

Chosen 61

Chapter 61:

Footsteps reached his ears telling him the location of his assailant. He lifted his head to meet the face of the same girl that had been toying with him. She was barely winded and looked bored considering the outcome of what had just occurred. He'd not known what he was getting himself into when he started this self-assigned mission. 'I now understand why you couldn't tell everyone the monstrosity of the Rogue killer. No one would believe you even if you tried explaining it. She's not normal even for a hunter. It makes sense now why Kyle is the most important asset to the Rogue king. He's the only one with information on this monster and yet I only delayed them.'

At that moment, Demitri planned to get a message to the others on how they were to escape this. He needed to howl loudly... something that was meant to travel miles so that the rest would receive the message to start running. In his state, gathering the energy and the strain to howl was almost impossible to do so. Right when he was about to open his mouth, a hand clasped around it, sealing it shut. "Not one sound from you... now I know they aren't too far yet. I just don't know where they are or how far and it would take forever... not to mention I wouldn't find them if they are well hidden. All that's left is to interrogate you. I hope you enjoy your time in the dungeon... the trick to surviving that place is to cooperate. Though I doubt you understand the words I'm saying."

Katie searched her pockets for her phone and dialed the Director's number. After waiting for a few seconds, he picked up, "What is it, Chase. You vanished for an entire day," he spoke roughly from the other side, his voice low since it was night.

"It's good to hear your voice as well," she answered him.

"Cut to the chase, Chase," he said. She could feel the smirk on the man's face through the phone as he said it.

"I've captured a rogue. My best guess is that he was going to retrieve something that Kyle left behind," she said.

"Kyle, you mean your nerdy best friend with the good grades?" he asked.

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"Yes, I mean him..."

"What has he got to do with anything?"

"He turned out to be the one that Chandler was telling me about. He was the one who killed Ash. When I found out, it was too late. He'd fled from town and was far away," she said.

"That gets rid of my sleep. Can you bring the wolf to the Agency or do you have somewhere to be?" Anthony asked the girl.

"I want to go and check out the house for anything that he might have forgotten there," she told him.

"Okay then, just tell me your location and I'll get the nearest patrols right with you," he said. She relayed her location and only had to wait for the hunters to get there. "You know, you are quite lucky. Kyle is

sort of a celebrity right now. One that had invoked the anger of many. For that reason, you might just be able to leave... that's only if you do the right thing and cooperate. Once again I find myself telling you this and yet I know that there is no chance you would do it," she said, "Are you listening to me?"

Taking her hand off the muzzle of the wolf, she snatched her hand before he got the chance to bite her, "You know, you make me feel like taking you to the Hunter's Agency and restraining you myself. With how feisty you are right now, you might even think that by some miracle you will be able to escape the party that's coming for you," she said.

It wasn't long before the sound of footsteps reached their ears. Katie turned to the group that had arrived and stood upright after squeezing the wolf's mouth shut so much that she damaged its gums. This was an effort to make howling all the more painful without damaging the vocal cords of the werewolf. A werewolf that couldn't speak was useless to them and so she made it hard for it to speak momentarily instead.

"Ah, the Rogue killer is back to her old tricks," one of the hunters said, a tall man who'd worked with the agency for as long as Katie could remember.

"Just doing my job, Kenneth," she replied.

"Do you ever get sleep or even tired?"

"Are you complaining?" she asked.

"No, I'm not. I'm worrying. It's like you patrol through the night as well as during the day. You should get some rest. Nonetheless, you have managed to keep peace in our town even though there are numerous rogues that are supposed to be attacking it. You've put down more than I could count and as a result, the people of Brigadia have even forgotten what it feels like to be in fear of rogues... well, that was until what happened at the school. I thank you for your service, on behalf of the Hunter's Agency of Brigadia," he said, bowing his head at the end, as long as the others.

"You're welcome, Kenneth. You might want to muzzle this wolf. I damaged most of the bones in his body required from movement, from the legs up to the spine, so you won't have to worry about him escaping," she said. It was only then that Demetri noticed the numb pain in his legs wasn't because there was no blood reaching them, but because she'd shattered his bones there as well. He scanned through his memory for a point when she'd gotten time to attack his legs as well, but there was no time that he could think of.

The only time that he would not have been able to feel that kind of attack was when he was hit in the side. During that time, she rammed into him and he'd crashed into the tree, during all that time, he wouldn't have noticed if his leg bones shattered along with the others that were being damaged in that instant, but the memory of her breaking his legs did not come through. He looked back at the Rogue killer... 'So you have both Prometheus gifts... You're worse than I thought you were... Just how impossible of a monster are you?' the question echoed through the wolf's mind as they hauled it away from there. Kenneth was stronger than he looked, holding it over his shoulders once they were done muzzling it.

Katie began her run to the house that she didn't think she'd be visiting this whole time. Her phone rang while she was running and she checked to see a picture of the Director flexing his muscles in his famous

black leather outfit. The man looked younger than his age and did his best to keep himself looking young. She answered the phone and put it to her ear, "Hello."

"Hey, Katie, I was just... you're running?"

"Yes, I am..." she answered the man. He was silent for a bit before snapping back to his question.

"I was asking for a report on everything that you've uncovered in your investigation on the killer of the werewolf in the school," he said.

"I did not want to make a report of a culprit that I haven't caught yet, but if it's that necessary, I'll write it and email you the report before I go to sleep," she said.

"That won't be necessary. We shall have your report in person tomorrow, is that understood?" he ordered.

"Yes, understood... What time tomorrow?"

"Preferably in the morning before the Founding Festival," he said to her. She noticed the use of 'preferably' was his humble way of saying it was an order.

"Okay then, I'll give you the full report then of everything I've discovered concerning my investigation and hopefully it's the last that I have to... Getting tired of repeating myself," she mumbled the last part.

"I know you're not in the most ideal of situations. Just bear with us, we are doing our best to handle this situation with the least amount of anger. You know how Lycaon is out for blood. I don't think we want a Royal losing control at this time... Speaking of which, are you ready for tomorrow?" he asked.

Katie sighed on remembering the chains and restricting steel restraints that had been set up in the basement of the cabin, "Yes, I'm as ready as I'll ever be."

"If you need anything, I'm just a call away," he offered.

"Thank you, Director Anthony. I'll remember that." With that, they bid their farewells. The lights of the town were starting to go through the thick foliage of the trees signalling her near arrival to the town... well, the part of it that held Kyle's home. She knew this part of town like the back of her hand... She had a number of things she now wondered. Kyle was living alone with the same excuse of his parents never being around, carefully claiming that they were back when he knew she couldn't visit. It was almost too obvious and yet she had not been able to notice.

Katie continued running, using alleyways and backyards to go through the town unnoticed until she reached the house she'd been targeting, a wave of nostalgia washing over her...

Chapter 62:

Kyle's house stood identical to the rest of the houses on his street, a building style normal in this place giving him access to a ground floor and a first floor. It was ample space for a family of four to live in and yet the boy had secretly had the place all to himself. It was odd that the landlord hadn't noticed a thing, but upon thinking about... given the right money, the landlord probably wouldn't have cared who lived in the house.

Katie walked up to the front porch and approached the handle, hoping it wasn't locked. The door gave way immediately she touched it, proof that it wasn't even shut. She turned on the lights, allowing the nostalgic feeling of standing in her formerly best friend's house to take over her. Memories of the times they'd come here were as clear as day to her.

"Hey, Katie, how come you don't read any books?" Kyle had asked her once while they hang out at his place finishing an assignment. It had been a few years since that day. He'd invited them over so that they could discuss the topic the teacher had just taught that day. Being the nerd that he was, Kyle did not have many friends, or at least that's what she'd thought at the time.

"You know my grades aren't perfect. Don't you remember that some of the hunters call you the friend of mine with the good grades?" she reminded him.

"I know, but you don't even try to excel and your grades are fine..."

"Well, if I was someone like you that needed this education so badly, I probably would be serious about my grades. A hunter is required to have had an education as well, so I can't exactly say I don't want to read," she answered him, finalizing the last parts of her work and giving him to go through it.

Another memory drifted through her mind, "Why don't I ever see family photos in this house?"

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"Well, my parents are always saying they'll get the chance to do that once we've gone out on a real vacation. Something I've heard is only for families that can afford a hunter escort. It's not going to happen anytime soon anyway," he said, dusting the random paintings in the living room.

"Well, at least they send you games," Katie replied.

"Yeah, that's true. Fancy a race," he asked, rushing over to the sofa, his mind completely forgetting his self-assigned chores.

"Maybe just one... You know I always win those ones..."

"Don't remind me of your multi-talents. This time I will, young Jedi," he yelled while he got hyped up for what was most likely going to turn out to be another defeat.

Katie stood in the living room while the memories passed through her mind, almost as though she could see them. She walked into the kitchen and froze at the sight of a picture frame atop the refrigerator. It was a picture of the three of them... Katie, Sandra and Kyle were at the park. Katie had decided to take the nerd out of the books and the empty house so that they could have fun. Passing her hands over the picture, she gritted her teeth just slightly at the irritation the emotions were giving her. 'To think all that time, you were only playing the part of a best friend. You were good... you had me fooled...' she thought to herself, cursing the blind trust she'd put in him.

Placing the picture frame back on the fridge, she opened it. It was still full of food that was going to go bad with no one to consume it. Katie knew there was still something in here that she hadn't found yet. 'If it was that important, then it was probably in his room,' she thought going for the stairs, ignoring the apparitions that her mind kept trying to project from the time when she was friends with the traitor. She

finally got to his room, blocking out everything she remembered about it and going through the mess that was in the room.

Clothes lay strewn across the floor in a disorderly fashion. He hadn't had enough time to take everything. To gain the advantage of speed, it was only fair that he'd packed light. That meant the clothes he took were a select few as well. Katie checked the room, flipping over the mattress along with everything that could be flipped, turned and opened. The sideboard was empty of any valuables and so was the wardrobe, but her gut spurred her to continue her search. This was the last room she was checking, having failed to find anything of importance.

She wanted to leave so badly, but she knew there was something in this place that she was supposed to find. She finally decided to check the one place that seemed useless to check out considering the futility of her situation. The bathroom that was connected to his room. Walking into the small white-tiled room, she scanned through it. Unlike the bedroom, this one was in order. Well, there wasn't much to mess up in the bathroom. The towel was still where it was meant to be, the toothbrush gone and everything still set in its right position.

She walked up to the mirror above the sink that also served as a door to the medicine cabinet. Opening it, she froze at what she saw. The cabinet was half-filled with orange tins. Most of them were empty and showed that they'd been there for a while. She scanned through and found that five of them were still full with the same drug. She didn't have to touch them to know what they were. She'd been using the same exact drug for her entire life... The same blue pills that she'd come to know were used to suppress a werewolf's animal side.

She picked up the trashcan that was in the corner of the bedroom and put all the drugs into the bag. She then took out the polythene and decided to deliver it to the Hunter's Agency. If there was anything that was still important in this room, it was the drug. 'Kyle forgot the drug... that means he will soon be having trouble with his wolf...' The drug would only work for as long as someone hadn't crossed the age of eighteen and Kyle wasn't eighteen yet. His birthday was in a month's time. 'He was already running out of time,' she thought. A short calculation of the pills that she'd found placed their due date exactly on his birthday. Kyle had all the medicine he needed up until the point it would be useless.

Katie did not waste any more time in the room and started the run to the Hunter's Agency, cutting through the town, but keeping to alleyways and places that would arouse suspicion. Stealth was not something alien to her either and this she excelled at until she reached the Hunter's Agency. Walking up to the gates, she froze at the sight of the dosing gatekeepers. 'Wow, that's a new sight...'

"Hey, wake up. I have to get in," she barked at them to get them up.

"Oh, Rogue killer... I thought you weren't going to show up until tomorrow," one of them said, yawning.

"I wasn't, but I found something at my suspect's house that I want to put here for safekeeping," she reported.

"Go right in..." the man said, opening the gate and letting her pass through.

"Are you allowed to sleep on the job like that?" she asked the man whose eyes were still closed.

“Well, not normally, but after we heard that the Rogue killer was back in action, we just felt like it was useless to stay awake all night knowing there is nothing that we are guarding the Agency for. For years, this place has not been threatened one bit. Some people say the hunters are losing their edge with all their time they are out of action,” the man said, chuckling while he said, “Nonetheless, we shall stay vigilant in our training.”

Katie ran through to the dungeon where she found the guards here dosing as well... She sighed and rubbed her forehead in disappointment before they noticed her... “Oh, Katie, we didn’t know you would be here until...”

“Just open the door... I only need to put this in my locker at the bottom of the stairs, so you don’t have to close as I’ll soon be out,” she said. She was done and on her way home in no time... Her phone started buzzing once more. “Hello, Anthony...”

“That’s Director Anthony to you,” he bellowed, “I’ve been informed that you were just sighted leaving the...”

“It’s late, Director Anthony. Can we talk tomorrow? I also need rest, you know,” she cut him off.

“What did you find at Kyle’s house?” he asked, noticing her low tolerance to his reprimand.

“I found the same drugs I’ve been ingesting my whole life... lots of them,” she said.

“So it’s true then. Kyle was a rogue spy in Brigadia high school,” he confirmed. Katie did not respond, letting him take in the information, “Still running, huh. Get some rest, Chase.”

“I will, Director Anthony. See you tomorrow,” with that, she hung up. Relief washed over her when her home started to come into view. She reached the house and found her parents in the same places she left them before she tried going to sleep earlier, “Are you guys planning to sleep?”

“We almost did, but then we sensed the rogue that you went after. How did it go?” Uncle Tom asked.

“It went just fine,” she said before heading for the stairs, “I need to get some sleep. I know tomorrow is going to be a long day.”

“Does it scare you? Tomorrow,” Uncle Tom asked.

“I don’t know what to make of it, honestly. I know that after tomorrow, things will get a bit complicated. You raised me never to call you guys mum and dad... I now see why, but wouldn’t it have been less painful if you’d let me,” she had deciphered their question unconsciously. Tomorrow was the day that they were going to lose their daughter and hand her back to the Sirius family, her biological family.

“Enjoy tomorrow to your fullest, okay,” Aunt Marie said to her.

“Yeah, I will. Good night, Aunt Marie,” there was no way that either of them could think to make this any easier. Katie stopped halfway up the stairs and ran back down, jumping into her father’s arms. Aunt Marie joined the group hug and the three enjoyed the moment while it lasted. They were all in agreement at that moment that they’d known this was going to happen and weren’t going to do anything to cause trouble. Though knowing that did not make it any easier. They were going to be separated no matter what they did and that was all there was to it.

Chapter 63:

Katie woke up the next morning feeling better than she thought she should have. The muscle aches were gone and she felt like a heavyweight had been lifted off her. The feeling of the drug in her system was starting to fade, however, the werewolf remained asleep, just like the moon goddess had promised. Katie got up and began going through her routine stretches, thoughts coming through her mind and leaving just as fast. She dismissed the case of the traitor and allowed her mind to dwell on other things such as the Festival ahead of them.

It was a chance to have fun with the others and there was nothing going to put that to an end. As the troubles of the day before left her conscience, the troubles of the new one dawned on her, regardless she didn't feel at all weighed down by it. She finished her stretches and took a quick bath. Regardless of having awoken at six in the morning, she found breakfast ready and the breakfast table set. Her guardians were both putting on aprons getting ready to eat their food. "Took you long enough, sleepyhead," Uncle Tom spoke.

"Good morning," she greeted, closing her eyes and allowing her nose to enjoy the amazing aromas that came from the food they'd prepared.

"Good morning, Katie. Sit down and have breakfast. We were told about your tight schedule this morning, so we got up early to make sure you didn't set off on an empty stomach," she explained before taking out a chair for her to sit.

"Thanks, guys. This is awesome... It looks so delicious," she replied, eyeing the food greedily.

"By all means, help yourself to our combined cooking. I did most of the work," Uncle Tom boasted.

"Oh, come on, Tom. Making coffee is nothing to be proud of..."

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"Ouch," Katie pitched in, taking a sip of her coffee, "Going to be hard to come back from that one..."

"Who's side are you on?" Uncle Tom, completely defeated, turned to his daughter.

"Your coffee is amazing," she complimented.

"Thank you... Not the point, you totally took her side there," he swatted her distraction.

"I know how terrible you are at using salt. Your food is always salty. I can tell who cooked these eggs and bacon," she returned.

"Fair enough, but I still could have asked for... Oh, never mind, it's hard to argue when you are eating like that," the man chuckled when he noticed the food was a bigger priority at the moment than the argument that was inevitably going to end in his defeat. Katie would not stop gobbling up what was in front of her.

"You know, honey. Raising Katie has been too easy," Aunt Marie said.

"What's that supposed to mean?" Katie asked, looking up from her plate.

"It simply means that you've been a perfect child. You never cried or gave us trouble. We were inexperienced youngsters when we were given the responsibility of taking care of you and yet, you didn't give us that much trouble. You never had any cases with the school. Never got into trouble with the other kids except for the one you insulted that one time during Junior Hunter training and got him to even move out of Brigadia," Uncle Tom explained.

"Oh, you mean Jeremiah?" Katie asked.

"You still remember his name? That's one memory you have," he said.

"I didn't want him to give up becoming a hunter because of what I said. To be honest, on that day, he helped me out by not fighting me at his best. I had muscle aches everywhere," I said.

"The hunters in charge of that session told us of your condition. We were forced to give you a week's rest from training..."

"That was torture. I felt like a potato lying on that couch doing nothing as your rules dictated," she pouted. The family continued to enjoy each other's company for a while before something else came to their attention. Katie, who seemed to have a wolf in her stomach that day for reasons unknown to her, asked for seconds and finished the plate of food with her stomach still growling for more food.

"Are you okay, Katie?" Aunt Marie asked worry etched on her face.

"I'm still hungry. Why am I still hungry?" the girl whined, clutching her belly in exasperation. It was like the food was being drained right out of her belly.

"You did say the moon goddess made it so that you didn't have to take those pills. I might say you have a wolf in your belly," she giggled at the joke.

"That's not funny. Am I going to be like this as a werewolf as well?" she asked.

"Normally, I'd say you just need more food because your wolf is finally waking up, but considering you have both Prometheus gifts, I'm not sure how much food the two of you are going to need," Aunt Marie voiced her concerns watching her daughter rush to the kitchen for her third serving of the delicious breakfast. It was true that when Katie let loose, she could eat a lot considering how much energy her Prometheus gifts demanded, but this was double what she normally craved when she was holding back.

"Katie, you better stuff yourself with food. We'll prepare more if you want, but don't leave this house with that pit unattended. You don't want to embarrass yourself in front of Cole like that," Uncle Tom began.

Katie stared at the man with her mouth open, "You're unbelievable. This is embarrassing no matter how you spin it."

"Be that as it may, which it shouldn't in the presence of family, we'd be happier to know that you left this house with your tummy full," Aunt Marie said.

Katie covered herself with her palms, "Rogues are always calling me a monster before I kill them, but this is what finally makes me feel like one." Her parents chuckled before getting to work nourishing her. After all, this was part of why they woke up this early; to make sure that their pride and joy was doing just fine. Katie left the house close to seven finally free of the hunger that had plagued her.

“When you said you were hungry, I didn’t think you’d...”

“Let’s try to forget about that, mum. It’s embarrassing,” she whined loudly, missing her violation after having been mothered the entire morning. Aunt Marie pulled her into a tight hug holding the child at the door. ‘Where did this come from?’ she thought before realizing what she’d said. “I didn’t mean...”

“Just this once, Katie... I’ll allow it,” Aunt Marie paused holding onto her daughter, “just this once.” The next time they would be meeting was going to be at the cabin that evening to lock her up for her transformation. Katie hugged her back, Uncle Tom joining them a moment later before they let her go.

Once Katie was out of earshot, Marie buried her face into the chest of her loved one crying softly into him while he rubbed circles into her back, “She doesn’t even know...” she sniffled, “that we just had our last breakfast together.” The detail had slipped Katie’s mind because of the numerous plans of preparation that had run through her mind that morning.

Tom couldn’t find what to say... What could he say? This was breaking him just as much as it did his wife. Memories of raising the girl were flashing before his eyes. They’d woken up early that morning just to spend their last morning with their daughter. They knew she wasn’t going to notice their farewell breakfast, but they were okay with that... for she needed her focus and resolve for what lay ahead.

Chapter 64:

Katie stood with Sandra behind the Director as he made a speech addressing the rest of the hunters in the vicinity. Every professional hunter along with their mentees had been summoned to the Agency for an announcement that was meant to drive the entire day’s activities. Sandra was diligently waiting for her mentor at the gates of the facility when Katie arrived along with a few other diligent junior hunters, “You guys make us look lazy,” Katie whispered to her friend.

Sandra chuckled, “Wasn’t a good look for the person who is supposed to be the head of security at the Festival.”

Katie groaned remembering what delayed her, “I had a bit of a...” her hand rapidly flew to her belly. There was nothing to be felt there, “a bit of a stomach problem.”

“Are you fine? Did you eat something?” Sandra asked her, concern in her voice.

“You have no idea. Something doesn’t cover how much I ate. We’ll talk about it later when we’re on guard duty at the school,” she assured her friend. ‘I just hope I don’t get hungry soon,’ she thought.

“We all know what day this is. Today is the Founder’s festival and all hunters along with junior hunters are to adhere to the instructions that are given to them. The entire force of hunters has been divided into groups and given different tasks in order to achieve airtight security. All this information has been pinned on the request board or quest board as most of you like to call it,” he said before dismissing the lot of them. They easily numbered a hundred which was a lot for a remote town. Most of them were out of shape from the period of shape compared to the Director as expected from hunters that lived in a place that rarely got attacked.

Once everyone was gone, a move that was done faster than Katie expected, Anthony turned to her, “You’re late, I had to improvise. Now come to the conference room quick,” he said quickly walking past

her. 'I might have gotten carried away with the eating at home,' Katie thought, even though her stomach said the opposite.

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"What stomach trouble are you talking about?" Sandra asked her while they followed the Director swiftly.

"I thought I'd said we'll talk about it later," Katie whispered through gritted teeth.

"Yes, I know, but you keep touching it and it's making me worry. You look like you're rubbing a belly holding a... baby," she said the last part through gritted teeth and in the ear of her best friend.

Katie gasped at the revelation, "I am not... Fine, I'll tell you... Are you serious?" her friend nodded in confirmation, a look of worry etched on her face, "Ugh, fine... It's quite embarrassing. I was hungry and can't tell if I won't be any time soon."

"What are you talking about? I know you eat like a..." Katie hit her friend's shoulder to stop her from running her mouth, "Sorry, but do you mean you ate more than usual. How many times more?"

"Almost four times the usual..." Sandra covered her open mouth in shock.

"That's unreal. Your stomach should be the size of that of a pregnant lady. How are you still normal? Stop messing with me, Katie," Sandra whined.

"What are you two bickering about? Hurry up... Are you forgetting that we are running against time?" Anthony said as they came up to the Hunter's Agency's main building. He led them through the building to the conference room. All the high ranking hunters of the agency sat in the room ready for what was to be said. There were people in here that Katie had rarely seen.

"Hello, everyone, she's here. Wow, Frost and Jackeline, it's been long since I last saw you," Anthony spoke.

"We came from our posts on the highway when we heard that there was a commotion from the Chase family. The couple says they feel that something bad is going to happen," Frost, a bulky man who was known by all hunters to be aggressive in battle and very efficient. His Prometheus gift was strength, but his speed was incredible. Katie had only had the chance to spar with him once and come to respect the man who gave her a hard time with both her gifts.

"Yeah, it's good to be back. The rogue killer seems to be losing her edge," Jackeline spoke, a lady who paired with Frost on most of their missions. These two were responsible for the dwindling requests on the quest board. A dynamic duo of agility and strength, these two were unbelievable when in combat. They'd backed off the rogues that tried attacking the town only after witnessing Katie taking them down single-handedly and swiftly.

"I wouldn't say that for sure, but I have been surprised in the past days. Rogues are getting bolder," Katie replied, "It's good to see you."

With the introductions out of the way, Anthony got the meeting started. He had a disturbing announcement to make, "I've called you all here to discuss something that was reported to me in the

nick of time even though it's quite troubling," Anthony said. He placed his hands on the table and sighed. The information that he had to share was disturbing and weighing him down.

"What seems to be the trouble, Anthony?" Frost asked the man, leaning back into his seat and crossing his arms.

"A reporter reached out to me and informed me that the information tarnishing the school had been withheld. After interviewing the students secretly, he discovered that none of them saw the incident of murder in the school even though some claim to have seen blood in the classroom. It was something that perturbed me to hear," he said.

"Are you suggesting what I think you are suggesting?" Jackeline cut him off before he was far into his explanation.

"The citizens of the town were shaken by what happened in the former Hunter training ground, but Katie along with the werewolves and junior hunters that were there were able to diffuse that one," he said, "No one was injured. That can be revealed without tarnishing the school's image. The information that the reporter was asking me to destroy was..."

"The news about the dead boy," Jackeline completed the statement, "What is that supposed to mean about the integrity of the Hunters? This move, if discovered could ruin the hunters' reputation. What are you thinking coming up with an idea as crazy as that?" She was standing by the time she was done talking. This was turning into a heated argument. Katie did not know whose side to choose as this decision to her was a double-edged sword.

"Just think about it. If this information gets out, there will be a mass panic. The school's position in the rankings will plummet. It's bad enough that there was a murder in the school, but the victim wasn't a human, but a werewolf. There will be consequences. Everyone knows the safety of the school was centred on the fact that the hunters enrolled there had proved more than capable of dealing with misbehaving werewolves. Rumours will spring up about the hunters having wanted to kill the werewolves in the first place," Anthony made a fine argument.

"What about the werewolves? What happens to them if they learn of this? We already know the victim was part of the Lycaon pack. It's arguably the most powerful pack in the world. Do you want to go to war with the likes of them?" Frost said.

"The Lycaon pack is closely aware of what has actually happened. We would not be hiding anything from them. This is concerning the rest of the world and not the Lycaons themselves," he countered.

"What do you plan on even saying? Anything you say to cover up the slither of rumours that have already leaked out will look like a direct insult to the Lycaon pack," she said.

"Then what's better? Think of what we are looking at here. If this information gets out, it will flush out the fact that the school was infiltrated by rogues and this won't bode well with the reputation of the school or the town. Brigadia will become a ghost town with everyone leaving. If trust breaks down in Brigadia, there will be nothing left of it. What does the Lycaon pack lose if we cover up the death of their comrade compared to what we lose if we reveal it?" Anthony had looked at both sides of the matter with the eyes of someone looking into the statistics.

“No matter how you spin this... covering up the death of an innocent girl to save the reputation of the safest school is a low blow and will have an effect on the integrity of the Hunters in Brigadia. Your judgement is starting to dull, Anthony,” Jackeline fought back. The argument was heated and each side was set on imposing their ideals on the other.

“What does the defender of Brigade High School have to say about it then?” Anthony spoke up turning to Katie, who right up to this moment, had done her best to stay invisible.

“I was not... Oh, no... Can’t you guys... Oh God, why did I have to be dragged into this?” Katie groaned. This was not part of the things she’d chosen to think about for the day.

“Are you okay? You keep touching your stomach and you don’t seem too bothered about a discussion that has you at the centre of it. What do you have to say about it?” Jackeline asked her. Katie scratched the back of her head thinking through her words.

“In my opinion, the truth is what I would go with. Ash deserves the right funeral and we can’t have that if we’re covering up her death. I cannot deny that rogues infiltrated the school under my watch and I apologise for that. I checked to make sure that there was no one that was caused harm by my incompetence. My goal is simple, to kill every one of them. Covering it up or revealing it to the public is of no concern to me. As long as I achieve a world with no rogues,” she explained.

Chapter 65:

The meeting was quiet after what Katie said. Frost smiled smugly in his seat as though he’d expected that from her. Jackeline visibly relaxed after hearing that and shook her head, taking her seat beside her partner, “Sometimes I forget the reason Prometheus chose us to be hunters,” Frost said from his seat. The chorus of laughter went through the members that were seated. Anthony was more bewildered, just like that, he’d been put down by Katie’s neutral statement.

The man gritted his teeth before letting go of his tension, “Very well then, we shall write a full report of the information in depth to avoid any misunderstandings. This will put a lot of pressure on Katie, but I think she can handle it,” Anthony said.

Katie was content with that course of action. She wasn’t a fan of hiding things so much, “However...” there it was, “We shall only reveal this after the Founder’s Festival.”

“I agree... if there is to be anything that will bring attention to Katie, she must be at her strongest. Right now, she’s still without the backing of her family,” Kenneth spoke up for the first time. All high ranking members of this Hunter’s Agency knew about Katie’s situation. Keeping secrets amongst the hunters was something that was so easy that there was no question. Being chosen by Prometheus was that much of a guarantee that someone could fulfil something as simple as that.

“Very well... I’d forgotten that I was supposed to think about that as well,” Katie said, mumbling the last part out.

Anthony stood straight with a new look of determination, “I’m glad I could lean on the rest of you for advice in this decision. I might be your leader, but I am not without my faults. For that, I thank you all...”

“You know, the next time you plan on making a decision like that one, don’t forget to include the pack that’s to be affected. Werewolves can be nearly impossible to deal with when they are angered,”

Jackeline said from her seat. The meeting moved on to the rest of the arrangements that Anthony had set aside. Thankful that Frost and Jackeline were here to provide support, they were added to the hunters that were meant to guard the guests of high calibre that attended the festival.

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Katie was put in charge of the rest and she got to business partitioning the force of hunters she was assigned. She'd been given reign over four of the highest-ranking hunters in the Agency, people that were ranked above her and allowed to use them as she saw fit. It was everyone's understanding that as she was the one responsible for the security at the high school, she was better suited to handle the security of the festival as well and she'd more than proven herself enough.

"Kenneth, you are to take a group of eight junior hunters to check through the vendors' stalls and make sure there is nothing illegal that is brought with them, that includes weapons, alcoholic drinks and everything else that you deem fit," she said, turning to the rest. Among the others she'd been assigned were Brian, Samantha and Trevor, three skilled hunters that Katie respected as well to handle their assignments well. To be honest, there was not much she needed to tell these people that they didn't already know, but for formality, she still had to do it.

"Brian, using a select group of five hunters to serve under you, I would like you to take control of the projects inside the school. Safety measures must be adhered to and students are to be lightly checked upon entry to avoid arousing much suspicion.

Samantha is to deal with the outer patrol of the vicinity and that's the exterior of the entire festival including the stalls set up by the vendors. For this, she will select four hunters and four junior hunters for the task.

And lastly, Trevor will take a group of ten junior hunters and station them strategically through the Festival. Their job is to handle surveillance and communication. Trevor will be stationed in the surveillance room where he will watch the entirety of the school through the cameras and the hunters under his command shall pay attention to the school's blindspots and overcrowded areas to use a spare set of eyes," with that said, she was done assigning her four temporary subordinates.

"Someone is enjoying the power to scatter numbers," Kenneth smirked.

"Did I go wrong somewhere?" she asked genuinely.

"No, I think you did just fine. We shall do our best to achieve our tasks as well," he said.

"It's been nice watching you grow up, but I never thought I'd see the day when you'd be allowed to order me around," Samantha shook her head in disappointment, "How far I've fallen?"

"Hey, you still rank above me in more ways than one. This is just my jurisdiction is all," Katie stood her ground crossing her arms in response to the lady.

"You've grown up well, Katie," she replied, smiling at the girl.

Once all was done, Anthony took control of the meeting again, "As we all know, today is the day Katie will shift. All hunters are to be alert on that fact once it clocks seven o'clock in the evening. No one is sure if her restraints will hold her. The Lycaon boy is to be informed of this at that exact time as well, so

no one waste a second when it happens. Information of mobilization at seven goes to those closest to the Royal at the time of shifting. The moon will be high in the sky today by nine as this is a day the moon goddess herself has been waiting for," Anthony said.

"Is there something you aren't telling us?"

"Hunters have no hesitation when it comes to taking a life. This is not the same for werewolves that aren't rogues, however, that doesn't guarantee that Katie's wolf will go easy on the first human it sees. Protecting the citizens of Brigadia takes priority above all else," the man spoke out loud as though he hadn't just allowed Katie to be in charge of security that day.

"You make it sound like I'll be some rabid dog," Katie groaned.

"For all we know, you are one right now... Oh, and before I forget, Katie. Reveal your findings of the investigation you carried out yesterday," the man said. Katie's expression fell on hearing this. It bothered her to have to reveal to everyone the reason why she'd failed to track the rogues that had infiltrated the school.

"Yeah, right away. Yesterday, I was able to find out who the killer of Ash was..." she said, pausing before finishing the statement nervously, "but I was too late and the culprit had already fled Brigadia in a hurry. I couldn't even sense their presence which meant they'd gotten a pretty good head start."

"Who killed Ash, Katie?" this was the question she found hard to answer. It was strange to feel nervous for the girl for this was an emotion she'd never required to feel, however, it was only getting in the way at the moment and so she chose to discard it and reveal the culprit. Katie closed her eyes and opened them once more, completely drained of emotion, the only way a hunter was trained to handle situations in this cruel world.

"Kyle Dwyer... that is the name of..."

"Impossible..." Frost is the one that burst from his seat this time, gritting his teeth in anger at the accusation. There was a chorus of gasps through the people that were present in the room. Katie whispered something in Sandra's ears, directing her to the locker that contained the bag of evidence she had.

"I need a key to get into it," Sandra asked, knowing how encrypted the dungeon was. Katie looked through the conference room and found a pen which she used to scribble her signature onto Sandra's forearm. This was another way to get through the security measures for someone that was not a professional hunter.

Sandra was out in a few moments running as fast as she could. "What's the meaning of this?"

"I've sent her to retrieve the evidence that I collected from Kyle's house when I searched it yesterday," Katie said.

"You had no right to... Katie, what's gotten into you? Does trust mean nothing to you?" Frost visibly yelled at her.

"Don't you realise that this was the only way the rogues could infiltrate the school? The only way Kyle could have overridden my instincts to detect an enemy was if I trusted him. He spotted his opportunity

years ago when I was enrolled on Brigade high school and became my best friend,” her voice was calm as she spoke, clarifying how much she didn’t like what had happened as well.

“Hey, Frost, calm down,” Jackeline tried, “Three breaths.” These words were all the man needed to bring him back into a reasonable mood. The next time he spoke, he was composed.

“How did you come to this conclusion?” he asked her, sitting down to listen to the girl’s tale. Katie was relieved that he’d been able to calm down, but an even bigger obstacle lay ahead. Telling the entire group before her the tale that led to Kyle’s unmasking.

Chapter 66:

Sandra came back into the room and found that everyone had settled once again. The murmurs among the hunters had finally come to a stop and there wasn’t anyone present that was trying to cause a fuss about what Katie had just revealed. Katie looked at her friend and beckoned for her to bring the polythene bag over.

Sandra still had no idea what was in the bag and was eager to find out just as everyone else in the room was. There was something that felt wrong with it. She’d said it was the evidence that she’d gathered from Kyle’s house when she’d gone there and that’s what everyone was interested in seeing. So much so that the meeting had come to a standstill with everyone waiting to see the contents the evidence would reveal to them.

Katie got the bag from her and lifted it above the table, upside down allowing all the contents of the bag to fall to the table. Numerous containers fell to the table piling into a small heap and the excess rolling all over the table. Some fell off, but Katie was not bothered by the mess she was making as her intended reaction was achieved. The entire room fell silent as they all knew what was meant to be in the orange translucent containers. Five of them were full though two fell to the ground.

Anthony got up and picked one of the containers that were full and broke the seal, taking a whiff of the pills that were inside. “There is no doubt about it... They are the same wolfsbane based drugs that were used to suppress Katie’s wolf side. These are many... enough to supply a pharmacy for a year. What’s the meaning of this?”

“He couldn’t dispose of them for fear of them being discovered by the others. So he kept them. By my count, they could keep him going until his birthday...” Katie said, “This proves that he was a werewolf.”

“Yes, it most definitely does. Now run us through how you came to this conclusion. I honestly can’t imagine how you came to this conclusion. I can’t imagine how you did. That is one boy I would never have thought you’d suspect,” he said.

Katie relayed everything that she’d used to find out that it was Kyle that had been the culprit, but in the end, she said something that hadn’t occurred to her since she’d found out Ash’s killer. “Now I wonder if Ash was trying to write Ash during the time that she was dying,” Katie said, thoughtfully.

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“What do you mean by that?” Jackeline asked. The two hadn’t been present at the time when all this happened and had not taken a look at the crime scene.

“The werewolf tried to write something before her life drained out of her. The letter ‘K’ was scribbled on the ground in blood after. The nearest person that was blamed was Katie, but now that we have this piece of information, it is clear that she was trying to write Kyle instead. Kyle was the only other person that had access to Katie’s weapons as well. Katie had a habit of handing him her bag when she didn’t need it,” Anthony said.

The words stung, informing Katie that every time she did that, she handed all her weapons to her enemy. “But if that’s the case, why didn’t Kyle ever take the chance to kill Katie when she least expected it?”

“Killing Katie was never his mission. Considering he ran when he did, he was instructed to gather information and report to the rogue king. We have reason to believe that he has not yet gotten far,” Anthony spoke.

“What might that be? Do you mean the werewolf I found interrogating early in the morning,” Jackeline asked.

“Yes, that one. Katie confirms that this wolf was heading in the direction of Kyle’s home when she captured it. If our hunch is true, Kyle forgot his drugs and this rogue volunteered to retrieve them,” Anthony continued to speak on Katie’s behalf having noticed how much it took for her to relay the entire part of the story of her investigation. She’d left out the part where the moon goddess had come down to speak to her and included his phone call and her time of realization.

Once everything was said, there was a moment of silence while the hunters present took in the information. “That boy had a good future. One that a Prometheus evaluation would have set straight,” Frost said.

“Katie, if you have the chance and you meet Kyle ever again, what will you do to him?” Jackeline asked Katie. Katie was quiet for a bit trying to interpret the question. In the end, she couldn’t come up with a desirable answer.

“I’d capture him for interrogation...” everyone let out the breath they’d been holding when she said only to hear a continuation that would make chills run down their spines, “but, if he gives me a reason to kill him, I won’t hesitate...” Her anger was clear, contained but just barely. All Kyle had to do was give Katie reason to stop valuing his life and he’d be dead.

“Fair enough, Rogue killer. I think that brings us to the end of this meeting,” Anthony said, allowing Katie and Sandra to take their seats, “Once again, we welcome Frost and Jackeline. Just to inform all of you, Brigadia is currently hosting the Sirius Royal family. So keep in mind that they are in town and you should do nothing to insult them while you are here. If any of you meet them, you are to treat them with respect.”

“Will they be meeting Katie?”

“No, they will not. They’ve been asked to wait until Katie is whole again so that they meet someone they will recognize by sight and scent as well. After all, the baby girl that they let go of was a werewolf, not a human. As such, we have given them the reasoning that we are to deliver a werewolf to them as they originally entrusted the Chase family a werewolf to care for. They do know, however, what their daughter looks like and will recognize her immediately given the chance,” Anthony explained.

“Whoever knew we would raise a werewolf girl in the Hunter’s Agency?” Kenneth chuckled.

“I know right... It’s like raising a puppy,” Samantha giggled. Katie gaped at the comments, recognizing the formation with which she was being cornered. It was not alien to find that the stubborn lot in this organization had found new ways to make her look ridiculous.

“I am no puppy,” she huffed.

“Oh, you’re just one of those types that look cute and can be very tough,” Brian pitched in.

“Oh, you mean like the times she ties up her hair using that lucky band of hers when she gets serious in a duel?” Trevor was the one to remind them this time.

“Now that is something I haven’t seen in a while. Katie, do you still carry around that yellow hairband with you?” Frost asked, finally getting interested in the bickering.

Katie dipped her hand into her pocket and pulled out the yellow hairband. It was an ordinary hair band elastic and made of cloth, except that upon it, a pin with the image of her guardians was attached, “Yeah, I carry it everywhere, although I haven’t used it in a while,” she said.

“I take it then that the rogue yesterday was not a challenge,” Jackeline asked her.

“No, that guy was specializing in stealth... there was nothing he could do to escape me,” she flipped the question...

“You know something... I know we are in the middle of a crisis right now, but when all this is over. And by that, I mean the Founder’s Festival and Katie’s shifting, let’s celebrate her birthday tomorrow night, here at the Hunter’s Agency,” Kenneth said. The idea seemed to lift everyone’s moods.

“Yeah, that would be nice. We’d have like a really big cake towering high up probably with eighteen tiers to mark her birthday,” Samantha beamed.

“Yeah, and we’d order drinks and food from that restaurant her parents told her that she likes so much. We all know Katie can’t turn down food with her pit for a stomach,” Trevor pitched in.

Everyone was marvelling at the idea of being able to have the party the next day and in turn causing a reaction that they didn’t know was going on. The whole chaos that currently had the hunters in a spell was stopped by something sudden and very unpredictable, well for everyone except the person that it came from. A rumbling sound caught everyone’s attention, echoing in the room, emanating from the famous rogue killer. The entire table went quiet and looked at the head of security. Katie dropped to the ground with her head in her hands. “My life is ruined,” she whined clutching her belly while she lay with her forehead placed on the ground.

Chapter 67:

The room was silent for a bit, its inhabitants contemplating what they’d all just heard from the Rogue Killer’s belly. A few of them were in shock while others were holding on to the last bit of self-control they had to keep themselves from laughing at the birthday girl on the floor. Sandra did not dare approach her friend in the silence that had taken over the room. Instead, the girl shot daggers at Frost who immediately got a grip of the laughter that threatened to burst from him.

"Katie..." Jackeline called the girl.

"Yes, Jackeline," Katie answered, embarrassment filled in her voice.

"This new you is far more expressive. It's a good look for you. About the sound we just heard, did talk of the party make you fall hungry? I know you couldn't have left that house on an empty stomach," she said.

"I admit that I'm hungry, but I ate before coming here," Katie replied, sounding as vague to avoid revealing just how much she'd eaten that morning.

"Well, did you eat very little? We'd understand if you were on some diet to look nice in front of Cole..." Jackeline said.

Katie stopped her mopping and looked up to meet the woman's eye, "That had not crossed my mind," a problem that had not yet registered in her mind until now. "What if this happens when I'm with him today?"

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"I never thought the Rogue Killer would have to worry about something as human as that, but I don't see how that should worry you now. We are going to help you solve it," Jackeline said.

Katie couldn't believe she had to explain herself to a conference room full of hunters. It was true that she'd grown up with them and they knew she ate more than the average human, but it didn't change the fact that she was about to appear to be more of a bottomless pit after this explanation. Katie put her head back on the ground and whined loudly, "That's not it, Jackeline. I ate almost thrice my normal today. I couldn't seem to get satisfied and by the time I got here, I felt like nothing was there."

Kenneth was not a gentleman in manners like this and collapsed on the table laughing. His laughter, contagious as it was, triggered his comrades to let out a few laughs as well. From giggles to explosive laughter, the likes of Kenneth and Trevor that didn't mind how loud they were getting, the room was filled with humorous laughter.

What was calming about it though was that Katie loved to see her comrades happy and this did not irritate in the slightest, 'You can all be so hopeless sometimes for the title of hunters,' she thought before laughing out with the others.

Anthony had to stop their happy moment to remind them that time was not one of their luxuries at the moment. Samantha replied him saying, "Can't you see our puppy is in need of some food? The whole world can wait."

Katie then had to explain that she'd met the moon goddess the day before, a detail she'd carefully left out before that would lead her to tell them how the goddess had taken her off the pills. The laughter came to a standstill once she was halfway through the explanation. Anthony, who was on the side of them keeping time decided to go to the kitchen and grab all manner of breakfast he could find. From the piece of the story he'd heard, this puppy was in need of a tone of food.

When he returned, they'd theorized that the wolf that still lay dormant was demanding food in preparation for her transformation later that night. "This is all I could find," Anthony said, dropping a

vast assortment of different snacks and food that he could find. Three maids followed behind him with trolleys of food and beverages.

“You don’t clearly mean to stuff all of that into this poor girl’s belly. She’s got a boyfriend for crying out loud,” Jackeline teased.

“Cole and I aren’t yet...”

“Well, it was already decided the moment you were born. You guys were made for each other...”

“I thought we’d all like to have something to eat before carrying out the day’s plans,” Anthony interrupted to plead his case with the female in charge. The males in the room refrained from making any comments regarding Katie’s condition to protect whatever new feelings she seemed to be showing now.

“That’s actually very thoughtful of you,” Jackeline replied, “Katie, you know we care about you...”

“I know Jackeline. I’m grateful for that, thank you,” Katie silently wished she could stay here for the whole day. The only other place she was free to slip up and no one would know a thing.

“So... Any of you guys think Katie’s having trouble keeping her emotions inside because of her werewolf side that’s now finally emerging?” Kenneth asked once they were finally eating.

“If you’re trying to insinuate that I’ll be less of a...”

“I wasn’t insinuating anything, Katie. You choose your own path,” he stopped her. ‘Darned adults... He’d seen through me like an open book,’ Katie grumbled internally. It was true that she was becoming more of an emotional mess since relieving her of the drug she’d been using. She knew this mainly because of the anticipation she had to be in Cole’s presence once again.

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Katie’s second breakfast ended thankfully without any other jokes about her condition. This time she ate till she was considerably satisfied, her belly remaining exactly the same. Unnatural as it seemed, she quietly thanked whatever supernatural forces made it possible. The hunters barely made it to school in time for the Principal’s opening speech. The VIPs had not yet arrived which was a good thing as it allowed the hunters to get done with all the security procedures.

Kenneth and his group of juniors immediately got to checking the stalls from the different vendors that scattered around the school allowing an assortment of things to purchase when at the festival. Events such as these were rare as it was a tasking activity on the side of the hunters. So for all those that had businesses that benefited best in crowds as big as those that were attracted by such events, it was the time when they got the chance to sell their wares and make considerable profits.

On one of the festivals in the past, there had been a carnival that was set up in the dead of night just for that day. This time, it wasn’t as flashy as it’d been that time. It was the time when the school was still considered the safest school in the whole of the world, but now that news of the dead werewolf was still spreading in the form of a rumour, the vendors had decided to hold back and pack light.

Nonetheless, the festival remained a sight to behold. A large stage had been set up in the field upon which the Principal currently stood to address the students. The hunters had come to the conclusion to expose the killer of the student to keep Katie out of detainment.

Much as this also raised suspicion of her involvement in the murder, the hunters stood by their word that she was innocent and that no claims were going to be tolerated in the face of the esteemed Agency.

Katie stood behind the Principal humbled in front of the student body. The hunters fanned out all over the school and the field. It was during this time that they did their job of checking through the projects that were to be presented that day.

"I know you are all eager to get your projects up and running. After all, that is what this day is about for most of you. I advise that you all be disciplined and diligent with your presentations. It's very likely that you can get a scholarship to great universities and schools to continue your studies. Though I don't see a place safer than here..." the short man joked. No one laughed when he said this, though it was clear he hadn't said it without intending it.

The Principal seized his laughter and dropped into a serene silence for a moment. The rest of the student body took this time to acknowledge the death of one of their fellow students, "Every single one of you knows what happened during the past week.

And for those that don't know or for those of you that heard rumours from a friend, I shall relay everything in the presence of our esteemed hunters and head of security." Katie took in two deep breaths as trained and assumed the mask she carried around with her everywhere she went to hide her emotions.

"I have been asked by the Hunter's Agency to reveal everything as it happened and withhold nothing of the truth. This information is to be published in the newspapers around the whole world as to what happened in this school," there were murmurs from the crowd as they wondered what it was that he meant by this.

On this day, the parents of the students that could make it were present and this was the source of the murmurs. The move the Principal was about to ruin the reputation of the school if anything he said was wrong or if he was suspected of fraud.

"Principal Brown..." a lone voice rose up from the chaos, quieting the entire field. Everyone looked in the direction of the one that had just caught the Principal's attention. The one person the entire school had come to respect... the same person that had caused the school to rise to the top in terms of safety. Since Katie's arrival, Brigadia High School had never been the same and the entire school knew her to be the one who ushered in an era of peace between the wolves and the humans.

She did not segregate between the two races and made the humans apologise as well in case they were the ones that had wronged the werewolves. If it wasn't for her reputation, she would have been suspected by the students as well, but everyone knew who Katie Chase was.

It would have looked like the Principal was trying to cover up for her if she had stayed back and let him relay the entire story as he'd been briefed earlier, but this way, they would hear it straight from the

person who'd made the most progress in the case and was at the centre of all the blame. Katie walked up to the podium, the Principal stepping aside from it to allow her to get up to the microphone.

A hunter is supposed to be capable of suppressing their emotions as she'd succeeded with this whole time. This, however, didn't come in the job description. No one would train you to appeal to humans and werewolves alike after one of them was killed under your protection. She wasn't sure she could hold her fa?ade... that was until she saw a sole face from within the crowd.

His blue eyes stood out amongst all the faces that stared at her and at that moment, she gained all the confidence she needed to make this speech and so much more...

Chapter 68:

Principal Brown gave the young hunter a warm smile when he realized what she intended to do at the moment, "Alas, I will be spared the trouble of reporting events that I also just heard from the Hunters. On behalf of the hunters, the head of security has decided to step in to explain the unfortunate events that occurred during the week," the man said before walking off the podium, giving Katie a tap on his way to the back where he'd watch the rest of the speech that she was going to give. "Good luck, Katie," he whispered.

Once Katie was up and close to the microphone, she spotted a distinct pair of bright blue eyes and froze, remembering the state he was in the day before. She couldn't tell what he'd do now that he'd seen her. 'Have I come to care this much? Of course, I have and it's only going to get worse... or simply more intense after today. I wonder... Cole, was I a good friend?'

A smile from the blue-eyed Royal got her heart beating again with confidence. She was glad he was back to his normal self even though the warmth that spread through felt like overkill. She could then proceed with the speech she was tasked with giving now. "As you all know, there was a murder that took place in the school of recent. Slightly before that murder, there was an attack in the forest that put the lives of many innocent students and citizens in harm's way. Thankfully with the help of the junior hunters and the werewolves, we were able to repel the attack and even detain one of the invaders.

I shall be brief as most of this is going to appear in the newspaper tomorrow. Most of this falls on my shoulders as you all know that the murder weapon was indeed a blade that was supposed to be in my possession," there were gasps as she revealed this, but that was to be expected, "The victim was someone who was among the rogues that attacked the students on that same day. This, however, means that the wolf went through a Prometheus evaluation and was deemed worthy of being welcomed into society.

Most of you knew Ash Myster as a fifteen-year-old boy that was struggling to keep up his grades, but that was not all that we should have known about Ash. Ash was indeed a girl..." gasps erupted from the crowd and she allowed a moment of thought for the people present to go through the information, "Yeah, I was also surprised by that after the autopsy. What makes me seem more likely to be the victim was the fact that when I arrived at the crime scene, Ash had written something in her own blood in an attempt to spell the killer, or so we suspect. However, she was only able to write one letter and that was a 'K'... Not a good look for me, I know, but that's what I found at the crime scene when I arrived."

Katie was getting more comfortable with narrating the tale of her investigation even when she continuously made everything seem like she was the one who'd done it, "Furthermore, I was at a loss of who the killer might have been. Usually, when there is someone behind something, I can tell. Come on, I know every face in this school and a name to match it. I continuously interrogated many of you who could have done it, but as I suspected, none of you could have done it. I'm not saying that knowing each and every one of you guarantees your innocence because the rogues that attacked the students a few days prior were also students whose names I knew.

However, Ash was able to reveal that there weren't any more that she knew of. Chandler, the rogue that we had in captivity was also able to confess that there was one more rogue in the school at the time and that he'd be leaving soon. We made a background check on every student to prove there wasn't any other rogue amongst us. Thankfully, every single one of you is clean and we are sure that there are no more spies amongst us. The details of the check will not be given for security purposes.

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There is only one person who could go through all these security precautions and still not be discovered after all this and that was none other than Kyle Dwyer." Gasps and murmurs went through the crowd as she said, "Now the rest I have to say is nothing more than useless information that the rest of you don't want to hear. I don't deny that Kyle was my best friend almost since I got into this school. He was someone I deeply trusted and couldn't think would betray me. That is also why it took me so long to figure it out."

"Where is Kyle now?" one of the students yelled out, a few others yelling in agreement with him, 'Yeah, where is he now?' they asked. They'd already skipped the fact that Katie was still a suspect in this murder which even made it harder to reveal the answer to the question. She found herself seeking Cole's eyes from the crowd. She finally found them and allowed them her eyes to stop darting about.

"Well, Kyle escaped as soon as he realized he was soon to be discovered. By the time we found out the true culprit of the crime, there was nothing of him left at his house and he was long gone..." there was silence in the crowd as she said this, most of them simply afraid to voice the doubts they were now developing in her entire explanation. Katie sighed before continuing, "I'm not going to bow to all of you and ask that you believe what I'm saying just because I was a tad bit late and didn't catch Ash's killer, but I will say this... There is no rogue left in this school... and it will stay that way."

"What makes you so sure?" Cole was the one to ask this time.

Katie couldn't hide the smirk that appeared on her face momentarily, "As we all know, I grew up here. The rogues that infiltrated this school, all of them besides Ash were people that came here before becoming the head of security. I'm sure you've all heard of the incredible tales and rumours of the Rogue Killer."

"That's all a myth," another student yelled.

"Well, some of the tales are over-exaggerated. Quick as lightning, strong as a boar, I do not like that particular phrase when describing me, but who am I to reject such appealing praise?" she joked about, earning laughter from the crowd.

A hand came up from the crowd and she nodded to allow the girl to speak, "You claim to be the famous Rogue killer? What's your Prometheus gift... if you are even a hunter at all?"

"Well, for the license to prove that I am indeed a hunter," she said, retrieving something from her pocket. Katie raised up a red laminated card that, something the hunters that were around could not allow to be flashed around if it was fake. The hunters wore proud faces as they saw the badge on display, for this was a hunter they were indeed proud to call one of their own. "As for my Prometheus gift, that is not very important since any of the gifts can be effective against a werewolf.

However, I will say this. The Founder's festival is held every year and offers a large opportunity for many of the students here to receive scholarships that allow them to move on to follow their dreams under much better circumstances. Dreams to become scientists, engineers, doctors and so many other enticing careers and adventures.

I have a dream as well... No, I'll call it a mission because I will succeed, and that's to put an end to this war once and for all," she said, the conviction in her voice gripping the whole crowd. Some of the hunters around gasped at what she'd just said. After centuries of fighting against the rogues, this really did sound like a dream. The crowd was not going to take her seriously when she said this.

"What is your Prometheus gift?" this time Cole was the one who asked. Katie smiled at him. He'd been a big help during this speech and he'd just given her the opening she needed to go for the kill. The Royal couldn't wipe the smirk off his face when he asked her.

"Oh, both of them..." she answered innocently, "I know that I have a lot of work, but I am not about..."

"You don't have to explain yourself, Katie," a voice shouted from within the crowd. Her eyes scanned through and came face-to-face with a pair of green eyes, "We know you won't give up until you have that scumbag down."

This seemed to have the right amount of spark to rile up the audience into an uproar of praise. People continued to yell and shout out different praises. Some of them that had been present during the attack in the Junior Hunter's Training ground shouted things like, 'We saw her in the training grounds. She might just pull it off.' While those that had been ensnared by the speech from the point she spoke of dreams that the Festival was supposed to help fulfil shouted out things like, 'You can make it. All dreams can become reality.'

Principal Brown could only stare at the commotion that she had caused. The speech had gone far better than he'd expected with the Royal helping out to make it sound better every time he needed to. The duo had this all taken care of from the very start. From the way Katie spoke, everyone could finally relax and feel safe in her presence. He did not know if there was indeed a checkup that had taken place of all the students but didn't oppose it for whether it was real or not, it helped lift the spirits of those that were present.

Katie proceeded to tell everyone about how the security was going to be handled. Mentioning restricted areas and places where to approach the hunters in case of an emergency so that everyone knew the entire layout of the security system. The rules against fighting between werewolves and humans were to remain the same as expected. Most of the VIPs were to be given a tour of the projects in the

afternoon and therefore the students had the whole of the morning to make sure that everything was working fine.

Katie finally concluded her speech. The second part of it had been to confirm that there was action taking place beside the words that she had delivered earlier and that everyone was indeed in the safest place at the moment. She stepped off the podium followed by an uproar of cheers and handclaps. "You exceeded my expectations, the Principal whispered as they passed each other."

"I'm glad... That was terrifying," she replied, doing her best to remain composed until there was no longer an audience. The fact that she had to focus to keep her emotions in was proof that she was becoming more emotional the closer they got to her birthday.

The Principal concluded the assembly and allowed everyone to go about their activities. Shortly after, Katie was also dismissed and she walked on with Sandra to make sure everything was running smoothly. The Head of Security didn't have a specific post and was not obligated to stay in one place, a part of the job that Katie found satisfying. This way she could also tour the festival just like everyone else while keeping an eye on what was going on.

"Hey, Katie, can I ask you a question?" Sandra asked as they walked up the stairs in search of the surveillance room. Their last location to check out before they were free to carry out whatever activities they saw fit at the moment.

"What is it?"

"Did you plan that speech with Cole beforehand?" she asked.

Chapter 69:

Katie opened the door to the surveillance room, her mind paying no attention to the inhabitants of the room while she answered her friend, "No, we did not plan anything out. Guess it was a blessing he was in a helping mood."

"Hello, Boss, well for today that is or at least until seven in the evening," Kenneth spoke up.

"Hey, Kenneth, how are things going on here?" she asked him and watched the man smirk from behind his container of popcorns. Two hunters sat in chairs watching the monitors while he reclined in his eating popcorn and oozing laziness.

"How can you ask me such a question? I am on top of things. Besides, I don't see anything going wrong today. There is no rogue that is capable of even thinking of coming close to this place with the rogue killer still around," he said.

"How do you know that? I captured one just yesterday," she said.

"Yeah, you did. That speed of yours makes the night patrols seem useless. Anyway, Frost and Jackeline put that rogue you brought in last night through the wringer. He spilt what they could manage to get out of him. He said the rest were too scared to come here and for good reason too. Even after what those two put him through, he seemed more afraid of you. Just what did you do to the rogue?" Kenneth asked.

“Well, he was quite skilled, so when I showed him how useless his skills of stealth evasion and combat were against me, his resolve sort of crumbled. He tried running away, but got many of his bones broken instead, so it only stands to reason that he would be that scared of me,” she said.

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“Well, his physique did show that he’d been put through some intense training, but that can only get a low ranking werewolf so far. He was able to at least describe what his experience against the Rogue killer was like. He was warned about getting three miles within the town, but he’d never thought that there was a place that guaranteed your death once you were within three miles of it. Finding out that this was true was what scared him the most. Finding a hunter that he couldn’t escape from or at least give a hard time had not been part of his experiences and he got cocky,” he explained.

“That sounds terrifying indeed... I’m not that scary, am I?” Katie asked. Sandra took a step away from her friend.

“I sometimes find myself thanking Prometheus and the moon goddess that I was not born a rogue, just because of how hopeless you make them look,” Sandra sighed, nodding her head in disbelief at her friend’s question.

“Same here... When Frost let the rogue continue ranting about how scared he was of you, the torture methods that were left had no effect and they left him delirious. Well, some of his bones that healed... well the ones that had minor injuries, but from the way he acted, it was like he was from hell. He wasn’t even supposed to be feeling pain from those injuries after the anaesthetics that were used on him,” Kenneth said, his hand failed to make the trip to his mouth with the next shipment of popcorns.

“Let’s change the subject... I am not that scary. Well, I’m okay with being that scary to the rogues, but not humans and werewolves,” she said.

“Talk about the partner you had during your speech,” one of the hunters who were watching the monitors spoke up in reply to her request.

“I walked right into that one, didn’t I?” Katie groaned, the rest laughing at her antics.

“Come on, tell us what’s going on. I know there is nothing he’s supposed to know with the moon goddess blocking the connection for now, but the boy seems drawn to you either way,” they began. Sandra put her hand over her mouth to muffle her laughter and breathed in twice to block her emotions.

“Sandra, save me,” Katie begged the junior hunter.

“I know nothing of what you speak of. You don’t seem to be in any trouble,” their eyes simply wouldn’t meet while she spoke. For some reason, all these computers were starting to look very interesting. Katie was being abandoned but her sole best friend.

“Sandra...” she called, “In that case, I won’t be quiet about your affair with...”

“Fine fine fine, it’s been nice knowing you boys. Let’s get going. Everything here looks fine and moving smoothly. We have no more reason to be here. Katie, why don’t we go check on the outdoor patrols, okay? Good, thank you,” the girl started ranting while she pushed her friend out the door until they

were out of the room and the door shut. "Hey, nothing's going on between me and whoever it is your mind is pairing me..."

"You mean Jason..."

Katie was speechless after that, "Why did you choose him? You didn't even see us together which we haven't been."

"Well, I do notice the way he's always sending you winks and small gestures of the sort. That boy cannot keep such to himself," she said, "He's just too obvious."

"Yes, that is true..." it was Sandra's turn to groan this time as they walked on. The two were stopped at the staircase by a voice they knew of all too well.

"If it isn't Hunter of the month," Dexter said out loud. They turned to see the Beta crossing his hands with a smirk on his face, his normal escort next to him humbly, "Someone's got their hand wrapped around a Royal. I never thought you were that type of girl."

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

"Nothing much... just an observation made by me and my boys," he replied, raising his hands up innocently. Katie couldn't think of him in his stubborn moods since he'd stood up for her during her speech, but his attack this moment had something else behind it. Maybe it was just idle chitchat, but she knew something that might have helped her uncover what was going on behind his mind.

"Don't you have someone else whose life you'd rather make miserable?" she asked him dismissively. Sandra always loved to watch their exchanges. The two weren't friends but took pleasure at jesting jokingly even though every now and then, Dexter would break the rules and have to be put to a stop, a painful process.

"No, not really... Of late, I am taking pleasure in poking at couples. Our moon goddess is taking her sweet time in giving me a mate," he said.

"That's not what I heard considering you won't be eighteen until later next month. I heard some other piece of information from someone else. Were you dumped, dear Dexter?" Katie smirked as she finished her taunt.

"What gave you that idea? Nothing of the sort..."

"Well, I heard of the reason you attacked Ash that day," she said.

"Ash was just getting himself, or herself in this case, into something that had nothing to do with her," he retorted, going on the defensive.

"Well, who was the girl?"

"That doesn't matter anyway. Let's change the subject. I'd actually come looking for both of you and not just the hunter of the month. I saw the person that Sandra couldn't take her eyes off and the way she reacted to him," he said, wiggling his eyebrows.

"Wait, really, but Sandra is barely expressive..."

“What seems to be going on here?” someone’s voice cut through the air, silencing Katie and sending shivers through her body. This reaction was noted with clarity in her mind as an overreaction on her part, ‘Celeste, what the hell did you do to me?’ she cursed the moon goddess. Cole was behind them staring at the odd confrontation. “Is something wrong here?”

“No, there is nothing wrong,” Dexter broke through the silence to answer the Royal and turned to leave winking at the hunter just before he looked away.

“Hey, Jason,” Sandra said, clearly noticing her friend’s state of ‘thought.’

“Hey Sandra, good morning,” he replied. She greeted the rest while Katie also got out of her trance to greet them. The three of them looked very much like the time when they first appeared on the first day they showed up at the school.

“Katie, are you okay?” Cole asked, having forgotten to greet Sandra all at the same go.

“Yeah, I’m fine. I’d like to thank...”

“Don’t mention it,” he stopped her, “To be honest, I was having fun with that speech. You handled yourself well for a suspected murderer.”

“It was terrifying actually...” she replied, chuckling, “If anything had gone wrong, there was the option of everyone advocating for my direct imprisonment or death sentence.”

“That’s not something to say so lightly,” Cole said. “Okay, now that we have the greetings out of this, we were actually looking for you guys.”

“Anything specific you had to ask,” Katie asked.

“Yes, we have never been to this Founder’s Festival thing and we’re hoping to get the best guides in the school. We were told the two beauties usually walk together and are almost impossible to miss because one has strikingly blue eyes,” he carefully voiced.

Katie felt her cheeks start to heat up and answered him quickly in an attempt to distract herself from the compliments, “Well, you found them and they are currently unoccupied.”

“Wonderful,” with that said, the five friends were on their way to the lower floor to start the tour of the entire festival. Katie couldn’t help but rub her cheeks when the boys weren’t looking. ‘Is this a good thing or a bad thing?’

Chapter 70:

Katie took the werewolves through the student’s projects first marvelling at the flashy ones. The projects that were presented by the students from higher classes were always better than the ones that were from the lower classes. Ranging from robotics in computer studies to biological innovations that yielded incredible production, the projects that were on display were a sight to see. Katie and Sandra took turns in taking control of their group.

While Katie didn’t show that she wanted to move through the festival with Cole alone or at least that’s what she thought she did, Sandra made it quite obvious by leaning more to Jason when she wasn’t the one explaining what they were looking at. And this message was inevitably reaching Caden’s ears.

“Hey Sandra, what’s that supposed to be?” Jason asked, pointing to a photo booth.

“Oh, I see what you’re doing. Come on, let’s take some,” she rushed the guy into the booth that had been set up by students from the middle school section. The kids got to work taking the pictures of the two who were now getting carried away. Katie couldn’t help but notice Caden’s silence. There was tension between him and Jason. She didn’t want to pry, but Sandra and Jason’s current situation provided her with the perfect opportunity.

“Hey, Caden, are you okay?” she asked.

“Yeah, I’m fine. Loving how chummy those two are getting,” he said.

“Oh yeah, I’m not talking about them...” she smiled, deterring the distraction Caden had tried using. Caden’s eyebrows scrunched close in frustration raising alarms in Katie’s mind. She backed off immediately retreating to Cole who’d let her approach him. Well, he hadn’t had any progress since they’d woken up that morning.

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“Thought you could get through to him, he’s been getting more distant even with us,” Cole said.

“I’ll just leave you guys to your double date. Don’t worry about me. I’m going for a run,” he said. Cole stopped her from calling him back, a somewhat knowing expression on his face.

“Let him be, Katie. Something is bothering him, but it’s something we don’t know about. If it was somewhat related to what was going on right now, he would have said so already. He’s quite straightforward,” he said.

“So what are you trying to say? That he is worried about something that is completely unrelated to people coupling right in front of him,” she asked bluntly, taking a gamble in the name of answers.

Cole bit back his reply trying to disregard what she’d just said, “Who, might I ask, is ‘coupling up’ at the moment?” he asked, his voice steady.

“The two in the booth...”

“Don’t say that. Not one word,” Cole had his hand on her mouth to stop her from saying more. He took her around a corner and into a classroom, “We don’t know if those two are meant to be mates. Jason doesn’t have it in him to fall for anyone else, or at least that’s what I know, but he says he doesn’t know what it is he feels towards your friend. How old is Sandra?”

“She will turn eighteen in a month and a half. Are you under the impression that the two could be mates, but not know just because Sandra is not yet of age,” she asked him, thoughts taking over her mind.

“Yes, that is what I am saying. It’s not unheard of for a pair to have a sense of the bond before their time arrives. This usually happens if they won’t be able to meet when the time actually arrives so that they aren’t apart by then,” he said.

“Are you trying to tell me that you guys won’t be here in a month from now?” Katie did not like what she was hearing. She blocked the thoughts of the future from her mind, “No, never mind that. Let’s enjoy the day, you still have a tour to finish.”

Cole noticed the disturbance in what he’d said, but obeyed the lady in front of him. Now that he thought of it, that unexplained feeling that Jason talked of was similar to the first time he met this hunter. He’d felt drawn to her and she’d flipped him off immediately like he didn’t matter one bit despite his blue eyes, looking back on it now, he chuckled at the awkward situation, “Very well, my lady. After you,” he said.

“Perfect, now come on. I have to show you what happens outside of the science projects. No offence, they are fun, but there is a reason it’s called a festival and not a Science fair,” she reasoned, holding his hand and running back to the photo booth.

They searched the booth and found that the two were nowhere to be seen. Cole got his phone from his pocket and dialled Jason’s number. Katie didn’t know why it irked her that she might have to continue this tour with Sandra and Jason, that is if they found them. “Well, he said Sandra decided to give him a private tour or something regarding a giant fish tank that was supposed to be on the other side of the festival very... very far from where we currently are and that even if we tried to chase them down, we still wouldn’t get to them because they are just so... so far ... I’ll stop lying now.” It was quite obvious with the way he was mincing words.

Katie couldn’t help the smile that came to her face, “That was a good try though.”

“You think... I’ve been practising. Taking lessons from Jason... To tell the lie and make it believable, you must be the lie,” he said, imitating his friend’s voice in the silliest way possible.

“Yes, I’m sure you’re making good progress,” Katie laughed at her partner. They walked on, Katie leading Cole further from the school. The festival started to change from school projects to stalls from different vendors and different setups all engineered towards providing an interesting service.

“This is impressive, though it isn’t as impressive as the Royal games. Now those are something else,” he said.

“What are the Royal games?”

Cole stopped in his tracks to rub his temples. Never in his life had he ever thought he’d be explaining this to someone else. “It’s only one of the most anticipated events in the world. The Sirius family competes with the Lycaon family in a series of games that determine who’s stronger and more superior,” he said puffing out his chest.

“I take it from the way you are acting that you won the last games,” she observed the alpha.

“Yes, I did. Drake barely stood a chance against me...”

“Is that so?”

“No, he gave me such a hard time,” he pouted, his mind floating back to the finals of the competition when he’d faced off with the oldest of King Davin’s children. Back then, they used to compete in many things, but time weathers down a long-distance relationship.

"I haven't played many games in this life of mine unless you call the sparring with fellow juniors training," she said.

"What do you mean by sparring?" he asked.

This question sparked a whole explanation of the life of a hunter. She explained the different training regimens that the junior hunters were put through before they were allowed to pick mentors. Mentors were supposed then to train the juniors until Prometheus deemed them worthy of possessing a Prometheus gift. This was the hardest part though since Prometheus gifts were rarely offered and only given to those that deserved them in all ways.

For this reason, hunters possessed similar characteristics and the one sole attribute of being incorruptible. Cole stopped by an ice cream stand, forcing the storyteller to stop as well, "What is it?"

"What does it look like?" he asked as he checked the prices on the menu. A lady sat on a chair inside the stall reading a book, taking almost no notice of the people that had just come to tend to her stall. "I wouldn't ask you to do that. Ice cream is expensive in these parts."

"Have you ever had some in that case?"

"Yes, Samantha bought me some, one day when she was taking me through the festival. It cost her a sum but she did her best to hide the payment," she said. Ice cream was a rare commodity that was barely produced and even less transported because of the transport costs. As a result, it was very expensive.

"It's expensive here because of how remote it is, but that shouldn't stop you from enjoying it," he said. The girl inside the stall finally took notice of them and smiled.

"What flavour would you like me to give you?" she asked him, winking at him as she finished the question. Katie narrowed her eyes at the girl but said nothing.

"I'll have strawberry for the lady and vanilla for me," he said to her.

She started getting their orders ready eyeing the Royal, "You guys look quite chummy. You chose the right event for a date."

"Don't get the wrong idea... this isn't..."

"You might not want to play that card," the girl stopped Katie. She handed Cole his cone and turned her eyes to Katie, "This one's a keeper. Don't let him slip away, Rogue killer." With one last wink at the girl, she turned retrieved her book and started reading again. Katie's cheeks were hot at the moment, her emotions pouring out of her in waves. She wasn't so used to this, but she didn't mind it either.

"So a date it is then..." Cole confirmed with a smug smile on his face. 'Was he doing something wrong? Yes, yes, he was. Regardless, he couldn't deny the pull he had towards the hunter. Her birthday was the next day anyway as he could recall. He pushed the dark thoughts that threatened to plague him and allowed himself to get distracted by her flushed face. Katie was definitely looking more expressive than she usually was.

"I guess so..." she replied, with a sigh.

“Eat up before it melts...”