

Chosen by Fate 141

Chapter 141 - Reece- Dietrich (VOLUME 2)

Reece

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"What's got you grinning so much?" Noah growled as soon as I walked into my office. Yeah, I'm not going to answer that question, at least not honestly. I couldn't very well tell him that I was grinning like a loon because I had just had some of the best sex of my life, and with his cousin no less.

"Nothing really, just had a good morning." I told him.

"You call us getting attacked by a crazy vampire and needing to fight him to the death as a good morning?" Vincent's voice was full of incredulity.

"No, I was referring to after."

"After?" Vincent was confused. "What happened after?"

"I don't think I want to know the answer to that." Noah glared at me.

"That's why I said nothing." I smiled at them both. "Now, let's get down to business.

"So, what was so important that you needed to call this meeting?" Noah growled, still angry. "Yeah, I get that the vamp attack was major, but I'm guessing that wasn't all of it."

"No, that's not the entirety of the meeting. Yes, I wanted to discuss the attack, but not with you two."

"Then who?" Vincent asked me.

"The man who sent that pile of ashes to see me."

"Who sent him?" Noah wondered.

"Lord Dietrich Conrad, the Vampire Emperor." I heard their sharp intakes of breath upon hearing those words.

"Lord Dietrich?" Noah gasped.

"The Vampire Emperor?" Vincent seemed a little more shocked about that title than the other one.

"What does he want with us?" Noah demanded.

"I contacted him. My family has had dealings with him going back at least three hundred years apparently. He had known my family since long before my ancestors moved to this country."

"Why in the world would you want to involve vampires in our pack business though? And why now?"

"Why now?" I asked Noah with shock filling my voice. "I need his help, that's why. The vampires have ways of tracking that we don't. And he, or someone he knows, might know Edmond. If they can help me track him down sooner, then I fully intend on using him and his connections to my family to their fullest

extent." I was speaking with an intense tone, telling them the truth of the matter when all of a sudden there was a knock at the door. The twins, Shane and Shawn were back for some reason.

"What do you want?" I yelled at them through the door.

"Alpha, we have a request." I heard one of them yell back.

"Just get your asses in here. I hate talking through doors." They opened the door at my words and I saw that they didn't look nervous, on the contrary they looked determined and sure of themselves. They walked into the room and stood near the mantle of the fireplace like they usually did. One on each side like weird bookends.

"Thank you, Alpha, for letting us enter." Shawn said.

"What do you want?" I growled at them slightly, letting them know I wasn't too happy about the interruption.

"Sir, we know you called this meeting to discuss the attack today." Shawn spoke clearly and without fear, even after my warning growl. Brave man.

"We want to be part of that discussion. We may not be the head of the Luna's guard like Vincent is, but we were there too." Shane spoke in his brusque, informal way of talking.

"That's right Sir, we were there and we are also guards to the Luna, we want to be part of any discussion that might affect her security."

"Is that so?" They nodded at exactly the same time at my words. "Fine, maybe you should be part of the discussion. You will have to be part of all this anyway, it will save us all a little time. Thank you for bringing this to my attention, from now on, unless it is sensitive information that I cannot share with you, you will be part of the main discussions. I should have David here as well next time, if he is not too busy with the investigation. But you're right that all of her guards should be privy to these conversations."

"Thank you, Sir."

"Thanks." They each thanked me with gratitude in their voices and determination in their eyes.

"Alright men, what we need to do first, is contact the Vampire Emperor and let him know what happened." I heard the gasps from the twins that had not been here for the previous part of the conversation. "Oh, did I forget to mention to you two, the vampire that showed up today was sent here as an emissary from the Vampire Emperor himself, Lord Dietrich Conrad."

"Sir, why is the Vampire Emperor sending men to speak with you?" Shawn looked nervous for a moment.

"My family has had dealings with him for over three hundred years. The connections go back to when my family still lived in Europe. I contacted him for help with finding Edmond." They both looked stunned at this revelation. "Now, if there are no more interruptions, I am going to video call our Lord Dietrich now, I don't want this call delayed any longer."

The large flat screen that hung opposite of my desk glowed around the edges of the black box, waiting for the vampire to connect to the video call. I figured he was probably waiting for me to call him with an update with how the meeting had gone, but he probably wasn't expecting it to be a video call.

I have talked to Dietrich a handful of times over the years since I took over the company, but I have never seen the man in person. I knew he was over five hundred years old and he had become the leader of the vampires over two hundred years ago. He has ruled them ever since.

I know that without him my family's empire would never have gotten as big as it is. Also, his business in Europe would not be quite as profitable if it wasn't for my family. We owe each other a lot, that is why my family has worked with him for so long. My family has never held prejudices over the other species of super naturals, so it made sense for us to work together.

The black finally changed, shifting from solid black to a well lit office space decorated in an eclectic collection modern and antique. I'm guessing those antiques weren't bought as antiques but when they were still new.

"So, Reece Gray, we finally meet face to face. Well sort of. You look very much like your grandfather, Roland and his grandfather Sebastian. Perhaps that look skips a generation. Seeing you brings back many memories." He was smiling at me with a friendly, open look on his face. "I trust that everything is well with you." He opened his arms wide in a sweeping gesture to signal me to begin talking.

"Lord Conrad-" I began but I was immediately interrupted.

"Nonsense Reece, your family and I have been like family for so long, please drop the formalities." I was at a loss, I didn't know if I should treat him like a friend right now or not given what had happened.

"Alright, Dietrich." I paused and saw him nod at me while smiling broadly, oddly enough I didn't see his fangs at the moment. "Things aren't so great right now actually."

"What could have happened?" He seemed genuinely concerned for me at that. Would that last when I told him what happened?

"Your emissary is dead." I decided to get straight to the point.

"What!" Shock filled his voice. "Tell me what happened Reece, please." Dietrich's piercing blue eyes, so light blue they nearly looked white, were filled with unease now. He was an interesting looking man. His light blue eyes, pale complexion, black hair, and regal manner all made him look like some historical novel character come to life. He was wearing an expensive suit, I could tell through the video it was high end. His face was full of concern yet not a wrinkle appeared anywhere on his perfectly angular face.

"The vampire that you sent, I don't even know his name as he never gave it to us."

"His name was Octavius, he had been one of my most loyal subjects for a very long time now." His eyes seemed to drift, as if in memory.

"I wish he would have had your disposition toward us that you do." I told him.

"I am indeed perplexed, Reece, what happened today?"

"He attacked my mate." The shock that enveloped his face at those words was beyond description. He was instantly furious yet apologetic at the same time.

"I should never have sent him. I am truly sorry, more than I could ever express. Octavius had no problem with wolves, well little to no problem. But unfortunately, he still lived in an antiquated mindset. Had I known that you had finally found a mate I would have sent someone else. For all his faults though, Octavius might have been the best among my people to help you in your search. If only he had not acted improperly."

"It wasn't just improper. Aside from speaking to her in a way that he never should have, he physically attacked her and her guards. He kicked my mate across my yard, I caught her out of the air myself, Dietrich. And I assure you, it was not just anger that made me kill him. He continued his egotistical and misogynistic behavior and tried to further assault my fiance and her guards."

"May I ask how you managed to defeat him? Octavius was a very skilled fighter and quite the user of shadow travel." Dietrich never once looked angry toward me, however, his clear, accent free voice was both apologetic and curious.

"We eliminated all the shadows around him." My answer was short and not very fulfilling for him, but I needed to keep my new information a secret for now.

"How, if I may ask?"

"I'm sorry, for now I cannot answer that. Perhaps one day if we meet in person I may tell you, but at this point in time, I can't."

"Understood, understood, no worries Reece." He was smiling at me. "I will of course arrange another meeting for you."

"As you might understand, I am a little apprehensive about having another unknown vampire entering my territory. Considering what happened today."

"Of course, Reece, of course. That is why I am coming personally." He grinned broadly as if that was the most obvious answer.

"What?" Shane yelped, apparently unable to control himself.

"Oh, I am sorry. I have been neglecting your associates in the back there. You have an impressive bunch of men with you. Are they all soldiers?" He seemed incredibly curious about them. I didn't know what his angle was so I was only giving him the bare minimum of information.

"Yes, that they are." No need to tell him that they were the Luna's personal guards along with her cousin.

"Splendid. It is so wonderful to meet you all. I am Dietrich Conrad, and I will be visiting you all very soon." The vampire's smile was beginning to seem unsettling. Still, I don't think he was trying to be anything but friendly, we've had the alliance for so long and all.

"Good evening." Vincent nodded his head once.

"Nice to meet you." Shane added. Noah and Shawn just nodded their heads with the words from the others.

"Reece, I will be there in one week, I just need to tie a few things up here before I can leave. I'm sure you understand what it's like to lead so many people." He seemed tired for the first time during the call. "And please do remember, that I am a daytime vampire. I may sleep later than the average person, but I am not up all night." Dietrich laughed. "So, shall we meet for a dinner party on the first of the month?"

"A dinner party?" Shawn seemed confused, and a little sickened.

"Rest assured, young man, that we vampires are quite capable of eating the food humans do. I actually encourage it as it helps us to fit in." He smiled at Shawn as he spoke. I noticed a shocked look spread across Shawn's face as Dietrich spoke to him.

"Are you alright Shawn?" I whispered, hoping Dietrich wouldn't hear me.

"Yeah, I was just confused for a moment." Shawn recovered from whatever had happened to him.

"Interesting." Dietrich smiled at him. "Now, I am sorry but I must go. We can continue this conversation when I am there in person. Until then gentlemen. Reece. Shawn." He seemed to be purring by the end of the conversation which felt a little odd.

"Is it just me, or did he seem like he didn't like me?" Shawn asked.

"Yeah, he seemed to have taken some kind of interest in you." Shane joked with his brother.

"Enough." I stopped them before they could get into one of their epic twin arguments. "We still have work to do. We need to get ready to host the Vampire Emperor, and I now need to go and tell David and Rawlynn that the emissary I invited to help us is dead."

"Sucks to be you." Noah joked with me.

"Haha, well guess who gets to come with me." I glared at him in response.

"Asshole." Noah growled.

"Thanks." I smiled at him.

Chapter 142 - Reece-Revelations (VOLUME 2)

14-18 minutes

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Reece

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Following the call with Dietrich, I decided to call David and check up on the investigation. He answered the call almost immediately.

"Yes Alpha?" He said when he answered.

"Hey David, how are things going with the investigation? Have you met with Otsana yet?"

"I've got all the information that I can from the local police, I was just about to go see the FBI agents."

"Alright, I planned on meeting with them and you anyway so I will swing by to pick you up at the station. Wait for me."

"Yes, Sir."

I quickly collected David from the station and the three of us made our way to the rental house I had set up for the FBI agents, I figured that would be easier on them than a hotel room. The house was close to the edge of town heading back toward the compound. Both Otsana and her partner Jackson Mclan were staying there.

We pulled up to the small ranch style house on the edge of town and started toward the door. I had told them that I was coming so they were expecting me. Agent Mclan opened the door before we had even finished climbing the porch.

"Mr. Gray, good evening." Agent Mclan called out to me. "I hope you don't find this rude, but can you explain to me why it's so important you and your cronies are part of my investigation?" He was definitely suspicious of me, especially since I had not met him before.

"May we discuss this inside, Agent Mclan?" I smiled at him to show that I was not a threat, however he seemed to visibly darken at my words and was immediately on guard. His dark brown eyes and light blond hair should have made him look innocent, but they were paired with a gym buff's body, a permanent natural tan, and a seriously disapproving look on his otherwise good looking face. He almost looked like he belonged in my pack instead of in the FBI, but the smell coming off of him was all human.

"I would like to refuse, but as Otsana is in charge of this investigation I can't very well say no."

"That, and I do own this house." I smiled a little more broadly."

"Of course you do. Because why not, you seem to own everything else." He actually laughed at that one.

"Jack, enough with the tough guy routine, these are important members of our investigative team." Otsana yelled from inside.

"I don't see why we need a group of PIs, especially one that's just a billionaire playboy playing games."

"Is that how the world sees me?" I asked the two men with me.

"Absolutely not, Sir."

"Definitely." They answered, Noah was not holding any punches and David seemed nervous. Huh, I didn't think I was seen as a playboy, I hadn't been seen dating anyone.

"I'm a billionaire yes, but I am so much more than that. Can't we just talk for a little while Agent Mclan, I'm sure you will come to trust me more."

"Whatever." He said stepping aside and letting us in.

"Forgive him, he's just acting like a big brother to me." Otsana joked as we walked inside. "Even though he's younger than-" She stopped mid sentence staring at David, her face full of shock and awe. David, likewise, had a shocked, dare I say dumbfounded, look on his face.

"What's the matter Rawlynnne?" Agent Mclan asked her with a hint of worry. "Do you recognize one of them as a criminal?"

"None of us are criminals." Noah spat at the man.

"I know what's happening here." I told them all.

"How can it be?" Otsana breathed in disbelief.

"I can't believe it." David sighed. "After all these years, I've finally found you."

"You two know each other?" Agent Mclan asked his partner, but still she didn't answer him.

"I'm ninety-nine percent sure they've never met before." I assured the man.

"Then how could they have been looking for each other?" He was thoroughly confused.

"That is a little hard to explain at the moment." Noah seemed uncomfortable.

While the three of us stood there in the living room of the small house, watching the two awestruck people in front of us a sort of drama was unfolding. I watched as David started walking towards Otsana, but with every step he took she backed up one.

"Why are you backing away from me?" David sounded hurt.

"This is the wrong time. I'm not ready." Otsana pleaded. "I've got career goals, plans for my future that I thought I would follow. This wasn't part of it."

"But we can't fight fate." David seemed to soothe her in a calming voice.

Otsana backed against the wall, unable to move back further she just stared at the man approaching her. She could have turned and fled in a different direction but she was mesmerized.

"What is going on here?" Agent Mclan asked me.

"You're watching destiny unfold before you." I answered him.

"Destiny?" He scoffed but still he watched on.

"What's your name?" David asked the woman he was staring down like a wild animal that might run away or bite him if he wasn't careful.

"No." Otsana shook her head.

"Her name is Rawlynnne Otsana, David, didn't you hear us talking earlier." I smiled at the man in front of me.

"Rawlynnne." He smiled as he said her name. "I'm sorry, I stopped hearing anything for a little bit earlier. My dreams have all come true after all."

"Stop saying that." Otsana yelled at him as he inched closer still.

"Rawlynne." He said her name again like it was the sweetest sound he had ever heard.

"Don't. Don't say my name." Otsana shivered both times David had said her name.

"But it's so beautiful." He cooed again. "And you smell so wonderful. Like soft subtle flowers and sweet decadent fruits. The smell, and sight, of you is making my mouth water." David's eyes visibly darkened with desire.

"Stop, don't say anymore." Otsana's voice was weak.

"That's fine by me, there's something else I'd rather do anyway." With that David took the last step to place himself in front of Otsana. With no resistance from her he wrapped his right arm around her waist and pulled her to him. His other hand he settled on the back of her head. Before any of us could do or say anything, he had settled his mouth on hers.

"Stop!" Agent Mclan came to his senses and yelled at the couple kissing like lovers right before his eyes. "This is unacceptable and frankly inappropriate. Rawlynne, you don't even know this man, why are you letting him kiss you like that?" He yelled at her.

"She can't help it Mclan, it's destiny."

"What's that supposed to mean?" He looked even more perplexed.

"It's hard for me to explain, but for them just now, it was love at first sight."

"Love at first sight doesn't exist."

Otsana had finally managed to push David away, but his protesting growl told me he wasn't very happy about it.

"Oh, it exists alright." Otsana was breathing heavily when she spoke to Agent Mclan.

"What's going on here?" He asked her as David tried to pull her back to him.

"David, control yourself." I snapped at him. "We have business to discuss." He turned to look at me with an angry, hurt expression before he bowed his head.

"Yes, you're right, Sir." He finally let his hands drop but he stayed standing next to his new mate.

The five of us settled on the couches and chairs in the living room, David made sure he was sitting next to the woman he had had his hands all over. Agent Mclan was still glaring at him with an angry look. Perhaps he loved the woman too.

"Will someone explain all of this to me?" He demanded, breaking the tense silence in the room. He was acting big and intimidating but it didn't go well with the pale blue armchair that matched the very girly living room around us, filled with pastel colors and pretty furniture. I hated it.

"It's hard to explain, as I said." Noah told him.

"We need to tell him the truth, Noah. We would have to anyway, with the turn things have taken."

"Alpha, no!" David seemed shocked by my words.

"Alpha?" Agent Mclan picked up on that right away. "Why did you call him alpha?"

"Oh, well, I, you see, he's-." David was blithering like a fool at his slip up.

"Because I am his alpha." I told the man. "Agent Mclan, you are about to enter a world that you have never known before. But it is a world that has always been there, just unseen by you."

"What are you saying." He was quickly losing his patience, he was apparently no good with being so out of control.

"Jack, let me explain a little."

'Wait, Otsana, let me start." I stopped her.

"Alright." She nodded at me.

"Jack, may I call you Jack?" I asked him presumptuously already using the name. He nodded and I continued. "Now, Jack, the reason I am here, that we're all here and intruding on your investigation is that three of the missing boys are from my pack."

"Pack?" Jack looked skeptical at the word but I ignored him and continued.

"During my private investigation I believe I have narrowed down the suspect list to who is responsible. That is not saying he took the children personally but had his people do it for him."

"And who is this person?" Jack asked me, again I ignored him.

"The problem is, we do not know exactly where this man is hiding. I had called a contact of mine in Europe to send someone to help us all. Unfortunately that man was not up to the challenge of living in modern day society and has unfortunately met a very abrupt ending."

"Ending?" He quirked his eyebrow at me.

"Rest assured, he was at least a few hundred years old and had lived a full life."

"You expect me to believe that Reece?" Jack asked me, opting to use my first name as I was using his.

"You'll believe it soon enough." I smiled at him. "You see, the man in question was a vampire." Jack interrupted me with a loud, barking laugh.

"Yeah, sure, a vampire." He continued laughing. "Can we move past the fairy tales and get to the real story?" He asked me.

"I'm afraid this is not a fairy tale, Jack. This is all real. The Emissary that came to me this morning was indeed a vampire, but he has since perished. I killed him myself."

"Are you a vampire hunter now?" He chuckled.

"No Jack," I smiled at him with my canine teeth slightly extended on both the top and bottom. "I'm a werewolf." Jack exploded into laughter at that.

"Right, a werewolf. Beware the full moons buddy." He wiped tears from his eyes that were caused from the uncontrollable laughter.

"He's telling the truth." Noah told him. Jack looked between me and Noah and saw the teeth and the changes in our pupils that marked a partial change.

"What the hell?" He jumped to his feet and backed against the wall, much like Otsana had. "What are you people? Stay away from me." He had genuine fear in his eyes now.

"I need you to understand that we are not monsters, Jack. People like me live and work in the world, all around you. We're here, among the humans. We do not cause problems. If someone does, we tend to take care of that person immediately."

"But you're monsters." He seemed frightened.

"Jack." Otsana said standing up. "They're not monsters." She walked over to the man at the wall and put a hand on his shoulder. "After all, if they're monsters then so am I." She told him, causing him to look at her instead of me.

"Rawlynne, you...you...you're one of them?" He stumbled on his words momentarily before he could talk.

"Yes, Jack I am. And I am not a monster am I?" She asked him, her canines elongated and her eyes shining.

"No." He shook his head. "No you're not." He was calming a little, just a little. "But, when?" He asked her,

"What do you mean when?" She laughed at him.

"When did you become a werewolf?"

"I was born one." She told him with a smile. "Werewolf doesn't mean what hollywood has told you. We don't change during a full moon, but whenever we want. The moon is like a symbol of power to us. We are not monsters or freaks. We are just people, like you, only a little special." She was soothing him.

"You weren't bitten?" She shook her head to answer him. "So, I can't be turned out of spite or on accident?"

"No Jack, though I have heard that there are ways to become one if a human truly wants to, but I don't know the specifics of that."

"I need to sit down." He allowed her to guide him to the couch where he collapsed, seemingly spent from all the revelations.

We spent the rest of the night telling him and Otsana what had happened that morning and about the impending visit from a high profile vampire. We managed to convince Jack that my pack and I were not enemies. All seemed to be well.

When I returned home, I was exhausted. I went to my room to find my mate reading a book. She was tired and seemed sick which surprised me. She complained of an upset stomach and feeling dizzy, but

apparently food poisoning was not a possibility. There were few illnesses that could affect us wolves, so at first I was confused.

That is, until I lifted her to carry her to the bed. That was when I noticed that her scent was different. I still smelled the ozone and apple pie, but there was now an underlying scent of cinnamon and oranges.

The new scent was faint, but noticeable. And I knew right away what it meant. I had to fight to keep myself under control. I laid her gently on the bed and took off her slippers and jeans. I pulled the blanket up around her and then climbed up next to her.

"What exactly are you feeling?" I asked her to confirm, I couldn't afford to be wrong here.

"Well, since my meeting ended, I have basically been feeling sick to my stomach. That and bouts of dizziness are all I've been feeling. I know it's nothing that I ate though because I didn't have anything different than Lila all day. I even felt too sick to eat dinner. Goddess, aren't I just worthless?" She seemed upset.

"No." I told her firmly but she looked at me curiously.

"Huh? You think me being sick isn't weak and worthless?"

"Not at all, because you're not sick." I smiled.

"What do you mean I'm not sick?"

I leaned forward and pressed my face against her stomach and proceeded to take a long deep breath, inhaling her intoxicating scent while she stared at me like I was crazy. When I lifted my head I had the biggest grin ever, I had been right.

"What? What is it Reece?" She looked worried but I just smiled at her. "Do you know what's wrong with me?" I smiled more broadly and nodded my head.

"Come on Reece, say something. Seriously, what's gotten into you."

"Me? You shouldn't be asking what's gotten into me. What you should be asking is what's gotten into you Little Bunny."

"Alright, fine, be cryptic. I'm too sick and tired to figure it out right now."

"But it's so simple honey." I said sweetly

"Fine, I'll play along. What's gotten into me Reece?"

"I have." I grinned as she blushed bright red.

"That's hardly news." She snapped. "But that has nothing to do with this right now."

"Oh, it does actually." I purred. "It explains everything."

"What."

"You see, Little Bunny, I'm what's gotten into you, me and my pup." I watched her eyes fill with shock at my words.

"I-I-I'm p-pregnant." She stuttered with little force to her words.

"Yup." I wrapped my arms around her, hugging her tight. "I love you Trinity."

"I'm pregnant." She said again with the faintest hint of joy.

I'm going to be a father. I thought to myself. It was the best possible way I could think to end my tiring day.

Chapter 143 - Trinity- Shopping With Juniper (VOLUME 2)

9-11 minutes

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Trinity

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The next day I was feeling a little better. Perhaps it was knowing what the cause was that made me feel slightly better. And, to top it off, ever since Reece had made me aware of the tiny life growing inside of me I could feel a sort of warmth emanating from inside. A sort of light inside of me that I just knew was the baby.

I couldn't help it, I was excited. I had to share the news. I knew just who to tell first. I didn't want to just tell her outright though, I wanted to make it a surprise when she finds out.

"Hey." Juniper's voice was full of fun and excitement like always when I called her.

"Hey Juniper, what are you doing today? Any plans?"

"None whatsoever. Why? What do you have in mind?"

"I want to go pick out a birthday present for Lila. I was wondering if you'd go with me."

"Of course, I'm always down for a shopping trip."

"Great, let's have a little lunch first then go shopping."

We went to a small cafe for a quick lunch. I knew I wouldn't be very hungry when it came time to eat, but I still wanted to try. We sat and ordered our food, I chose a simple vegetable soup and BLT while Juniper ordered a lot more food than me, also more complex food.

"Why aren't you getting more?" She asked me, confused.

"I'm just not all that hungry."

"You're sick?" She looked at me worriedly.

"No, just wedding jitters." I smiled through the lie hoping she wouldn't call me out on it.

"I can understand that. I remember my wedding, I was so scared and nervous."

"Nervous doesn't even begin to describe it."

"You'll be alright. You have all of us here for you." She smiled. "Paul and Cedar are so excited for the wedding too, though they won't ever admit it to you." She was smiling happily. I knew I made the right choice to come out with her today.

We continued to chat, talking about wedding plans and gossiping about what had happened in the pack recently. All in all it was a good lunch with my best friend. That is until my stomach flipped and I felt queasy.

"Are you feeling ok?" She asked me, clearly suspicious again.

"Yeah, I'm alright." She didn't push the matter, I just hoped she wouldn't get mad later when she found out that I lied to her.

After lunch we went to a plant nursery. I wanted to get something special for Lila's birthday. I knew that she would love anything to do with gardening, something to add to the solarium and garden outside. I wanted to get her some beautiful and rare flowers. I chose some rare breeds of roses and an array of orchids that would form a rainbow. Lila and I both had a fondness for orchids. I also got her some new gardening tools and supplies. I was certain that she would love all of it.

I had other plans for the day as well. I asked Juniper to come with me to the mall, I knew they would have the things that I wanted there. I wanted a way to break the news to everyone. I knew it was a bit cliché but still, I wanted to do it.

The first stop we made at the mall was to a custom printing shop. I picked out three baby onesies, two white and one green. I had the staff print something onto all of them. DADDY'S LITTLE PUP on the green one. I LOVE MY GRANDPA on one of the white ones. And lastly, I LOVE MY GREAT-GRANDPA on the last one. None of these would have given my secret away just yet, as I could have been buying them because Nikki was pregnant.

Next I took Juniper to a jewelry store. I had a very clear idea of what I wanted. I browsed through the section with engravings and novelty sayings. I chose two necklaces that said GRANDMA inside of a beautifully designed heart surrounded by gemstones and diamonds, one for Lila and one for Aunt Eve. Again, this wouldn't seem overly suspicious as Nikki could be giving these to her mother and Aunt Eve.

I found two that said AN AUNT'S LOVE IS FOREVER. One was a necklace, the other was a bracelet. The words were engraved in a heart surrounded but pink and blue gems as well as diamonds. They were lovely and would be perfect. I was totally playing up the cliché of the gifts a little but I didn't care.

"Hey, Juniper, which one do you think I should get?" I asked her.

"Hmm." She said as she came to look at the bracelet and necklace I was holding. "Well, personally I prefer the bracelet, but you're not the type that wears bracelets so I say you should go with the necklace."

"That's true, I personally would prefer the necklace." I smiled at her, she knew me so well already.

"What about Nikki? Which do you think she would prefer?"

"I don't know Nikki all that well. But I'm sure she would want you to wear what you're most comfortable wearing."

"What do you think she would like to wear?" I asked her as I tried to press the issue a little more.

"Why would it matter what she would want to wear?" Juniper asked as she started to think. She then saw that I had already placed the bracelet on the counter to buy. That's when her face exploded with excitement.

"No." She breathed, her voice weak but filled with restrained excitement. "Trinity are you?" She asked me with a big grin on her face. I just smiled at her. "The onesies, I should have known when you bought the green one, but I was deluding myself. The grandma necklaces aren't for Nikki's mom and Eve, they're for Lila and Eve, and the aunt necklace is for Nikki, not you." She was grinning happily.

"And you." I told her. "I'm getting the bracelet for you silly."

"Me?" She seemed at a loss as her eyes teared up. "Why would you get that for me?" She was actually crying now.

"Because you're my best friend, and the closest thing to a sister I have ever had besides Nikki." I put my love for her into those words.

"Oh, Trinity." She hugged me tight, sniffing just a little. "Just you wait, I'm going to be the best aunt ever. This kid is going to be so happy. And when I finally have a kid, they will grow up to be the best of friends. Wait until I tell Paul. He's gonna be an Uncle and I'm gonna be an Aunt. Oh wait, is Cedar gonna be called Uncle Cedar?" She tilted her head in confusion at the end.

"Yeah, if he wants to be. He's like a brother to me too. He's always protecting me anyway."

"He will love that." She smiled while jumping for joy, holding my hands in hers.

Suddenly, though, her face fell and she seemed worried.

"But wait, what about your dress?" She asked me, worried about the wedding dress.

"I'm getting married in three weeks. I don't think it will affect the fit that much, but we can ask them to allow for a little extra maybe." I tried to calm her. "Though, if I keep getting queasy like I have since yesterday, then I will probably weigh less than I do now. I don't think I have anything to worry about."

"I'm gonna have to make sure you stay healthy and eat properly for the two of you."

"Ok, now you're starting to sound like you're my mom or something. Just be my bestie, ok."

"Nope, I'm gonna watch you like a hawk, someone has to protect you outside of scary situations. I'm not your guard, but I am personally invested in this now." She just smiled at me and hugged me again. "I'm so happy and excited for you Trinity."

"Thanks Juniper." I hugged her back.

"Oh, one last thing." She glared at me, angrily. "How many people already know? I'm not the last to find out am I?" She was not really mad but she was clearly hoping to know before anyone else.

"Juniper, I'm literally buying gifts for everyone to tell them. Do you really think that I told them already?"

"Good point. But still, answer my question."

"As far as I know, Reece is the only other person who knows, unless he's told someone else already."

"So, beside the father I'm the first to know?" She seemed elated. I laughed at how she worded it, it was actually pretty funny.

"Well, actually Reece truly was the first to know."

"What's that supposed to mean?" She looked at me with confusion.

"He's the one that enlightened me. He noticed before I did."

"Well, that's usually how it happens though, isn't it? The father can detect the scent change in the mother."

"Yeah, I know, but it had never even crossed my mind that it was a possibility until he told me."

"Girl, with the way you look at each other, we've all just been waiting for this news." She laughed at me.

"We're not that bad, are we." That seemed to make her laugh harder.

"Seriously Trin, have you not noticed how obvious you two are around each other since you got back?"

"No." I shook my head. "Are we awful?"

"No, it's really sweet and makes all of us happy for our Luna and Alpha."

"God, I might just die of embarrassment now, if everyone knows that much about my sex life that is."

"No one knows details, well besides me and the tidbits you've shared." She grinned. "But we can tell how much in love the two of you are, and everyone can tell you've definitely mated for real now."

"No, Juniper." I covered my face in embarrassment.

After my mortifying talk with Juniper, I got small gifts for Paul, Cedar, Carter and Noah as well. I just hoped Noah didn't get too angry with Reece, he's been super protective for the last few months.

Chapter 144 - Trinity- Dinner With Lila And Grandfather (VOLUME 2)

10-12 minutes

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Trinity

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When I got home from shopping I found Reece waiting for me in our room. He seemed like he was worried about me.

"Where have you been?" He yelled at me.

"I went to lunch with Juniper." I told him, not sure why he was so mad.

"And who went with you?" He demanded.

"Well, no one." I hung my head as I understood why he was so mad. "I only went to lunch and the mall really. I wasn't in any danger, and I wanted to have a private conversation with Juniper."

"Trinity!" He roared. "It's too dangerous for you to be out and about on your own." His voice thundered as he stalked toward me. "You need to be more careful. Especially now." He placed his hand on my stomach and rubbed small circles.

"I know Reece, I just didn't want anyone to over hear us, that's all." I felt ashamed. I had deliberately lied to and evaded my guards before I left. I knew he would be mad if he found out.

"What was so damn important that no one could hear?" He asked me.

I opened the shopping bags I had and showed him the gift I had bought for him as well. The one that said DADDY'S LITTLE PUP.

"I was buying announcement gifts, and telling Juniper about the baby. She is my best friend. And I wasn't really alone, she was with me. We could have handled things ourselves." His eyes got a little less angry when he saw the onesie I gave him. He was so excited to be a father, he had told me so many times the night before while holding me in his arms.

"Look, I know that you're happy, and this is an exciting time, but please don't go anywhere without me or one of your guards, please." He was begging me now.

"I can't live my whole life in a protective bubble Reece. Eventually, I am going to have to live more."

"Not if I have anything to say about it." He joked, pulling me into his arms. "I just worry about you so much, Little Bunny. I don't want anything to happen to you or our baby."

"I know Reece, and I promise that I will take someone with me next time."

"I'd prefer it if you didn't go anywhere." He added in a half joking half serious voice.

"I'm not going to be a hermit or a prisoner again." I told him firmly.

"You have no idea how dangerous it is out there right now, especially for you. If Edmond were to get his hands on you, there's no telling what he will do."

"And I have proven that I am not a weak little girl Reece. I'm not going to argue it with you. I am not going to be stuck here forever, end of discussion." I put my resolve and conviction into those words, making them ring with power and finality.

Reece's mouth closed with a snap and a gasp. He hadn't expected my anger I'm guessing.

"One day, I need to find out why you can give orders to people you shouldn't be able to." He growled but smiled at me. "I would love to learn whatever tricks you seem to have."

"I'm not doing anything Reece." I told him as he buried his face in my neck. "Now back off, now is not the time." I pushed him away making him whine like a puppy. I laughed at that.

I decided we needed to change the subject and get things moving away from me, guards, and orders.

"So, I want to have a special dinner with Lila and Grandfather soon." I smiled at him as I thought of my plans.

"Why?" He asked me, perplexed by my suggestion.

"They're the next two I want to tell." I smiled at him, thinking about the reactions we were likely to get from them.

"Not your aunt and uncle?"

"I told my aunt about the wedding first, I think Lila and Grandfather will be happy they were next."

"Why not tonight?" He smiled, he was obviously eager to spread the news too. "I can let Abigail know right now and you can call your grandfather."

"Good idea." I started to grab my phone. "Oh, you didn't tell anyone did you?" I glared at him.

"The only person I saw today was Noah, and if I told him he'd probably try to kill me. No sweetheart, that job falls to you." He smiled as he held his hands up as if to ward off the thought.

"Good, I didn't want anyone else to know yet.

Grandfather had agreed to dinner tonight and Lila had no other plans as well. I decided that a nice dinner in the garden would be lovely. The flowers weren't blooming yet, but it was still a beautiful night with a lovely view. Reece liked the idea as well, or said he did, so I went with it.

I helped Peter set up the table once it was outside. The napkins, settings, even the candles all had to be special. I selected a wine for Reece and the others, I couldn't have any for multiple reasons, but Lila and Grandfather would just think of my age as the only factor. The gold plated tableware, crystal glasses, and beautiful plates were all set and looked exquisite.

Tonight, Abigail had chosen to make a crown roast of pork with mushroom gravy, mushroom stuffed steaks, balsamic roasted chicken, roasted red skin potatoes, baked cheddar macaroni, asparagus, sweet carrots, and broccoli. Along with a beautiful garden salad and delicious looking vegetable soup with garlic bread to accompany it. For dessert there was a delicious looking chocolate cake.

When we all sat down to eat my eyes popped. I had started eating more than I used to when I shifted, but with the queasiness I had been feeling, I didn't think I could eat that much at all. I would definitely be sending the leftover food from this dinner to feed some of the other pack members.

"So, what was so important that you wanted to throw this dinner party?" Grandfather asked.

"I am quite curious as well." Lila looked excited while Grandfather looked confused.

"Let us eat first and enjoy the food before it gets cold." Reece encouraged them with a grin.

"You're hiding something." Lila looked at him suspiciously, but was still smiling.

"Who, me?" Reece tried to feign innocence.

"Alright, fine, have it your way. We will eat then talk."

The meal was delicious. I had a little bit of everything that was put on my plate, but I couldn't even eat half of it before I started feeling sick to my stomach again.

"Is everything alright, Trinity?" Grandfather asked me, sounding as formal as always.

"Just a little pre wedding nerves, that's all." I smiled at him as I gave him the same excuse as I had given Juniper. It seemed to work just as well now as it did then.

"No reason to be nervous, it's just a wedding after all." Grandfather made it seem not so important.

"What matters is that the two of you are together and happy." Alright, that redeemed him a little. He was right, as long as I was with Reece everything would be just fine.

"You're right Grandfather. As long as we have each other, everything will always work out."

When we had finished dinner we were sipping coffee while eating our dessert, I was having tea instead of coffee. The atmosphere was nice and calm, but I could tell at a glance that Lila was eager to learn what they had been brought here for.

"Trinity, Reece, can you please tell us what is going on now?" She finally asked when her patience ran out.

"Go on, Little Bunny, better not keep her waiting any longer." Reece smiled at me. I nodded and looked between Grandfather and Lila.

"Well, first, I have a gift for you Lila." I informed her as I reached beneath the table to get the two bags I had put there earlier.

"It's too early for birthday presents." Lila protested.

"I have one for you too, Grandfather."

"It's definitely too soon for my birthday, that is not until June." He seemed to laugh at that.

"These are not for birthdays." Reece told them.

"Though I did order you a birthday gift that will be here soon." I smiled at Lila.

"Trinity, you shouldn't have." She smiled back, obviously feeling loved.

I handed the gifts to them. Lila's necklace and the onesie for the baby to wear for Grandfather. With Grandfather's strict way of behaving and formal speech, I didn't expect him to excitedly dig into the gift bag like he did. He almost seemed a little childish as I watched him.

Grandfather had his gift unwrapped before Lila had the box for her necklace opened.

"Is this because of Nikki?" He asked me. "It's wonderful. I am certain that Noah and Nikki's baby will look wonderful in this."

"That's adorable." Lila cooed as she pulled open the top of her box. "You're very lucky Samuel." She said enviously looking at the onesie.

When Lila looked at the necklace she smiled, not reading it at first.

"This is lovely dear. Thank you." She looked at it more closely and her eyes popped open wide. "Wait! Does this say what I think it does?" She looked between Reece and me repeatedly. "Oh my Goddess, oh my Goddess, oh my Goddess." She was fanning her face in all her excitement, her cheeks flushing bright red and a huge smile on her face.

"What is it Lila? Is something the matter?" Grandfather seemed confused.

"Take a look at this Samuel." She told him as she reached across the table to show him the necklace with the word GRANDMA written beautifully in gold.

"Grandma?" He was confused for a moment. "Why would Lila need a necklace that says Grandma when Nikki is having a baby?"

"Samuel you dunce." She yelled at him. "Trinity and Reece are going to have a baby as well." Lila was on her feet now and literally running over to me. She wrapped her arms around my shoulders and squeezed me tight. "Trinity, oh you've made me so happy." She was nearly jumping with joy like Juniper had. She left me and ran to Reece next. "Reece, you finally did something right." She hugged him too. Grandfather was still trying to catch up with everything.

"Is she telling the truth?" Grandfather looked at me. "Are you expecting as well, Trinity?" I nodded at him.

"Yes Grandfather, I am." He smiled and his eyes misted over.

"My dear Trinity." He got to his feet as well and I rose to meet him halfway. Grandfather put his arms around me and hugged me just like Lila had. "I am so happy for you, my dear." When Grandfather left me he too went to Reece next, his hand outstretched.

"Congratulations my boy." He shook Reece's hand firmly.

"Thank you, Samuel." They smiled at each other happily. Everyone was happy that there was going to be a baby.

Chapter 145 - Reece-Telling Little Bunny's Family (VOLUME 2)

10-12 minutes

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Reece

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My Little Bunny seemed to be happy with the newest development. That was good, as long as she kept herself safe from now on it would continue to be great. And telling Mom and Samuel about the baby

went really well. I know it was a bit too soon, but miscarriages aren't common among wolves so we didn't really have much to worry about anyway. I was just happy to continue making my Little Bunny happy.

There was one thing I was not looking forward to though. And that was telling the rest of her family, specifically my beta. I had a feeling Noah was going to be very mad at me. Nonetheless I still made plans to see them with her the next day. I still had five days until the vampire showed up, and it was still exactly three weeks until the wedding so I was not pressed for time.

David, with his new mate Otsana and the newly assimilated Jackson Mclan were still investigating until we found where Edmond was hiding. I just hoped the kids were not being treated like Trinity had when she was with the Warlocks. They were all so young that they would not be able to handle even a fraction of what she did.

We decided it would be best to invite everyone over to our place for the big secret reveal. Carter was due in the morning to give a report anyway so he would already be here. The rest of her family came right after lunch having opted to join us after we had all eaten.

Things were going good. Everyone was catching up with Carter as he had been leaving town a lot due to his missions as a scout. Her Aunt and Uncle were happy to see him again. I noticed that Carter still looked slightly depressed about something though. I would have to talk to Trinity about that later.

Everyone was happily talking about the wedding, and Nikki's pregnancy. All the changes that were coming for their family. It was nice to see such a close, happy family spending time together like this. I had mom back now, but for so long I had no one to spend time with like this. Yes I had my Great Uncle and cousin still in this pack. But my aunt and uncle had been among those killed in the same ambush that my father had died in. The same for my cousin Riley's father. A lot of my family had died that day. And we all found out how my Great Uncle had raised my cousin to be. I literally had no one left really. Finding Trinity was actually the best thing that ever happened to me.

We spent a good amount of time discussing the plans for our wedding. Trinity and Nikki gushed about the flowers that they had chosen and the color themes. I didn't really get it but it made me happy to see her smiling so much. The talk finally moved on to the topic of our honeymoon. Everyone clearly expected us to have one, and I had already been planning something special for my little mate, dreaming of something secluded and romantic.

"I don't think it's a good idea right now." My Little bunny shattered my dreams in one go.

"What? Why?" Nikki asked her in shock, asking exactly what I planned on asking.

"I don't think it's a good idea to go until things are settled. I wouldn't feel right going until the children are all home." Her voice was sincere.

"Are you sure, Trinity? You deserve to have a special time all for you."

"I'm sure Reece. We can always go somewhere when this is all over, Then I won't feel so guilty getting away."

"You truly are a worthy Luna." Eve said. "You put the pack ahead of yourself, that shows that you care about the pack."

"I'm proud of you Trinity." Wesley said.

"You have a good point." Carter told her.

"Very good, Trinity. I'm happy to follow you and Reece in this pack." Noah said with his voice full of emotions.

After a little while longer, the conversation lulled and Nikki brought up what I was dreading.

"So, what was the whole reason you all called us over? Don't get me wrong, I'm happy to have time with all of us together, but there was something else, wasn't there?"

"Yes, there was." Little Bunny turned to look at me with a smile. I took her hand and squeezed it gently.

"We have something to give to you all.

I helped Trinity as she gathered all the gifts for her family. She had gotten onesies for the grandfathers, necklaces for the grandmothers, a necklace for the aunt, and keychains that proclaimed they were owned by proud uncles. They were asked not to open them until everyone had their gifts. Once all of them were handed out they all proceeded to open their gift bags.

I heard the shrieks of delight come from Eve and Nikki when they saw the items.

"Oh my Goddess, does this mean what I think it does?" Eve asked.

"Trinity, are you serious? Really? They're going to be so close to each other."

"My little girl?" Wesley cried out. Carter and Noah just stared at them in disbelief for a moment.

Noah recovered first and glared at me, his eyes full of a protective anger.

"You son of a bitch!" He snarled at me. "You told me that you hadn't knocked her up."

"And at the time, I hadn't." I tried to explain to him.

"Don't give me that bullshit. You lied to me." Noah rose to his feet still glaring at me.

"Calm down Noah." Carter stood and grabbed Noah's shoulder.

"Let go of me Carter." Noah growled at him.

"No, Noah, you can't do this." Carter growled right back at him.

"Carter! She's our baby cousin. She's just a young girl. She's too young for all this."

"Noah!" Carter yelled at him. "You're being too overprotective of her. She's not a little girl anymore, she grew up just the same as we did." Carter tried to help Noah see reason.

"Noah, Carter is right." Nikki told him. "This is just your protective instincts kicking in because you're going to be a dad yourself. You need to calm down and be happy for her."

I turned to look at my Little Bunny and saw sadness filling her face.

"What's the matter sweetheart?" I asked her, reaching out to hold her in my arms but she just slid away.

"Noah, are you that upset about it? You're not happy for me at all?" Her voice trembled as she spoke, tears threatened in the sound of her voice and in the look of her eyes.

"Trinity." Noah's anger deflated immediately and was replaced with heartbreak. "Don't cry Trinity. I'm sorry. I am happy for you if you're happy. I just don't want him to hurt you again." Noah rushed over and hugged her loosely. "I'm really sorry." He said again.

"He won't hurt me anymore Noah. That's why I want you to be happy for me." Emotions were still filling her voices causing it to tremble even more.

"I will be. I am happy for you Trinity. I am always happy for you when you're happy. I'm sorry I got mad. I just remembered how things used to be."

"What does he mean, how things used to be?" Wesley asked.

"Yeah, I want to know too." Carter backed up the question. My Little Bunny really hadn't told anyone else.

"When we first began our relationship, I wasn't always the nicest person to be around."

"You were a dick to her." Noah snapped at me.

"You're right, I was. And you punched me in the face for that, remember."

"Should have hit you harder." He mumbled the same words that he had said before.

"But I learned my lesson, and I know that she is the love of my life. I will never treat her poorly again."

"You'd better not." Wesley said firmly.

"Or you'll be dealing with all three of us." Carter added.

"I'm glad you're all here to back her up, but it won't be necessary. I love her with all my heart and soul."

"Well, I say we've all had enough excitement for today." Eve tried to stop the arguing.

"Trinity, I am so happy for you. We will talk more about this later, but for now I think we should all head home." Eve gave my mate a hug and started to drag the men away with Nikki's help.

"I will see you all later, I love you." My Little Bunny called after them with a look filled with love and sadness at the same time. I hugged her to me and held her close, letting her know how much I love her.

"I will always be here for you, Little Bunny. You know that don't you?"

"I know." She settled herself against me, letting me hold her more tightly.

That night, after everything calmed down and we were getting ready for bed, I had to deliver some heavy news to my mate.

"So, we have a visitor coming soon."

"What kind of visitor?" She questioned me.

"The man who sent the vampire emissary to see me the other day." She didn't look happy.

"Is he a vampire as well?"

"Yes, he is."

"Reece!" She snapped at me. "Wasn't the last visit dangerous enough?"

"It won't be like that this time. This man has been an ally of my family for centuries. He didn't know I had a mate and sent his best tracker to visit me. But, as you saw, Octavius didn't have the greatest of attitudes."

"That's an understatement." She yelled at me.

"I know sweetheart. But Dietrich is different."

"How do you know that he is different?"

"Well, for starters he's been working with my family, me included, for a long time. And second, he's the Vampire Emperor."

"Reece!" She yelled my name again.

"Trinity, I promise things will not go the same way again."

"You better make sure there are plenty of guards here."

"I will, I promise. I will even call David back, though he won't be too happy about that."

"Why won't he be happy?" She asked me.

"Oh, well, he found his mate recently."

"WHAT!" She nearly shrieked the word. "When the hell did that happen?"

"Oh, um, the same day as the vampire attack."

"And you weren't going to tell me?"

"Hey, to be fair, there was even bigger news for us when I got back that night." I smiled at her. "I just spaced it out when I found out I was going to be a dad. I honestly just remembered it again."

"Who is his mate anyway?" She wondered.

"Oh, it's Agent Otsana."

"The FBI agent?" She laughed at that. "Well, she's definitely someone who can bring out the true warrior in him. She continued to laugh. "I'm happy for him, things are really looking up for the pack right now."

Chapter 146 - Trinity- Preparing For The Vampire's Arrival (VOLUME 2)

6-8 minutes

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Trinity

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With all the excitement that was whirling around us, it seemed like time was moving so fast. With the news Reece gave me after my family visited I was left with more to contemplate and a lot more to do.

First there was congratulating David and Agent Otsana on their mating, but that could wait. The more pressing issue was preparing for the visit from the Vampire Emperor. I didn't even know such a person existed, or that Reece has been working with him for the last seven years.

What was a vampire Emperor like? What did he want to discuss? Could we actually handle this visit with him? All these questions kept swirling in my mind for the four days that we had to prepare for this.

I will say this though, I was learning a lot about vampires while I prepared for the visit. First, vampires could walk in the sun, well mostly. Freshly made vampires found it a little harder than the older one. But even those who had difficulty didn't burn up or burst into flames, though I should have known that already because the vampire that attacked us had done so in the morning and he didn't seem too fazed by the sun.

The freshly made vampires would only find the sun uncomfortable, and perhaps a little draining. They would end up with something like a very bad sunburn if they were in the sun for just a few minutes. But as they got older and controlled their thirst more they were able to be in the sun with no issues.

The older vampires that did have a problem with the sun were not the type you wanted around. Basically, they were the type of vampires who had truly lost their soul, or humanity. In a word, they were evil. They didn't care about preserving peace, or protecting the humans at all. To them, humans were nothing but cattle or sheep. They were basically rogue vampires.

The rogue vampires were able to trick you and walk in the sun if they had a special item they had obtained from either a warlock or a fae. These were magic items that glowed bright, blood red and helped to protect them from the sun's harsh rays. They usually paid a large sum of money or threatened to harm the person they got the magic stones from.

Another revelation about the vampires was that they would often eat regular meals, meals like we eat. They did this because it would provide a semblance of nutrients and power to them, nothing like blood though, and it helped them to blend in with people when living their daily lives.

And as far as feedings went, most vampires either had someone or several someones that they had a pact with that would offer them blood in exchange for a slightly extended life. Blood giving was apparently painless and actually felt quite pleasant, or so I was told. And so these people who knew the truth of the vampires would donate to them in a mutually beneficial contract. Most of them worked for the vampires in another way though, like secretaries or assistants.

Outright feeding on unsuspecting and unwilling humans was against vampire law. Your only options were mutual agreement, animals, or blood bags. If they were found breaking these laws then they were subjected to immediate termination.

Vampires were also rare. Compared to us wolves who numbered in the hundred thousands worldwide, vampires might have totalled a few thousand. But vampires had their own set of skills that made them worthy foes, or allies.

I had learned all these vampire facts from Grandfather, who had worked with Reece's father and knew of Dietrich through his previous working situation, as well as the other elders. Their information should come in handy, I hope.

By Sunday, we had almost gotten everything prepared. The room the vampire would be staying in was on the third floor. Reece thought it would be best to offer the vampire a room in our home. He was still free to stay somewhere else if he wanted. Reece had a room ready for him in the city as well. Abigail was prepared for the dinner party that we were going to have the night he arrived. And everyone had been fully briefed on all the info we had about vampires.

All of my guards, and the FBI Agent Rawlynne Otsana were going to be present for the meeting. Apparently, her partner Jackson had just recently been made aware of our community and didn't feel quite up to meeting the vampire just yet. I hoped he would adjust soon enough.

On the morning of the visit I came across David and Agent Otsana. They weren't doing much other than walking toward the stairs to Reece's office but it seemed like they were leaning toward each other and had happy doe eyed looks on their faces. I was so happy for David, I know he had thought he would be single forever, but he finally found his mate.

"David." I called out to him.

"Luna?" He turned and smiled at me. "What can I do for you?"

"I just wanted to tell you and Agent Otsana congratulations. Reece told me the wonderful news." I smiled at them both.

"Thank you Luna." He seemed truly happy in that moment.

"Thank you, Mrs. Gray." Agent Otsana also smiled.

"Well, I'm not Mrs. Gray yet." I laughed. "The wedding is just over two weeks away. I would love it if you accompanied David as his date."

"Oh, I couldn't impose."

"It won't be an imposition. Honestly, with all the ambassadors from other packs and groups, plus our pack and those in our fealty and treaty packs there is going to be well over a thousand people, one more won't make that much of a difference. Please, join us."

"Really? Wow, that's a big wedding." She smiled at me. "But thank you, I would be honored to be there."

"Thank you Agent Otsana, I can't wait for everyone to celebrate with us."

"Please, call me Rawlynne, or Lynne, one of the two."

"Thanks Rawlynne, and please call me Trinity."

The conversation with them brought a smile to my face. I was so happy to see positive things going on in our lives. Now, time for the dreaded visit from the Vampire Emperor. Why do I have a feeling that things weren't going to be so easy tonight?

Despite everything I just held my head up high, put on a grin, and forced myself to persevere. I didn't have the greatest of hopes, but at least I knew how to push through tough times. We could do it. After all, there was nothing Reece and I couldn't do as long as we were together.

Chapter 147 - Trinity- Dietrich's Arrival Brings An Unexpected Twist (VOLUME 2)

11-13 minutes

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Trinity

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My nerves were frayed most of the day. Between fine tuning all the details of the dinner for tonight, stressing over said dinner, feeling nauseous out of both nerves and baby housing, and trying to make sure that everyone that was supposed to be there was indeed there.

Finally, it was a quarter to six and the vampire would be here at any moment. Reece and I were waiting, impatiently, in the front hall, waiting to welcome our visitor. We were notified that the gate had let his car through so we were just waiting for him, and his driver, to make their way up to the house. Reece had his arm around me comfortingly as we stood and waited. At long last, we heard the sound of the car coming up the driveway.

Reece opened the door and the two of us stepped outside with Noah, Vincent and David. Shane, Shawn, and Rawlynn were waiting for us inside. A sleek black Mercedes-Maybach GLS600 drove up to the front of the house. Now I only know the make and model because Reece was trying to talk me into getting one so I could be driven around town like some kind of royal. It wasn't going to happen.

The driver parked the car and gracefully got out. I watched as she walked elegantly around the vehicle to the back passenger door. I could tell instantly that the woman was human, but she smelled a little off. She had a strong scent of musk that didn't seem to be a perfume.

The driver made it to the back door. Seeing the elegant and expensive car complete with a driver sitting in front of Reece's castle-like house was like another blow to my psyche, the amount of wealth I was seeing now still blew my mind.

The driver elegantly and gracefully opened the car door for the vampire. Once it was opened all the way, Dietrich stepped out of the SUV. I had only ever seen the one vampire before and he looked nothing like Dietrich. Dietrich was pale with dark hair and bright, light blue eyes. His face was handsome and angular, not a single wrinkle to be seen. He also seemed to be just a hair over six feet tall, shorter than Reece but still quite tall, especially compared to me.

From my estimates, Dietrich had stopped aging when he was close to Reece's age, maybe a year or two older. He looked young and very attractive. Even having a mate of my own I was affected by his looks. I didn't know if that was a vampire trait or not, but if it was it sure was a powerful one.

"Welcome Dietrich." Reece called out in a friendly voice. I knew he trusted this vampire more than the last one, but I still had my misgivings.

"Reece, so good to finally meet you. I have not been back to the States in close to thirty years. Your father had not yet sired you then. I am grateful for the chance to come and see you all personally, though I do regret the cause for it." He smiled brightly and with a sincere warmth, perhaps Reece was right about the vampire.

"Welcome to our home." I spoke quietly and slightly reserved with my nervousness, but Dietrich paid it no mind at all.

"Ahh, the new Luna. I am so sorry I did not know that your Alpha had taken a mate. Had I known we could have avoided a lot of this trouble." His smile faltered a little as he spoke, perhaps remembering what Reece had told him. "But may I say that you are a very lovely woman. Reece is a very lucky man."

"I am indeed." Reece agreed, him and Dietrich smiled at each other. "Allow me to introduce my mate, and fiancée, Trinity Whitton. Trinity, this is Lord Dietrich Conrad, Vampire Emperor and a close friend of my family."

"It's a pleasure to meet you." I smiled and nodded my head at him.

"The pleasure is all mine, my dear. Allow me to congratulate you on your upcoming nuptials."

"Please, Lord Dietrich, I would be delighted if you stayed for the wedding."

"There is no need to be so formal, Trinity, just call me Dietrich, and I most definitely would love to share in your most special of days." He was smiling so broadly that I was feeling elated just looking at him.

"Also," Dietrich continued talking, "allow me to congratulate the two of you on the upcoming addition to your family."

"Addition?" I heard Vincent say questioningly.

"I am sorry, did I say something I shouldn't have?" Dietrich seemed saddened for a moment.

"No, it's no problem Dietrich, we just haven't gotten around to telling all of the guards, with how busy things have been. David, Vincent, Trinity is expecting." Reece smoothed the slip up over. I saw the happiness and excitement alight in their eyes.

"Congratulations Luna." Vincent told me immediately. David was smiling at me fondly.

"Shall we head inside then?" I asked, feeling a little more relaxed with Dietrich's current attitude. I just hoped it kept going this well.

Dietrich and his driver, having joined us up on the grand front porch, walked with us as we went back into the house. The others were waiting for us just on the other side. I immediately heard the gasp that came from Shawn's direction as soon as we were inside.

"What's wrong Shawn?" I heard Shane whisper quietly to his brother but Shawn just shook his head looking in the direction of Dietrich and his driver. He seemed to be paying the driver very close attention, trying to figure something out.

"Come on Dietrich, we've got dinner waiting for all of us." Reece turned to inform our guest, I turned as well to watch the exchange, however, Dietrich wasn't there anymore.

I turned my head again and saw Dietrich standing next to Shawn, who was still looking in the direction of the female driver that Dietrich had with him, a perplexed look on his face. The woman was slightly older, with dark brown hair fading into gray and unremarkable brown eyes. She wasn't ugly, but she was not exactly pretty, just average I would say.

"So we finally meet." Dietrich almost seemed to coo from beside Shawn. I watched as Shawn seemed to jump as he spun in confusion.

"E-excuse me?" Shawn sounded scared and nervous.

"I have been looking forward to meeting you since I saw you last week."

"W-why would you be looking forward to meeting m-me?" Shawn's shaky voice asked him.

"Because, in all my years, I have never met someone so intune with my wavelength as you are, Shawn. Do you know what that means?" Shawn shook his head in denial. "But, you must have noticed it by now, right?" Dietrich seemed to be having a very good time as we all stood and watched him and Shawn talking in our spacious entryway.

The foyer, with its bright lights and dark, panelled walls and dark wooden floor, was like a setting for a scene from a drama unfolding before us. The happy vampire and nervous wolf staring each other down. Beads of sweat were forming on Shawn's forehead. His posture was rigid and defensive. Dietrich, the complete opposite of Shawn, was calm with a steady grin.

"What should I have noticed?" Shawn looked around nervously, his eyes passing over his brother, Reece, me, and finally settling on the woman across the room.

"Trust your senses, Shawn." Dietrich told him. "Close your eyes and follow your truest of all senses."

"No, I shouldn't." Shawn tried to refuse with his eyes back on the vampire.

"Trust me, and just do it." Dietrich insisted, his calmness faltering for just a moment.

"Just listen to him for a moment Shawn." Reece instructed. I saw the look of fear and dread on Shawn's face as he gulped once then followed his orders.

Shawn closed his eyes and tilted his head just a little. I noticed that Shawn and Dietrich were almost the exact same height. Both of them had such unique looks that it was like staring at something straight out of a movie, like two high profile actors filming a scene in my house.

Shawn, with his eyes closed and head tilted back, inhaled deeply. I saw the flare of his nostrils and he picked up whatever it was he was supposed to be sensing. His head tilted to the side on instinct trying to follow the scent trail.

I saw the smile that settled on his face as he took in the smell. I didn't smell anything particularly special at the moment, but we all sensed things differently. Clearly, Shawn could smell something intriguing and pleasant to him.

"What do you smell Shawn?" Reece asked him. Shawn answered with his eyes still closed.

"It smells like musk, cognac, and leather."

"And what is this scent telling you?" Reece questioned him further.

"The scent, and my wolf, are telling me that I've found my mate."

"And where is that mate?" Reece asked. On instinct I looked at the driver for a moment before looking back toward Shawn.

Shawn opened his eyes, staring at Dietrich, a look of pure shock on his face.

"How?" Dietrich smiled at him, a look of pure joy.

"I imagine it's the same way as any other mating. Or am I wrong?"

"But this is impossible." Shawn was shaking his head. "How can this be?"

"In all my five hundred and twenty-eight years I have never found a mate. I have of course had my fair share of lovers over the years, but never have I felt anything like what I felt when I first saw you on that video call. I knew when you were bespelled by my words that you were the one for me."

"But I'm a guy." Shawn protested.

"Shawn, I've lived so long that people ceased to be male or female to me, people are just people. We all love and live do we not. I have no preference one way or the other. Do you truly not feel the same way?"

"I'm not gay!" Shawn nearly shouted.

"But, you've never had a relationship either. You never seemed like you ever cared for any of the girls you tried dating." Shane revealed some of Shawn's history to us all.

"Shut up!" Shawn yelled at his brother. "I was just saving the best of me for my mate. Why go half ass on a relationship that is going to end when I meet my mate?"

"Are you opposed to me as your mate?" Dietrich asked him. "Do you not wish to have who the Goddess chose for you?"

"I, that's not, it's just that, I don't-." Shawn seemed incapable of finishing a coherent thought. He took a deep breath and settled his nerves. "I just don't know."

"I understand that you're confused." Dietrich leaned in close to Shawn and placed a hand on his cheek. "But we can work it out together. After all, fate has drawn us to each other." Shawn froze in place, an uncertain look on his face, but he didn't pull away.

"I think this is wonderful news." I tried to break the tension and provide my support for him. "This is a time to celebrate. Two new matings with the people so close to me." I smiled at Shawn as he and Dietrich looked toward me and Reece.

"Indeed, it is a joyous and wonderful day. You should be happy Shawn." Reece smiled at them as he offered his encouragement.

"But...but...but-" Shawn spluttered.

"Come on, let's get to dinner. You can sit next to me." Dietrich wrapped an arm around Shawn's shoulders and dragged him toward the dining room and the smell of food. I notice Shane grinning at his brother as they walked away.

I stalked over to Shane and growled at him in a low voice.

"Don't you dare give him hell about this. He needs to accept it and understand it without you making it worse."

"Yes Luna." His head snapped up and he looked like he was afraid of me.

Chapter 148 - Reece-The Meeting (VOLUME 2)

Reece

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I never expected that Dietrich would mate with Shawn right after he got here. That was unexpected, and frankly quite surprising, but mates were beyond our choosing. There is someone out there for everyone, and the Goddess chose Dietrich to be Shawn's mate. But how fortunate they would finally get a chance to meet, otherwise they would have been mateless forever. So I guess it was a good thing that I killed Octavius after all.

The dinner started with no other incidents or surprises. Dietrich sat in the spot to my right facing Trinity. Shawn was sitting next to the vampire with a scared and confused look on his face. Agent Otsana joined us at the table as part of the meeting and sat across from Shawn. An extra setting had to be placed to accommodate Shawn who was supposed to be guarding and not eating. Shane, Vincent, David, and Noah were all stationed at the four corners of the room, keeping watch.

Abigail and Peter brought the meal in, extravagant and decadent foods that were both domestic and European. A vintage red wine was paired with the meal for us, well everyone except Little Bunny, she had cran-raspberry juice, it was both delicious and healthy according to her.

Before we actually started eating there was something that I wanted to say, to clear everything up for those who had not been outside.

"There are a few people at this table that still do not know about the news from the Luna and I." I said in a loud, clear voice. "Dietrich was able to discern immediately that the Luna and I are expecting a child together. She has yet to visit with a pack doctor, but I would like to spread the news the rest of the way. Shane, Shawn, Agent Otsana, you were not outside when the others found out."

"That is excellent news." Shane immediately declared.

"I am happy for you and your Alpha." Agent Otsana congratulated Trinity. The guards were looking truly happy, and even Shawn was looking a little less nervous as he spoke.

"Congratulations, Luna, that is wonderful news for you and the entire pack."

"Thank you everyone." My Little Bunny was a little shy at having them all stare at her, but there was no hiding that smile on her face.

"Now, let us eat. We may talk business now or after, that is up to you Dietrich." I smiled at those assembled around me.

"I wouldn't mind a friendly chat while we eat. But we can hold off on the major issues until after the meal." Dietrich indicated his preference.

"That sounds perfect. Please, enjoy your meal everyone."

We ate our food, talking about the upcoming wedding. There were discussions of the baby. And, not surprisingly, Dietrich wanted to know more about Shawn, Shane was all too happy to provide those details from his corner.

"Dietrich, how did you know that I am pregnant?" Little Bunny asked him shortly after we started eating.

"I may not have the same senses as a wolf, and I have never smelled you before so I would not have been able to detect it from that alone. However, as a vampire, I have the ability to sense life. And when I looked at you I saw not just one life essence, but two."

"Does that mean you would know if someone were having multiples." Agent Otsana asked in a joking tone of voice.

"I admit, I do not know. It has not happened yet as far as I know. I am not often around pregnant women. If the few that I have encountered personally in the last five hundred years did indeed have multiples I have no way of knowing."

"Hmm. Sounds like it would be interesting to find out, you know." Otsana added with a curious smile.

"Are you planning on multiples?" David asked with a hint of shock and fear from across the room.

"Goddess no!" Otsana exclaimed. "I'm still coming to terms with having mated with you, don't go and bring kids into this too soon." David visibly relaxed at those words at which point we all started laughing at the relatively new couple.

"That's one thing you won't have to worry about." Dietrich joked with Shawn as he gave him a heated look. "We've got built-in birth control." Shawn blushed crimson at those words, his mouth hanging open in utter shock with Shane nearly collapsed to the floor laughing.

"So, Shawn, your brother said that you have not had many relationships and that they didn't last long, does that mean that you're innocent?" Those words from Dietrich darkened Shawn's blush.

"I-I-I-I-I-I." Shawn spluttered uncontrollably, not able to answer.

"Shawn are you?" Shane shouted.

"Shut up!" Shawn yelled at his brother. "My personal life is none of your business."

"I'm sorry." Dietrich gave him a soft expression. "I should not have asked that. It was too personal. Forgive me."

"No, it wasn't you." Shawn backpedaled. "I was yelling at my brother. He's just an asshole."

"So, you're not angry with me?" Dietrich leaned into him again, a sly smile on his face.

"Uh, well, I, it's not, you're my, we're, no I'm not." Shawn finally got to his answer. "I'm not mad." He said again.

"Good, I'm glad. We can save the personal talk until we're alone."

"Alone!?" Shawn practically yelled in a squeaky voice.

"Yes, I am so looking forward to getting to know you, all about you and the life you've lived."

Once dinner was over, and Shawn's face was back to a normal color, we moved from the dining room to the office to discuss business. Once again, Dietrich wrapped his arm around Shawn's shoulders and pulled him along with him to the office as he followed the others. Once in the office, Dietrich sat on the love seat, sitting close to Shawn as he had pulled him right along with him. I could tell Shawn was apprehensive, but he didn't seem quite as nervous as he was downstairs.

Otsana sat in one of the armchairs opposite the Vampire and Shawn, I pulled Little Bunny onto my lap in the other armchair. The rest of the guards stood around the room just like before. Despite the comfortable seating arrangements, for everyone except Shawn that is, we were about to discuss very uncomfortable topics.

"So, Reece, there is much we need to discuss. First, will you give me the full story, with full details, about what happened when my emissary arrived?" Dietrich didn't look angry, he was sitting next to Shawn with a content smile on his face and a hand resting lazily on Shawn's arm. Again Shawn looked slightly uneasy but not as much as before, and still he didn't pull away. Between Vincent, the twins, and Little Bunny, they were able to relay all of the information easily. But there was one little problem with the explanation.

Dietrich shot to his feet at the words that Shane had just shared.

"WHAT!" The anger and rage was clear in his voice. "Octavius was further gone than I thought then." Rage was still pouring off of him.

"Is there something wrong?" I asked him. Shane had just told him about Octavius attacking and slicing open Shawn's shoulder.

"There very well could have been. One of the abilities that Octavius had, aside from being very skilled in tracking through special means, he could control those he gets the blood of. If he were to have licked your blood off of his fingers, you would have been like a puppet to him. To think he would not only attack but use that forbidden technique on our allies. It's absurd. He used to be a loyal and dutiful soldier of mine. What could have happened to him?" By the time he was done talking, the anger was ebbing away from Dietrich's face, being replaced by sadness.

"I wonder, Dietrich, but could he have been turning?" Little Bunny asked him, drawing his attention to her.

"Turning?" Dietrich was shocked by her question. "Do you mean that he might have been losing his humanity? I never would have thought it, but listening to the way he was behaving, I honestly do not know."

"Well, I only ask because of the things I noticed that day. First, he had a scent that was old and decayed, like dust and dirt, and the mildew smell of old damp leaves. All things that were dead and lifeless. Also, when he died, the blood that came from him was almost black. It was such a dark red color that to say it was anything other than black would nearly be a lie."

"Meine Goettin." He slipped and spoke in German for a moment, My Goddess was what he said. "He was close to becoming dark. He was losing all hope for his humanity, his soul was leaving his body and making him into the type of monster that you see in the movies."

"What would cause something like that?" Shawn asked him, worry clear on his face.

"Many things can be attributed to it. It would all depend on the type of person they were when still human, how they lived their lives as a vampire, whether they have someone around them to keep them grounded, and lastly their view of humans. Honestly, Reece, I am so very sorry I did not see it sooner. And I truly must thank you for doing what must be done when a vampire changes like that. It is a job I would have had to do myself if you had not."

The mood in the room had dropped dramatically. None of us, aside from my little mate, had suspected that the vampire was losing his humanity. It wasn't something that I thought about all that often, alright, I never would have.

"How were you able to figure that out?" Shane asked her. "I didn't notice anything different with his scent. Nothing that indicated death and decay."

"I believe it is because your Luna is quite the special one." Dietrich smiled at her.

"Special how?" Trinity looked uncomfortable as she asked.

"I think you already know a little about that, don't you Trinity." Her eyes went wide at his words. "I believe you are not just a normal Luna, am I right? You are special, different, than the others."

"How can you tell?" I demanded. I needed to keep my mate safe, I knew he wasn't a threat, but others might be able to sense her specialness if he could.

"Just as I can sense the life force of people, I can also sense the level of their life force."

"What do you mean? How can you sense the level of someone's life force? What does that even mean?" Shawn asked Dietrich. Shawn didn't seem very nervous at all anymore as he was talking with the man next to him so easily.

"Every person has a life force. Even vampires have a life force, but reading a vampire is different than reading a human or a wolf. The same goes for all the supernatural beings. Fae, witches and warlocks, the other shifters and even the less common types like daemon, djinn, spirits, merfolk. It doesn't matter what the type is, if they're alive they have a life force, essence, inside of them and I can read that

essence like it's an aura. I don't often pay attention to it unless I am meeting new people, but it is a handy skill to have sometimes. I just wish I would have seen Octavius in person before sending him your way, I would have known his essence was changed."

"And what exactly is different about my essence?" Little Bunny asked him nervously.

"Well, Trinity, I see the wolf essence in you, strong and powerful." He smiled at her and she nodded. "I can see the essence of a powerful witch, but one as of yet untrained." Shock flitted across her face now as she listened to him more. "And there is another essence, one that is stronger, more powerful than the other two, but it is still awakening. But when it is fully awakened, it will be quite powerful indeed. This third essence will be the one to rule your aura, it is who you were meant to be all along."

"But what is it?" Little Bunny pleaded with him to know.

"I wish I could tell you. But know this my dear, in all my five centuries and more of life I have never seen an essence quite like this one."

"Is that a bad thing?" I asked him as it looked like Little Bunny couldn't talk anymore.

"Not at all. I sense that this essence is great and powerful, wise and fair, strong and determined, it is full of nothing but positives."

"When, and how, will I find out what it is?" There was fear in my mate's eyes that looked like it would be permanent.

"I do not know the answer to that, I am sorry. But I am willing to help you figure this out if I can."

"We would appreciate that, Dietrich, thank you." I offered him my sincere gratitude.

It seemed that everyone in the room was at a momentary loss for words as everyone looked slowly around at each other. Trying to figure out the meaning behind Dietrich's words would take us a long time, I was sure. But for now, it was time to move onto the most important subject. The whole reason why Dietrich was here.

"Dietrich, we need your help, same as we needed the help when the emissary was coming here. We need to find the leader of a certain coven of Warlocks and Witches."

"Yes, I know that you mentioned that before, but you didn't tell me who it was you were looking for. Nor did you tell me the reason why." I could see the seriousness sharpen the look in Dietrich's eyes.

"We need to find the High Warlock of the Sacramentum de Mortis." Dietrich's eyes went wide with shock.

"Why on earth are you looking for Gannon? He is a terrible man with terrible ideals."

"We've noticed." Little Bunny quipped sarcastically.

"Trinity, you must stay away from that man, if he learns you have the blood of a witch, he will most definitely try to make you one of his."

"He already tried." I stated flatly. "He took her back in January and held her for a little over two days."

"How did you ever find him then?"

"He tracked me through our mate marks." Dietrich's eyes flared at the plural use of that word, I'm certain we will be talking about that at some point.

"You are lucky to have escaped. Gannon is a ruthless, ruthless man. He is not even against experimenting on and torturing his own children."

"Oh, I know that first hand, I experienced said torture."

"Wait, Trinity, are you telling me that Gannon is-."

"Yes, Gannon Cornelius Edmond is my father." Trinity interrupted Dietrich, causing him to gasp at her words. "Mind you, I didn't know who he was until I woke up in the cellar of his torture house. He and four other warlocks tortured me both with and without magic."

"You're very lucky to be alive. Having your wolf is most likely what saved you."

"I didn't even have a wolf until after he kidnapped me. I had never changed until then. It happened literally at the stroke of midnight."

"That's a powerful time." Dietrich smiled.

"Yeah, well, to make it worse it was the stroke of midnight ringing in my birthday." Dietrich gasped, his jaw hanging open for just a moment before he snapped it shut and continued to speak.

"Trinity, how old are you now?" Dietrich's voice was filled with awe.

"Nineteen, why?"

"I knew it."

"Knew what?" I demanded of him.

"The number nineteen, while having so many important signifiers in numerology, is a number very prominent for the moon goddess. As you know there are several Gods and Goddesses that we supernaturals worship, a different one for each of us. Shifters, of all types, worship the Celtic Goddess Nehalennia. She was said to have a fondness for the number nineteen and would have that number around her in some way. Nineteen pieces of fruit in her basket, nineteen wolves following her. Whatever the reason, nineteen is indeed a number to be associated with your moon goddess. And that you would wait to have your shift until you were nineteen means that you are destined to be special. Goddess touched as they might say."

Noah and I both looked at my Little Bunny, identical looks of worry on our faces. Dietrich was not the only person to say that Trinity was marked by the Goddess.

"Rest assured, Reece, I will make sure I help you find Gannon, no matter what."

"Good, then we will be able to rescue the children."

"What children?"

"Edmond orchestrated the kidnapping of eight children from the city, three of them cubs from the pack." Otsana told him, finally adding something to the conversation after watching on completely enraptured by everything being said.

"Only eight? You're sure."

"Only eight from here, we haven't been informed of any others yet." I told him.

"Though I have a feeling he wants, or needs, four more before he can do whatever it is he has planned." Little Bunny told the whole room.

"I believe you are right, Trinity." Dietrich frowned, a line of worry and anger between his brow, it was the first wrinkle I had seen appear on his face. "We truly must work hard to find them. I will not leave until I help you bring those children home."

Chapter 149 - Both- Emmalee And Bryce Arrive (VOLUME 2)

11-14 minutes

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Trinity

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Dietrich decided to settle in at the estate. He said it was so he could talk to us about the case easier, but I know it was so he could be closer to Shawn, who would be working in the house most days. He also planned to help me find someone who would help me to develop my magic. I had to admit, having Dietrich around would be pretty nice. And I think Shawn will come around to having his new mate, eventually.

The day after Dietrich's arrival, there was a surprise visit from my last wedding planning crew member, and her parents of course. It was just after lunch that our newest visitors had arrived. We weren't expecting them, and somehow they managed to get all the way to our door without so much as a phone call from the guards. I had a feeling Noah had a hand in it, as he was conveniently absent today for an appointment with Nikki with the pack doctors.

Noah was due back later this afternoon with Carter, the tailor was coming to measure everyone, except Riley, for their suits for the wedding. Uncle Wesley and Grandfather would be here as well. And Vincent would already be here on guard duty. Everything would work out well.

But, then Emmalee showed up with Bryce and Bree. I was happy to see Emmalee. I knew she would be a valuable asset for planning the wedding, and I was genuinely grateful to have her around. When Reece and I went to the hall to answer the door, I had never expected the blonde bundle of energy to explode into the room.

"Trinity!" Emmalee ran to me as soon as the door was open, before we even had a chance to welcome the guests to our home. "I'm so happy for you." She threw her arms around me, excitement and true happiness showing on her face.

"Emmalee, it's great to see you." I hugged her back.

"Emmalee, give the woman a chance to breathe." Bryce scolded her from the doorway. "I'm sorry Reece, my boy, I never can control that girl."

"No worries Bryce, it's fine. To what do we owe for the surprise visit today?" Reece asked with a smile.

"I have some personal business to discuss with you. If I may borrow some of your time for a little while."

"Yeah, no problem. Should we discuss things in my office then?"

"No, I would prefer to talk outside if that is alright with you."

"Ok." Reece seemed confused but agreed.

"Emmalee, Bree, would the two of you like to join me in the living room. I can get some refreshments and we can catch up."

"Yes, oh Goddess, I need to hear details about the proposal and the wedding." Emmalee linked her arm around mine and started off into the house. "Let's have some champagne to celebrate."

"Emmalee!"

"No!" Bryce and Reece yelled out at the same time making Emmalee stop in place.

"Emmalee Jade Evans, you are not using Trinity as an excuse to drink, not after last time." Emmalee hung her head.

"Trinity and you are both underage anyway." Reece didn't say anything else.

"Come on you old fuddies. It's not like we're humans, a little celebration is nothing to fear."

"No, Emmalee, I can't drink." I informed her.

"Don't let those boring boys staunch your fun Trinity."

"It's not that Emmalee, I can't." I smiled at her but she still didn't get it, but it seemed someone else did.

"Oh, congratulations Trinity." Bree cooed.

"Reece, boy, you dog." Bryce smiled. "Congrats. Hopefully you have better luck than I did." He laughed and Reece grinned his goofy grin again.

"What are you talking about?" Emmalee asked us all.

"Are you kidding me?" Bryce looked at his daughter in exasperation.

"Emmalee, Trinity is pregnant, so she can't drink alcohol." Bree told her.

I watched as Emmalee's eyes got bigger and bigger, until eventually they looked like giant green orbs floating in the middle of her beautiful face.

"EEeeeeee!" She squealed, long and loud. "Trinity!" She yelled and she hugged me again.

"Congratulations."

"Thank you Emmalee. Now, let's go so the boys can have their play time." I joked as I turned and winked at Reece. "See you later." I told him playfully. I heard a low growl answer me before I left the foyer entirely.

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Reece

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I went outside with Bryce as soon as the women left the hall. I let the older man lead the way and followed as he went toward the large, burnt orange colored SUV. He seemed to be heading toward the cargo area. When he was almost there he pressed a button on his key fob that caused the gate to lift automatically.

"So what is so important out here Bryce?" I asked him.

"I have an early wedding gift for you." He smirked at the words.

"You could have waited to give me any gift until the wedding, it's not that long of a wait you know. And shouldn't Trinity be here then?"

"No, this gift you have to open yourself with no one else around." I tilted my head in confusion, looking at him with a new found curiosity.

"Alright, I'm intrigued. What is it?"

"You need to open it." He said pointing at a medium sized square box, maybe a little over a foot in length. The box was wrapped in black paper with a gaudy red bow.

I stepped closer to the SUV's cargo bay and looked at the box with suspicion and anticipation at the same time. I reached my hands out slowly and grabbed the lid before looking back at Bryce one last time. He had a bright, excited smile on his face. I didn't think he was out to trick me or betray me, but I didn't understand his look at all.

With slow movements, I finally lifted the lid off of the gift. Once the lid was no longer sitting atop the box, all four sides fell down as if they were flaps. The sides dropping revealed what was inside the box, but before I even saw what it was, the sharp scent of blood hit my nose with such intensity that it nearly made me sick.

The bottom of the box was lined in plastic with a cloth sitting in the middle so soaked in blood it was black. And resting atop that cloth was a head. Not just any head though, it was Stanley, the leader of the Black Moon pack's head.

"Bryce?" I spoke in a questioning tone.

"I promised you that I would tell you if I came across him before you, didn't I?" Bryce was grinning proudly. "Well, I figured you were busy with the wedding, and the case that you've been tracking down, and now an upcoming baby too I guess. I thought I would work extra hard to track him down. We found him two days ago and I took the liberty of preparing this gift and arranging this visit. Your beta was

helpful in helping me to surprise you, though he thought I just wanted to surprise Trinity with a visit from Emmalee." The old man was positively beaming as he spoke.

"Sorry I took the joy of killing him, but he did cause a lot of trouble on my lands." Bryce was looking a little upset now, like he thought I was mad. I was a little surprised when I first saw the man's head sitting before me, but when I realized who he was all I could do was grin.

"He finally got what he deserved." I told the older man.

"That he did, asshole probably deserved worse though, really."

"You're not kidding. He was always trying to poach my lands." I laughed with him good naturedly.

"Speaking of lands, what should we do with his? Didn't he have some sort of treaty with you?"

"No, he wouldn't sign with anyone, or rather no one was willing to sign with him."

"Do you have someone in mind that would make a good alpha?"

"I have a man or two in mind." I told him. "What about you?"

"There might be a couple that would do a decent job, but I have been grooming my son to be my successor and he would be the most qualified. I can't send my son to run a different pack."

"We can discuss this a little more later, once we're inside. I can hear a car approaching."

"Yeah, I hear it too boy."

"One more thing, Bryce, where are you staying for tonight? We can prepare rooms for you if you'd like."

"That'd be great." He smiled at me before the car that carried Noah and Carter got back.

When the men parked and got out, the four of us went back inside the house. Stanley's head was closed back up inside the box, and when the ladies were not around we would dispose of it. We were walking toward the living room, Bryce and me in the lead, Noah and Carter bringing up the rear, when I heard a shout from up ahead.

"Oh Goddess! He's here." Emmalee shouted.

I saw her bolt to her feet and start running toward us as soon as we all entered the room. I thought she might have been running to her father, but she just ran past him, past all of us except Carter. She ran straight at him and literally tackled him to the floor.

"You're not getting away this time." She was pinning him to the ground by laying across him.

"EMMALEE!" Bryce and Bree both screamed.

"Carter are you alright?" Trinity asked.

"What the?" Noah gasped. I just stared in fascination. I think I finally figured out why Carter has been so down lately.

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Trinity

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I was standing there in total shock. The minute Reece came into the room with Bryce and my cousins, Emmalee bolted to her feet and tackled Carter to the ground. I easily guessed why though. It was obvious that Carter was the mate she mentioned back in January. And Emmalee was the daughter of the Alpha and mate that Carter mentioned to me in December. They had never met face to face, only smelled each other's scents.

Carter was on a scouting mission and left the minute he smelled Emmalee in that pack, knowing she would seek him out and blow his cover. Emmalee, having smelled Carter, searched for him frantically, only to break down into tears when she couldn't find him. They never thought that they would ever find each other again.

"Emmalee, what are you doing?" Bryce demanded.

"Emmalee?" Carter said in a soft voice filled with awe. He and Emmalee were staring at each other's eyes intently.

"It's alright Bryce, I think we should just watch for now." Reece smiled knowingly and Bryce stared on in confusion.

"Why did you run away from me?" Emmalee seemed to be on the verge of tears.

"I had no choice. I couldn't be found out."

"What's he talking about?" Bryce asked Reece.

"When the Warlocks were after Trinity, I knew that other packs were part of it, so I sent scouts." I expected Bryce to be mad, but he just smiled.

"Exactly what I would have done. Smart boy."

"I don't care that you could have been found out. I thought my mate didn't want me. I thought you looked at me and ran away."

"I never even got the chance to speak to you. But I saw you, and I wanted you." Carter turned his head to look away from her in embarrassment. "I have been wondering if I'd ever get the chance to make it right. I knew that if I went back to the pack and talked to everyone then they would know that I was a spy. I thought you would hate me too, for being a spy."

"You were following orders, and we had nothing to hide. I don't know why you were investigating us, but I know our packs are allies now." Emmalee was smiling, but Carter was still looking upset.

"I just thought I blew it before I had a chance to meet you as myself."

"Who are you? Why are you here? What's your name?" Emmalee bombarded him with questions.

"My name is Carter, and I am Trinity's cousin."

"So you mean Trinity and I are going to be related now?" She exclaimed excitedly.

"Does that mean you forgive me for running?" Carter asked her nervously.

"Not yet, but eventually." She joked with him as she smiled radiantly.

"Emmalee, get off the boy and let him breathe for crying out loud." Emmalee finally stood up and let him stand. When he was back on his feet she grabbed his hand and pulled him along with her. "Mom, Dad, this is the mate I was telling you about before."

"So, Reece, it looks like our packs were already bound together before you came to me for help." Bryce laughed. "It's good to meet you Carter." He smiled and shook hands with the man his daughter had just tackled to the floor.

"Thank you sir, it's good to meet you as well." Carter nervously shook the older man's hand as I watched on, smiling happily knowing that he could finally be happy.

Chapter 150 - Trinity- Dresses (VOLUME 2)

10-13 minutes

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Trinity

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Emmalee decided she wanted to stay until the wedding so she stayed at the house while her parents went home. They would come back the night before with their other children in tow. Emmalee wanted to be a part of the wedding planning as much as possible and that just wasn't easy if she was still back at the Black Canyons. So, now we had two house guests and probably a lot more visits from Carter while she was here. Carter did seem truly happy when things between him and Emmalee were finally settled.

After about a week of Emmalee being at the house we had everything nearly done with the planning. It turns out that a lot of women in the pack wanted to help with the wedding in at least a small way, so it was decided that anyone who wanted to cook could prepare a dish for the wedding to reduce the strain on any caterers. There was going to be a lot of food that they brought.

Three days before the wedding, Ella came to the house to deliver the dresses. Emmalee, Juniper, and Nikki were extremely excited to see my wedding dress. Aunt Eve and Lila were there as well, but with a more level head and better contained excitement.

It was just before sunset that Ella arrived, the tension and excitement for having to wait was very thick in the air. Reece wasn't home at the moment, but we didn't want him seeing the dress until the day of the wedding, so we had Ella escorted to my bedroom. The group of us were waiting in the sitting area when she walked in. I rose to my feet to greet her.

"Ella, it's so good to see you again." I smiled at her as I walked over and gave her a gentle hug. I had seen her quite a few times with all the fittings and I had now come to view her as a friend.

"Trinity." She squeezed me back with one hand, the dresses held in the other. "I finally got it to look the way I wanted, I hope you like it." She seemed nervous.

"I'm sure it will look great, Ella. I saw some of the sketches after all."

We took my dress to the bathroom to change, Ella had come with me to show me how all the fastenings and extras were supposed to go. She was used to helping her clients try on dresses so she wasn't embarrassed but I sure was. I know a lot of women in the pack lack that kind of modesty but I don't think I would ever lose it. I got embarrassed way too easily.

Ella hung the dress up as soon as we were in the bathroom. She unzipped the black protective bag that it was in, slowly revealing the beautiful dress. The first thing I noticed was the two different shades of blue, persian blue and maya blue, the latter was a lighter, paler blue and was the primary color. The darker blue was the accent color.

There were metal and gemstone decorations covering the dress at various spots. Ella had used the three moon symbol when designing the dress, two crescent moons on either side of a full moon, the crescent moons were facing away from the full moon so that the crescents were opposite of each other. The three moon symbols were made out of metal that was persian blue as were other decorative accents.

At each of the shoulders there was a three moon symbol and little leaves and vines made of metal. Chains connected the decorative metal to the bodice of the dress. And connected to the shoulders of the dress were sleeves made out of the same maya blue fabric as the dress. Dangling from the metal work of the shoulders were short, thin chains that ended in what looked like tear shaped sapphires. The color made me think of raindrops instead of tears.

The top bodice of the dress had an intricate set of swirl designs made of the same metal as the shoulders. There was a large gemstone in the center of the designs that looked just like a full moon. On top of that full moon gemstone were two crescent moon shapes that were made of the same gemstones. A loop of cloth connected those crescent moons and would be what went around my neck to hold the dress up.

The dress was done in almost a V-Waist design, but with less accenting with fabric. The V of the waist was accented instead by a belt made out of the same three moon symbols in the persian blue color. There were thin chains hanging from the belt as well. Near the hips they were shorter, but the closer to the middle they went the longer they were. The longest chain would hang to about mid thigh. Each chain once again ended in a tear shaped sapphire.

The dress was cut to go all the way down to the floor or ground when I was wearing my heels, and the skirt was just full enough that it would swish as I walked. I could see a few small braided strands of cloth leading down the back of the dress from the loop of fabric for my neck. They looked like they would connect at the waist which would only come to my lower back.

Ella took the dress out of the bag and behind it I saw what was going to serve as my veil. It was a cape made of a sheer grayish, almost silver looking fabric with a large, loose hood. There were no sleeves but rather gaps so that my arms would be able to go through the cape if needed. The cape was gathered in the back between where my shoulders would be. It was gathered by another of the three moon symbols this time made of a black metal. The top of the fabric was bunched together so that it would reveal my

back and the back of the dress but then flowed out as it went down. The bottom of the cape would trail behind me like a train to a dress since my dress didn't have a long train.

I was in awe by the amount of work and detail that she put into the dress.

"Ella, it's beautiful." I had never seen the final product or any of the dress when she was working on it. She would instead use other pieces of fabric to cut them to size for the real dress's measurements. She truly wanted the final product to be a surprise to me.

"You really like it?" She asked me.

"I love it, Ella. You're amazing." She was beaming at me happily, grinning with joy at my praising words.

I slipped out of the clothes I was wearing and Ella helped me into the dress. I now knew why she was the one coming to help me. All the intricate work would take a skilled hand to get me in and out of it the first time.

Once I was in the dress and the cape, Ella led me out of the bathroom for everyone else to see.

"Oh Goddess that's amazing." Nikki squealed.

"Trinity, you look awesome." Juniper smiled.

"Trinity, you're the prettiest bride I have ever seen." Lila looked like she was on the verge of tears.

"Oh, Trinity." Aunt Eve was actually crying, a hand over the lower half of her face to contain the sob she was obviously trying to hold back. "You look so beautiful. You're mother would be so happy and proud if she could see you right now." The tears were streaming down her face as she spoke.

"I know she would, Aunt Eve. I know she would be because you're here in her place and I know that as long as I can make you happy she would be happy too. Because you're my mom too Aunt Eve."

Aunt Eve sobbed slightly before she walked over to me and hugged me tightly.

"I love you Trinity." She smiled at me. "You know, you look like a goddess in this dress. That's how amazing this dress is on you." She smiled through the tears.

Just as Aunt Eve pulled away from me I smelled Reece coming down the hallway. But I wasn't the only one, everyone's eyes snapped toward the door. In the blink of an eye Juniper was at the door and locked the handle before he could come in.

The door and handle jiggled slightly as he tried opening it to come in.

"What gives? Why did you lock me out?"

"There is important wedding stuff in here, go away." Juniper told him.

"Go away? It's my room." He whined.

"It was Trinity's first, and it's only until we're done."

"This is unbelievable." He said in a fake exasperated tone of voice as he walked away.

"Quick thinking and nice speed." Nikki congratulated Juniper on her job well done.

I changed out of my dress and then safely stored in the back of my closet while the others tried on their dresses. The dresses for Lila and Aunt Eve were long with a sash like belt across the waist. The bodices went all the way up to the collar bones then went around the neck in a halter style. The back of the dresses scooped low to the middle of the back.

The main color of Aunt Eve's dress was lapis lazuli with a lighter shade of blue, baby blue to be exact, for the sash belt and the trim at the very top of the dress. Lila's dress was the same as Aunt Eve's except for the color. Lila's primary color was pine green with a fern green sash and accents.

The bridesmaids and maid of honor dresses were very similar with just one difference. They were all empire waisted with thin straps coming off of the bodice. The maid of honor dress had a black gemstone 'X' pattern that wrapped around just below the bosom of the dress while the bridesmaid dresses were the same gemstones but only a wide band of them going around the dresses.

All of these dresses were a lighter shade of gray except for at the very bottom, there was a pop of color where the skirt flared out. The gray was like an outer shell that opened just below the black gemstones. It opened up like it was a cape to reveal the two colors beneath. By the time the dress got to the floor the gray had receded to the sides and every time one of the women in the bridesmaid or maid of honor dresses walked the colorful clothes would be what swished and moved with them.

The colors under the gray were the lapis lazuli and pine green. The contrasting blue and green went amazingly well together. The blue seemed to start first and the green was coming out in the middle of the blue. Almost like the gray gave way to blue that gave way to green. They were beautiful dresses and I loved them all so much.

Now that I had my dress, and the wedding was only days away, it finally felt like it was all real. I was nervous but oh so excited too. After the dresses were put back into their bags Ella was ready to take her leave as were the others. It was about time to call it a night and let my moping fiancé back into our room, but Juniper had one more thing to say first.

"Ella, we're having a bachelorette party for Trinity in a couple days wanna join us?"

"Really?" Ella looked surprised as she stared at us all.

"Yeah, come on and join the fun." Nikki encouraged her.

"Alright, that would be great. I can't wait."