Fated out Chapter 146

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Lyla w**w** $w.n \odot v \mathcal{E}/wor \mathbf{M}.c \mathbf{O} \mathcal{M}$

I was in the middle of a clearing. The moon was shining brightly... so bright that if I reached out for it, I would touch it.

The stars shone with such bright intensity that I'd never seen before, pulsing with the rhythm of my heartbeat... the forest was quiet except for the quiet chirp of crickets in the distance.

A voice called out to me, filling the space with warmth. For the first time since my second cleansing,

"Lyla... $\mathbb{W} \mathbb{W} \hat{\mathbb{N}} \mathbb{O}(\mathbf{v}) \mathcal{E} \mathbb{I} \mathbb{W} \hat{\mathbb{O}} \mathbf{r} m.c \mathcal{O} m$

I felt at ease. As if a voice calling my name in the middle of nowhere was the most natural thing I'd ever seen-like I'd been waiting for my whole life without realizing it. Slowly, I turned towards the source of the voice. But I saw Mother Liora pouring water over my head in a ceremonial gesture. Beside her, Nanny

clasped my hands so tightly that I could see her veins popping out from under her skin and she had a serene aura around her. But something was not right.

Something didn't feel right for a moment.

I was standing here and Mother Liora, Nanny and I were standing a short distance away from me,

barely acknowledging my presence. How was I standing in the clearing while simultaneously standing in front of Mother Liora and Nanny?

I squinted, letting the moonlight illuminate the scene just to make sure the person there wasn't me, but then, I saw her clearly... it was me alright. Similar features, the same dress... everything

was the same. I tried to move forward, to close the gap between the two versions of myself, but I was rooted to the

ground. I opened my mouth to cry out, but no words would come out.

shimmered like liquid starlight, tinted with sparkles of silver and gold.

The voice called again, closer this time.

"Lyla..."

Under the moonlight, she looked nearly white, but on a closer look, she was a paler colour between silver and white. Her legs were long and elegant, nearly as tall as mine, and her tail was unlike anything I had ever seen-it ended in a forked tip, resembling two branches joined into a longer stem.

I felt a light brush against my leg and when I looked down, blue eyes brilliant and piercing stared

back at me. Hidden in my shadow and from the moon's glow was a magnificent wolf. Her fur

thought Nanny's wolf was beautiful, but this creature was something else entirely. She was art brought to life as if the Moon Goddess was so intentional in making her. 100 The Mandestation!

The wolf circled my legs, her lithe body brushing against me. She rubbed herself against mine,

She was breathtaking. Ravishingly beautiful-probably the most beautiful wolf I'd ever seen. I

I felt so connected to something as I did now. I felt a synchronization with her heart; I could hear her

entire body as if she knew me.

nudging my hand with her nose, urging me to touch her.

heartbeat and feel every part of her within me. I lowered myself to the ground, stroking her fur as our gaze met again, sending a shiver through my

I stood momentarily watching her, feeling a burst of happiness course through my body. Never have

"You're so beautiful," I murmured, rubbing her your owner?" I asked. d with a smile. "Did you get lost? Where is

Her mouth parted slightly, revealing a small set of white pearly teeth, but there was no threat in her expression, only understanding. She nudged me again, this time with more insistence, and I felt my

I wanted to do that so badly.

"Who are you?" I murmured again.

"Lyla!" a voice resonated deep in my mind.

hands sinking deeper into her fur. I was fighting the urge to hug her....

flickered for a second up and down my form, drawing a laugh from me. "You're so sassy, I chuckled. "Is your owner around here?"

She tilted her head, her gaze was filled with an intelligence that felt almost human. Her eyes

I jumped with fright and was about to find the voice again when it came loud and clear, tinged with an edgy tone.

"It is me, Lyla... I am you, and I'm standing in front of you. We are one, bound by the Moon and the

I heard a small scoff as she took a step backwards, gazing at me.

Sun. It is time to embrace what you're meant to be."

ever. It's a shame you gave your Moonsinging abilities to Xander."

"Something about the Moon Goddess is not responsible for making you."

"Great. So, what do you want to be called? Do you have anything in particular?"

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in my mind.

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already"

cake? Honey? Love?"

My eyes widened. "Oh! You're in my head... you're talking to me in my head

The subtle eye roll. "I've been talking to you for years, literally... you listen to every other thing except mine."

"Oh!" I laughed, covering my mouth. "I don't know what to say. You're my wolf?"

"Not good enough for you?" she asked, practically glaring at me. "I asked you to name me the last

time. You must do it today. I'm tired of sitting around doing nothing and you need me more than

"I'm sure I mentioned I've been inside you for years. Lyla, focus..." she pounded her paws on the ground in front of me. "Now, you should name me... thanks to the cleansing, I can fully come to you, but I must have a name. Do you remember the reason I gave you for not having a name?"

"You know about that?" I asked, still trying to wrap my head around how well we could communicate

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"Before you blurt out anything, you can only name me once. Once you call me by a name, there's no

"Don't blame me for having an attitude. I've been stuck in one place for years. My legs would love to

"Do you have any preferences, cos honestly, I have no idea how they name wolves?"

"How about the name of something or someone that has really stuck long with you?"

going back, you can't change it. So, until you're sure of a really... really nice name... don't blurt out random words."

"O...okay!" I scoff. "You have an attitude, but we'll deal with that later.

run too and do a lot of things. Hurry and choose a name. She urged.

"Oh, sorry!" I gave her an apologetic smile. "How about Truffle?"

I thought for a moment and was about to speak when she filtered into my mind, her voice stopping me hastily. "Don't blurt it, Lyla... just say it in your mind, I'll be able to know"

"What?" her eyes widened with shock as she growled at me. "You should give me a name that

matches my appearance. Imagine meeting Lax or Ragnar answering Truffle...I feel embarrassed

"Oh!" I nodded, shifting slightly. I didn't think I was up to discussing my messy love life. "How about

"Who's Lax or Ragnar?" I asked. "Ramsey's wolf and Nathan's wolf, respectively."

"Are those the only words in your vocabulary?" "Since your vocabulary is so extensive, how about you tell me what you want to be called and let's stop wasting each other's time. It's getting cold already?" I shivered, rubbing at my arins.

"Tell me the names, else, I'll blurt out the first thing that comes to my head.

She groaned. "Let's just do the naming..." "Okay. Let's hear your suggestion."

"Actually, I have a lot. I mean, I've been picking up words here and there, you know... preparing for

today," she paused. "Usually, you're supposed to do these things but, you're Lyla... you get stressed

"Fine!" she hissed. "The options are, Isariel, Sylara, Nymeris, Eryndra and Zeryntha. These names stuck with me. So, you just have to pick one.

"It is your duty to do that!" she said through gritted teeth.

"Just choose any name you want from the three. I won't mind."

"You're in a dream. How can you be cold?"

"In a dream? This looks real?"

by the tiniest of things."

Isaricl"

"This is your last strike... if you badmouth me, I'm going to blurt out Cupcake. 146 The Manifestation i

"Okay!" I nodded. "Very strange options, but... I guess we'd have to manage it that way. So, which

"Which of them do you like more?" I asked, stifling a tired yawn. \ww.n\@\vec{v}\mathcal{E}\w\Orm.\mathcal{C}(\circ)\m

"How about Hazel?" I asked. "Too popular and I'm a Two-tailed wolf, Lyla... I can't just answer normal, cliché names. Come on...

I studied her for a few minutes, deciding on which of the names would be much easier for me to

call.

Before I could respond, the world around me disappeared, and I awoke with a gasp. I was lying in the forest again.

of the names do you like the best?"

choose from my options."

"Okay... I can really choose anything?" "Yes!" she nodded. "But from my list. "Okay! Here goes nothing. I exhaled. "I chose Nymeris. I can call you Nym." She bared her teeth excitedly and her tail wagged, too. "Good choice."