

Chapter 65 - The Alpha God's Luna

Fenrir and Warg were on their way to the underground cell, where Salome was detained until the Southern Alpha Convocation decided what they were going to do to her. By the local laws, she was under their full power. Although Fenrir hated leaving Astrea alone even for a moment, he also knew that Warg would get himself in trouble if he didn't see the witch.

"She'll be fine," he commented, watching his creation pacing over the small elevator space.

"You can make everything fine right now," the first lycan looked at him with his brows furrowed, that half-begging, half-expectant expression on his tired face. "No offence, Rir, but you can destroy this building, free our friend, take Astrea, and we can all go home."

"I wish it was as easy as this," the wolf god grunted. "If I do that, someone else will have to pay for these actions. We have already brought enough imbalance into this world, and although it always feels right at the moment, the feeling gets sour over time when I see the consequences. There has to be another way. This world can't take any more divine intervention anytime soon."

"When did you start caring about the world? I thought you were done with it!" Warg folded his large arms over his chest.

"When I saw a future for it," the deity admitted, adding, "and when I realised no one else gives a damn about any of it."

"All I am saying is we could have destroyed that place, taken Salome and Astrea and returned to Solace," the lycan frowned. "You can keep it safe for a few hundred years. I am sure."

"And then what?" Fenrir's jaw tightened. "Neither Astrea nor Salome will live this long, and what do we do then? When the world around Solace ceases to exist, what will our children do?"

Warg stiffened, searching for a reply. "I guess what I am trying to tell you is that the world is not our responsibility. They were never kind to us."

"Well, that's on them," Fenrir countered. "What does it have to do with me and what I choose to do? Letting them die will make none of us feel better. Trust me, I have already been down that road once."

"Why don't the mortals save themselves for once?" the lycan offered a disgruntled scoff.

"They did. So many times." Fenrir sighed and rubbed the bridge of his nose. "Gods were choosing their champions for a reason, giving powers to those who were willing to make the necessary sacrifices. Those powers aren't really gifts, Warg. The price for them is higher than

any benefit they bring to their owner. What goes around, comes around. This is why I don't want to abandon them now when I am partially at fault. We may not have started it, but Vidar wants to wipe this realm clean because of what Joran and I did during the Northern war. Blessing all those warriors was a mistake. I knew I should have walked away back then. But—”

“It felt right at the time—” Warg closed his eyes, realising it was the end of the argument. They would have to find another way.

“Yeah.”

The elevator doors opened, and they walked into an immaculately clean white corridor. The southern prison for high-profile captives was minimalistic and well-maintained, just like they expected. The two men showed their permission slip from one of the southern Alphas' to the guards and were led to the only door with markings on it. Fenrir recognised magical-blocking runes at once, knowing that Salome wouldn't be able to break out of there even if she tried.

One of the guards pressed a button, and a small window at the top of the door opened, revealing Salome sitting on the ground in a meditation pause. She didn't even flinch at the sounds.

“Sal,” Warg rushed forward, but Fenrir held him in place.

Salome opened her eyes, immediately trying to blink away the tears that formed, seeing the two men.

“Guys!” She stood up, trying to straighten her creased dress and checking her hair on her way to the door.

Salome's thin fingers touched the edge of the window, and small bolts of electricity hit her, forcing her to wince from the pain.

“Careful!” Warg's claws elongated instantly, but once again, Fenrir placed his palm on his friend's shoulder, urging him to conduct himself properly.

Salome tried to meet the wolf god's gaze, but he was checking the runes on the walls, occasionally eyeing the guards. She had so much to tell him, but... it did not look like he was interested.

“I am fine,” she promised to the lycan, whose chest was raising and falling at a dangerous rhythm. “They didn't hurt me, and I doubt they will.”

“If as much as a hair falls down your head, I will make them regret it!” Warg let out a low growl. “And don't worry, I will die, but help you out of here. You are not staying here for long! I swear!”

Salome froze. If Fenrir said those words to her, she would have been the happiest woman alive.

But Warg was promising her something he couldn't deliver without endangering himself. She couldn't accept that. Not when she couldn't reciprocate his feelings. It wasn't right.

"Warg," the witch hugged herself, unable to look at him. "It's my fault. Everything that happened is on me. I made a mistake, and now I need to face the consequences."

"Hell no!" he replied. "We all make mistakes — It doesn't mean that you'll have to rot in here! I will blow this place up if I have to!"

The guards exchanged concerned looks, and their hands slowly moved towards the tranquilising smoke guns on their belts.

Fenrir swore under his breath, taking a bead off his bracelet. He crushed the ancient magic between his fingers, making sure the two werewolves froze before they could do anything.

"We have around ten minutes!" he avoided his friends' startled gazes. So much for not interfering anymore.

"Ok, so do I destroy the wall or—" Warg flexed his fingers, eager to free the woman whom he had been thinking about every day for the past fifteen years.

"No need." Fenrir shook his head and approached the wall, erasing one of the runes and disrupting the magical pattern that imprisoned Salome within. "We can go now!"

Warg couldn't contain his excitement, breaking the handle on the door. He walked inside, offering Salome his hand, but she stepped back.

Finally, Fenrir locked eyes with her, raising a questioning brow.

"I really can't," Salome confessed. "Just think about it. How will everything look if I escape?"

"It's already such a mess that I don't think anyone would care," the Wolf God retorted.

"On the contrary," the witch exhaled and took another step back, resolute on staying behind, "King Kai and Queen Savannah trusted me. I used their token to bring the northern army to the border, thinking that you were going into a fight. The fight I caused when I set up you and Astrea. But when I tried to help, I only made matters worse. Now I see that the message I received was a trap. You didn't ask me for help, did you?"

Fenrir shook his head, and she bit her lip painfully, holding back tears.

"I should have known," she whispered.

"You can't win when you play against the gods," Fenrir told her, and she nodded.

"It explains why I lost." The witch forced a smile onto her lips.

“We have no time for this!” Warg rushed them. “We can talk about all this later. Let’s go.”

“You don’t understand.” She shook her head, finally locking her eyes with the first lycan. “If I go now, the North or the East will be blamed for the explosion. I have to stay until the explosion is irrelevant and keep insisting it’s all on me.”

“They will execute you!” Warg wasn’t having any of it.

“I don’t think so.” Salome tried to curl her lips, but her smile faltered. “Witches are precious cargo, and I am a member of my coven. Killing me wouldn’t benefit anyone.”

“But they will never let you go!” The lycan gritted his teeth. “You will not be able to come back home—”

“She doesn’t want to come back,” Fenrir said and Salome turned away from them both.

“Sal!” Now Warg was utterly shocked.

“I want to be where I am needed,” Salome said. “There is no place for me in Solace anymore. No one is waiting for me there, and we don’t have any sources in the South. Over time, I can be that source—”

“I am waiting for you,” Warg whispered, slightly embarrassed that Fenrir was witnessing this conversation. “Salome, I—”

She pivoted and closed the distance between them.

“Don’t say it,” she grasped his hands and squeezed them tight. “Please, Warg, you are my best friend. Don’t—”

The lycan stared at her while his heart clenched painfully.

“Rir, we cannot leave her,” he said.

“We cannot take her by force either,” the Rogue King exhaled heavily. This was a surprise for him too.

“We will meet again,” she said, brushing her palm over Warg’s cheek. “Of that, I am sure.”

“Come with us!” he pleaded.

“I am pretty sure that if I do, everything will only get worse.” Salome confessed. “At least now Solace is safe.”

“This is not right!” The lycan looked at his creator again, and Fenrir’s throat bobbed with emotion. He knew what Warg was going through very well. He knew what he wanted from him, but—

“It’s her choice,” he reminded his friend. “We have to accept it.”

“But she is one of us!” Warg couldn’t give up.

Salome smiled sadly, knowing that couldn’t be further away from the truth.

One of the guards let out a whimper, and he knew they were out of time.

“Go!” she told them. “It’s best if they don’t see you here.”

Warg looked at her, clenching his fists.

“Did I ever have a chance?” he asked her, some desperation in his voice that broke a piece of Fenrir’s heart too.

Salome looked at him through tears, slowly shifting her gaze at the man she had spent years loving with all her heart.

“I am so sorry,” she whispered to both of them.

A little pang in Fenrir’s heart suddenly turned into a powerful stab, and he knew something was wrong with Astrea the moment it happened.

“I need to go!” he said, ready to leave, but before the guards woke up to witness everything, he took one of his bracelets off and threw it to Salome, who gazed at him with wide eyes. “For protection,” he said with a nod and this time, he opened a portal.

He stepped into it, and Warg paused one more time, looking straight into the witch’s eyes. He wanted to tell her so much, but she only smiled at him, shaking her head. Broken, the first lycan followed his creator into the unknown.

Nikki woke up tied to a chair, silver chains digging painfully into her flesh. Her vision was blurred, so she heard the two men before she saw them.

"Are you sure?" one of them asked, his voice echoing in what seemed like a large empty warehouse.

"Yeah. This signal means we have to end her now," another replied coldly.

"So young!" The first one sighed, spitting on the ground.

"Either her or us. Your choice," the second reasoned. "What will it be?"

"How do we do it?"

A wave of adrenaline rippled over Nikki's body. Were they discussing her? The last thing she remembered was an ambush at the penthouse and the fight where Bjorn fought for her even though he didn't have to. She was their target from the very beginning. Not him.

Nikki swallowed the lump in her throat, remembering how Darius' chest was pierced again and again by the assassins sent to get her. She couldn't forget how they dragged her out, leaving him lying there in the pool of his own blood.

A loud roar cut the silence of their surroundings, making the blood freeze in her veins.

"What the f*ck is that?" one of the men asked before a soul-shattering scream...