

Cried Wolf 91

Chapter 91

'Nina, please don't ask me again. We are not allowing Alec to leave that dungeon,' Magnus growls.

'If you saw what he showed me, how it all came about. You would see how unjust it is for him to remain in there,' I say.

'Nina, I would never put myself in that position in the first place. Your blood flame made his choice, and he now suffers the consequences,

'If I was burned at the stake, would you not try and kill those responsible?' I ask.

Magnus stiffens, and instead of responding, he walks away upstairs to our room and slams the door.

With Reaper on my shoulder, I sigh and stroll over to the open window.

That didn't go down well,' Reaper mind-links.

Well, it's a complicated situation for Magnus, he is my mate, and the vampire king is my second mate.'

'Did you hear that, Reaper?' I ask as I hear a gasp from the garden.

Yes,' he says and flies from my shoulder and circles through the garden, searching.

Who's there?' I shout out the window. 'Come out now, and I might let you live,' I crack my knuckles and climb out the window. When Reaper lets out a caw, I know he's located something... or someone. So I take a step forward and tackle the person.

'Don't kill me, please don't kill me,' Hank begs.

'Hank? What are you doing in my territory? You were exiled from here. You were never supposed to return,' I growl.

'I came to ah, apologise, yes apologise and make amends for my... terrible behaviour trying to blackmail Magnus into a mateship with my sister,' he says in a higher-pitched voice.

'You know I have every right to kill you for returning and trespassing?'

Y-yes,' he says, falls to his knees, and bows before me, 'But you are such a kind, understanding Luna. Would you really kill someone for trying to right their wrong?' he says, making me think of Juniper and how she would have wanted Alec to forgive the humans. I frown in thought. My gut is telling me to kill him, right here, right now. But my heart is thinking of Alec and Magnus and what would be the right thing to do.

He looks up to see my outreached hand and takes it to stand up. Thank you, Luna,' he says.

'What were you doing in the garden anyway? Why didn't you just knock at the packhouse door?'

'Um, I thought if Magnus or someone else were to greet me at the door, they would not be as understanding as you would be and kill me without hearing me out first,' he explains.

I see,' I say

'Now that you have heard what I have to say and accepted my sincerest apologies, I will be on my way then.' He says, taking his leave.

Wait, how come I can't smell your scent? The warriors should have known you were here,' I say.

Hank fondles a symbol made from a precious stone around his neck. He doesn't know what to say. I step forward and hold the symbol and take a closer look. I've seen this symbol before,' I say, thinking of what it is and where I have seen it. I yank it from his neck, turn my back to him, and hold it up for Reaper to see. 'Wasn't this mentioned in one of the spellbooks? I'm pretty sure it hides your scent?

"Yes, that's an excellent observation' Reaper mind-links. I return my attention to Hank, but he has already left.

'Something odd about that, Hank,'" I say.

Are you going to chase after him?' Reaper mind-links.

"No, I need to check on Magnus,'

Reaper flies over me and onto the railing outside my bedroom window, readying himself to eavesdrop on our conversation. Rolling my eyes at him, I enter the packhouse and 'Skedaddle Dash' upstairs and knock on the bedroom door.

I hear a grunt which I take as a sign to enter. Magnus sits on the end of the bed with his head down. Instead of saying anything, I sit on his lap and snuggle into him. He immediately relaxes and wraps his arms tightly around me.

I'm sorry,' I whisper.

'I know, I am too,'

We stay embraced silently in each other's arms for a while.

'I should finish off the paperwork in the office. Do you want to come with me?' Magnus asks.

'I think I'll go down to the basement and socialise with my cover sisters,' I smile.

Entering the basement, there is a new large circular table with wooden seats that have carvings.

'This table is beautiful,' I exclaim to Ela, Fern, Lilac, Ria and May.

'We materialised it together. It's just for us witches for meetings and other such things,' May says,

I notice the back of each chair has a name. I take the seat with Luna written in gold on the back. It's very comfortable. 'Well, we could utilise it right now. I have something I want you all to know.'

Everyone stops brewing the potion and takes their seat.

What is it, Luna?' Fern asks.

'Alec showed me what had happened to Juniper, his first blood flame, and why he attempted to wipe out the human race. I want you to all know his story. I'm going to tell you what I saw in the vision he showed me,'

Wait a minute. We have a vision spell as well. Please allow me to get the book for you.' Ela remarks as she walks over to the spellbook rack. She flips over the pages, places the book in front of me, and retakes her seat. When I look down at the paper and pronounce the words Visionous Memorias, a great circle of magic appears and shows what I'm thinking about. I start where Alec left off, with Juniper rushing down the cobblestone path, entering the cottage, putting the healing potions in her basket, and departing to give the potion to the Hillsburys. When the vision is finished, everyone is wailing and crying, their eyes downcast. Behind me, I hear a shuffle towards the stairs. Magnus had witnessed the entire vision, and tears streamed down his cheeks. I dash over to him and give him a tight embrace. He gently squeezes me back.

That was... incredibly difficult to watch, Magnus says quietly.

I wipe the tears from his face and turn to face the others. They are crying into their familiars. The fennec fox whimpers as he licks May's tears from her face.

'It's so sad,' May sniffles, 'Alec never even got to spend a whole day with Juniper, and she killed before his very own eyes,'

'And Juniper never got to take her grandma back to Alec's castle,' Fern cries.

'They killed her grandma,' Ria cries.

I take Magnus's hand, and we walk upstairs and out of the packhouse and sit under the moon tree.

Reaper caws and flies down from the tree onto the grass for a pat

'I can see why you think it's unfair that Alec is still in that dungeon, but it's also for the best,' Magnus says.

'Are you kidding me? It's for the best?'

'Let's say we let him out, Nina. What do you think he is going to do? Prance around and pick flowers from the garden? No, I'm your mate, which means he will want me out of the picture and will probably attempt to kill me or succeed and kill me,'

'He wouldn't,' I say.

'Are you willing to stake my life on that, Nina?'

Would Alec murder Magnus if we let him out of the dungeon? I'd never considered it before.

'If Alec truly loves me, Magnus, he would never do anything to hurt me, and if that means you staying alive and being by my side, then I'm sure that is something he will accept and adjust to,' say.

I need to let my wolf out for a run. I'll see you tonight." He says and shifts into his wolf, bolting towards the woods.

Alpha Bennet taps his fingers repetitively in the dark of night Alpha Amir and Alpha Theaton sit at the table beside him. The candelabra above them only dimly lights the room Hank brings a large jug of wine to the table and refills everyone's cups before taking a seat himself

How much longer do we have to wait for this Kadva you speak of to arrive? Hank asks, evidently impatient with waiting

The window shutters suddenly blow open, and the lace curtain dances in the air before settling itself back down and the candles on The candelabra flicker

Hank looks towards the window to see no one there but becomes startled when he sees a hooded figure on the seat beside him.

"What in the world! Hank says, 'Where did you come from?"

Kadva, it's nice of you to join us,' Alpha Bennet says

"It's been a while, Alpha Bennet,' Kadva says, sounding polite

"Something interesting has occurred and in our favour too,' Bennet smiles

"Oh? Kadva says as he turns his hand upright, and a blue orb of magic appears. He bounces it up and down in his hand as if bored,

Hank's eyes grow wide, 'What is that thing?' he says, frantically pointing at Kadva

The wolf council are calm, as if it's normal for them to see such magic

"Hank, this is Kadva He is a mage,' Alpha Benner says, almost too calm

AM-mage? I never knew such a thing existed.' Hank says

Kadva turns his head at Hank, 'Refer to me as a thing again, Hank, and maybe I will show you what this thing is capable of,' He grits through his teeth

Hank stiffens and goes silent

Let's get back to business, Kadva We agreed many years ago that we would keep you a secret from society so you could live your life free from being hunted down. In return, you would owe us a big favour if we ever needed it. That time is now,' Alpha Bennet smirks

Trusting, hadva says

We all have mutual feelings toward the human race and find it unfair that we have to stay hidden from humans, century after century We have even joked about wiping them out, but for thousands of werewolves to go up against billions of humans and their weapons of destruction We know it would never be possible, and we would lose. However, there is a pack we have disliked for Bonne come now. Shadow Crest They are responsible for killing alpha Zenith many years ago and, more recently, his daughter Vanessa and grandson Moss As you know Alpha Zenith used to be a part of this council, and we were practically brothers. Now Alpha Magnus has taken over the pack, and it turns out his little mate is half-witch'

“What? That’s impossible Kadva says. There hasn’t been a record of a witch in hundreds of years, There is no end of a mage ether Alpha Bennet smiles, But here you are. It gets even better from here. A coven of witches came

and made themselves known to Shadow Crest

The mother the core cared Kadva asks.

the Midnight

Came

coming along those lines. They made Nina, and her sister, who also wields magic, members of their of the coven merged into the Shadow Crest pack

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Luna, a day to depart from any pack territories and never return. Otherwise, we would hunt them down and kill them. We left, and further, along the road, this smouldering blackbird gave me a note to come back the next day, where I would be taken to Pandora’s Box We returned the next day and entered a portal with the witches. It was their Covenstead which they named Pandora’s Box. I entered the house to find items floating and moving around. We stepped through a large mirror and opened a door that led to darkness. Yiselda made a staircase magically appear using a book, and then we walked up the stairs until we reached a large dark heavy door covered in sigils. It was a dungeon, we entered, and the first hideous creatures I saw were what they call Grimghouls.

Then there was the Shadow Reapers further up. They were all interesting creatures, but what got my attention was the lone vampire king locked away in a small dark cell,’

‘The vampire king?’ Kadva says as he drops his ball of magic onto the table. It shatters into light blue glimmering dust, scattering across the table.

‘So not only do witches still exist but Grimghouls, Shadow Reapers and vampires too? And not just any vampire, the vampire king?’ Kadva asks.

‘Yes, hundreds of years ago, humans killed his blood flame, who happened to be a witch. He created the Grimghouls and Shadow Reapers and sent them across the lands to kill all humans. Werewolf packs teamed up and tried to stop him. He wiped out most of the packs until witches intervened and have kept him in the dungeon ever since.’

This is all rather interesting to hear. After all these years, I thought werewolves and myself were the only supernatural creatures left?’

‘Well, the story gets more interesting again. I’ve had Hank here wear that necklace you gave me years ago to cover scents and sent him to spy on Shadow Crest. He returned with rather intriguing news. It turns out Nina, the half-wolf and half-witch Luna, isn’t only mates with Magnus but is also mates with the vampire king.’

They have the vampire king on their side as well?’ Kadva says, astonished at the thought.

'Not quite, Nina wants to let him out, but the others are against it, especially Alpha Magnus,'

'Well, I'm intrigued about where I fit in, in all of this and still not sure where you are going with all this information?'

'I want the humans gone, wiped out, non-existent, and we can now achieve that with the vampire king's help. We can take over the world and never have to hide from the world. A human free world full of werewolves!' Alpha Bennet beams.

Kadva awkwardly coughs.

'Oh, supernatural's, I guess I should say?' he corrects himself.

'And how do you supposed we achieve that? We don't know how to get to the vampire king and if he will want to wipe out the human species?' Kadva says.

'Actually,' Hank interrupts, 'I happened to follow them through a portal to Pandora's Box and was able to figure out the location. It's a few hours run in wolf form from here,' he smirks and folds his arms.

'We are not going to visit the vampire king and just ask him if he would do it. We will make him do it. You, Kadva, will take Nina's wand and kidnap her. Magnus will notice her missing. You will leave this note telling him in order to have Nina safely returned, he needs to free the vampire king, and the vampire king needs to eradicate the human race,'

'So, I'm to remove Nina's wand removing her of magic, kidnap her, leave this note and have Nina hidden and locked up somewhere until there are no humans alive?'

'Correct,' Alpha Bennet says, 'Except we won't be handing Nina over. I want the witches and that vampire dead as well. Hank will burn Pandora's Box down. We will kill the witches, and together we will kill the vampire king,

'Are you sure you want all the blood of those humans and witches on your hand? It doesn't feel right just to wipe them out. What if we can't kill the vampire king?'

We will seal him in a dungeon for eternity using Nina's magic and then kill her. If you refuse to cooperate, Kadva, tell me now because I'm sure the humans would love to hear all about this mage that can manipulate elements. They would capture you and lock you up in one of those laboratories and have fun experimenting on you every day until you die?' Alpha Bennet warns.

Kadva stiffens, 'So when do I leave for Shadow Crest?' he asks.

'Tonight,' Alpha Bennet smiles.

Chapter 93

The entire town of Shadow Crest has been abuzz with rumours about the vampire king becoming my second mate. We'll be having Astrid, Ryker, and my parents around for dinner to talk about it all in more detail.

The moment they walk into the packhouse, we all meet and embrace one another, 'Please take a seat in the dining room. It won't be long until dinner is served! I smile.

The kitchen staff have laid out a feast along the table, and we have begun to pile food onto our plates.

So, dear, tell me all about the vampire king? Does he treat you well? Is he handsome?' My mum inquires.

Amelia!' Magnus says with a snarl.

What? I think we're all a little curious, she says.

'You asked Nina about her second mate in such a casual manner, as if it were entirely common to have two mates.' Magnus says.

Well, it's quite natural. In my childhood, my grandmother had two mates, and another pack member had two female mates as well. I remember my grandmother giggling her way from one bedroom to the other in the middle of the night, Amelia recalls fondly.

Magnus is dumbfounded and looks at his parents for guidance and comfort.

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"Actually, son, Ryker adds, taking a bite of roast beef in his mouth. 'Amelia is absolutely correct. My grandmother had two mates, as

did her cousin, who also had two mates. In fact, most packs had at least one or two members who were blessed with two soulmates,' he says with a smirk.

"And they were completely okay with that? Sharing their mate?' Magnus asks, completely taken aback.

'Well yeah, Nina isn't just your mate. She is also the vampire king's mate. What's his name anyway?' Ryker asks.

Alec, Magnus grizzles, clenching the fork in his hand tighter.

I have no intention of sharing Nina with him, and she is just visiting him once a day until we can figure out how to break the bond between them, Magnus explains. The cutlery clatters and crashes against the plates and everyone's eyes are drawn to Magnus in surprise.

Mate, relationships are sacred. They should never be broken, Ryker asserts firmly.

'Nina is mine! Magnus lets out a growl.

'She is Alec's as well, Magnus. Would you like him to keep Nina away from you every day and try to sever your mate bond with her?' My dad, Leon, argues.

Magnus clenches his teeth at the concept, 'No, he says.

Take a moment to consider what you are doing to Alec. He is Nina's, second mate. Whatever you do to him will also cause Nina pain, and anything he does to hurt you will cause Nina pain.

'What are you saying? I should be mutual with Alec and share Nina with him?' Magnus laughs.

'Well, if you want what is best for your mate, then yes, Ryker says.

'Has it not sunk in at this point that Nina's second mate isn't even a werewolf? He is a vampire, and he is the king of the vampires! Magnus argues.

'Nina's extremely lucky, an alpha and a king, Amelia says, a smile on her face as Nina blushes in response.

I'm out of here, Magnus says as he rises from his seat at the table and proceeds toward the packhouse door.

So, sweetheart, you didn't respond to my queries, my mother says with a smile.

'He is quite sweet and gentle towards me, mum. He is as equally attractive as Magnus is..

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Don't worry about Magnus. He will come around. I forget with fewer packs now. It has become more uncommon over time to see anyone with two mates, He wouldn't be taking it so hard if he had known earlier how common and natural it was back when we were

young, Ryker says

Do you all really think that Alec and Magnus would become mutual one day?' | ask. Everyone smiles and nods their heads,

The fact that Magnus is opposed to releasing Alec from the dungeon means that it is unlikely to happen for a long time, I explain

Magnus returns to the table, where he silently continues his meal.

'Back so soon?' I smile.

Well, I didn't have much of a choice. Reaper kept trying to swoop me, he grumbles.

I bust out laughing and lean over to embrace him with my arms around his waist.

We complete our dinner without saying anything about Alec, and then we escort our parents out of the packhouse together.

I'm going to tell Reaper off for swooping you, I say.

I'll meet you upstairs for bed, Magnus replies and places a kiss on my temple.

As I walk closer to the moon tree, I call out, 'Reaper. He flies down and lands on my shoulder. Can you tell me why you were swooping Magnus?'

'Because I could sense he was upsetting you during supper, he explained.

"I have the ability to fight my own battles, Reaper. Please don't swoop him anymore, okay?'

I'm your familiar Luna, and we work as a team. It's my responsibility to watch out for you, he says with a squawk. 'However, I'll make an effort not to swoop him the next time he offends you,

'You know, you never ended up telling me how you and Alec know each other?'

I haven't lived my entire life in Silverfay forest. I enjoy venturing out into the world to explore what has changed since I was last there. I was resting in the woods one night when I was roused by Alec sprinting past the tree in front of me. He cornered a deer and buried his teeth into its neck to bring it down. I stood there and watched as he drank the blood till he finally fell to his knees, looking

and looked right at me perched on the branch. If you can cast me the vision spell, I will show you the rest,

Visionous Memorias,' I say, a large clear circle of magic appears, and I see Alec staring at Reaper in the tree.

'You aren't an ordinary raven,' Alec says through a mind-link, 'I was surprised because it was the first time anyone had been able to mind-link me. Usually, the only person capable of accomplishing this is the witch, mage, or warlock with whom a familiar has formed a link.' Reaper explains to me

'No, I'm not,' Reaper replies to Alec.

What is a familiar doing roaming the world? Shouldn't you be in Shadowfay forest with the rest of your kind?' Alec asks.

I'm not like the other familiars. I'm the only Shadow Raven to exist. I'm more powerful than any other familiar, and I was bored, Reaper says.

The most powerful familiar, bored?' Alec laughs.

Watching pixies and elves prance around, tossing magic dust all over the place, all day, Reaper admits, 'Can be a little boring,

Alec continues to laugh, 'I suppose it would be. What's your name, bird?' Alec asks.

Reaper, and yours?

Alec, Vampire King, he proclaims with pride.

What is a vampire king doing in these desolate woods?' Reaper inquires.

I was on the verge of going mad. I needed to get some nourishment quickly before I lost my senses. These woodlands are lifeless and devoid of any form of life. With the exception of you, this deer is the first living creature I have seen in several days' Alec explains

Reaper descends from the tree, a dark cloud of mist enveloping him as he falls on Alec's shoulder. That was a brave move, my little trend Are you not afraid I will sink my teeth into you and take your life?' Alec asks.

Reaper caws and stretches his wings, 'No, you just drained the blood from an entire deer. I'm confident you are quite full,' he says

'So, Alec, Vampire King. Now that you have your senses back, where are we off to?'

'My home, the Realm of Shadows,' he says as he and Reaper flash through the woods together.

Chapter 94

The magical circle

Did you spend a lot of time with Alec?' I ask Reaper.

A few hundred years till the witches imprisoned him in that dungeon. Juniper was murdered in front of my eyes. I saw everything! In a sorrowful tone, he says. 'Because I wasn't his familiar, I couldn't pass on my powers to him. I couldn't follow him through the portal to Pandora's Box. The witches kept repelling me back with magic. It closed before I reached it. After years of searching for Alec, I returned to Shadowfay forest and remained there until you arrived.'

I'm so sorry, Reaper. 'That's a lot for anyone to go through, I grimace.

I smile and say, 'When we visit Alec tomorrow, I'll give you two some alone time to talk and catch up.

Td like that, says Reaper. For a while, we sit and gaze at the moon. Goodnight, Reaper,' I reply, kissing his beak.

'Night, Luna, he caws as he flies up into his moon tree.

I walk to the lake, not quite ready to retire to bed, tucking my wand into my back pocket, half poking out. I lie on my back, hands tucked behind my head, and gaze up at the stars in the clear night sky.

Something flitters through the air. It appeared to be a little stone. I sit up, perplexed, as someone sneaks up behind me and grabs the wand from my pack pocket. A hand grabs my arm and pulls it behind my back as I turn around. A knee digs into my back, causing me to fall to my knees, then on my stomach. I scream, but whoever it is, has straddled themselves onto my back, and I hear a man's voice 'Dreamus Sleepous,' he says, and I fall asleep.

As I open my eyes, everything appears fuzzy. My tied wrists and the hard brick wall against my back are the first things I notice. I'm seated on a cold stone floor that's cold to the touch. Then, as my vision sharpens, I realise I'm in an old jail-like cell. I try to mind link Magnus right away, but nothing happens. The mind-link connection has been severed. I try to untangle my hands, but the rope tightens

Take a deep breath, Nina, and stay calm. Let us examine the situation. I've obviously been kidnapped and am now imprisoned in a cell. My wand has been stolen, so I can't utilise my magic and can't mind-link anyone, not even Magnus. I don't believe I've sustained any injuries.

I wiggle around to see if I can feel any pain or injuries; nope, no pain, no injuries other than from the rope burn around my wrists.

Now the question is, who would kidnap me, and why would they do so? I can't conceive of anyone who would want to do this to me, so I concentrate on chewing the rope around my wrists and spitting out the tiny prickly fibres.

Footsteps are approaching. I gaze up to see the wolf council and Hank looking at me with smug expressions. Someone else is Turking behind them, a hooded figure.

“Alpha Bennet, what brings you here? Why did you kidnap me?”

Welcome, Luna. I see you’ve settled comfortably in your small cell, Alpha Bennet chuckles.

I scoff, ‘Comfortable is far from the term I would use! Now answer my question!’ I shout.

‘So, dramatic,’ Alpha Bennet says, ‘And I didn’t kidnap you for starters. Kadva did,

‘Who is Kadva?’ | ask.

The hooded figure stepped forward. He held his hands out, and they began to glow. A blue magic sphere appears in both of his hands and transforms into balls of water.

I’m Kadva, he introduces himself,

“How did you manage to do that?” ‘Who are you?’ I enquire, astounded by his powers.

Kadva is a mage, Alpha Bennet interrupts the conversation.

“A mage? My coven sisters would really love to meet you, well, before you kidnapped me, of course, but I’m sure they’d want to meet you for less than pleasant reasons now. I frown.

I’m just following orders,’ Kadva says in defence.

‘Following orders? You work for the wolf council?’

‘The one and only,’ he says in an uncomfortable manner.

Despite the fact that Kadva kidnapped me, I can’t help but think he’s not really an evil guy. I’m curious to what they have against Kadva to force him to do their bidding. in

I’m not sure why I’m here. Why did you have me kidnapped?’ I look up at Alpha Bennet.

“How would you feel if this planet was free of humans?” To live in a world where we are no longer required to keep our powers hidden. ‘To be able to shift into our wolves without being hunted down and slaughtered by humans?’”

This planet was made for humans. It was never intended to have supernaturals on it in the first place. Books dating back a thousand years can be found in the Shadow Crest library’s forbidden room. I read one book in particular. It documents the history of supernaturals. We did not come from here but from another dimension called Mysteria. To answer your question, I would not feel right if humans no longer existed, especially in their own world where they are meant to be. I prefer to leave the humans alone and return to Mysteria if given a choice. But I’m not sure what my kidnapping and confinement here has to do with this?’”

Alpha Bennet bursts into laughter, ‘You were supposed to say how wonderful living in a human-free world would be. Your priority should be for your own species. You’re a disgrace to all werewolves.’

I jump to my feet and lunge at the bars where Alpha Bennet stands, ‘You’re lucky I don’t have my wand and that I’m behind these bars. The wolf council is the disgrace!’ I shout.

Alpha Theaton laughs. And the Luna hasn’t even heard the best part of all this yet,’

'What part?' I ask, knowing I'm not going to like what I hear next.

'The part where Magnus will never see you again until your blood-flame the vampire king wipes out the human race,' Alpha Theaton grins.

'H-He won't do it!' I yell.

'Oh, but he will. He was going to do it once, and if he wants you back, he will have no choice but to do it.'

I glare at Hank, 'This is why you were back in Shadow Crest? You were spying on me? How else would the wolf council know that Alec is my blood-flame?'

Hank smiles proudly at himself, 'You should have killed me when you had the chance,' he laughs.

'Oh, don't you worry, Hank, the next opportunity I get, I will kill you, I warn. He stiffens and stops laughing.

I lower my gaze, concentrate, and try to mind-link Reaper, Magnus and anyone else from my pack, but nothing happens. I glare up at Kadva.

'You did something to sever my mind-linking ability, didn't you?'

Although I can't see his face under his hood, I can sense he is highly uncomfortable. He remains silent but nods.

'Please, Kadva, I have to tell Magnus not to free Alec. I don't want the human race to die because of me. My life is not worth the death of billions of innocent people!' I plead.

Kadva takes a step back and walks away.

I have to agree with you, Luna. Your insignificant life is not worth the life of even one human being. Kadva takes a step back and walks away

I have to agree with you, Luna. Your insignificant life is not worth the life of even one human being. But both of your lovers will think otherwise, so sit tight, sweetheart, because the world is about to change,' he says, laughing along with Alpha Theaton and Alpha Amir. They take their leave.

You'll be sorry!' You will all be sorry! Please, no one should die!' I yell at the top of my lungs through the bars.

They slam the door shut behind them, and I drop to the ground against the cold wall. I need to get out of here, and I need to put a stop to this. I chew on the rope, and the prickly fibres in my teeth feel like nails on a chalkboard. The rope is now frail enough to

snap With my hands now free, I slowly and thoroughly inspect every inch of the cell for any flaw or vulnerability through which I can escape

When Magnus wakes up, he discovers that Nina has not yet gone to bed. Magnus peers out the window to check if she is still by the moon tree. There's no trace of her.

"How come I can't smell her scent?"

Nina?' He shouts as he walks down the hallway and then down the stairwell. Lilac and May are the first ones to leave their bedrooms.

Alpha Magnus, it's like three o'clock in the morning. Why are you shouting?' Lilac asks, adding a yawn

"Have any of you seen Nina?' he inquires. 'She didn't come to bed with me last night, he adds.

'When was the last time you saw her?' May inquires. 'She was under the moon tree with Reaper. I'll go wake him up and ask him if he knows where she has disappeared to. Not that he can tell me, but perhaps he can show me,

As Magnus approaches the moon tree, he notices Reaper, fast asleep with his beak tucked beneath one of his wings.

'Reaper, Reaper, I need you to wake up,

Reaper stirs awake, stretches his wings, and clicks his beak.

'Nina didn't come to bed last night. Do you happen to know where she went? Can you show me where she has gone?'

Reaper begins to caw and screech in response to this. He seems troubled that Nina isn't here. As he searches for her, he takes to the sky. I shift into my wolf and run after him. He will have a better field of vision than I will, flying in the air. Nina may have been injured and might be unable to move. It would explain why she never came home, but she didn't mind-link me. I try to mind-link her, but the connection is gone. Reaper makes his way into town. I shift back and inspect the forbidden room, but she isn't there. After that, we head to the lake. She was here at some time throughout the night. I can smell her scent I say to Reaper as we look around.

As I approach the lake, I notice a rock that has been weirdly positioned near the water. I see a note under the rock and pick it up. Reaper takes flight and settles on my shoulder as I raise the note up to show him.

Alpha Magnus, if you want your precious Luna returned alive, you are to free the vampire king, and he is to eradicate the human race. Once the human race has been annihilated, that's when your Luna will be returned. If you both refuse this order, then we will kill her, and then we will destroy your entire pack declaring you an enemy to all wolf packs and kill every single pack member.

Regards,

The Wolf Council

Reaper squawks and flies around in a crazy manner across the air. While I fall to my knees in shock and in response to the ultimatum that has been placed before me, I raise my eyes to the sky..

Luna, I will get you back one way or another. I will bring you back home safe where you belong. I promise you!

Magnus shifts and returns to the packhouse. Reaper perches on his shoulder. The sun is just beginning to rise in the sky. Everyone is already awake and alert after May and Lilac awoke the entire packhouse to notify them that Nina has gone missing.

Has anyone been able to mind-link Nina?' Magnus asks. May attempts to mind-link Nina.

There is nothing. May says in dismay.

Magnus faces all the witches drinking tea at the table, 'I need you to take me to Pandora's Box. I need to speak with Alec,' he says.

Why Alec? Wouldn't Yiselda be a better help?' Fern asks.

Magnus holds the note up. The wolf Council have taken Nina hostage. They left a note for Alec and me,

What! May shouts

What does it say? Ela asks.

I will tell you what it all says later. But, for now, I need to speak with Alec, so Nina can be returned safe and alive, he says, knowing too well that if the witches know there is a chance that Magnus will let Alec out, then they most likely won't allow him into Pandora's

Box again

All right, we can go now. The rest of the witches and I follow Elona she proceeds to the portal, where we enter through the circle and emerge outside Pandora's Box. After entering the covon stead, I walk towards the glont mirror until Lilac lays her hand on my back and tells me to stop.

'Alpha Magnus, we need to tell Yiselda first that Nina has been kidnapped and that you need to speak to Aleo urgently, she says.

'We'll inform her afterwards, Magnus says.

'Sorry, Alpha Magnus, but you will have to follow me into the kitchen and see Yiselda Magnus, annoyed, clenches the note,

Fine!' he snaps and follows them into the kitchen

Yiselda, something terrible has happened! May says, racing over to Yiselda, who is eating breakfast.

'What is it?' she says, startled, standing up.

'Luna, she has been kidnapped by the wolf council. They left a note for Magnus and Alec,

'What does it say?' Yiselda asks.

'You may read it once I've spoken to Alec, Magnus says, masking his displeasure at the question.' It's important that I speak with him right away. Nina is in danger,' he says,

kitchen and through the mirror. She materialises a book and transforms it into a slairway, and we follow her up to the enormous, hefty door in the distance. Yiselda unlocks the door, and Magnus dashes by her, ignoring the Grimghouls and Shadow Reapers he passes along the way.

Alec, Alec, Magnus shouts. He looks up to see two glowing brown eyes in the shadows of the cell.

I know you, and I aren't close for obvious reasons, but Nina is gone. The Wolf Council have kidnapped her

Alec comes face to face with Magnus with such speed, sending Magnus to tumble back to the ground.

What do you mean the Wolf Council has kidnapped her? Nina is a witch, and she has her wand. So she would be able to protect herself, Alec says.

Alec is right. Even with all three alphas up against her, they still would not have been able to kidnap her.

The witches have caught up and circle the cell listening to our conversation.

I'm not lying. The wolf council must have had help to kidnap her, Magnus says as he hands Alec the note. 'Perhaps they were able to take her wand away from her?'

'That would make sense if what you say is true, Alec says, accepting the note, He holds it up and reads it out loud.

Alpha Magnus, if you want your precious Luna returned alive, you are to free the vampire king, and he is to eradicate the human race. Once the human race has been annihilated, that's when your Luna will be returned. If you both refuse this order, then we will kill her, and then we will destroy your entire pack declaring you an enemy to all wolf packs and kill every single pack member.

Regards,

The Wolf Council

The witches gasp and whisper amongst each other. Alec's breathing becomes heavy, and he looks away in shock.

"They have my blood flame and took her away from me. I will make the wolf council pay!' Alec viciously snarls and lets out a horrendous deafening screech, with his hands clenched around the bars. Magnus and the witches cover their ears. The Grimghouls have become louder hissing and snarling while the Shadow Reapers shriek. Alec locks eyes with Magnus.

Before Magnus can respond, Yiselda steps closer.

'Not going to happen... ever! She says sternly.

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Alpha Magnus, I hope you weren't intending on letting Alec out? Is that why you wanted us to remain unaware of the note's contents?' Yiselda asks. Reaper squawks furiously at her before flying from Magnus' shoulder and walking through the bars, perching on Alec's shoulder.

Alec scratches Reaper's beak and pats him, much to Yiselda's bewilderment.

'In all honesty, Yiselda, I had no idea whether I would release him or not, but I came prepared, for if I do. All I know is that I need Nina back in my arms and if we can't come up with any other alternative, then....'

'Stop! You will not go there, Alpha Magnus,' Yiselda growls, 'I know Nina is your mate and Luna, but we can't allow the humans to be wiped out in her place.'

'Yes, we can,' Alec interrupts, 'Now let me out!'

'Repeliate,' Yiselda says, waving her wand at Alec. He is thrown backwards by Yiselda's magic against the cell's back wall.

'I will not let you harm the humans,' she says.

'What do you suppose we do then, Yiselda?' Magnus asks.

'Nothing, we do nothing,' she says.

And let Nina, your Luna and coven sister perish?'

'Her death will not go unnoticed. Do you believe I desire Luna's demise? No! However, we cannot allow billions of people to perish in order to save her. Do you believe she would desire that?' Yiselda refutes.

Magnus stiffens and clenches his hands as they begin to tremble. 'I can't live without her. If you are unable to come up with a better plan, then it will leave me with no choice but to release Alec,'

Yiselda pauses in thought and turns to Alec and asks, 'After all these years, you still wish to eradicate humankind to avenge your blood flame?'

'If I could travel back in time, Yiselda, I would change everything. I'm relieved that I was unable to eradicate humanity. Juniper would not have wanted me to destroy them, and I regret killing anybody who attempted to stop me. If I had been released before Nina's kidnapping, I would not have sought retribution. It hasn't been easy, but I've recognised Juniper is no longer with us and that killing humans would not bring her back. Meeting Nina and having her as my second chance blood flame means the world to me right now. My primary concern is to keep her safe, alive, and near to me at all times. I know Nina wouldn't want me to eradicate the humans either, but the difference between Juniper and Nina is that Juniper is dead and Nina isn't, and I would do anything to keep Nina alive.'

'I'm sorry, Aleo. I can't let you out, knowing you will kill the humans. It is final.' Yiselda says.

'Not, if I have a say in it,' Magnus says, crossing his arms.

Alpha Magnus, I have no choice but to ask you to leave,' Yiselda says.

'Oh, I'm going to go, but I'm going to take Alec with me,

Alec shakes his head in bewilderment at Magnus, unable to believe what he is hearing.

'I can't allow you to do that, Alpha. Please don't force me to use magic against you.' Yiselda cautions, removing her wand.

“You won’t have to, Alpha Magnus chuckles.

Alec and the witches exchange puzzled glances. Yiselda flutters her wand in preparation to cast a spell. Magnus growls, in his Alpha tone, Yield and lay down your wands. Except for May, all the witches instantly lay down their wands and kneel.

“How is this possible?” Yiselda asks, concerned.

You become a member of my pack. All alphas have the power to subdue any of their members, he smiles.

“Unbelievable” Alec says, wedging his head against the bars. ‘Guess you didn’t see that one coming, Yiselda?’ Alec grins.

No, I did not, she states angrily.

‘Magnus, are you sure about this?’ May asks.

‘Is there any other option?’

May’s shoulders slump in defeat, and she nods her head no.

Magnus moves by Yiselda and takes a position in front of the cell door.

‘Alpha Magnus, I beg you, please don’t let him out. He will kill us all,’ Yiselda warns.

Alec steps towards the cell door, anxious for his freedom, but keeps behind the salt line, knowing that attempting to pass it would be harmful.

‘Alec, there is something I need to do before I release you, Magnus says as he draws out the athame, the identical one used in the witches’ initiation ceremony.

Yiselda is confused that Magnus has a knife and is wondering if Magnus will harm Alec with it.

Alec scowls at Magnus, ‘If you believe you’re going to knife me, you’re in for a surprise. ‘I could kill you before you unsheathe it, he says.

“Relax, Alec. As much as I would like to stab you, Nina would never forgive me, so you can dismiss that thinking. This is not an easy decision for me to make, but with Nina’s life on the line, I have no option but to initiate you into my pack, Magnus explains.

Alec blinks a few times and bursts into laughter. ‘Me? Join your pack?’

‘Remember, it’s not only my pack; it’s also Nina’s.’

Alec stops laughing, ‘You’re being serious?’

‘You can’t be serious?’ May and Yiselda say in unison.

‘A vampire in our pack?’ Fern stutters.

Alec, I need assurance that you will not harm Yiselda or the other witches and that you will not do something silly like flee with Nina and keep her to yourself, Magnus says.

'Fine!' Alec sighs deeply. You have my assurance, I will not attack the witches except in self-defence, and I will not kidnap Nina for my own selfish reasons...' he huffs.

I need more than your word Alec. I need your initiation into the pack,' Magnus states.

'No, you want me to join the pack just so you may exert power over me in the manner of the witches, he shouts.

That is true. Nonetheless, it is for your own benefit. You will be incapable of harming any pack members this way.

I'm a king, and I don't take orders from anyone!

'And you will still be King of all vampires. Your status won't change. Submitting into the pack verifies everyone's safety, including yours,

Alec turns his head 180 degrees on his shoulder. They seem to be mind-linking each other.

"You can mind-link with Reaper?' Magnus asks.

'One of my many abilities, Alec adds sarcastically.

'What's he saying?' Magnus asks.

'Reaper is advising I should join the pack,'

"And what did you say?' Magnus asks.

I told him I would do anything to get Nina back alive, even if that means becoming part of your stupid pack,

'Well then, let's get you out of here and begin the initiation to join this stupid pack?'

Alec nods and watches Magnus take the keys and unlock the cell door. It creaks loudly as Magnus pulls it open and steps in. Alec and Magnus stand face to face on either side of the salt line. Magnus withdraws the athame from its sheath, 'Hold your hand out,' he says to Alec. Alec exposes the palm of his hand on his side of the cell. Magnus extends his arm over the salt line to cut across

the palm of Alec's hand, and then he cuts across his own palm. They firmly grip their hands together.

"1. Alpha Magnus, of the Shadow Crest Pack, with the Moon Goddess as our witness, accept Alec, the vampire king, into our pack. Wolf, Witch and now Vampire have merged.'

We hear the crack of lightning striking the coven stronghold and the severity of thunder and feel the gentle rumble of Pandora's Box beneath our feet. Then it all comes to an abrupt halt.

The Moon Goddess approves, Magnus announces aloud.

They part hands to find their wounds have all but healed.

Magnus sweeps the salt line away with his foot, and with a flash of speed, Alec awaits at the large inscribed door for freedom.

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Alec taps his feet anxiously as Magnus, Yiselda, and the other witches approach the final door that keeps Alec imprisoned,

Are you certain you want to proceed, Alpha Magnus? There is no going back once I remove the symbole,

Do it, Magnus commands unequivocally

Yiselda brushes her palm across the door, obscuring the symbols, and trudges down the steps miserably. Magnus follows closely behind Alec as they walk through the mirror and continue out the front entrance of Pandora's box.

Alec falls to his knees, touches the ground, and raises his eyes to the sky, 'I never imagined the day would come when I would be delighted to see the day, he says.

'Doesn't the sun harm you?' Magnus asks.

'No, but we aren't fond of it either. Vampires appreciate just one type of light: moonlight. Otherwise, Alec continues, we prefer to be out and about at night and inside during the day.

Reaper pecks at the dirt near Alec's hands nonchalantly.

"Hmm, that's intriguing, Magnus says.

'Lei's waste no more time, take me to Shadow Crest so I can reclaim our Luna, Alec says as he stands,

Magnus and Alec enter the circle, following the witches and appearing at the packhouse.

"Alpha Magnus, I will not participate in your destruction of humanity. My immediate concern is for my sisters here, and I want to remain and defend them until Luna returns.' Yiselda informs him.

'I understand, he replies.

All of the witches retreat to the basement

May informs Magnus, I'm going with them.

"All right, I'll mind-link you if I need you. Magnus says,

'Sure, she says, frowning as she walks away

Alec takes a step toward Magnus.

"How do we get in contact with the wolf council?' Alec inquires,

They reside in the north. It will take most of a day to get there,

'Let us go to them. If we can eliminate them and save Nina, we will avoid annihilating the entire human race.

Magnus nods, shifts into his woll, and dashes towards the woods, followed by Alec and Reaper

After a night's trip, they arrive on the territory of the wolf council just as the sun rises,

Wolves in the dozens approach us, growling and snapping to keep us at bay. Alec stands unconcerned and smiles coyly, revealing his fangs. The wolves are taken aback and confused about what to do. Some turn and see in fear. Most wolves remain put but are unsure if they should stay or flee.

'I've come to retrieve my blood flame. Step aside or die!' Alec cautions.

Boisterous laughter comes from the wolf council's residence. The door swings wide to see Alpha Bennet chuckling. Alpha Thealon stands beside him. Alpha Amir reappears alongside Nina, holding a knife to her throat. A cloaked figure accompanies them

Alpha Magnus, I'm glad you kept your half of the agreement, 'Now Alec must do his share and exterminate the humans, Alpha Bennet says

Nina gasps, Alec, please don't do it, she yells, Alpha Theaton smacks her hard against her face, Touch her again, and you will die!' Alpha Magnus yells.

Alec speeds ahead but comes to a halt when the hooded figure's enormous ball of flame spirals towards him. Alec is unable to react quickly enough, and the flame strikes his arm, severely burning it. Alec tightens his grip on his arm. Alpha Amir puts the knife softly against Nina's neck, causing a trickle of blood to drip

Any closer and she dies, Alpha Amir warns, 'I won't hesitate to cut her delicate little throat open. And she wouldn't be the first she wolf I've killed, he smiles,

Alec takes a cautious step back, keeping his gaze fixed on Nina, who glances between Alec and Magnus,

Alec, he will kill Nina if we get any closer. Do you know who that hooded guy is and how the hell he made that ball of fire?' Magnus asks

'No idea. I'm just as stunned as you are, Magnus,

Alpha Magnus, Reaper corrects him through mind-link. Alec scoffs and rolls his eyes at Reaper.

'What is it?' Magnus asks.

'Nothing, he replies

'I think he might be a mage, Reaper mind-links.

'Reaper says he could be a mage,

'What? They exist too?' Magnus says.

'Yup

Alpha Bennet takes a step forward.

'I suggest you leave and not return until the humans are all dead, Alpha Bennet yells. He steps towards Nina and hits her hard against her face causing her lip to bleed. The longer you delay, the more harm your precious Luna will sustain

Magnus and Alec exchange worried glances.

'If we approach Nina, Alpha Amir will cut her neck, and with the mage shielding them, we will be too late to stop Alpha Amir, Magnus adds defeatedly,

Then there is only one thing I can do to save her, Alec says. He holds his hands out and summons the Shadow Reapers and Grimghouls,

They arrive in droves, ascending from the earth around us.

'If we approach a human city, they will deploy the army and all it possesses, including soldiers, tanks, and jets. What if I destroy their city without harming the civilians and lure the army to return here? The council and the mage would be caught in the crossfire, forced to battle for survival. Perhaps this will provide us with an opportunity to rescue Nina while they fight? Additionally, they forget that when I attempted to exterminate humankind hundreds of years ago, they lacked the armament they possess now. Therefore, even if I desired to wipe out humanity with their bombs, chemical weapons, and arsenal, I would be unable to accomplish

so.

'You are right. None of this occurred to me. Why did you not bring this up earlier in the dungeon? You might have been released sooner if we had considered the strength of humankind now in comparison to centuries ago,

Alec shrugs. 'I guess I was waiting for one of you to figure it out and realise I'm no longer as significant a threat as I once was. I hoped I would get the benefit of the doubt from someone, and I did, from Nina, She knew in her heart she could trust me!

Magnus's expression transforms into one of remorse. 'She pleaded with me to release you, but I refused. I'm.. sorry,

I'm sure you are, Alec smirks. 'Now, let us proceed to make our presence known to humanity!

Magnus nods, shifts into his wolf and joins Alec, the Grimghouls and the Shadow Reapers in their pursuit of a large city. Magnus mind-links May their plan.

That might just work, Alpha, I'll put the television on and mind-link you to what is happening on the human side. Yiselda has somewhat relaxed that she now knows you are only planning on destroying some buildings without harming humans. I'm worried, Alpha Magnus, even if we get Nina back safely. What will happen to us if the humans don't back down?'

I'm not sure, May I guess we will worry about that part when we get to it.' Magnus mind-links her back.

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Alec sends his minions to spread out on the first street they enter. The Grimghouls climb onto parked cars, rip the mirrors off and chew through the metal of the vehicles with ease. Car alarms sound, and people run and scream. Then, the Shadow Reapers coalesce into a giant swirl of dark matter and now beneath the vehicles, hurling them into the distance. Alec makes sure there are no humans in the cars

before they are tossed aside. Magnus shifts into his wolf and howls. All the humans watching are terrified and film what they can with their phones before seeing, Magnus chases after some of them, purposely running as slow as possible to allow them to escape. Police cars spread out along the street, and the officers shoot directly at the Grimhounds and Shadow Reapers while others radio for backup.

A helicopter soars high above them. It's from a News network.

'Magnus,' May mind-links. 'We can see you on the television. They are filming it all live and announcing the military is on its way. They are advising residents and shop owners to remain indoors and out of sight.'

'Perfect, as soon as the army arrives, we will draw them back to the territory of the wolf council

'Good luck, Magnus,' May mind-links.

More vehicles are flipped over, and street signs and poles are twisted. There is rubble from automobiles and buildings strewn everywhere.

After many hours, the military arrived, bringing tanks, aircraft, and soldiers.

'Stand down!' They shout.

Thowl at them, and something unexpected happens. They move so fast, that I don't realise what they are until they approach Alec and me. Vampires.

They bow down to Alec, and the soldiers give each other a look as dozens more vampires approach and bow.

'Our king has been freed!' A female vampire announces,

"King?" The soldiers murmur to each other.

I am Alec, vampire King!' Alec yells loudly with proudness,

Master, give us your command, a male vampire says.

Alec mind-links them to inform them that their queen, Nina, is in danger and that they must assist in luring the army to the territory of the wolf council without killing the humans. They nod and disperse across the street, just behind Alec and me

Alec and I begin to retreat, giving the humans the illusion of victory. We are pursued and followed out of the city. Alec's strategy has thus far been successful. Alpha Bennet walks out of his house with a serious expression,

'Why did you bring the humans here!?' he yells.

Alec smiles, 'You want the humans wiped out? Carry it out yourself!' Alec shouts. The jets' bullets ricochet through the air, narrowly missing Alec and me. Bullets have no effect on the Shadow Reapers since they go right through their silhouettes. Hundreds of pack members of the wolf council shift into their wolves and attack the troops. Alec assists the troops by causing the werewolves' minds to be taken over by the Shadow Reapers. They instantly recognise one another as soldiers rather than werewolves. The werewolves cease attacking the troops and engage in fights with one another.

Alpha Bennet has ordered Kadva to help defend their premises. Fireballs shoot through the air towards the jets, and the ground shakes violently at moments, causing humans to lose their footing. Soldiers are flung through the air as a result of his abilities. Alec directs the Grimghouls towards him, where he sees Alpha Bennet and Alpha Theaton fighting against the soldiers.

Magnus, this is the time to find Nina while they are distracted!

Magnus nods, and they hurry around the rear of the building, entering by the back entrance. They make their way toward a stairway.

'I can smell her scent. She must be down here,' Magnus says.

Alec sprints down the stairwell in a blink of an eye. Magnus hears Alpha Theaton's gargled final gasps, Alec has him pinned against the wall and drinks the blood from his neck

The cells are old and have a musty odour. Magnus scans the area and can see Nina unconscious in a nearby cell.

'Nina!' Magnus yells."He awkwardly grabs the key from Alpha Theatons belt og Alec continues to drain the blood from his body He runs to the cell door, unlocks it and kneels by Nina's side.

'Wake up, Nina. I'm here. You're safe now.' Magnus says, holding Nina in his lap. Then, in an instant, Alec is in front of me. Ao Nina stirs awake, Alec kneels and gently wipes her hair away from her face.

Alec? Magnus? She says, her eyes darting between them. She takes their hands in hers and cradles them to her bruised loce, Taking in the overwhelming sense of sparks emanating from the bond she feels with each of them.

'We're here,' Alec smiles. Nina sits up and flings her arins around Magnus, kisses him endearingly, then turns to Alec and jumps up, wrapping her arms around his neck. They hold each other tight."

Outside sounds like a warzone, she murmurs.

"How did you get out of the dungeon? Oh! The humans! Please tell me you didn't?"

'No, Alec hasn't harmed the humans, Alec's idea was to make ourselves known in the city, destroy a few buildings, cars etc. and lure the army to Alpha Bennet. They would have no choice but to fight against the humans, which would distract them from you. We used the opportunity to come down here and rescue you. I'm sorry, Nina, I should have listened 18 you earlier and let Alec out when you asked,' Magnus says.

'You let Alec out?' Nina says, surprised.

'Much to Yiselda's dismay,' Magnus laughs.

Thank you she murmurs as she turns to Alec, who draws her into his chest and passionately kisses her.

I have something for you,' Alec says and places her wand in her hand.

'How did you get this? Alpha Theaton took it from Kadva,' she says.

'Kadva?' Magnus and Alec say in unison.

'He is the mage you met earlier, unfortunately with a ball of fire. He is being forced to do Alpha Bennet's bidding. I'm sure of it.' Nina says with assertion.

'We need to put an end to the wolf council and Kadva and then convince the humans that we wish them no harm,

I'm not sure how well that will work, given that we did attack and destroy their city, Alec says.

'We have to at least try.' Nina says as she makes her way to the stairwell. She gasps upon seeing Alpha Theaton's dead body with visible neck punctures.

'Don't look,' Alec says. Then taking Nina's hand, he leads her up the stairs.

They exit the building to see many dead wolves from the pack of the wolf council.

Ill apprehend Kadva, and you two concentrate on defeating Alpha Bennel and Alpha Amir, Nina says,

Magnus shifts into a wolf and sprints for Alpha Bennet, who is also in wolf form. Magnus lunges and knocks him to his side, biting his leg. Alpha Bennet leaps to his feet and savagely bites into Magnus's back, tearing a chunk of skin from his body. Magnus Nips Alpha Bennet over and rips his stomach open with his claws.

May mind-links Magnus, 'Alpha, Pandora's Box, it's been destroyed. There is nothing left!

'What do you mean it's gone?' he mind-links back.

"Yiselda returned there to grab a few items, and the entire coven stead was up in flames. It was too late to do anything. We soon discovered Hank nearby, attempting to flee. He was the one who started the fire that destroyed Pandora's Box. Yiselda was completely distraught. She killed Hank,

I'm sorry you all have lost your coven stead. Yiselda is part of our pack. Our home is always her home, too,' He mind-links back.

Alec fights Alpha Amir, appearing in front of him one moment and then the next moment behind Alpha Amir, throwing swift kicks and punches. Alec's movements are so fluid and quick that it nearly appears as though he is not moving at all. Alpha Amir collapses on the ground in defeat, just as a couple of Grimghouls tackle and rip him to parts.

The soldiers are in utter disbelief and confusion as they watch the last of the werewolves killing each other, as well as Magnus, Alec

and the vampires also killing the werewolves.

Nina is sprinting towards Kadva with her wand, Restraino Detainous. A purple wind whirls around Kadva, lifting him off the ground and immobilising his arms and legs.

Nina approaches Kadva and removes his hood. She takes a step back and gasps in surprise at Kadva's appearance,

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Kadvas eyes have an azure blue hue reminiscent of fine diamonds. His heart shaped face is framed by his snow-white hair.

He is a sight to behold, and he exudes exquisite beauty

He is young and appears to be around my age.

Reaper swoops down and settles on my shoulder,

Kadva, it's all over now. The wolf council is no longer alive, I tell him.

Kadva scans the strewn bodies and is taken aback to see the bodies of Alpha Bennet and Alpha Amir.

Kadva laughs, but in a relieved tone, 'They're dead?' he asks,

Yes, but why were you following their orders?' | ask.

They were going to inform the humans about me and the location of my whereabouts if I disobeyed their commands. I didn't want to be taken hostage and subjected to their experiments,

That's never going to happen, Kadva, now that they're gone. Are there any friends or family members?' | ask.

He shakes his head, 'No, he says. I don't have anyone!

I look to Magnus and Alec and Mind-link them, 'I think we should ask Kadva to join our pack? He is alone. He was afraid Alpha Bennet would hand him over to the humans for experimentation' I explain.

Alec and Magnus exchange glances, then return their gaze to me and nod in agreement.

I wave my wand and break the spell on Kadva. He can now freely move his arms and legs. But, before I can ask him to join our pack, we are surrounded by soldiers,

Stand down!' a soldier yells, 'Lower your weapons and put your hands on your head,

Alec rushes forwards and appears in front of me in an instant. 'She is not coming with you, Alec hisses. Grimghouls and Shadow Reapers reassemble behind me, prepared to strike the soldiers at any time. Magnus stands besides me in wolf form, growling at the troops, I rest my hand on his head and say, 'It's all right. I'm going to speak with them and attempt to diffuse this situation, all right?'" I say as I take a step forwards in front of Alec. What are you doing, Nina?" he gently touches my arm.

'I want to speak with them,

'Fine, but don't get any closer to them," he says.

'My name is Nina, Luna of the Shadow Crest pack. I respectfully request that you lay down your firearms, 'We are not here to fight, I exclaim

The soldiers exchange glances and then return my gaze.

'Who or what are you? How did you get here? A soldier shouts.

I am half-werewolf and half-witch. Behind me stands Alec, the varnpire king, and Magnus, the Shadow Crest pack's Alpha and this is Kadva, the mage. We have been living here unnoticed and away from human society for centuries.

The soldiers exchange shocked mutterings.

The wolf council is responsible for the attack on your city, but they have been eliminated. We hope to peacefully return to our territory and for you to return to yours.

Those two were in the city, causing chaos and destruction along with those creatures! A soldier states pointing to the Grimghouls and Shadow Reapers,

They didn't have a choice. They were forced into it, I explain.

'Lies! They attacked us once. They will attack us again,' another shouts. They immediately begin firing at us. Alec envelops me in his cloak, lifts me, and vanishes into the distance. Magnus follows us in wolf form along with Kadva and Reaper. The Grimghouls

and Shadow Reapers slow the soldiers down, allowing us time to escape,

I clutch Alec's shirt tightly and lay my head on his chest. He kisses my forehead,

"It feels incredible to have you back in my arms, he smiles,

"It's good to be back in them and see you free of that dungeon,' I say

peer over his shoulder and notice Magnus is having difficulty keeping up. Something is wrong.

Alec, please stop. Something is wrong with Magnus.' He comes to a halt and gently places me down. I sprint over to Magnus and observe blood on his leg.

Shift,' I tell him

When he shifts back, I can see that a bullet has pierced his arm and is bleeding heavily.

I'll be fine. We need to get back to Shadow Crest,' he says,

'No, the bullet is still in there. It will heal quickly but I'll remove it,'

Magnus sighs in defeat, and I dig two fingers inside the wound. Magnus masks the pain well. I remove the bullet. Over the next few minutes, the wound has sealed up and healed.

We shift into our wolves and run towards Shadow Crest with Alec, Reaper and Kadva following. It's the early hours of the morning when we arrive home. Kadva halts before entering the pack house. He seems apprehensive.

'Kadva, you're with us now. We want you to join our pack.'

'You would welcome me into your pack?' His face brightens up with a smile. 'Even after I had kidnapped you?'

"You abducted me because you were forced to, but you never injured me, nor did you wish to hurt me, I say with a smile. Come on, let us have breakfast together.' I grin.

He gives me a nod and follows me into the pack house. Yiselda, Fern, May, Lilac, Ela, and Ria all dash down the stairwell in unison. We all hug and weep at Pandora's Box's demise.

I'm so sorry, Yiselda,' I frown.

'It's something I will have to learn to come to terms with, but I'm glad you are all safe and back home,' she says.

Yiselda raises an eyebrow at Alec and approaches him. 'Alec, I'm at a loss for words. I was certain you'd kill the humans, but you didn't. You proved me wrong, and I want to express my gratitude: Alec nods but maintains silence.

'Who is this gorgeous gentleman!?' Lilac squeals, looking at Kadva, who is now flushing from the witches' attention.

'Girls, this is Kadva. He is a mage and will be staying with us, I explain.

They all squeal and crowd around him, stroking his arms, face, and chest flirtatiously.

'Um, help?' He says, his gaze fixed on me.

'Girls, cut him some slack. He has only arrived. I'm sure you'll all have plenty of opportunities to spend time with him, but for now, let's eat! I say taking my seat at the table.

We are all exhausted. We finish our breakfast.

We are all exhausted. We finish our breakfast, 'Kadva, Alec, we have more sleeping quarters upstairs. 'Follow me, I say with a smile.

'This can be your room Kadva,' I say.

Thank you it's a nice room, I'm completely drained from travelling all night. I'm also going to sleep, he says.

I show Alec the room next door to mine and Magnus's,

"You can sleep in this room. Alec casts a perplexed glance my way, 'Is there a problem?' | ask.

'Vampires don't sleep.

'Oh? Okay, so this may be the room that provides you with your own private space to have time alone?'

This will be your room too?" he asks, hinting that he would desire to have me in there with him at times. I smile and nod.

Magnus tenderly takes my hand and leads me to our room. He carries me to our bed and covers me with kisses before we make intimate love and fall asleep.

Chapter 100

I awaken in the middle of the night and take a long shower. Magnus is sleeping soundly. I decide to venture outside to shift, allowing my wolf to run free. Reaper is asleep in the moon tree. As I ready

myself to run, I feel warm sparks gliding down my spine. Alec is standing beside me, gently caressing the fur down my back as I turn my head.

You are a lovely wolf, he murmurs and kneels, and I rest my head on his lap while he pats me even more. 'May I join you on your run?' he inquires.

Inod and dash through the trees. Alec follows. I can't believe I have my blood flame beside me. After all these years, he must feel relieved to be free of the dungeon. We sprint up the mountain and stop for a rest at the summit. I shift to my human state and lie in the grass. Alec approaches me, hovers over me, and locks his gaze with mine. Everything is perfect. My hand reaches out to brush across Alec's cheek. I draw his face closer to mine, and we kiss and make love passionately in the moonlight.

My head and hand are resting on his chest, and we are both staring at the moon. He caresses my arm, and we remain in this position for a short while.

Alec grins as he stands.

'What is it?' | ask.

'There is something I have always wanted to do with you, he says.

'What is that?' | ask.

He takes my hand in his to assist me in standing. 'I want to dance with you under the stars right now, he says.

His eyes flicker like a flame, and his gaze is filled with love and affection. I give a nod. He puts one hand around my waist and lifts the other, and we begin to waltz. I'm overcome with zeal and zest, and I can't help but smile shyly at Alec.

'I love you, Nina, he smiles.

I love you as well, Alec,' I whisper.

Alec intensifies the waltz till we can't dance any longer. I giggle, and he laughs until we are both out of breath

The sun will shortly rise.' I smile, 'We should go back to the packhouse since I know you dislike the day.'

As long as I'm with you, the day isn't that horrible, he grins.

We travel down the hill holding hands. I come to a halt as I notice all the shadowy figures hidden amid the trees.

Come and meet your Queen!' Alec shouts.

Several dozen Vampires emerge from the trees and bow in front of us. They then approach and kiss Alec's hand, followed by mine.

'Where did they come from, and where will they stay?' | ask.

'They have been hiding in many places away from people and supernatural beings, awaiting my return. They will stay close to me now that I am back, most likely here in these forests. Thus enabling them to continue serving me in the manner they did hundreds of years ago

Then I'd like to extend a warm welcome to Shadow Crest! I say to them all. They nod, smile, and bow in unison.

As we make our way back to the packhouse, we hear the distant noises of helicopters and jets. Everyone exits the packhouse to investigate the sounds.

'They discovered us! But, how?' I panic,

Magnus mind-links the entire pack to get themselves ready to defend our territory. Our town is rocked by explosions. We turn to find a bomb has destroyed many houses. Other planes continue to fly above and release additional bombs. Soldiers in their hundreds approach, armed

Vadva uses his abilities to keep them at bay with fireballs, while the witches and I use our spells against them, 'Repeliate!' I yell.

sending a dozen troops into a brick wall. 'Tremendous Nebulous!' May costs, and the air suddenly becomes hazy, making it difficult for the soldiers to see us.

Tumultuous Volley!' I say, a large cloud appears, and lightning strikes repetitively. Alec screeches, calling the vampires forth. They appear and help light the soldiers, but hundreds more arrive. More bombs are dropped, destroying our whole village. Rubble and dust are strewn everywhere.

A tank is coming towards us, 'Inferno Flamo!' I yell. A massive ray of fire slams into the tank, completely engulfing it in flames. I feel my body beginning to weaken.

'Reaper,' I mind-link. 'Where are you? I need your power,

Trying to evade being struck by gunshots and explosives,' he mind-links. 'Incoming for landing,' he says as he crashes forcefully on my shoulder. His eyes blaze a brilliant white, and the black mist emanating from his body drifts into mine.

'Aqua Bedew!' I yell. A tornado of water arises and rips its way through the army of troops, collapsing into a river of water, sweeping away numerous men into the fields.

A dozen soldiers creep up behind Magnus as he battles against five other soldiers. 'Repeliate!' I shout, and they fly away into the air

We are surrounded by destruction and death—a nearby soldier struggles for air. I kneel alongside him and grab hold of his vest, pulling him up.

Tell me how you discovered we were here. How did you locate us?'

Tell me now, or I will end your life for you, I threaten the soldier.

He coughs out a small amount of blood.

A few werewolves from the wolf council survived. They were weak and on the verge of death when they returned to human form. In exchange for sparing their lives, they revealed to us the exact location of

each pack on a map. Army units have already been dispatched to all areas, and the majority have been annihilated. He says.

I take a step back in horror, 'You're trying to kill us all?' I say with trepidation.

'Of course. You are all a threat to humankind with your magic abilities and capabilities of shifting.'

'You have to tell your men to stop, please,' I beg.

He laughs, 'Until you cease to exist, they will never stop' he odds before collapsing. I take a step back and look at Alec, Magnus, and the others. Tears stream down my cheeks.

'He is right. The humans will never stop now that they know we exist,' I cry. They have destroyed Shadow Crest, and more military will arrive at any moment. We have two choices, stay and die or return to Mysteria?' I say

Mysteria?' Everybody says.

I make a beeline towards the packhouse. Due to an explosion, the left side has been destroyed. I enter my bedroom, retrieve my burlap sack, stuff it with a few spellbooks, and return outside with the book of magical history in my arms.

'I just finished reading this book a few weeks ago. It describes how supernatural beings originated from another dimension, a world known as Mysteria. Thousands of years ago, a portal opened, allowing humans to access Mysteria and supernatural beings to enter this world. When humans waged war in Mysteria, the portal was closed, never to be reopened. They allowed the peaceful humans to stay but forced the remainder to return to earth. This book demonstrates how to open and close the portal, I say, handing the book to Kadva, who then passes it to Yiselda after reading it.

Do you believe we can open it?' I ask them.

Yiselda carefully examines the page. 'It takes a great deal of magic, Luna. Some of us may perish as a result'

'If we stay here, we will perish.' I say.

Yiselda sets the open book flat on the ground and extends her hands.

All right, then, let's do this. If we die, at the very least, we will be surrounded by loved ones, Yiselda explains.

There is something I need to do first, Alec says, He opens the portal to Silverfay forest and summons the Grimghouls and the Shadow Reapers. One by one, they jump through the portal and change back into their pixie or elf forms. Once they have all returned to Silverfay forest, he closes the portal,

After all this time, all I had to do to change them back into their natural forms was to return them to Silverfay forest,' Yiselda growls.

Alec smirks and nods at her.