back and dusted himself over before walking casually out of the forest and towards the hotel. The tension in the air as he got into the lobby was inescapable. His initial aim was to go straight for the elevator and go up to his suite for a hot bath, but alas, curiosity got the best of him. Cole walked up to the reception, "What's with the mood in here?"

"Oh, Mr Lycaon, there are some new arrivals on the suite above you. I just don't know what is interesting your kind with this small town of ours. Anyway, we welcome you all if it's going to make this hotel all the more famous," she said.

"What do you mean by 'my kind'?"

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"Oh, you didn't know. The Sirius Royal family just showed moments after you left with your friends," she said.

"Did my friends return?"

"No, they did not. You know, when you first arrived, I thought you guys would be trouble, but you're not at all what I expected," she said.

"You're quite open about that. We get that a lot," Cole replied before bidding her his farewells and heading straight for the elevator. 'I don't want to run into the Sirius family until after I've rested. Those guys can be a handful.'

"Are you okay? You don't look so good," the receptionist called back to him.

"Yeah, I'm fine. Thanks for asking," he replied once he was in the elevator. 'I wonder where Katie ran off to.'

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Sandra walked through the forest with the two alphas, leading them deeper and deeper into the woods. "Look at her leading us into the forest like sacrificial lambs," Jason began after a moment of silence.

"You might as well be sacrificial lambs for all you know," she replied with a smirk on her face.

"Very funny. Take Caden fast, he's far plumper than I am. He's bound to please your gods," was the reply.

"I like the way you easily abandon your comrades, Jason. But I will take the compliment, I'd make a much better sacrifice than you," Caden countered. This was a side of Caden that very few ever got to see in a lifetime.

"So how is training done in the packs? Is it as excruciating as what hunters do?" Sandra asked after laughing at these obnoxious males.

"Oh, alphas don't really know. We are built stronger than the others, inheriting the gene from our parents. Even if we go through the same training as everyone else in the pack, we gain much more in terms of results. In the end, we don't really understand what it is for someone to put in their all to achieve power," Caden explained.

“Wow, that would have come in handy for a lot of... Wait, if that’s the case, then does it work the same way for Royals?” she asked.

“Royals are on another level. Although, they also have the most control over their emotions and in turn end up being the least aggressive. That just means there are fewer cases of them losing their temper, but it’s not impossible. And each time a Royal has lost their temper, it would take a minimum of five well-trained alphas to stop the rampage,” Caden continued.

“All these questions about werewolves, is there something you didn’t know? I know hunters are well-educated in the matters of werewolf history and nature,” Jason interfered.

“Yes, we are taught well, but perspective matters. The Hunters purge emotion from everything that they do and that means a lot of information comes through assessed according to logic. So all we know sounds like it first went through a court and was assessed until the perfect story was decided. There is no room for perspective,” she said.

“You sound like you want to take a side,” Jason observed.

“There aren’t really sides in this war. It’s the world against the rogues or at least that’s what I’d like to believe. The existence of the Hunters and the different agencies around the world make it look like we are still at war with all the werewolves. Up until I met Cole, I had a very different idea of Royals. They were dangerous in my mind.”

“Do you mean to say that Cole is harmless?”

“No offence, but Cole is way too soft for the brutes we learn about in the history of this war,” she said.

“I won’t deny that. After what I saw in that dungeon, your judgement is justified,” Caden concluded. Their destination was finally coming into view. At the edge of a small clearing stood a cabin made of wood. It was well maintained and still looked habitable. For a structure this deep into the forest, it was in oddly good shape. “What is this place?”

“This cabin is owned by Katie’s parents. Not many know about it, but this is where we used to go to train as kids. Her parents tried teaching me with her back then, but I wasn’t... I could say as dedicated as she was,” Sandra explained.

“Very well then... we’ll help you train your butt-off. Some stretches and demarcations should do the trick,” Jason announced...

Four bouts, two victories per wolf and four losses for the hunter later, the three of them lay on the ground sweating. Jason offered her a bottle of water which she didn’t bother asking the origin of.

“You’re better than I thought you’d be,” he said to her.

“I feel like a fool. We are the same age, aren’t we?” she asked.

“Yes, we are, but we are werewolves with alpha genes. You are human. What were you expecting?” Caden asked her, though impressed by her efforts.

“I can take down a weak rogue quite easily. I guess I let it get to my head. For humans, being able to have the upper hand in a fight against a werewolf means a lot, but I guess I’d forgotten that I still have

limits. In case of an ambush, I'm worthless," she said to herself. "I can't believe Katie thought that far ahead when we were training as kids."

"You always sound like you are trying to be Katy. Why don't you rejoice in your strength? She seems to be confident in you," this was Jason's attempt at making Sandra feel better. Thoughts of the morning they'd gone through were far from memory.

"Yes, my mentor is indeed confident in me. She always trusts me to take care of something that's within my abilities. In fact, she knows everything that I am capable of, but I'm stuck there. I can see her achieve much more than she should be able to. She is always at the top of her game and never falters in anything. Of course, there was a time when she was at the same level as all of us," Jason was intrigued by her last statement.

"You can still remember the time when she was still weak. How is it that she advanced so fast then while you stayed behind?" Jason asked.

"Well, we can probably explain that with what happened the day she got her Prometheus gifts. That's probably the same day we all realised she was much stronger than all of us," Sandra said, memories taking over while she went over what happened on that day.

"We were playing hide and seek near this very cabin that time. Katie demanded I test my training and try and stay hidden from her. At the same time, she was playing hunter and looking for me. It was a form of hide and seek that I sometimes found scary because it brought the fears of being hunted by a werewolf to light," Sandra began the story.

Chapter 50:

Sandra had found a bush to hide within. It was hard to keep her breath quiet when she was beginning to realise just how good Katie was at tracking her. She wanted to win this game, but when Katie caught wind of where she might have gone, it was merely hopeless to watch her through the opening in the leaves as Katie slowly made progress, heading towards her.

Each time she had been found in under ten minutes no matter how still and quiet she kept. Katie would circle the entire clearing until she chose a direction that inevitably would lead her to Sandra. A feat that scared the young girl every time she watched it happen. Katie never asked that their roles be switched for she seemed to be enjoying the role of hunter.

Nevertheless, Sandra could not imagine what was making this easy for Katie. Nothing was making sense to her. Seeking was essentially meant to be the harder part of the game and yet Katie made it look so simple. This was beginning to feel more like a training exercise than the fun that Katie initially thought of it as.

While she waited for her talented friend to inevitably find her, scuffling sounds in the opposite distance caught her ear. She was so used to this place being empty that her ears could easily pick on abnormal sounds that did not fit the area. She looked back causing a rustle in the bush she was hiding in. Katie, no doubt heard her, but merely froze. Sandra could tell from the tension in the air that she too could hear something other than her friend's disturbance.

“Sandra, you can come out now. Let’s wait for our parents in the cabin,” Katie called out, but Sandra’s eyes were glued to the darkest inner parts of the woods she’d heard the sound coming from. Having been raised by a hunter family, their closest instinct was to think that something unfriendly was coming. They could both feel it in their gut that something was amiss and that they were not doing anything to help the situation. “What is your gut telling you, Sandra?”

Sandra began to tread backwards slowly making sure to be as quiet as she could manage. The scuffling sounds began to sound louder and more distinct. They were soon the undeniable sound of a running werewolf, paws striking the ground with force fierce enough for them to know that it was on the run. Sandra wasted no time in running back to the clearing, passing Katie at the edge who followed behind her.

Before they could get to the door, the wolf lunged out from the cover of the trees and quickly closed the gap, barring their entrance. The dirty wolf snarled at the two kids, baring its teeth at them menacingly. Wounds and cuts riddled its fur as though it had been in a fight with another and lost miserably. No, this was different. Realisation soon hit as the children recognized the knife wounds that this wolf had been subjected to. It was being chased by Hunters. There wasn’t a hint of mercy or compassion behind the eyes of the beast that stared at them. Only a single emotion came from it, plain and simple murderous intent.

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Katie looked at her friend and found that she was rooted to her position, shivering and entirely grasped by fear. Sandra’s eyes were slowly starting to show signs of despair, “Sandra, we are junior hunters, aren’t we?” The question came across Sandra as ridiculous... completely ridiculous. The wolf before them did not care for the title they gave themselves. They were going to be killed, one way or another and there wasn’t a thing they could do about it.

She was too stunned to speak as well. The werewolf lunged at them, a deranged look in its eye. Katie chose the moment to push her friend and trip the werewolf, using its weight against it, she made sure to throw it off its balance. There wasn’t a second to waste. Wolves did not stay down too long. “The cabin, Sandra, now...”

In that moment, a myriad of thoughts went through Sandra’s mind. Why her friend was risking to sacrifice herself when there was nothing she could do against the werewolf. Katie could move and she had kept her cool this whole time that they had faced the werewolf. There wasn’t a hint of fear in her. This was the difference between a hunter and a junior hunter. A hunter was not phased by emotions of fear. A hunter sprang into action the moment it was required of them regardless of whatever state they were in.

To be consumed by emotion the way Sandra was merely meant that there was nothing that she could do to defend herself. The couple of years she had gone through training could not show when faced by a werewolf. She was no different than a human in this situation and she understood that. One might call it cowardly, one might have even called it despair, but Sandra did it anyway. When her best friend was facing a moment where she might have gotten killed, she ran. She did not look back either, for she knew there was no way that Katie was going to allow the wolf past her.

Katie heard the wolf growl and a struggle behind her that almost had her freeze in the spot and go back for her friend, but this wasn't the time to play the hero. There was something else she could do to help and didn't involve staying behind to rescue her friend when she knew she'd only freeze up. She got into the house and began frantically tossing everything about in search of something. It didn't matter what state it was in, she just needed to find it.

It was something a hunter family could find lying anywhere in their house... a dagger. Specifically, one that was designed to hold poison used in killing werewolves. Katie found one strapped to the underside of the dining room table and unsheathed it. It was used and old, but it would have to do. It was better than nothing at all.

She opened the door and froze at the sight before her. Katie was pinned to the ground whilst the wolf tried to bite her neck to end her life. Katie, however, summoning all her strength, punched the wolf's jaw to have it miss its target just in time. The momentary daze was enough for her to crawl further into its underbelly and come out from its side. She'd thought her momentary escape through as she faked getting out from one side and turning to the other while the wolf was stuck going the wrong direction.

Everything Katie was doing was futile, but the determined look on her face showed otherwise. This girl was not going down without a fight. Instead of Katie running away, she used the wolf's momentary confusion to her advantage and struck one of the visible wounds it had in its side. As the wolf whined in pain, she struck the same spot repeatedly in an effort to get the pain to confuse and slow it down more.

"Katie," Sandra screamed throwing the knife at her.

Katie couldn't help the smile that formed on her face as she leapt out of reach of the werewolf and grabbed the knife midair. The wolf froze at the sight of the knife. It looked between the knife and the face of its wielder. For once its eyes showed signs of intelligence. He was thinking about the idea of attacking a child. Sandra didn't know why, but it was at that moment that she relaxed completely and felt safe.

She watched Katie circle the wolf, her eyes glued to it and her face locked in a serious expression that was bound to arouse fear in the wolf. Snarling at the little girl, the wolf attacked. Katie sidestepped and ducked, allowing the wolf to pass by her. The thought of stabbing the wolf's initial wound which was softer than going through its hide was an idea she could not pass up.

This was the first time she was using a knife with the intention of killing a rogue. With all the stories of how despicable rogues could be, there was no hesitation in her actions as she drove the knife into the side of the wolf and got to work performing an act that made Sandra vomit her entire lunch. Nothing about what Katie did to that wolf could be termed as merciful.

Once Katie had finished stabbing it the first time, the wolf had lost the will to fight then and Katie had been left with finishing it off which she did swiftly without a second thought. The adults arrived only minutes later to a scene of a bloodied Katie holding a dagger and staring at the corpse of the wolf that had just attacked them.

The children's parents, along with the hunters that had accompanied them stared at the scene in silence and a mixture of expressions. What they saw before them was somewhat incomprehensible. "Are you girls okay?" Aunt Marie called out, snapping everyone back to the present....

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“It was then that I swore to train harder and never be a burden to her again. That is also the day, however, that she became unreachable. With each passing day, her abilities began to improve exponentially until she was the unstoppable force of nature you see now. One could say she was an unstoppable force of the gods. I remember it like it was yesterday,” Sandra concluded the story. She couldn’t help but smile at the looks on the boy’s faces as they listened to her.

“You mean ‘force of a god’, don’t you?” Jason corrected.

“Oh yeah, ‘force of one god’, because that is what she is... Prometheus, no other,” she said. To Sandra, it didn’t matter if they noticed how nervous it made her. Katie’s case was so bizarre that there was no way they would suspect that her context was indeed what she’d intended to say and would have spilt premature secrets in turn.