

Chapter 18 Uno

Elena sprinted away from the castle and into the woods. She knew it wouldn't be long until they realized she was missing. She had to get to Lenore and then they could figure out what to do next.

Elena, RUN! It was her father's voice that entered in her mind. It sounded like he was using all of his strength to get that message to her. She tried to talk to him but she couldn't make the connection. Most likely the devil's fruit had weakened this as well. She was furious, and a big part of her wanted to head straight to Elysium for help. As much as she had ill feelings about the other vampires, she didn't want the innocent to suffer. She also didn't want to start a species war. Besides, she was strong and so was Lenore. Together their power could combine into something terrifying.

She needed to find her way to Lenore. Most likely there was another entrance somewhere in the kingdom, but she didn't exactly have time to search for it. She had to escape. Her father's final plea meant they were after her.

She pumped her legs with all her might, leaping over fallen logs and dodging low-hanging branches. Her vision narrowed to a tunnel as she focused on reaching safety, her heart racing faster

Chapter 18 Uno

than her feet could carry her. Branches and leaves rattled in her wake, giving away her location to keen vampire ears. And it did. She could faintly hear the quickening sound of several people heading in her direction.

Every muscle in her body burned with each determined stride, propelling her forward in a frantic race for survival. The oppressive darkness of the forest seemed to close in on her, taunting and teasing her with its twisted branches and tangled underbrush. Her vision tunneled as she sprinted towards safety, the sound of her own panicked breath deafening in her ears. Behind her, leaves rustled and branches snapped under the weight of pursuing vampires, their keen senses honing in on her every move.

She could defend herself against many vampires but she wasn't sure what tricks they had up their sleeves. Most likely, they were prepared to face her. If they had the devil's fruit, they could also have other forbidden magic and items. She couldn't risk it. From the corner of her eye she caught a tall dark figure running through the woods. She was going to be overtaken. She steeled her nerves refusing to give in. She was going to fight and she had to win. No matter what.

Her ears were ringing as her blood pounded in her ears, her vision narrowed to a pinpoint of light reflecting off of the lake ahead of her. She could

almost feel the cool hand of the water reaching out for her. As if it was trying to help her. The frantic scrambling behind her was getting closer. They were gaining on her, despite her best efforts. And then a sound like thunder split the air and the dark figure leaped towards her. She felt the powerful arms that gripped her firmly around the waist. She instinctively fought against them, struggling to break free. But a soothing voice urged her to calm down.

"I've got you." Bernie breathed out as he pulled her forward. "We are almost there."

She felt a wave of relief wrap around her as his warm hand guided her faster. "Bernie, I have to—"

"Take a deep breath!" He commanded, shutting her up as he jerked her body to the side. Keeping his hand on her waist, he dragged her into the water. She took a quick gasp for air before she was completely submerged. He kept a tight hold on her as he dragged her into the murky depths, the weight of the water pressing down on them. As they dove deeper into the abyss of darkness, each breath became a struggle, her lungs began to burn with desperate need for air. But still, he took her deeper into the unknown darkness. A depth that no vampire could ever return from... including her.

A desperate, suffocating panic took hold of her as

she struggled for air, clawing and twisting in his tight embrace. He abruptly turned her towards him and forcefully pressed his lips onto hers, forcing a rush of oxygen into her lungs. Her eyes flew open in shock and alarm as he intruded on her with this unfamiliarly intimate gesture. She had never experienced anything beyond the brief peck on Aba's lips. This was different, overwhelming, and she could feel the heat rise to her cheeks with both embarrassment and discomfort. This wasn't a kiss, but it felt more intimate than anything she had ever experienced. Her mind raced as she realized that even with Bernie's lips pressed against hers, all she could think about was Aba. The love she felt for him pulsed through every fiber of her being, making this moment feel wrong and foreign. It wasn't the same, and it never would be.

She felt an icy current swirl around her that made her insides feel frigid. Her body began to shake from the cold as he swam them towards an unnatural current that shouldn't be in a lake. He grabbed her waist and spun her around to face him, his strong hands enveloping her body protectively. His eyes bore into hers with a fierce intensity before he used all his strength to kick them backwards into the strong current. The icy water enveloped them in a whirlpool, spinning their bodies in a chaotic dance as he crushed his lips onto hers once more. Their bodies were

Chapter 18 Uno

caught in the powerful current of the swirling water, twirling and dancing at a dizzying speed. The swirling vortex finally shot them out of the water. She was still in his protective hold as she felt air swirl around her. AIR! She pulled her lips away from Bernie and took in a greedy breath. She panted heavily as she looked around, exhausted. It took her a moment to realize she was straddled over his torso and sitting on his stomach.

"I'm sorry," she mumbled and quickly rolled to the side. There were sitting on a red stone and surrounded by the same colored rock cavern. "Where is this?" She couldn't look at him as she moved her eyes over the terrain.

"Someplace safe," was all he said. "Elena, what happened?" He moved to his knees, forcing himself in front of her face. "Lena?"

"Bernie—" She whispered as she tucked in her bottom lip. He reached his hands up to cup her cheeks as he stared intently at her. Her wet hair and clothes clung to her body, making a cold chill race through her. "I have to get to Lenore."

"Is she in danger?"

"I think she is okay right now."

"Then you can rest a bit."

"I don't have time."

Chapter 18 Uno

"Lena." His thumb brushed over her cold skin as he gave her a small smile. "You just made a very dangerous journey to get here. Your body needs to relax. You're freezing." He sighed and looked around.

"Uno, you half deformed firefly where are you?!"

Ad



Ads-free >

Bernie yelled in the air.

The air was suddenly filled with a high-pitched raspy voice, exclaiming "HOW RUDE!" Elena's eyes widened in surprise as a tiny creature appeared before her. It was no bigger than her palm and its skin was a mottled gray, wrinkled like the bark of an old tree. Its large, dark eyes were almost black,

Chapter 18 Uno

glistening with intelligence and mischief. Two leathery wings were folded against its back, twitching slightly as it spoke. Its hands had four slender fingers each. From atop its small head, tufts of dark hair stood at attention like a tiny crown. Elena couldn't believe what she was seeing - a magical being unlike anything she had ever encountered before.

"Start a fire, she's cold," Bernie said dismissively.

"Of course she's cold. The fairy princess isn't made to live in this type of place. You shouldn't have come with him here. All he cares about is breeding you."

"She knows how I feel about her." Bernie shrugged his shoulders as the little creature's mouth opened in shock.

"And you still came with him to his mating den?!"

"His what?!" Elena choked out, blinking at Bernie.

"It was the safest place I could think of. I'm not going to do anything unless you want me to." He winked at her as a big ball of heat lit up from the floor. He stood up and walked to a large stone. The moment he touched it, it changed. It was a cabinet in disguise. He grabbed something out of it and then returned to her side. "Eat this."

Elena looked at the round red berries, not feeling hungry at all.

Chapter 18 Uno

"It will help settle you." He sighed as she remained motionless. "Eat them on your own or I'll feed them to you with my mouth."

"You are pressing your luck, Bernie." Elena looked up at him with a challenge but she grabbed a berry. Instantly, he looked appeased and sat down next to her.

"Why don't you start by telling me why you were being chased."

Elena watched as the tiny creature Uno sat down next to the fire as if he was also waiting for her story. She still didn't know what the creature was but it was something she would ask about later. She quietly recapped on everything that had happened. She didn't know exactly what was going on but could only account for what she could see happening. She watched Bernie closely as she explained the blood bond to Aba and that he was also her fated mate. His face remained stoic as he stared at the fire.

"...and then I ran. I was being chased after and that's when I ran into you." She took a breath as she finished. "I have to get to Lenore. She must be worried." Her eyes suddenly lit up. "Bernie, there is a large pool of water in the caves. Can you travel to it? Let Lenore know I am okay and that I am coming to her?"

"I could but that would mean I have to leave your

Chapter 18 Uno

side. I can't transport you there with me. I only have the power to transport myself."

"That's okay, just let her know I'm okay."

"I'm not leaving you alone."

"You aren't. I'm here with Uno. Besides, the vampires can't get to me down here. I'll be fine."

"I'm not leaving you," he said simply as he settled back on his elbows.

"BER-NARD!" Elena yelled. "Lenore is a fairy princess too and she might end up in danger trying to get to me. You will go and let her know I am safe!"

She listened as he clicked his tongue angrily, moving to his feet. "Fine, I'll go." He snapped his head at her, his eyes black with anger. "But I am not giving a message to your guardian. He won't have you!" She watched as his hands began to tremble and his nostrils flared. "If you need his blood then take that and THAT alone. Don't keep him as your mate." He closed his eyes as he turned away from her. "Don't choose him Elena."

"Bernie—"

"Don't!" He turned and looked at her. A sad smile rested on his face. "Please, don't. I really don't want to hear you say we're just friends. Not this time. This time... it will feel more real. He can't

Chapter 18 Uno

love you more than I do. Since the moment I laid my eyes on you, I knew it had to be you. You are the only one I'll ever love." His eyes stayed on hers for a moment. He could see the rejection on her face and felt his heart shatter. Slowly he turned away, stepping towards the water. "Stay right here. I'll be back." His voice was a quiet whisper as he struggled to hold in his emotions.

Elena watched as he dove into the water, disappearing from sight. She felt the pain in his words and understood them. It was how she felt when she thought Aba was going to tell her he was in a relationship with Beryl. She felt like she was in a one-sided love and the pain seized her heart. She loved Bernie, but it wasn't in a romantic way. It was always Aba. Her heart had always belonged to Aba, and now she finally understood why. He was her mate, and he was going to get an earful about hiding the bond from her. She didn't care what nonsense he had cooked up in his head. Aba was hers and he might as well get used to it. As much as she felt bad for Bernie, she couldn't sacrifice her heart for him. He was her dearest friend, but Aba was her existence.

"You're a heartbreaker! Dream maker, love taker..." The little raspy voice sang out as it waved its four fingers in the air.

"Are you going to make me feel bad too?" Elena asked smiling at the 'so ugly it was cute' creature.

"Why do you feel bad?" Uno asked as he hopped over to her. "You can't force yourself to love someone you don't. Pony boy knows that too. Why else do you think he was so sad there? He already knows you aren't picking him. He has been pining after you for years. It is going to be tough on him to let you go. It's never wrong to love someone as long as you know when to let go." His head tilted to the side as a mischievous grin reached his lips. "I guess we will see if he knows how to let go. Unless you want to take two mates?"

"My heart belongs completely to Aba." She watched as the sly little creature shrugged.

"I'm just saying there is always room for love. Or at least there should be."

"Is that right?" Elena giggled as she watched the creature hop around. "So what are you exactly? Uno is a very interesting name. I like it."

"Well, funny thing about my name... I adopted it myself. See, my mother was a sprite who fell in love with a dwarf imp. Two creatures that are not supposed to be together. And I am the result of that union. My parents died during the demon war many many years ago. I don't know what name they gave me. I lived in the sprite orphanage. Whenever I would come around, the others they would all yell 'Eew no!' and run away. I was called that so much it became my name. As soon as I

Chapter 18 Uno

was able to, I left the sprites. I work for Bernard now and live down here."

Elena reached out and picked up the tiny creature. He looked at her with his wide brown eyes. "Your name means number one from now on. I am so sorry for how you were treated." For a creature

Ad



who was very much unloved, he had a lot of wisdom. "You are right, there is always room for love. I will always love Bernie, but it isn't in a romantic sense. There is only one man who makes my heart race. I should have been true to it a long time ago. But I felt like I was doing something wrong by admitting my feelings." Uno snuggled into Elena's palm as she spoke, his small

Chapter 18 Uno

body radiating warmth. He gazed up at her intently as she poured out her heart, listening with a keen understanding that belied his tiny stature.

Uno nodded sagely, his small wings flapping slightly as Elena spoke. "Love is a tricky thing but it isn't wrong," he said quietly. "It can be hard to understand it, but ultimately, the heart wants what it wants, and there's no sense in denying it. Besides, it's one of the greatest forces out there."

Uno was right. Her family was a prime example of what love could overcome. She watched the flames dance in front of her as the fire crackled quietly. She wondered about her parents and family. How were they being treated? Were they okay? She had to get to Lenore quick. Whatever was going on, they needed to put a stop to it.



59

Comments



24

Vote



Watch videos get points (0/20) >