

Chosen 81

Chapter Eighty One

“Sir Haelstrom, I would ask that you refrain from disrespecting the Hunters of Brigadia as there will be no second warning. They work diligently to keep this town safe and will not take kindly to the insults of an outsider using baseless information from rumours,” Anthony stepped in to end the argument.

“Well then, is there something else that you might want to add to that, Director?” Lionel added, his voice taking on a serious tone.

Through gritted teeth, the Director added, “I extend apologies on behalf of anyone who might have offended you during this minor dispute and hope that you can see past their misdeeds.”

“I’m going out for some fresh air,” Katie announced walking out of the room with no authorization. This was a violation of many rules and she was probably going to end up being punished for it later. Her newly-found impulsive behaviour, however, would not let her sit and take these insults head-on without any form of retaliation.

The meeting proceeded as it was supposed to. With Katie gone, Lionel was much quieter and let the rest talk on more. The maids later brought food to them and they ate while they talked about their recent exploits. Clark had a lot of tales for the hunters as they hadn’t met in quite some time and he was eager to catch up on what had happened while he was in the Sirius empire.

He narrated that when Jeremiah had decided to quit being a hunter and decided they moved after being humiliated by a girl riddled by muscle pains and on the brink of collapse. He didn’t see himself fit to be a hunter much longer. None of them would have thought that he’d only come up with the story so that he would join another agency and train tirelessly away from the eyes of those he knew in Brigadia.

Anthony wanted to know the reason behind this course of action, but Jeremiah was not comfortable sharing it. As the conversation continued, Lionel found himself in need of a fresh breath of air, so he excused himself from the table. Sandra was worried for her dear friend who just wouldn’t return to her seat even after thirty minutes had passed.

Lionel, on the other hand, had gone out of his way to hunt down the hunter, using his sensitive nose to guide him to the upper floors of the school building where he found her seated at a balcony, the wind blowing through her hair. ‘Talk of getting a fresh breath of air...’

“Might I join you?” he asked the girl who, up until now hadn’t noticed his presence. It was well past noon and the sun was not as hot as it one would have thought. In fact, one would say that the scene before him was of someone who couldn’t wait for the sun to set.

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“Couldn’t wait for my return?” she asked him.

“No, I got worried that something might have happened,” he said to her, allowing his smirk to grace his face.

“How does it feel to be the heir to the Haelstrom pack?” she asked him, gesturing that he could join her.

“Well, to be honest, I don’t know how to feel about it just yet. I have a lot to learn. This will be the last time that I come here though,” he said.

“And why is that?”

“Considering the way you are still irritated by my presence, the reason I used to accompany my father to come here has faded,” he declared.

“That’s a harsh way of putting it. What will happen to the Founder’s festival then?” she asked.

“Well, considering there is a new noble family that will like to come here because this was their home, I think this place will be fine,” he said.

“I would have thought that Brigadia had the power to win your heart like it did your parents before you. Though you are still obnoxiously annoying,” she said.

“I’m used to the comment. Part of my charm you know,” he chuckled for a bit before getting deadly serious, “Come with me back to my pack.”

“I thought I made it clear that I had no intentions of doing so the last time. You had the audacity to ask me that in front of the entire meeting,” she said.

“Well, this time you only survived the advance during the meeting because you walked out before I could make it,” he said, “And I’m quite sure you’ve grown smart enough this time to know that this request is one that you are lucky to be receiving. I am a high ranking noble dating back to the...”

“You can stop there,” she stopped him mid-sentence.

“There you go again,” he scowled, “Stopping me before completing my sentences. Take it from me that it’s absolutely irritating.”

“I’m only saving you the trouble. What you envision when you think of me coming with you back to the Haelstrom pack is nothing but a fantasy. To put it bluntly, it’s not going to happen,” she said.

“Why do you say that? Why do you thwart my attempts?”

“I would like to start from the point where you’re a werewolf alpha required to have a mate before he can take over the pack. What part of that are you trying to ignore? Anyway, there are far more reasons than I’d care to count,” she said.

“You don’t take it easy on someone,” the man before her chuckled, taking a step back from her. It seemed as though he was retreating for the first time since she’d met him, “I’d expect nothing more from a hunter. I won’t bother you anymore... Fell for a pair of sapphires. Forgive me for the trouble I’ve caused. Obviously, you will since I’m a high ranking noble that everyone would rather have in their good graces.” Even as he left, he couldn’t help but try to retrain his boastful ‘charm’.

‘Why do I feel sorry for him?’ Katie thought as she watched him go back to the meeting. ‘Just ten more minutes,’ she told herself while she looked back at the horizon. The evening sky would soon show itself.

When Lionel returned to the meeting and took his place at the table, the hunters that had an idea what his calm demeanour meant and the reasons behind why he was always trying to get on Katie’s nerves

could tell what had happened. Sandra, on the other hand, was bewildered by the drastic change in the man's behaviour. He still commanded respect but didn't throw it around. It never occurred to her that he didn't have a reason to throw it around much longer.

"Katie is surely taking her time to return," Jeremiah said after a few minutes.

"If she takes five more minutes out, I'll send someone to call her. It's like she's forgetting that she's supposed to take charge of escorting the VIPs through the festival," Anthony said out loud. Katie came back moments later, taking her seat.

"Forgive my sudden leave," she voiced her apologies.

"Are we going to know what it was for?" Tina asked absentmindedly while hacking at the fried fish she had in front of her.

"No, you aren't going to know that bit of information," Katie confirmed before commencing the palate-pleasing ceremony, as one would call it, for the chefs that had been called to cook this food were nothing more of extraordinary when it came to preparing delicious feasts.

The table fell silent on hearing the blunt reply before splitting into random murmurs as neighbours talked amongst each other. "Where are the Royals staying while they are here?"

"Brigade Hotel," Anthony answered.

"Ah, the town's pride and joy 4.5-star hotel," Lionel said, absentmindedly. Nothing seemed to interest him now that he had finished the reason for coming here.

"Katie, I know you don't lie and all that when it comes to the hunters' exploits, but I wanted to hear it from you. Was Kyle really a rogue in disguise?" Kendra asked the girl.

"Yeah, that was what I said in the speech," she said.

"You'd so easily turn against him like that..."

"If that was the case, I would have caught far before he the chance to run, but he ran before I could find out and had even prepared a recording admitting that he was indeed a rogue. I also found evidence in his abandoned home," she explained.

"I try to get you to spill the details and Kendra gets through so easily. This world's so harsh," Lionel whined, sparing them a glance, "Please do go on..."

"Well, the last time you didn't say please, so that's the difference between the two," Katie said before proceeding with the story, "He was found with drugs that suppress the werewolf inside you, though they only work on werewolves that haven't turned eighteen yet."

"I've never heard of such a drug," Kendra said.

"It's an illegal drug that's can be found if someone knows where to find it. The hunters have tried their best to stop its spread and its use because its base component is wolfsbane. We hope we can stop its distribution since it's highly dangerous and can kill a werewolf if overdosed," he said.

“That sounds like a drug that I don’t want to know about. Why would something like this stay a secret for so long?” Kendra asked.

“Well, putting information like that out to the public can have both positive and negative advantages. However much one might say the drug is painless, it induces a human state in a werewolf and even stops the glow of their eyes. During this time, if they take an overdose of the drug, their death would be painless and for this reason, the information is kept secret such that it might not then become a cause for increased suicides or attempted murder,” Anthony explained.

“Wow, people will always find a way to make something that’s basically harmless completely dangerous,” Tina exclaimed, her face depicting whatever horrid scenes were going through her mind.

“Yes, that is true. One can never know what the public will end up using certain things for. As we witnessed earlier, there is the possibility that a big part of the world did not like Katie’s speech,” the conversation continued along those lines, going into different debates that eventually excluded Katie and allowed her to focus on the food before her.

82 Chapter Eighty Two

The luncheon soon came to an end. Anthony stood up to declare the program that the VIPs were to follow in order to get the day going. They only had one hour to take the VIPs through the entire school to look through the projects and they would then set them free to roam about the festival though they were to pick bodyguards from the hunters that were present.

Katie was excused from this job as she would not be able to fulfil this job past seven o’clock. Principal Brown was called upon to take over when the VIPs were ready for the tour. They led them calmly through, having the students explain what they had been working on. The students were mostly tired since they’d set all this up in the morning and were now having to explain it to the VIPs for the umpteenth time.

This was viewed as part of the test. If a student was able to pull off their presentation without giving the impression of being tired and trying to get it over with, then that student would gain merit when it came down to what the VIPs finally decided at the end of the entire tour. Katie walked with Sandra behind the VIPs calmly before her phone vibrated from within her pocket.

She pulled it out and saw a text from Samantha asking that they meet on the roof. This was an odd location, but also one that was guaranteed to be private as they discussed what they intended to. “Anthony, if I might be excused, I have something urgent to discuss with Samantha.”

“Make it quick, Chase. It’s unbecoming of you to miss out on the role you were given,” the man warned before she made her way for the roof.

On the roof, Samantha was pacing impatiently, “What took you so long? How did you forget that what I wanted to talk to you about was urgent?”

“I couldn’t keep that in mind with the chaos that went down during that luncheon,” she said.

“Never mind, I have something to tell you, Katie. I heard it from your parents. I don’t know what makes the Chase family so special, but it’s been a blessing to have them here. That ability that you all have to detect danger. I don’t know if you picked up on it, but your parents did or should I say your guardians...”

“What are you saying, Samantha? Get to the point,” Samantha had her hands on the girl’s shoulders and they were shivering the more she rambled on without making any effort to get to the point that she was supposed to be making.

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“Okay, yeah right. I was telling you something. Your parents... no your parents are in the hotel... I meant your guardians, the ones from the Chase family that don’t age,” she rambled on again.

“Samantha...” she paused remembering the part about not ageing. It didn’t ring a bell in her memory even though she was sure that was not the point of the conversation, “We’ll get back to the ageing bit later. What have you come to tell me?”

“Your guardians were feeling very uneasy about tonight. So much so that they were afraid enough to call in one of the four Mighty Hunters of Prometheus...” she said. Katie froze on hearing the news.

“What do you mean? Do they mean to say that something bad is going to happen?” she asked Samantha, this time shaking her.

“I don’t know Katie... I don’t know... All I know is that calling on one of those four is something that’s only done if there might be a war. They are the most feared hunters on the planet. No one matches them in power, not even the Royals,” she said, shaken as she said it. Hunters were rarely moved by something, but from the way Samantha was acting, something was amiss.

“Is the Mighty hunter coming here then?”

“Yes, they said he accepted their request since he trusts the Chase family’s ability to detect danger. As we speak, the man is on his way here, but as you can assume, he wasn’t near and it might take him some time to arrive. Before he comes, your guardians asked me to tell you that you stay out of trouble,” she said.

“What has any of this got to do with me?”

“That’s part of what makes this all the more frightening... we don’t know...” Katie left Samantha on the roof after remembering what she was supposed to be doing with the others. She texted Sandra so that she might get directions and catch up with the group of VIPs that were milling about the school like they owned the place.

Samantha watched the birthday girl leave, her mind a mess. She didn’t know what to do and yet, from the information she’d received, this was all centred on her guardians’ concern for Katie. The message was being sent to all the hunters telling them that they get ready. It was a good thing Frost and Jackeline had returned.

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The Sirius family rested in their suite after hearing what the Chase hunters that were responsible for protecting their daughter had to say. They were concerned but had nothing to do about it. It was decided that they were to meet the girl the next day after she’d shifted so that they met their daughter when she was whole again. The way she was supposed to be.

“Are you worried, my dear?” Queen Martha walked up to her husband who watched the horizon with a solemn expression. She carried with her a glass of water and was dressed in a calm white gown that flowed smoothly down to her feet.

“I’m on tension. You know of the Chase family all too well. They were the reason Cole Lycaon survived the invasion when he was an infant. They detected the danger to his life before anyone else while the ones that helped us were only called upon by the moon goddess to protect ours. Getting a warning from them is always cause for worry...” she said.

“I know what you mean, honey. Katie is a strong girl. From what we’ve heard, she’ll survive this,” they said.

“That’s not what worries me... I’ve been thinking. I looked into it and it’s true what they say. Rogues are afraid to come here. So afraid that it had been a full year before a rogue was spotted in this place. There was no need for a cause for worry and everything we have to go on is coming from the odd power that the Chase family has,” he said.

“Well, if you haven’t noticed, that’s how they work. There was no reason for there to be an attack on the castle eighteen years ago when the rogues made an attempt on our daughter’s life and Cole’s. If it wasn’t for the call we received from the Lycaon family, there is no way we would have known. The guards were present and so were the hunters, but they still managed to get through and make it inside the palace somehow...” she said.

“It still bothers me that I was never told,” she said.

“Well, for starters, when I did four years later, the number of rogues that were attacking Brigadia increased by a lot. The Chase hunters reported to me that it was the case until Katie clocked fifteen years of age,” she said.

“The birth of the rogue killer... that story knows how to calm my nerves. I’m sure we don’t have much to worry about. Best to be on our toes. Should I call my, Arthur and Rory?” he asked.

“Your Beta Alphas, no, let them be. They need to handle the situation at the palace while we are gone...” she said... Beta alphas, the two right-hand men of a Royal. A royal family was only supposed to have two of them coming from the Head of the family. In other words, it was only the king that was allowed to have beta alphas. They were more powerful than alphas and the clear definition of the gap between Royals and normal alphas.

However, they didn’t have as much freedom as normal alphas. Beta alphas were powerful and were definitely scarier than normal ones, but they were also bound to the King by a much stronger bond than anyone could fathom. As the normal alphas could dismiss a request from the King, beta alphas couldn’t disobey their King. As a result, the King would even find himself being careful with his speech as every sort of request was a command in the eyes of these powerful creatures.

Some argue that because of this exact rule, they were arguably more powerful than their King, but that was just a rumour that developed when it was realized that the Royals rarely got their hands dirty or even stepped onto the battlefield, leaving the Beta alphas to demonstrate their monstrous power.

Davin Sirius' nerves had calmed a bit after the short talk with his wife. Lina stayed on the sofa watching her favourite show from the safety of her sheet although her mind had long since wandered from the contents of the show she was watching, having repeated the episode a dozen times. Drake paced about the room calmly, his thoughts a swirling mess. He needed to find a way to cool his nerves. "Father, might I go out for a run?"

"That might do all of us some good, but to keep discretion and avoid rousing the werewolf residents, I propose we go one by one, for all those that need to go for a run. Take your time, Drake. No one's rushing you," he said, the king said. The Prince was eager to let his sandy brown wolf out having heard the disturbing warning from the Chase family.

83 Chapter Eighty Three

Katie did the best she could do to contain her nerves from what she'd just heard from Samantha. Samantha wasn't someone to be shaken by something, but from the way she was acting, something was definitely wrong. One thing she could tell, however, was that the danger wasn't immediate. She'd been asked to keep her guard up and that's what she did. Keeping her eyes peeled for any sort of suspicious activity.

There was nothing out of the ordinary throughout the entire tour through the projects. The VIPs each chose something that had impressed them. Although something currently had them occupied at the moment. They'd all returned to the staffroom where they were to discuss what they were going to decide. "That student that built a water purifier out of household materials was impressive," Tina mused.

"Yeah, that's true, but I'd go with the child who succeeded in robotics. Scientific Invention is something of a trending topic these days," Lionel said.

"I was of the same opinion. In fact, I'm ready to give that boy a scholarship in the Sirius Royal capital," Clark said.

"That will not be happening. I had my eyes on that one while you two were still taking a look at the water purifier. Besides, they both have potential, I say you go with that one and I'll happily take the one that has done the robotics. Besides, I haven't heard any of you say something about the one who wrote a thesis on increasing agricultural production, that one was nice," Lionel was going all out.

"The one on agricultural production was certainly creative and open-minded, but that would help if he was given the right facilities to work with and frankly the capital is not a place that would see that child's dreams realized," Tina argued.

"Did you just look down on Haelstrom as a village and not a town of economic importance or did I hear you wrong?" Lionel asked.

"You know quite well that the capital would not function without a town like Haelstrom to see that production that it's not capable of flourishes and becomes great. Since we are from different empires and you seem to show less interest in that child I would probably benefit more if I informed my king of this new development and had the child taken somewhere within the Sirius capital to a place that will foster his bright and innovative ideas," Clark and Tina were not going to back down very easily.

“What do you take me for? My issue was with the child of robotics. I’m not backing down on that one. I know the one that shows great promise in agriculture would be a good pick, but there is only so many that I could take,” Lionel tried to defend himself seeing his grip on the child-of-interest loosening.

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“They are really going at it this time,” Sandra whispered into Katie’s ear.

“Yeah, I never thought Lionel was the type to actually take interest in matters such as this one,” Katie replied. The discussion continued to rage on. The hunters would have said they wanted it to end and they all move on, but for some reason watching the VIPs battling over the kids and placing all points on the table seemed to amuse them and they watched the discussion go on and on.

It was only when Anthony looked at his watch that he realized that they should have been wrapping this up a long time lest they risk the chance of enjoying the rest of the festival. “Dear VIPs, as we have noticed your severe interest in the children that have shown talent in today’s festival, we must reach a conclusion before we burn any more daylight. So I bring forth a proposal that the children that seem to have sparked an interest in both parties be handed the choice.

Surely these students, given how serious they are, also know what part of the world would be better for their advancement in their fields. It would be okay to add incentives that better their academic ventures and help them reach the necessary conclusion. It will be forbidden, however, to give them incentives that do not have anything to do with the time they will be spending on their academics. Accommodation of the best calibre is an obvious privilege along with food and clothing.

Therefore, everything that is to be provided as an incentive is strictly for academic purposes. This being said, we’d save up enough time to enjoy the rest of the festival as was planned,” the VIPs listened to the Director and both sides looked visibly taken by the idea that the man had brought forward.

“That does sound like a sound plan. It would be better than fighting amongst ourselves. To be honest, I had no idea Lionel would put up this much of a fight. When he came in his father’s stead, I thought he wouldn’t be as interested as his father was in the years prior to this one,” Clark confessed, sighing.

“I did come to do what my father does every time he was here, so I could not let him down. Besides, I might not look it, but I was chosen as an heir because I have my region’s best interests at heart,” Lionel sounded different as though someone had locked him in a formal tone, a thought that almost made Katie laugh as Sandra voiced it in her ear.

“Very well then. I’m glad to see all is not lost for the Haelstrom pack,” Jeremiah pitched in.

“What’s that supposed to mean?”

“Moving on to the next program of the day. I have drawn flyers of names of VIPs and the hunters that shall be their escorts through the festival. We know that the escorts you brought with you would rather enjoy the festival themselves rather than continue to work the way they did on their trip. This is like a thank you for letting them get you here safely...” Anthony said, raising his voice such that the rest did not interfere with the miniature argument they’d pretty much already started.

“These meetings have loose protocols... How did I get into trouble last time?” Katie whispered to Sandra even though due to the silent room, many people heard her and stopped to pay attention to what she was saying, “Did I say something?”

“Forgive her manners...” Anthony called the attention of the room once more and finished the rest that he was supposed to discuss. Basically the do’s and the don’ts of the festival and where to go and where not to go. Once he was done, the VIPs were excused and allowed to leave the vicinity and explore the festival, “Farewell, and have fun. At eight, there will be a feast for dinner and the dance will commence at 9:30, for those of you that want to have fun swaying with your partners and shaking you tushies.”

“There are some words that man says and just makes me wonder... Where does he get them?” Sandra said once Anthony was gone. Katie chuckled at her friend’s silliness.

“How was your tour with Jason?” she asked the girl.

“Why are you asking me? I am seeing a new fine piece of jewellery that really sparks with your eyes,” Sandra said, her voice going up a few octaves and gaining twice the excitement.

“I also wanted to talk about that, by the way. Katie, you look like a whole new person with that necklace. So spill, was it Cole who got it for you? Oh, if only Jackeline were here to see this,” for some reason, Samantha was already with them and her eyes were screaming to get in on the story behind the sapphire necklace that ran around Katie’s neck.

Katie, for the moment, was feeling like the most important person. Her job as Head of Security was certainly starting to feel like an irrelevance, “Yes, it was Cole. It was such a thoughtful gift, I barely had the words to thank him,” she indulged.

“Umm, Katie...” a deep voice came from behind them. Someone that the three had not expected. Katie turned just in time to see Jeremiah before her, someone she’d longed to see since he left them. Although she never would have thought that he’d continue his training as a hunter, “Would you take the tour with me?”

“What’s this? Like some kind of proposal. It’s a tour, but you two girls have turned it into something else entirely,” Samantha almost yelled, throwing her hands into the air before dragging Sandra away from the two of them.

“It’s crazy and I know that, but what is someone supposed to do when asked for a tour, say no...” Sandra said while she was being dragged away, “I just wish I got some jewellery. It’s a nice way to make a tour interesting.”

Katie buried her head in her hands as she watched the two hoodlums walking away, “Who are they talking about? Is it the same Cole that I found you shooting arrows with?”

“Yeah, that very one,” she confessed.

“He bought you a necklace... that’s that pretty...” the man sounded astonished by what he was saying.

“Yeah, can’t a guy buy for a girl some nice stuff?” she asked him, placing a goofy smile on her face feigning innocence.

“Well, only if the guy is meant to be with the girl. That’s when it would make sense. To me anyway, but what do I know? Should we get going?” he asked.

The two of them had just got out of the school doors when they ran into Cole Lycaon, dressed to kill and ready for the ball that night. Well, that was obviously not going to happen, but he was dressed in a black suit that stunned Katie immediately. Though his face didn’t appreciate the fact that she was in the company of a male other than him and Katie was well aware of this fact which made this situation all the more hopeless.

84 Chapter Eighty Four

Drake Sirius of the Sirius pack was the next in line on the throne of the Sirius family, not because it was his birthright, but simply because he’d proven himself to his father to be more than capable of taking over the crown. The only person that didn’t approve, however, was his uncle. The man was peculiar and old fashioned. He was far older than his father and frankly didn’t look fit to be called Davin’s brother.

One of the secrets of the Lycaon family was that this man was no in fact Davin’s brother, but rather his uncle. With humans that lived short lives and the lack of information preserving tactics, it was not known to the public that this werewolf was indeed that old. Drake let his thoughts fly while he ran through the woods, his wolf leading him more and more into the forest and away from Brigadia. He did not know where the wolf was taking them, but he also didn’t know his mind since rogues were no problem to him.

However, the further he ran the more he became aware of a presence in the forest that his wolf seemed to be seeking. Focusing more on what he was getting at, he could tell there was a lone wolf in this forest. The wolf wasn’t a rogue, so what was he doing in the forest this far from the town. He finally slowed down as he felt he was getting closer to his target.

It was not long before he heard the soft whimpers of a wolf in mourning. The atmosphere in the vicinity was just as thick and sad as the wolf that inhabited it. He moved ever so slowly and carefully until he found what he was looking for. At the roots of one of the biggest trees in the forest that he had seen so far, a coffee brown wolf lay there coiled up. Every once in a while the wolf would cringe at whatever was going through his mind.

For him to have gotten this close without being detected, this wolf must have not been paying that much again. Drake kept wondering where he’d seen the wolf for it was very familiar to him. He got even closer, knowing that he couldn’t leave him there. For rogues would have gotten to him before he would have noticed either.

As Drake got closer, the place grew quieter that even his heartbeat was noisy. A step on a twig was all he would have needed to be noticed. He took a few steps back and barked to announce his presence. The coffee brown wolf was on its toes in the next few seconds, its eyes staring back at the royal. They were bright red, a colour that confirmed the identity of the wolf before him, this was Caden, one of Cole’s best friends.

“What are you doing here?” he sent the message through a temporary mind link that royals were able to make with any werewolf that wasn’t a rogue.

“Is that you, Drake?”

“Yes, it’s me...” the wolf relaxed upon confirmation of his identity and sat back down in his original position. The sandy brown wolf wasn’t amused by this behaviour although he couldn’t avoid the urge to try and help remedy it. “What happened?”

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“I wouldn’t want to trouble you with my matters, you have far more to care about,” Caden replied.

“You might be right, but right now, the only thing I can care about is in front of me. The rest I can merely worry. Why tell me what’s wrong?” he said.

“It’s a matter of the Lycaon family and not the Sirius family,” Caden pushed again.

“Well, I don’t see Cole mourning the way you are...”

“Can’t you take a hint? I don’t want your help. I’m doing just fine on my own,” he said.

“I can offer you a distraction. From your state, you will probably be here when it happens,” Drake said.

“When what happens?” Caden’s curiosity peaked. The Royal knew something that he didn’t know... come to think of it, they hadn’t been given a reason for their presence... “You aren’t here for the Founder’s festival, are you?”

“No, we aren’t and frankly I’m not sure if I should be telling you why we are here either, but you won’t let me help you with what’s going on with you. Take your pick, would you like to share or would I rather just go on and tell you the reason why mourning endlessly might just be a bad idea...

“Fine then... I don’t want to intrude. Just tell me why I shouldn’t mourn for much longer...” Caden asked.

Drake had almost forgotten the type of person Caden was. He mentally smirked, both options that he’d offered had been swatted that easily, ‘Sneaky...’ “Quite simple really... The Chase family sent out a warning that everyone is to stay on high alert tonight. Something is going to happen. Something dangerous... Most say it might be a rogue attack. I don’t know what it is either.”

“I’ve heard of the odd workings of the members of that family. In that case, I will come to my alpha the moment I’m summoned. Just let him know that.” something about the way he said it made it gave him all the assurance that he needed to know that he would show up without fail.

“I do want to know what caused someone of your mental fortitude to get into such a state...” he tried again, “Perhaps I can help...”

“You honour me, Prince Drake. Though I must decline that request for I do not have any intention of telling this story to anyone before my alpha gets to know of it. Besides, I doubt you possess the ability to bring back the dead...” so someone had died. Drake could already make a clean guess who it was for he knew that Ash had already been initiated into the Lycaon pack and was part of them.

“Maybe I can help distract you then?”

There it was... the one reason the man before him had lasted as long as he did against Cole Lycaon. He didn’t know when to give up even when there was no reason for him to keep going. It was a character

that they always found impressive. He always followed through to the end with everything that he swore to do.

“You came here with the intention of cheering up a werewolf whose identity you hadn’t known?” Caden asked.

“If it’s that obvious, then you know that I am not leaving until I have accomplished that task,” the prince said boastfully.

“You amuse me... How is your sister doing? I did promise to beat her just once in a race,” Caden said.

“Oh, she got much faster...” Drake said, crushing the male’s hopes.

“Unbelievable...” Caden was starting to get comfortable in the man’s presence. Although this came along with a curiosity to know what the Sirius family was doing here. “She makes up for her lack of physical strength in speed and agility.”

“The next Royal games are not far... I can’t wait to kick your team this time...” Drake started musing...

“Will you be allowed to attend this time? You are the oldest of us. What makes you think they’ll let you participate?” Caden asked.

“It will be my last appearance in the games. It will be glorious...” he continued.

“I love the way you seem to be a professional dreamer. You will never win the games...” Caden scoffed.

“Oh, but this time I have a secret weapon. There will be nothing holding me back,” he said.

“Why would you say such a thing? Just train harder and beat Cole when you get stronger than him,” Caden sighed.

“Oh, I keep up my training, but if Cole’s also training as hard as he does, I don’t stand a chance against the moon goddess’ chosen,” the Royal shrugged.

“What do you mean, Moon goddess’ chosen? That topic was buried when the death of your younger sister was confirmed,” Caden said... “Unless... wait...”

“Oh my...” Drake exclaimed, sarcasm laced in his voice, “I let it slip now, didn’t I?”

“But that’s not possible,” Caden’s mind was a swarm of thoughts. Katie was human... she was, wasn’t she? Prometheus would never grant a werewolf his gifts, not to mention both of them... It made sense that it would be the reason behind the coming of the entire Sirius family. “I am under the impression Cole is not supposed to know this until the time is right,” the wolf that was starting to get up to his feet groaned, falling right back into his original position.

“Did I help in distracting you?” Drake asked.

“Yes, you did... I’ll have to inform my alpha about what I was thinking so that a proper burial will be given to our fallen. Although, right now, what you have told me is quite distracting... What do you require from me?”

“Stay on your toes... When the moon rises tonight... My sister will shift. Beyond that is unknown to me. I only know of the plan to unite the two Chosen mates, but that’s about what I know. If your alpha doesn’t call to you, I will...” with that said, Caden was updated on what was going on in the town of Brigadia.

85 Chapter Eighty Five

Katie looked between the two men as they stared each other down. She didn’t quite understand what was going on... Jeremiah’s face was indecipherable while Cole stared back with a look of annoyance. “Who might this be?” Cole asked.

“This is...”

“The name’s Jeremiah Lawson. I believe we met at the Archery range but weren’t properly introduced,” Jeremiah interfered with Katie’s introduction.

“Ah, that was you... What are you doing here then?”

“I am one of the VIPs receiving a tour guided by a hunter. I must say, I feel so safe in the arms of the Head of Security,” Jeremiah said, his eyes lighting up.

“Let’s go, Jeremiah,” she said to him before any of this went far. However much she would rather have a second tour with Cole, she’d rather the two didn’t start some kind of rivalry which seemed to be Jeremiah’s intention.

“But we only Just met...”

“Keep moving...” Katie cut him off, pushing him away from the Royal. Right before she vanished into the crowd, she placed her hand upon the sapphire gem that lay on her chest and winked at the Royal...

A gesture that immediately set Cole’s heart to rest. “Is there something going on between the two of you?” Jeremiah asked the hunter when she was done pushing him into the fair.

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“No, not... ugh, it’s complicated,” she said to him.

“How is it complicated? He’s a werewolf. They’ve got these things they call mates and they are very possessive of them. I don’t see how that can get complicated,” he said.

“Let’s take our minds off that for now... The festival has a lot to offer...”

“We used to come here as kids... well, by then we weren’t friends yet, so I used to come here with my friends and not with you and Sandra. You don’t have to explain anything to me,” he said, cutting her distraction in half.

“Well then, what did you have in mind?” she asked.

“I was thinking we could take a walk and catch up on what we missed. I’m sure you have questions for why I left,” the man beside Katie spoke.

“You cut straight to the chase, don’t you?”

“Most times, yes... I was more curious when I heard the title that you go by these days,” he chuckled, looking into her eyes while he did. He genuinely looked happy, like hunters did when they were sure werewolves no longer posed them a threat.

“Well, that’s quite simple. I could detect the rogues the moment they were three miles away from Brigadia and that’s where the trip would end,” she explained. The same way she detected rogues was the same way she could tell that she could feel uneasy revealing that she was a werewolf to the man.

“What about you? What got you back into being a hunter?” she asked.

“You...”

Katie was frozen for a bit, trying to follow what the man had just said... “What’s that supposed to mean? I don’t remember doing anything much...”

“Well, there is weight in watching a young girl stand up to someone almost twice as big as her, trying her best and yet she was in no condition to fight. I was embarrassed to face you ever again, to be honest... But I wasn’t going to give up. So I came up with that phoney story so that we would move away. When we got to the next place, I did not stop training,” he explained.

The story had Katie completely taken... Jeremiah had listened to what she’d said those many years ago. It was clear that a rogue wouldn’t stand a chance against him. From what she’d seen at the archery range, his strength Prometheus gift had been improved as well and sharpened. He was stronger than the average hunter with a strength Prometheus gift.

“What is it that’s running through that beautiful mind of yours?” the man’s deep voice cut through her thoughts.

“Nothing really, I was just thinking of how rude I was to you that day. I looked for you to apologize,” she said.

“I got the message. I just never sent a reply. That’s how I was sure that you weren’t going to forget me even if I left for this long. You’ve got such a warm heart,” he complimented, tucking a stray hair behind her ear. Katie didn’t mind something as minuscule as her hair when in the presence of someone other than... ‘What’s happening? Wait... What’s Jeremiah doing?’

“Ummm...”

“Hey, Katie, I have something for you,” Jeremiah cut her off.

“Okay,” Katie complied following him, a familiar gut feeling of guilt came into her mind. This time she knew what it meant all too well and wasn’t surprised when Jeremiah led her to the stall she’d visited earlier with Cole.

The stall owner came out and looked in between the two of them. “It wasn’t easy to find them, but I got them. I don’t usually stock up on the same colour you know.”

“It’s okay... As long as you found what I asked,” Jeremiah said.

“I did, but it’s going to cost you...” the stall owner said to him, putting on her poker face while talking to the hunter.

“Do I look like I care about the cost?” he asked the lady. Her face softened and for a brief moment, Katie could tell that she was only trying to get the boy out of buying the jewellery. Katie herself was still stuck in her thoughts trying to figure out how to do the same cruel thing for the second time in a single day.

“Very well... Here they are...” the stall owner said, placing a small white box in the boy’s palm. She stopped him from retrieving the money he had from his pocket, “They are my gift to you. You don’t have to pay for them...”

“No, I wouldn’t do that... I know how much these are worth. I won’t take advantage of such kindness,” he said, placing the cash on the counter and bidding the stall owner farewell. Even as they walked away, Katie looked back and saw the stall owner staring at the money with a worried expression on her face. She couldn’t do much, but send her an apologetic look. Hunters were paid a monthly wage and from what Jeremiah had paid, it didn’t look like he would have any financial problems. Not to mention his family was nobility.

Opening the box, there was a beautiful pair of earrings. A sapphire jewel surrounded by a grandiose silver design of a flower. “Try them on...” Katie was still stunned until this point. ‘Getting Lionel off my back was something easy, but Jeremiah is different. I can’t say yes... But it will hurt him both... Why couldn’t he be back to just be my friend...’

“I can’t accept this, Jeremiah,” she said to him...

“Why is that?” he asked, “Is it because of him? He’s toying with you. You know it’s not rare for an alpha to sleep around before finding their...”

The distinct sound of a slap echoed through the grounds. Katie realized what she’d done seconds later after seeing her handprint on the man’s cheek turning red... Despite the guilt that threatened to consume her, she couldn’t hold back when he’d attempted to accuse Cole of the heinous crimes of an undignified alpha. “I’m sorry, Jeremiah. I just can’t accept this gift...”

Jeremiah stood still, silence taking over the vicinity. He’d made an error in judgement... a grave error. One that the vendor who’d given him the earrings had tried to show him. Unlike Lionel, he wasn’t one to back down while his dignity was still intact and gracefully give up. The hunter walked back to the stall, his fists clenched. Those that saw him knew not to get in his way.

‘It’s all that alpha’s thought. He’s got her twisted in his lies. She cannot be with someone like that when he’s only going to break her heart. Some of those damned werewolves make me sick...’ his thoughts ran. He reached the jewellery stall and threw the trinkets onto the counter.

“Didn’t go so well? I tried to...”

“Thanks for the warning. I noticed it... and yet I went through with what I was doing,” he replied, his eyes pinned to the ground.

“I’m sorry... I saw her here with someone else... the Royal, his eyes were bright blue unlike her dark blue. So I assumed they were an item from the way they acted. She had the same look that told me that you were making a mistake... You can have your money back,” the lady tried to hand him his money.

“No, you keep it. Take it as thanks for trying to warn me,” he said before leaving the stall, fists clenched, a sign that kept the stall from calling him back. Her words remained lingering thoughts, ‘You gave me twice the price that you were supposed to pay for them...’

She couldn’t bring herself to touch the earrings that had caused a man to lose his cool that bad. In the eyes of this vendor, the beautiful pieces of jewellery could just as well be cursed to always bring bad luck to their wearer.

86 Chapter Eighty Six

‘Hey Jason, get over here...’ Cole called through the mind link.

‘Huh, what do you mean? I thought you were...’ the Royal started tracking his friend as soon as he got a whiff of his scent.

‘She’s with Jeremiah... Giving him a tour, I suppose...’ the Royal said, cutting his friend’s ventures in half as he’d planned to look for Sandra. Cole finally got his eyes on the alpha and started following him while maintaining the mind link communication.

‘Very well, what do you have in mind?’ Jason asked changing course to find his alpha instead, ‘We could go watch a few archery bouts though I’d prefer to watch people get creamed in paintball,’ the alpha replied, offering distractions for his alpha. ‘Have you heard from Caden yet?’

‘No, I haven’t heard from him,’ Cole sighed, ‘Do you think he’s hiding something?’

‘Maybe...’ Jason replied, ‘Where the hell are you? I’ve been walking through this bloody maze. I know you are the only one in this entire festival with glowing blue eyes.’

‘Yes, I am the only one in this entire place with eyes that special though not the only one in Brigadia. Where are you looking, man? You know you’re not going to find me eating ice cream again,’ Cole said, following the clueless alpha to the shade tent that he’d found him in the last time they’d met.

‘Have you been...’

“It’s funny to watch someone look in all the wrong places...” Cole laughed at his friend.

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“Okay, you got me there... Now let’s get out of here and get to the bloody archery range...” Jason said, “I didn’t get the chance to go there and from what I can see, it won’t be daylight for much longer.”

“Yeah, let’s go...” right as they exited the tent, the two of them came face to face with someone that they never thought they’d run into. Jeremiah stood right in front of them with his fists clenched. Something was different about him though... Cole could tell that he was concealing a great amount of anger. His smug look had been wiped off his face and Katie was nowhere to be seen.

“Oh my, Lawson... What happened to your cheek?” Jason asked him without reading the mood he was in. “Wasn’t he supposed to be on a...” realization hit a little too late for one’s liking, ‘Oh, tour with Katie... What happened?’

“Well, my guess is that he did something stupid...” Cole answered.

“Oh, that’s not what happened. You have her wrapped up in your lies. You better stay away from her. She doesn’t need scum like you to ruin her when she has much bigger things to focus on besides...”

“You’d better stop running your mouth before we have a reason to cause a scene...” Cole stopped him mid-sentence.

“Oh, we already have all the reason to cause a scene already. By the time we leave here, you will never get close to her again,” the hunter meant his threat and Cole did not take it lightly. In fact, his wolf was screaming to tear the human before him to pieces.

Jason looked between the two males and realized they were both past words and were about to let their fists do the talking. From what he knew, Jeremiah was a powerful hunter and if he used his gift in this fight, Cole was in trouble. Cole, on the other hand, was in a mood to remind the idiot in front of him just why the Royals are feared above all kinds of werewolves as the Apex predators of the world. His eyes gleamed brighter as the two came at each other for one epic clash...

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Katie walked through the crowd, her right hand shaking after having slapped the one person she never thought she would. It was the first time she was losing control of her emotions in her life and the effect it was having was not the best of them...

She searched her mind for reasons why she’d slapped the boy, but there wasn’t any that was strong enough to command her hand to perform such action had she been in her right mind. She felt a presence receding within her mind. Something else had taken control at that moment to defend what belonged to her.

Her wolf, seemingly asleep had not allowed something like that to happen while Katie was conscious and had taken that one matter into her own hands. ‘Am I going to be impulsive like this when I shift tonight?’ Even as she tried to blame herself for losing control, she couldn’t stand by and let Jeremiah say such things about Cole. ‘If I was to do it again, I would.’

“Hey, Katie, what’s wrong? What are you doing here? I thought you had gone with...” Sandra’s voice cut through her thoughts and got her back to the world of the living. “What’s wrong, Katie? You’re shaking.”

“Nothing much... I just lost...” the words wouldn’t leave her lips.

“Is she fine?” Samantha was walking up to them. Katie took the time to look around and found that she’d unconsciously made her way back into the school and was currently at her locker. She opened it only to close it immediately as her nose was invaded by the worst scent anyone would have thought to find there. She brought her hand to her nose to soothe the itches that ravaged her nostrils.

“What the hell is in there?” she asked the two backing away from the locker.

Sandra opened it and froze at the sight of a leather jacket. Katie moved further as the smell continued to get stronger, her eyes tearing from the acrid smell of what she now knew was a poison. “It’s your jacket. I thought this wasn’t...”

“Never mind... Just lock that thing in there before it suffocates me,” Katie said, her mind completely alert. Her time hadn’t come yet, but without the drugs that inhibited the characteristics of a werewolf,

some of her senses were starting to get altered. Her sense of smell wasn't strong yet, but she was sensitive to the weaknesses that wolfsbane posed to her.

"Katie, calm down and tell us what happened with Jeremiah. He's a noble now. We don't need bad publicity..." Samantha asked, playing chaperone.

"Well, I slapped him when he started bad-mouthing Cole," she summarized to ease the woman's nerves.

"Wow, that's quite direct. I'm on your side now... Would you like to talk about it?" Just as soon as Samantha had spoken, a commotion from outside the school reached their ears. The three females were on their way to its source. Having been placed on security, there was no time to waste on the details.

Humans were either running from the general direction or trying to go to it. Each had their own reasons for the direction they were running. From what Katie could tell, it wasn't a danger to the citizens. "What do you think it is?" Sandra asked, matching her speed.

"Well, we'll have to see..." Katie's words got caught in her throat as she reached her destination. Three males were exchanging heavy blows. Cole, Jeremiah and Jason were going at it rough. The hunter was holding his ground against the two of them even though they weren't backing down either, "for ourselves."

Katie was frozen for a moment before she noticed Jeremiah preparing to hit Cole with a blow that was made to be fatal. Considering what she knew from his Prometheus gift, the hit was bound to put Cole in the hospital for sure, if not immobilize him for a couple of hours. The other hunters that were in the vicinity couldn't find a way to break the clash that was taking place in front of them. The three males were moving at a pace that could only be matched by those with agility gifts and yet the force that their hits packed was lethal.

Jeremiah stopped an attack from Jason, making it seem like he was made of steel, shoving the latter a couple of metres away before taking his attention back to the Royal that was already mid-attack. 'So this is how much he has trained, huh,' she thought before walking forward. Sandra held Jason keeping him from getting back into the fight.

Right as the two were about to meet, she stepped between them, reinforcing her palms with her Prometheus gift, she stopped their blows, "That's enough..."

"Oh no..." a fist to the gut knocked the wind out of Jeremiah as he tried to protest. His knees buckled and he fell to his knees, trying to catch his breath. His eyes bore a look of disbelief... This was the second time he was getting hit by her...

"I don't want to hear it, Lawson," she replied, grabbing Cole's hand to lead him away from the scene.

"So, that's who you've chosen," Jeremiah said through gritted teeth.

Katie stopped walking and turned back to him, "You've been back one day... What makes you think you own the place? You're going back to the capital tomorrow. I advise you enjoy the rest of the festival. I told you the rules of Brigadia. We don't start fights between werewolves and humans..."

"What makes you think the werewolves didn't start the fight?" he asked.

“Because...” she paused staring him straight in the eye, “A hunter would never start a fight with a Royal. We know what they stand for...”

“Well said, Katie Chase...” Anthony said, walking up to the scene. The hunters got Jeremiah up and took him away. Katie led Cole away, the Director nodding in confirmation to the course of action she was taking.

87 Chapter Eighty Seven

Katie led Cole on quietly through the chaotic crowd. The wolf hadn't been paying attention to the effect of his class with the hunter. Humans were afraid of Royals because they were the original werewolves and literally the only ones capable of starting the war back up again. Regardless of how much they'd tried to assure the public that a time like that was well past them, there was still fear because such power still existed.

Seeing a Royal and a hunter fighting wasn't going to put a good image out to the public. It was the perfect depiction of what happened during the war centuries ago and no one was ready for a re-enactment. Now that Cole was calm and no longer in the mood to fight Jeremiah, partly because his mind wouldn't stop staring at the dark-haired girl who still held his hand.

He found that he was unconsciously studying the grooves of her palm where the skin touched and enjoying the light sparkly sensation it gave him to be holding a part of her. Shaking the odd thoughts from his mind, an action his wolf huffed at in disappointment, he decided to try and apologize for the commotion or at least explain himself.

“Katie, I'm...”

“Don't explain yourself, Cole. I don't want to hear it...” she cut him off. They were well away from the festival and getting into the forest. She'd led him away from the entire chaos of the festival and for a walk through the forest. The cool humid air of the forest was relaxing as the sun started its journey heading down for a sunset that was a little over an hour away from them.

After a moment of silence, when Cole's laboured breathing had died down, he couldn't help but ask one of the burning questions on his mind, “Did you really slap him across the face?”

“Yeah... I don't know what has gotten into him. It's not how I'd expect a noble from the Sirius Kingdom to act,” she said to him.

“He's a noble? I didn't know that. When did that happen?”

“Something about him saving my... I mean the brother of the King from a group of rogues or something, then receiving his Prometheus gift only moments later,” she said to him.

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“Wait, is that how it works? Someone can receive a Prometheus gift from saving a werewolf?” he asked.

“A Prometheus gift is often granted when a junior hunter has proven themselves in the virtues of a hunter and get kick-started when they perform a heroic act. For me, I saved Katie from a rogue that had escaped captivity. The gift didn't come during the fight, but rather after that... During the days that followed, I was granted my Prometheus gifts...” she explained.

"I don't understand... If it's that easy, can't someone set it up?" Cole asked.

"It's not automatic, Cole. After all, it's not like the god Prometheus wouldn't know what's going through your mind while you slay rogues in a 'staged attack.' Besides, there are hunters that have gained a Prometheus gift from just straining tirelessly. The key is to understand what the hunters stand for. A hunter cannot be granted the gift until that has sunk clearly into their minds," she said.

"You sound very confident with the god Prometheus. I just keep wondering if there is a way around it. The rogues would definitely want a hunter on their side," he noted, letting his mind flow.

"If we were ever to tell such suspicions through to the hunters, the whole system would crash and we'd be on the verge of a crisis," she said to him.

"Yeah, I guess that's what would happen. Trust on a scale that large is something that's quite fragile," Cole said to her, taking a moment to look at her. He was starting to get a feel of where she was going... The same hill that she always did her thinking from... well, at least that's what he thought she did. "You love this place..."

"Yeah, it's peaceful enough for me to do some thinking whenever I want to. It also allows me to look at the town that I am supposed to be protecting," she said taking a seat. She tapped the spot next to her and the wolf joined her.

For a moment that got longer than he thought it would, she stayed silent. "What's going through that beautiful mind of yours?" he asked, childishly.

"Well, a storm of thoughts honestly..." she replied, sighing and placing her head gently on his shoulder.

"You're so comfortable with me that I find it scary sometimes..." Cole chuckled.

"Just roll with it, Lycaon," she replied chuckling.

"Cole will do just fine. Don't use my family name," Katie could hear the begging tone in his voice while he made the request. "Might I get a peek into that storm of thoughts? I know there are things that are confidential, but is there one piece of information that isn't confidential?"

"Oh yeah, there is one," she said, pushing him down so that he made a more comfortable pillow. Katie rested her head on his chest before continuing like there was nothing wrong. Cole wanted to resist, but found that his wolf fought against him when he tried to... 'What the hell is going on?' 'Just roll with it, huh...' 'Does she have control over my wolf on top of the two Prometheus gifts that she has... That would be insane...'

"Let's hear it then..."

"Well, the Chase family, my guardians got a sense that... well, that kind of power that you take to be hocus pocus... They got the feeling that there was going to be trouble tonight... Like serious trouble and I can't help but wonder..." she said, sounding calm even though her state suggested she was anything but.

"Oh, the family mojo... I've heard of it before, but I don't know how or if it does work. What's the level of trouble they detected," he asked.

“Something so terrifying that they had to call one of the Four Mighty hunters...” she said to him. This got his heart racing, something that he hadn’t experienced in a while. The four were named Mighty for a reason and calling them for something wasn’t something that could be taken lightly.

“It can’t be that bad... Do you think the Rogue King might appear?” he asked as the first thing that came to mind. The Mighty hunters were called on when that was a most likely scenario for they were the only four humans on the planet that would stand the highest chance of killing the man even if he was guarded by an army.

“I don’t know, but I’ve been thinking of that possibility. I don’t know what’s meant to cause it, but something has made the Chase family get onto their toes so much that they had to call one of those four,” she said.

“Who did they call?”

“They called the Thunderclap, Jim Gordon,” she announced, a knowing smile on her face. There wasn’t a soul alive, well in the society of those that wanted the Rogue king eliminated that didn’t know the myths behind the man that had been summoned to the small town of Brigadia.

Blessed with the Agility Prometheus gift, the man was said to have trained his gift so much that he had tapped into the god’s powers, competing with the god Mercury in speed. It was said that when he ran, the sound of a thunderclap announced his arrival and departure as he cut through the air itself forcing it to split and meet back together in one loud collision.

All these were myths, however, as most that knew of them had never seen him in actual sense. “Now that’s someone that I’d love to see in action. I know we might be in trouble considering what your parents said, but this is still something that I’d love to see for myself,” the Royal admitted, his childish excitement getting the better of him.

“You do know that he is called in times of a crisis and that his presence is more of a bad omen than it is good,” she said.

“The presence of either of the four Mighty hunters is never something to smile about considering they are sent to the places with the highest cases of rogue attacks and not enough hunters to deal with them. It is said that they deal with such cases in such a short time. Probably because the rogues flee when they realise they have made too much of a fuss in that area,” he said.

“Yeah, that’s true. I have no doubt that they would have sent one of them here if I had never got my Prometheus gifts...” she explained.

“Couldn’t your parents help out back then?”

“I’m not sure about that. Maybe they were too busy taking care of me,” Katie answered. In truth, she’d never seen her guardians using their Prometheus gifts and was yet to pose the question to them. Now there was something else she was supposed to ask them when she met them next. However, for now, she discarded her thoughts and turned to her side such that she rested better into her ‘man-made’ pillow...

A wolf purred at the back of her mind... a wolf she was now aware was awake, but still being held back by the moon goddess’ power. Something she was grateful for at the moment. Having to explain that to

Cole at the moment was not something she was willing to get into. The male didn't seem to mind her company, 'Katie, this is not you...' she tried screaming in her mind, but those times seemed long gone. She was giving in to the stronger emotions that came with being a werewolf. While she knew that there was a time when she was supposed to bottle up all those emotions and revert to her hunter nature, this was not one of those times.

88 Chapter Eighty Eight

Katie and Cole lay there talking about anything that came to mind to pass the time. Their main goal was to spend more time with each other. While Katie was certainly aware of why this came naturally to both of them, Cole was at a loss for words. Suspicions crept in but were swatted the moment they made his heart jump and become erratic. In the end, he just settled into his role and kept the lovely girl that rested on his chest company.

The sun was setting when Cole decided to mention the dance that he was supposed to be attending, "Are you going to go to the dance in those clothes?" she asked, looking at the suit that had become dirty during his fight with Jeremiah.

"No, I can't go like this. I'll have to go back to the suite and get clothes," he replied.

Katie got off him and allowed him to stand, "Well, it's about an hour before I have to go. Need an escort to your suite and back... Personal bodyguard?" Katie asked.

"I was going to just shift and run there... Then probably just drive all the way back... The car which I left at the festival..." the alpha said, recollecting the results of the paintball with Jason. They'd used the car on their return journey and left at the makeshift parking lot outside the festival grounds.

"Well then, let's go to the car then... Can I drive?"

"I don't think... Wait, you can drive?"

"Why do you sound so surprised?" Katie asked him.

"I was just wondering what your parents were trying to do by pumping you with that many skills. It's unbelievable," he said to her.

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"Does it bother you?" the question was packed with enough sincerity to make Cole regret his comments.

"No, it doesn't. Shall we be off then?" he asked offering her his hand to take. She took it gracefully and allowed the alpha to lead the way. The wolf within her was as happy as a child who'd been given candy.

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When Katie had gotten him back to the festival, everything was calm again and everyone was calm once again. There was no reason for her to have changed clothes since she wasn't going to be attending everything else that was going to happen on that day. She stopped the car in the parking lot, the music that governed the nighttime of the festival wafting into the car.

Cole realized the mood was just right. He looked at his watch and saw that it was still twenty minutes to seven. Something he'd been trying to achieve the whole time. "Hey, can you spare the last twenty minutes to dance with me?"

Katie looked at her watch. 'Sneaky alpha,' she smirked. Her next look was at her clothes which were too simple compared to the black perfect suit the man was dressed in. "I'm not dressed," she said sounding genuinely disappointed.

"That doesn't bother me. You're the only one I was looking forward to dancing with tonight," he said.

"Hey, Cole. I was wondering where you had gone..." Jason interrupted. Katie looked out the window and froze at the sight of Sandra and Jason. The two of them were dressed to kill. Jason in a black tuxedo and Katie in a stunning blue sleeveless dress that had a floral design falling down to her ankles gracefully. Her hair had been tied into a neat bun at the top of her head showing off the entire beauty that hid behind that dark hair.

"You guys are... wow, I don't have words for it," Cole exclaimed.

"Stunning, dressed to kill, dressed to the nines, glamorous..." Katie rambled.

"All of those intertwined, yes..." Cole chuckled.

"We've been wondering where the two of you were. Katie, get out of there now..." Sandra asked her to hurry and rushed the girl off. Jason stayed with his friend and led him through the festival...

"What are you guys planning?"

"Well, you'll have to wait and see that," Jason said, leading his friend to the school. The festival had calmed down a whole lot and lights had been put up, designing everything well and giving it a calm serene feel to it. It was peaceful and it seemed as though everything had come to a stop to prepare for the nighttime of the festival.

"When did you guys get dressed?" he asked his friend, the outfit reminding him of Jeremiah. Someone that still made his stomach turn.

"Well, after our scuffle, Sandra wasn't going to let me stay that dirty. She made sure I got changed almost immediately," Jason chuckled, "I notice someone was driving Grayback. How did you let her do that?"

"I don't know," Cole had completely forgotten how sacred the car was as soon as Katie asked to drive. He hadn't even known what her driving felt like or if she was out of practice. He'd accepted without a second thought.

The school was covered in warm lights that didn't hurt anyone's eyes, drawing on soft colours like yellow. Students that recognized the duo stopped for a moment to take in the appearance of the two men as they made their way to wherever it was that Jason was leading them.

The school gym, which was their destination was unrecognizable. The large room had been transformed into what was now a dance floor. The cage that surrounded the indoor basketball court was nowhere to be seen and neither were the hoops adding more space to the room. A few students sat in the bleachers, some in groups while others were couples.

The sound systems were already set and a slow song was currently on with no one specifically dancing to it. Jason tapped his friend's shoulder to stop his observation of the room, "What is it, Jason?"

"You might want to look there," he said beckoning to the entrance to the gym. Cole wouldn't wipe the smile off his face when he saw the angel that graced the room with her presence. Dressed in a white sleeveless dress that gracefully dropped to her shoulders, Katie looked like an angel in the eyes of the alpha.

He looked at his watch and saw that it was already seven, the time she was supposed to be leaving. "How is she here?"

"We asked her parents for a little more time and they were happy to give us thirty minutes, but no later. So for thirty minutes, she's all yours," Jason said to his friends as they watched the hunter walking down the stairs to join them near the bleachers. Jason left his friend and joined up with Sandra who'd brought Katie in, moving on to the next part of their sneaky plan.

"You look stunning, glamorous, dressed to kill, dressed to..."

"You couldn't resist, could you?" she chuckled cutting him off.

"No, I couldn't. I knew that necklace would look good on you," Cole said, his eyes scrutinizing her countenance.

"That look... It's like I'm under a microscope," Katie chuckled nervously, her hand flying to her hair, tucking the hair behind her ear in a nervous gesture.

"You didn't tie your hair up as Sandra did?" Cole asked.

"No, I didn't. I do that under different circumstances. Do you not like it?" she asked. Cole knew it wouldn't be good for him to see her neck even though he wanted to. At the moment, she didn't look one bit like a hunter and everything like an angel. The music changed and got louder taking on a slow tone that was irresistible to dance to.

Cole looked to the DJ's booth and noticed the two troublemakers. "Now why does this sound familiar?"

"Reminds me of an old story that they used to read to us when we were kids. Let's forget about that though, in the meantime. May I have this dance, Katie Chase?" he asked, offering her his hand.

"It's the whole reason I'm here..." she replied, taking the alpha's hand. They started dancing, the two of them completely forgetting their surroundings. They were the only ones on the dancefloor, but the longer they danced and the more the mood affected the others that were present. More couples started to join the dancefloor, including Sandra and Jason.

"This was all I needed to make my day, I guess. I was so sure you wouldn't be here at this time," he confessed.

"Well, when I heard that my parents had offered me some more time, I couldn't turn up the opportunity. Samantha and Sandra worked fast," she explained.

"Yeah, though you still have only a short amount of time before you have to leave," he said to her.

“Yes, that is true and I’ll have to go quickly. They say I’ll be cutting it close,” she said.

“Sounds like part of what I’m not supposed to know. I’m growing sensitive to that part of the Chase family secrets,” the werewolf chuckled.

“I’m just glad you’re taking it well. I was worried that you’d still be in the same mood I left you in last evening. Thank you for your help during the speech this morning...”

“Don’t mention it. I was happy to help,” he replied. Katie was trying her best to hide the raging bliss that she felt in the arms of the Royal. She was happy to be here like it was where she belonged. Her wolf only intensified what she felt for the Royal.

“Stay on your toes tonight,” she said to him.

“That’s not the first time I’m hearing that,” Cole noted, “Are you in trouble?”

“No, but I might need you tonight,” she said, her secret threatening to spill the more she spoke to the Royal. The spark she felt from his hands were starting to intensify making her supremely aware of the hands-on her waist. Her mind was not helping her situation either.

‘Katie, the moon is rising...’ a voice came into her mind, sounding familiar to none other than the moon goddess. She gasped when she heard the voice, “Cole what’s the time?”

“It’s 7:35... Oh no, we got carried away,” she was out of his arms almost immediately.

“I’m sorry that I have to go... I would have wanted to stay longer. I’ve honestly never wanted to dance here until today,” she confessed while she stepped away from what seemed to be her current addiction. Her wolf was not impressed happy by the hunter’s reaction.

“Hurry before you’re late...” Cole said, “I’m glad we at least got to dance...”

‘So understanding,’ she thought as she left, though the thought escaped her mind when she remembered Jeremiah. As she left, Cole clenched his fist. He’d got what he wanted, so there was no reason for him to be upset about her departure. Nonetheless, he couldn’t help but feel like following the retreating angel.

89 Chapter Eighty Nine

Katie held her dress while she ran through the halls to the changing room they’d used. Sandra had left her old clothes there for when she was to run back home. Once she was inside, the wolf within her growled lowly. The restraints the moon goddess had put were starting to weaken. She had to get out of there as soon as she could.

Changing clothes and leaving the dress where she’d been told, she started the run to the cabin in the woods that was equipped to contain her. ‘Hurry, Katie. You don’t have much time left,’ the moon goddess whispered into her ear once more.

Katie found her guardians waiting for her at the exit. Aunt Marie was pacing about, her face worried, “You certainly took your time... Get over here...” she said, leading the panting hunter to the basement and getting her on the table. Uncle Tom stayed quiet and helped get the cold steel restraints onto his daughter’s arms and legs.

"I have something to ask you," Katie said as they continued fastening the restraints.

"What is it, Katie? Did you have fun at the dance?" Aunt Marie asked.

"Oh, yeah, I had fun. Danced with Cole till the mate bond began to get stronger... If I hadn't been a hunter, I don't think I would have left his side," she said, absentmindedly, trying to keep thoughts of the Royal to the back of her mind. Those were the thoughts that seemed to be stirring her wolf. "I wanted to ask what the conditions for taking care of me were."

The two parents remained quiet for a bit when they heard the question. They'd kept this from Katie. So much revolved around the girl. The other part of the Chase family lived in the capital of Lycaon and kept rogues away, however, they were here to protect Katie even though there were conditions to the way they achieved this task. Conditions that had been set by the moon goddess herself and one might just say that... they were selfish.

"Well, on the day that you were handed over into our care, we were given some rather drastic conditions. We didn't even know that the moon goddess had that kind of power until we realized that this was a plan that Prometheus must have approved of. And if not, he was just turning a blind eye. The moon goddess asked that we dedicate eighteen years of our lives to raising and protecting you..."

"I don't quite understand that. What does that have to do with..."

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"Well, if you would listen, then maybe you would understand what that means entirely," Aunt Marie said. She might have spoken in a kind motherly tone, but Katie could see through someone scolding her even when it was that kind. The only difference was that this was easier to take, "Well, we sound found that we couldn't access our Prometheus gifts unless it was to help you or protect you. The moon goddess stopped us from ageing or even giving birth for as long as you were in our care. Katie, for the past eighteen years, you have been our life."

Katie had always wondered why she didn't have siblings and yet the reason was her, "But that's not fair. She robbed eighteen years from you just like that and you..."

"It's not unfair, Katie," the woman cut her off, "Katie, you're special. In the past two centuries, there has never been an opportunity to end this war that was as great as the one that appeared on the day you were born. Do you know what will happen when you and Cole are finally united?"

"What do you mean when you say united?" Katie asked, her wolf inducing thoughts she'd otherwise haven't imagined. She watched the wolf's fantasies of marking her mate and making love under the moonlight.

"I guess marking each other would suffice," Aunt Marie said, in thought.

"I doubt that's all that will happen..."

"What do you mean? Oh, your eyes..." Aunt Marie exclaimed when she saw the sapphire orbs that her daughter had for eyes flickering bright and dim, "the moon will soon be out and when that happens, we'll have to inform Cole to simply follow the scent his nose is picking up."

"That way you still haven't told him who I am. Is that how bad it is to trust the Royals?" she asked.

“No, that’s not it, Katie. Once the information reaches out there that the two of the Moon Goddess’ Chosen have been united, all hell is bound to break loose,” she said.

“Is that what made you guys detect a great danger?” Katie asked.

“Well, we are not sure otherwise it would have been that accurate... Wait, you can’t feel a sense of danger looming over you,” they asked.

“Not as exaggerated as what you guys made it look like,” she replied, chuckling right before a pang of pain went through her stomach, her eyes burning at the same time, getting clearer. Her heart started beating faster and she could have sworn that she felt her blood flowing through all her veins at the same time.

Aunt Marie and Uncle Tom stepped back from the girl. Her eyes were an intense blue and had stopped flickering, she was finally going to shift before their eyes. “We shouldn’t be here for this,” Uncle Tom said to his wife pulling her to the exit. The woman stared once more at her squirming daughter before climbing out of the basement.

Katie, on the other hand, was going through a myriad of changes to notice the adults leaving. Her wolf was trying her best to dull the pain, but the first shift was meant to be painful and there was no putting her past that. Quicker was going to have to be better. However, all these thoughts came to a standstill when her nose became sensitive. Through all the scents that wafted through the window, there was one that she couldn’t ignore even if she was buried at the bottom of a septic tank(not an ideal situation, though)

Katie’s didn’t know how she could recognize scents when she’d only now gained the ability to catch a scent. However, she knew whose scent had just wafted into her nose.

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“You think she’ll be fine?” Aunt Marie asked her husband.

“I know she’ll be just fine,” her husband replied as they sat in the living room of the cabin. “This place harbours so many memories.” The man looked through the cabin getting a memory of the girl from nearly everything. From the time she was only an infant that couldn’t walk. Memories of that baby crawling all over the place came to his eyes. He almost reached out as though they were real. The baby didn’t cry much which was something that kept them on their toes while giving them peace at the same time.

It was impossible to know if a child was hungry, uncomfortable or in need of being pampered if they never cried about anything. For this reason, his wife had set an alarm that would alert her to check on the baby every single hour of the day and night. They took shifts in the night and many times the child was fine. “Our first child won’t be nearly as easy to raise as Katie.”

“Yeah, that’s true. Sometimes, I think that child knew we were inexperienced parents,” Marie chuckled, “Remember the time when...” her voice was cut short when the cabin shook so violently as though it had been hit by an earthquake... They held onto the sofas for support while the tremors shook the room.

The turbulence shook the cabin for barely a minute before everything went quiet once more. A feeling of dread filled the two Chase hunters. They ran out of the cabin that now sat askew having been knocked out of its foundation. "There are no earthquakes in this region. What was that about?" Marie asked once they were out of the cabin.

"Hey, honey, come and see this," Tom called the woman. His voice came from the side of the cabin that was raised. She came to see what kind of damage had been caused and lost all energy to use her words upon seeing the wreckage. A large hole had been ripped into the side of the cabin, looking straight into the basement. The chains that were supposed to hold their daughter lay on the floor of the basement, shattered, "That was no earthquake..."

"Call the Director... No one is safe, the plan has been compromised. If Katie gets to that festival, there is no telling what she could do," Tom said from within the basement. Marie was dialling the number in her phone quickly. They were running out of time. Katie had broken out of the basement like it had no walls and vanished with barely a trace.

"Yes, Director Anthony, listen before you spiral off into needless conversation. Katie has broken loose. I repeat, she broke out... Get all hunters ready," she said, panic in her voice.

"Is this the great danger that you sensed?" the director asked.

"It's related to it, but not quite... Make sure Cole is on his way to her as well," she added before hanging up. 'Could Katie really let her wolf take over and hurt all those people?' the woman thought. One look at the full moon was enough to shatter her resolve. They didn't have time to make such negotiations when there were civilian lives in the picture. 'Why then do I feel like there is something else that I should be worried about?' she mentally questioned herself.

90 Chapter Ninety

Cole took a seat in the bleachers after Katie rushed out and sighed, watching his best friend dancing with Katie's best friend. The two looked genuinely happy in the presence of each other. He didn't want to admit that he envied them for they were not sure what significance their closeness posed. Remembering the words of Martha Sirius, the Queen of the Sirius kingdom, this kind of closeness was ideal if the moon goddess wanted the mates to keep in touch so that they could both be present by the time they are to find out that they are mates to each other.

Otherwise, the two were to never meet again. 'Weren't they here to stay?' he thought to himself. The two found himself deep within his thoughts, "Hey Cole, how did it go?" Jason asked, walking up to him with Sandra at his side.

"It was wonderful. Better than I thought I'd like it," he said.

"I'd say... Katie had never looked shy before," Sandra chuckled, taking a seat beside the alpha, her face lost its smile faster than it should have.

"I haven't seen any of the pro hunters around," Cole asked.

"They are mostly being transferred to the outer patrols. The junior hunters are the ones conducting the activities in here with the help of a few professionals..." just then, Cole plunged his hand into his coat as

something was starting to vibrate from within it. His phone was ringing with a number that he did not know.

Almost at the same time, a scent hit his nose, one that he knew very well. Katie had been gone nearly thirty minutes, but that was of no relevance. When he was told that it would be soon, he hadn't thought it would be this soon. Sandra looked at the number and froze, she recognized the number, but couldn't tell why that number would be calling Cole of all people.

Her purse began to vibrate as well and she retrieved the device only to find the same number blaring on her screen. The phone was calling them at the same time, now worry starting to seep in. "Who is it?" Cole asked.

"It's the Director..." Sandra said, somewhat panicked. She picked up the phone and lowered the volume so that only the three of them heard his voice over the speaker. It was a conference call with a number of hunters already listening in and voicing their greetings...

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"Can I have everyone's silence? I've made this call to all of you because of how urgent it is. I was merely waiting for Alpha Cole Lycaon to answer the call. I have only confirmed Sandra's phone... Am I to assume Cole is listening..."

"Yes, I'm right here, Director Anthony," he said.

"Well then... That makes everything much easier. All pro hunters know what day this is..." the man said.

"The Founder's festival?" Cole asked, partly astounded. Who didn't know that?

"Cole, you are the one person that gets to her the fastest. We don't know which direction she's headed and even if we try to track her, she's probably moving too fast for any of us to catch up to her," the man said.

"Who are you talking about?"

"I speak of the person that bears the scent that you must be getting a full dose of right now. Follow that scent as fast as you can before someone gets hurt. We are to find her immediately," Sandra chose to break protocol at the moment as the Royal seemed to be frozen at the moment. She mouthed the name of the person in question, "Katie..."

Cole was out of the gym before the Director had time to explain his encrypted messages. "He has gone after her," Sandra informed them.

"Well, that can only mean you told him who to expect... No matter... It now falls upon your shoulders to find us a way to communicate with the Royal as he tracks Katie down," Anthony said to her.

"I have a way of doing that," she replied, looking at the werewolf before her. Through the mind link that the two shared, it was going to be easy for them to communicate back and forth.

"Okay then... Just sit tight and stay alert... All hunters around the festival are to tighten security and not let any werewolf through. We don't know the colour of her fur either so you are all to look out for a

werewolf with blue eyes. On the other hand, Cole Lycaon's wolf is black in colour and no one is to stand in his way. With that said, the call ended.

"Ask Cole where he is," Sandra asked Jason. The wolf's face got a glazed look while he focused on talking to his friend. "How did Katie escape? I saw that equipment..."

"What do you mean?"

"I saw the equipment that was going to be used to hold Katie, steel chains and everything around her was reinforced," she explained, trying to think through what could have happened, "Did she shift before she got there? No, the Director would have said that."

"If Katie shifted and broke out of something that required that much energy to break out of, then I'm afraid we should be chasing her down as well," Jason said, worry seeping into his voice. There weren't many things that could force a werewolf to resort to extreme methods to escape.

"There has to be something that gave her wolf the right amount of motivation to go through all that trouble to escape restraints that powerful. If they were anything like the ones we saw in the dungeon, then Katie didn't just break out because she lost control, she broke out because of something else..." he explained himself. The two were up and running out of the school after they realized that.

"We have to follow them immediately..."

"Cole just answered me..." Jason said to her, "We have to go." Jason started running faster and Sandra could barely keep up the pace. To be honest, she could tell that the wolf was holding back so that her human legs could keep up...

"What is it, Jason? I need to inform the Director," she said.

"Katie was headed for the festival, or at least that's what he thought at first, but she wasn't headed for it at all. She's headed somewhere else... She says he should call for backup if he can and that's when he contacted me... He's called Caden as well. We don't know where he is, but he called him..." Katie got her phone out and began to dial the Director's number.

She relayed the information to the Director and that's when another conference call was opened, this time with Katie's parents as part of the call. "Katie is not going to the festival. She's going somewhere else. We don't know where, but Lycaon says it's nothing to do with the festival and she won't stop for anything."

"Could it be?" Aunt Marie's voice came through. Sandra and Jason were now out of the festival and heading for the treeline when Jason started relaying some more information.

"Katie has confirmed her motive..." everyone over the conference call went silent, "I don't understand everything just yet, but I'll say what Cole told me. When she sh-shifted, she caught the scent of Kyle Dwyer and that's who she's going after," Jason said.

A few seconds later and the conference call filled with much more hunters' numbers, "What's with the conference calls? What's going on? What is the Director up to?" a chorus of different questions came through the phone call before the Director raised his voice.

“Silence... Everyone pay attention. I am assigning a number of hunters to assist Katie Chase... No, I’ll use her real name, Katie Sirius. The target is Kyle Dwyer whose scent has been tracked. We are to bring him in alive and protect the lives of the Moon Goddess’ Chosen. Unfortunately, both of them appear to be on the front lines of all this,” he yelled over the phone.

Jason leapt into the air shifting into a dark brown wolf. He turned and lowered his colossal form so that the junior hunter could get onto his back. Three hunters approached them from the festival grounds, Kenneth, Samantha and Trevor as the most experienced pros that were nearby. Jason got ready to run, the whole party ready, “Lead the way Jason,” Samantha said. Picking the scent of his alpha, the wolf started the run. ‘Don’t do anything rash, Cole. We are coming to aid you. If Kyle really is there, he’s going to have quite the protection.

The hunt for Kyle was on and Katie Sirius was leading it. At the Brigade Hotel, a group of Royals felt the connection of the long lost member of their family rekindle. “I guess we should go meet our daughter,” Davin Sirius stated, leading his family to the elevator. They’d been waiting far too long and now that they’d found her, nothing was going to get in their way.

At the Hunters’ Agency, the Director paced about... something wasn’t feeling right about this. The Rogue king would have done anything to have that girl killed. If Cole had indeed already met the girl when she’d shifted, then she was indeed in control of her actions. That would only mean that they were no longer chasing a wolf on the loose, but rather they were following the Rogue killer to a slaughter.

And if the Chase hunters were right about something bad happening on this day that they even called the Thunderclap, then Katie was in need of all the help she needed. Anthony walked out of the agency, slipping into his leather jacket and brandishing his phone to make one last call, “Frost, Jackeline, I’m sending you the locator for Sandra’s phone. She’s following Katie. We might just need all the help we can get on this one...”