

## Mated to the Alpha and His Beta novel

### Chapter 461

Chapter 461 Xander

As more shouts erupted, and the crowd began surging up toward the stage, I held up my hands. The truth was, if they all truly wanted to riot, they would. There wouldn't be much me, Zane, and Mason, could do about it.

I didn't want to rule this pack like my father had. I refused to, as a matter of fact. But that didn't mean I wasn't going to show them all exactly who was boss.

My lip curled in a snarl that reverberated through the air. I felt my canines lengthen, just a touch. Behind me, without me saying even a word to them, both Zane and Mason did the same. When I shot a glance at Lanie, she'd stepped back, her eyes wide. Not frightened but impressed.

"Let him speak!" Someone shouted from the crowd.

I should have known they'd all want to know where my mom was. Telling them she'd found a new mate wasn't going to sit well with anyone who was harboring conspiracy theories about her being killed because of my father, but I also wasn't going to start this new era building on the lies he'd left behind. Sure, I missed my mom, but I understood why she wanted to stay at Brightsky. She deserved the chance a happiness.

As the crowd settled, I let my wolf retreat...at least physically. I was sure to keep Hunter at the ready in case I needed him. He was eager to be set free and wanted to run, but he'd have been happy to launch himself into battle, too.

"Steady, old friend," I murmured to him in my head and promised myself I'd set up some training days as soon as I could.

Hopefully, though, training for war would only be a pastime, not something we needed to truly prepare for.

My brother stepped up to address the audience. "Everyone, I realize this is not something you were prepared for, but I want to reassure you that my brother and I are both on the same page when it comes to this pack. I'm honored to be at his side, and I'm also honored to have Zane as my Beta. And, I want to make sure you all know that I'll be available to meet with any of you who have concerns about me, who I am, and how I intend to work as the co-Alpha of this pack."

I listened to his calm, steady voice, and shot a grateful thought up to the Moon Goddess that I had my brother at my side. For as bad as it started off, our relationship had

become steady. We couldn't have gone through everything we had without ending up having each other's backs.

Mason gave me a nod and stepped back.

I faced all of them again. "There are a lot of changes coming for this pack. First, I want you all to know that I appreciate and value your support. I am my father's son, but I will not be making his mistakes." Some faces in the crowd frowned and grumbled, but most of them smiled and nodded. I sensed an upsurge of confidence and relief. We'd been gone a long time, and a lot of shit had gone down. They wanted and needed leadership that worked with them and for them.

"Second," I continued, "I'll be setting up a series of discussions about what we experienced while we were gone. We're going to be sharing that information with you. No more secrets. And friends, let me tell you, there's a lot of stuff we weren't told."

I waited a second or so for the murmurs to die down, then went on. "Third, Constantine will now become a sanctuary for all supernatural beings, provided those who join us abide by our rules: Contribute to the well-being of the pack, and be kind. Hatred and discrimination will no longer be tolerated here." [Search The FindNovel.net website](#) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

I looked around at everyone, fixing my gaze and the light in my eyes on as many individuals as I could.

"The old regime, the High Council, used fear to control us. Ultimately, their fear and hatred was their own downfall. They were destroyed because of it. I won't see that happen to the rest of us. We are Pack Constantine!"

The crowd's roar became deafening. Shouts, cheers, hats thrown into the air. People were jumping up and down, hugging, slapping each other on the backs.

"We are!" Mason shouted, and the crowd called back, "Constantine!"

"We are!" Zane stepped up and hollered out the words with a wide, broad grin.

The crowd bellowed out the response, "CONSTANTINE!"

That's when another, single voice rang out. "Show us the child!"

The silence fell like a hammer. The crowd parted to show a single man in the center of it. He looked around like he was surprised at being shown up that way, but then faced the stage to shout it out again.

"Show us the child!"

"Stella," Lanie thought to me in a panic. "He means Stella."

## Chapter 462

Chapter 462 Mason

"Stella! Show us Stella!"

At the sound of my daughter's name in the voice of the crowd, Colt stirred inside me and rose with a growl. I felt my eyes blazing, and my claws and teeth were both descending. If they tried to harm her, I'd fight them all to the death.

My brother held up his hands again, although the audience had gone quiet. I could feel their anticipation rising, along with an edge of anxiety. It wasn't that I blamed them, but I still wasn't going to let anyone hurt her.

"It is not the custom for the pups of the Alpha and Luna to be paraded around like show dogs," Xander said firmly in a clear voice. "If you have questions about Stella—"

"I heard she's the one who killed the entire High Council!"

"She's not a wolf!" [SEARCH the FINDNOVEL.NET website](#) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"Someone said she's not even Alpha Xander's pup!"

Xander and I shared a look. His fists were clenching, and his snarl was loud enough I could hear it even over the crowd. I knew he was going to lose his shit if they kept up with the accusations, even with Zane pulsing out his calming Beta energy.

"She can control people's minds!"

"She ate the High Council!"

This last shout sent ripples all through everyone in the audience. I could see Xander raising his fists, but who did he think he could pound first? There were so many of them, and what they were shouting pissed me off, too, but we had to keep our heads clear.

When I stepped up again, I made sure to make eye contact with everyone in the front row, one at a time, along with a reassuring nod and smile. Then I addressed everyone else. I kept my voice steady, but firm. I might not have been raised to be an Alpha, but I was one now.

"Friends!" I shouted. "We're all getting a little worked up. Let's not allow unsubstantiated rumors to fly around, okay? Stella Constantine is the daughter of Xander and Lanie, but I consider her my own, as well. As many of you know, in order to save our Luna's life, she spent some time in Stillwood, where she and I met."

This had the possibility of getting sticky with explanations that I didn't want to shout out to a crowd, but I had to keep my brother from shifting into his wolf and tearing into the restless pack. I didn't blame him for being upset, but we had to keep ourselves under control. Lead with example. Protect our family while also honoring our commitment to the entire pack.

"I saw her! I saw Stella, and she's an adult!" The woman shouting this turned to her companions with a frightened look. "Those twins look like they doubled just fine. How can she have grown up so fast?"

"She's a freak!" someone shouted in response.

"A hybrid!"

"The High Council warned us about hybrids!"

"The High Council were bigots who deserved everything that happened to them!" Xander growled. His Alpha fury rippled out into the crowd. Some fell back, but not everyone did. "Their campaign of hatred will not happen again! Look around you. I guarantee you in this crowd you'll find your friends, your loved ones, might also be hybrids."

I added my Alpha energy to his, but used mine to pull his back a bit. I spoke up again. "Our Stella is unique and unusual, that's the truth. She's also not used to being in the spotlight like me and Xander are, so I'm going to ask you to respect that and give her some time and space. But she is the descendant of Xander, she is not a freak, and yes, she is now an adult. When she's ready, she'll address you. But on her terms!"

I could tell they weren't exactly happy with this response. I couldn't really blame them, either. This pack had been lied to for so long, I couldn't be shocked if they had trouble trusting in any kind of authority figures. Plus, I knew that if I were among them, I'd be wary and scared by rumors, too.

Xander and I stood shoulder to shoulder, with Zane slightly behind us. Lanie stepped up beside him. The four of us would be no match if the pack rushed the stage...at least that was the expectation. None of these people had any clue about what we'd faced. How we'd conquered. They were afraid of Stella, and I understood their concerns, but they were afraid of her for the wrong reasons.

"We demand to see her!"

"You said no more secrets!"

"What are you hiding, Alpha Xander? Why won't you show us your daughter?"

"What's wrong with her?"

As more shouts and accusations rang out, Xander, Zane, Lanie, and I formed a line. Our wolves rose, ready to fight if necessary. We'd faced the High Council.

We were about to find out if we had to fight the entire remaining pack.

## Chapter 463

### Chapter 463 Stella

A rush of intense emotion stabbed into me like a thousand tiny blades slicing me all over. My flesh stung and crawled like I was being bitten by ants. I'd opened myself empathically when my fathers started speaking, and this fierce influx of emotions rose and rose without stopping.

I'd been standing in the back of the stage, off to the side where nobody could see me. Earlier, I'd quieted the shouting man who'd been trying to rile up the crowd, but I could see now that had been the wrong choice.

I'd thought I was easing his worries, but all I'd done was give room for him to feel stifled without knowing why, and that nameless feeling had pushed his anxiety even higher. The people around him had sensed it, reacted to it, and now, they were all starting to feel it...which meant so was I.

How could I blame the people of this pack for being afraid of what they didn't know? How could I ask them to understand what I, myself, could barely begin to comprehend? I was unlike anything they'd ever known.

Celestial.

Most of them probably had never even heard of such a creature. They'd been lied to for so long, and they hadn't even been fully informed that there was an entire world beyond wolves, vampires, and witches. How could we expect them to simply change everything they'd been taught? To accept the existence of other supernatural beings without questions or worries? They were terrified of the rumors, but the reality was going to shock them even more. My heart went out to each individual pack member who was struggling.

As I heard my fathers addressing the crowd, another thousand-no, a hundred thousand small blades raked at me like the slices from a hundred thousand claws. I drew in a shaking breath and stood up straight. I needed to draw strength from the Moon Goddess.

I had to close myself down from the full force of all their feelings, or else they were going to...well, not destroy me. But hurt me quite badly. I narrowed myself to only the broadest and most general overview of the crowd instead of each individual. Anxiety, tension, concern, fear. There was also some self-satisfaction as people convinced themselves they'd been right all along not to trust anyone in charge. This pack needed comfort. Reassurance. They needed the truth.

If only I knew what to tell them!

My family wanted to protect me because they still thought of me as a child. They probably always would. I loved my fathers and my mother for that unconditional love and support, but the Moon Goddess had shown me in a vision that being a Celestial was not meant to be a dirty little secret.

I'd reached out to her again this morning, but there'd been no clear answer. I knew I had to accept that. I might be a Celestial, and I might be able to harness all the supernatural gifts that existed, but that didn't make me a goddess.

I heard the accusations being thrown around, and again, my heart went out to all the scared people of the pack. My fathers were trying to defend me, but of course, just about everything the crowd was shouting was true, at least in some measure.

Nothing could be gained by hiding away. I just wished I had some clearer help to guide me. Back in Brightsky, with a mission, my goals had been easy to figure out. My visions from the Moon Goddess had been consistent. Reliable.

For one moment, I felt very, very alone.

My feelings of isolation and abandonment faded within a few seconds. The Moon Goddess would let me know when I was needed, and what I should do. She had never led me astray or let me down in the past.

My faith in her was complete.

If only the pack could feel that same comforting weight, that utter confidence that came along with the knowledge that someone was watching over them. Protecting them the way my parents wanted to protect

me...

Ah! There it was! My confidence that I didn't need a specific vision to guide me.

Whether it came from the Moon Goddess or from somewhere deep inside myself, because I was a Celestial, or because I was an adult, I couldn't be sure. What I did understand was that this pack belonged to

me.

I was the daughter of not one, but two Alphas. My lineage was strong. Powerful. I carried their strength inside of me, and it had nothing to do with being a Celestial.

I was a Constantine.

My people needed to trust me, and how could they put their faith in me if I was no more than a myth or a rumor? They were scared of what they didn't understand, so I needed to help them understand me.

To know me.

I stepped out of the shadows, and into the light.

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## Chapter 464

### Chapter 464 Stella

My dad's muscles tensed under my grip when I stepped forward to grip his shoulder.

Abba was at his side with Papa slightly behind them. My mom was tense, too, and I could tell she wanted to get up in front of the crowd to tell them to leave me alone, but she was holding herself back out of respect for the Alphas.

When my Abba turned to me, his eyes widened slightly. I knew that Daddy was my biological father-but Abba was the first father I'd ever known. Plus, we all shared the same blood through the grandfather I'd never met. My connection with all three of my fathers was strong, but there would always be something special between me and my Abba.

I gave him the slightest of nods, and he returned it. I could sense that he wanted to step between me and the front of the stage, but he stayed in place. Daddy, on the other hand, growled and half-turned. Before he could tell me to get back out of sight, I used our mind link to send him reassurance.

"It's okay, Daddy. I've got this."

I squeezed his shoulder again but didn't try to send him any calming feelings. He'd know right away I was doing it, and he'd get angry with me for trying to soothe him when he felt—and not wrongly—that he needed to be on high alert. Even so, I needed him to back off, and I didn't want to do it by reminding him that I was a Celestial.

I wanted him to remember that on his own.

After a second, his eyes blazing, my dad stepped back, too. I shot a quick glance at Papa Zane, then at my mom. Both of them gave me faint nods. We were all together on this. Pride and gratitude flooded me. We'd been to literal hell and back again. Nothing could break our family apart.

Now, if only I could convince the pack of the same thing.

"Hello, friends!" I called out. I tried to keep my voice light, not aggressive, but also firm. Authoritative without being overbearing.

They knew my adult figure was not usual. I was too grown up and also too young at the same time. I could feel their confusion rising.

"I'm Stella Constantine. You know my Dad, Xander. And my other fathers, Papa Zane and Abba Mason. I'm sure I'm quite a surprise to you all, but I assure you, nobody was more shocked than my papa the day he came to pick me up from school expecting to see a toddler and finding...well. Me."

I waited, holding my breath, hoping I hadn't completely bungled all of this. My senses had told me the crowd would respond to light humor, but as they all stared, some of them with the blazing eyes that showed their wolves were very close to the surface, I had to send up a prayer to the Moon Goddess that she'd been guiding me down the right path.

Then, someone chuckled.

The negative mood didn't completely break and dissolve, but it got a lot better. People took deep breaths. They smiled. Some murmured to each other about times when their own pups surprised them. "I realize that you all are likely to have a lot of questions. So, like my dad and abba both have said already, I want you to be able to come to me with them. Please just understand that, although I'll be as honest as I can be with you, there are many things about myself that I don't even know. So...I hope you'll all help me discover what I can about myself."

I paused again, hoping that my appeal for their help had also been the right choice. People liked to feel connected to their Alpha and his family. I wanted them to feel that connection to me. A willingness to accept and help me, instead of being afraid.



"We heard that you destroyed the High Council!" a voice called out hesitantly.

More whispers circulated.

"Yes. That's true. The Moon Goddess granted me the blessings of her vision and guidance, to let me know that the High Council planned to eliminate me and my family."

I took a soft breath and tried to meet the gazes of as many people as I could. I wanted to sound confident, even though I didn't entirely feel that way.

"The High Council lied to you and betrayed you. I didn't want to hurt them. I don't want to hurt anyone. But they refused to stop their attack, and they lost their lives because of their hatred."

"How could you take out the entire High Council all on your own?" another voice cried out. "You're just a girl!" [SEARCH THE FINDNOVEL.NET WEBSITE](#) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"She's not a girl!" someone else shouted out. "She's something else!"

"Tell us the truth!" another voice shouted out. "We're tired of being lied to!"

I could feel all four of my parents urging me to find a way to keep my secret just a tiny bit longer, until they could find a way to spin it. But I knew there was no more hiding. Not if I wanted this pack to accept me I sent up one more prayer to the Moon Goddess.

"Please don't let them tear me apart."

## **Read Chapter 465 -**

### **Chapter 465**

Chapter 465 Stella

"You're right! I am not a girl! I'm a woman," I said with a slight smile and that edge of humor I'd been trying out before. I didn't pause for the laughs, though.

I faced the crowd with my chin up and my shoulders straight. I put as much confidence and maturity into my voice as I could. The Moon Goddess didn't send me a vision, but that didn't matter. I could do this.

I had to.

"And yes, it's also true that I am more than that. I am a Celestial."

There were some gasps. Even a few loud guffaws, like I'd made a joke. There were some mutters, too, half-angry and half-confused.

I didn't use humor this time, and I didn't try for the element of surprise. I simply waited and let them take it all in. Someone would know what I was talking about, and I wanted that person to be the one to speak first. I could pound all of them with this knowledge, but it would be so much better...so much easier...if it came from someone they already trusted.

Just as long as that person wasn't horrified.

The Moon Goddess didn't feel very close to me in those few moments while I waited. I could feel my parents holding their breaths, expecting me to speak. Ready to fly to my defense, verbally or physically, if they had to.

At last, a tremulous voice rose above the crowd.

"A Celestial! A blessing from the Moon Goddess herself! Oh, praise, praise to the Goddess!"

The people gathered parted, leaving an opening around the old woman in the center. Her long gray hair trailed down her back in a series of tiny braids tipped with beads. Her dark-blue gown was spackled with silver and gold stars all up and down the front of it. As she moved toward the stage, the crowd continued to part. She turned, shaking hands and kissing cheeks, and I could see more gold and silver designs on the back of her robes. The entire moon cycle was embroidered there.

She reached the front of the stage and beamed up at me, holding out her hands for a moment before turning back to face the crowd. "We've waited a long time for the blessings of a Celestial!"

I could see a few confused looks being passed around. The old woman offered her hands to my dad and Abba, who helped her onto the stage. She put her arms around me and enfolded me into an embrace so warm and comforting I wanted to sink into it. When she pulled away, she kissed both my cheeks, one at a time.

"My dear, my great-grandmother told me many stories of the coming of a Celestial, and what it would mean for our pack. But I never dreamed it would happen within my lifetime." "What's a Celestial?" A hesitant, brave voice spoke out. [SEARCH THE FindNovel.net website](http://SearchtheFindNovel.net) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

She turned to face them all. "A Celestial is a tapestry, woven of every single thread. Beyond the blessings of the Moon Goddess, our precious Stella is able to access the

gifts of every supernatural to have ever existed. That she belongs to our pack is a blessing of the highest order."

"Is that how you were able to kill so many who were much stronger than you?"

"If she's one of these Celestial things, she has to be strong!"

"What does this mean?"

The old woman, still smiling, turned to take both of my hands in hers. She squeezed my fingers. She gave me a single, firm nod.

Her confidence in me lifted me up. Again, I faced the crowd. I kept my voice as clear as I could, but it shook with my own waves of emotion.

"I didn't do it by myself. I am a Celestial, yes, but that doesn't mean I don't need the support and love of my parents. Or my pack," I said and swallowed hard around the lump in my throat. "I would never have been able to stop the High Council without my parents. All four of them were there to protect me...just as all four of them will be here to lead this pack. Your two Alphas, your Beta, and your Luna!" Cheers rang out. People clutched each other. The old woman hugged me again.

My dad stepped up. "Everyone, I promise you, there will be ample time for everyone to ask the questions they need to be answered. We're here, together, just as Stella said. More importantly, we are all here together. Alpha Mason and I have declared today a pack holiday! Food and drinks are on us!"

More cheers rose up. I knew there'd be many more questions and meetings, and not all of the people watching us were satisfied, but that was fine. They had the right to their concerns. We'd face them all with honesty, just as my dad had promised them.

I watched my parents embrace, hugging and kissing because they loved each other-but also to show everyone of the pack that they were truly all mated. It would take some time for them to get used to it, but this was a great start.

Looking out at the entire pack cheering, laughing, and celebrating, though, I couldn't stop myself from also feeling sad.

Nobody would ever love me that way.

Who could ever want someone like me?

## Chapter 466

Chapter 466 Mason

The party we'd meant as a small celebration, a welcome home, a token of our appreciation to the pack...yeah, that little shindig had gone on until long past moonrise. Hell, some revelers were still going as the

sun rose.

I'd grabbed a few hours of shuteye, but the room here in this mansion felt strangely too small. The biggest bedroom I'd ever had, and the walls had closed in on me while I tossed and turned next to my sleeping mates.

Finally, when the birds chirping outside sounded louder than an alarm going off, I got out of bed and made my way to the kitchen. Search the FindNOVEL.net website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Some of the staff were already up, of course. Someone had to make the bread and get the coffee brewing. I startled a pair of chatty women dressed in maids' uniforms as they replenished their cleaning caddies.

"Good morning, Alpha Mason! We were just...um...ahem, we're getting to work right away!"

I had to stifle my laughter, but I also felt a little bad that they looked so obviously worried that I was going to scold them. Or worse. I wondered if my brother had been the sort of Alpha to come down hard on the staff, or if that was a throwback from Orion.

Every time I thought I had this Alpha gig down pat, something new cropped up to remind me that wishing and wanting to be something wasn't the same as training to be something.

"No worries," I told the maids, who giggled behind their hands.

"Can I serve you some breakfast, Alpha Mason?" A younger man in the house uniform of black trousers and a white button-down approached me hesitantly. I recognized him from the night before, when he'd been dancing wildly with...yep, one of the maids.

Man, I missed the days when I could party all night and still wake up at the crack of dawn looking like I'd slept for twelve hours.

"I'll just grab some coffee. I can get it myself." I stopped him from heading into the kitchen on my behalf.

He looked a little taken aback. "It's just that Cook is kind of...protective. About her kitchen."

"I'm the Alpha," I told him dryly. "Somehow, I think grabbing myself a cup of coffee shouldn't be too much of a problem."

"Yes, sir."

The maids and the young man all left me. In the kitchen, I found the cook hovering over the oven, talking a mile a minute about the sourdough loaves in several pans on the racks inside. I found the coffee pot and helped myself, only to turn around and see who was taking up so much of her attention.

"Stella," I said happily. "Good morning, little star."

"Morning, Abba!" she said cheerfully.

Talk about looking fresher than a daisy. I suspected Stella hadn't slept at all. Did she even have to? I wasn't sure, but I suspected that she could get along on no sleep for a lot longer than I'd ever been able to. She hopped off the counter and gave Cook a big, warm hug. The older woman gave me a side eye but didn't complain about me helping myself to the coffee. She put a couple of fresh blueberry muffins into a handled basket and gave it to Stella with an admonition to come back any time.

"You're too thin," Cook scolded.

Stella laughed and hugged her again. She linked her arm through mine and leaned against me. "C'mon, Abba. Let's go out into the back garden and have our breakfast. Have you been out there yet?" "I haven't been much of anywhere yet," I reminded her.

Either she'd been exploring, or her Celestial talents gave her an unerring sense of direction, because my daughter led me through a maze of hallways and through a double set of doors. Beyond was a high-walled courtyard with a garden in full bloom.

"Kind of like Brightsky, huh?" she whispered as she nudged me with her elbow.

"Kind of."

We found seats on a curving stone bench in front of some red and white roses in full bloom. Unlike Brightsky, there was no artificial sun here to make them grow, and once more I was reminded that I had no idea what time of year it was. How long we'd been in the enclave. It might've been a year, or two, or three months...

Stella cocked her head to stare at me. "Abba? Are you all right?"

I sipped my hot coffee. It was perfect. Delicious. Fit for an Alpha, as a matter of fact, and I couldn't stop myself from chuckling under my breath.

"I waited my whole life to be here," I told her. "And now that I'm here..."

"It feels weird, doesn't it?" she asked quietly.

I nodded. "Yeah."

Stella tipped her face up toward the sky. "You know, we could run away."

She had a teasing tone to her voice, but at first, I didn't answer her.

Running away didn't actually seem out of the question.

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Chapter 467

Stella

I knew my Abba was feeling out of place here. The huge house. The staff. I'd never spoken at length with him about how he grew up, which was very different from how Dad did. I just felt a strong sense of being out of place coming from him.

I understood exactly how he felt.

For a few minutes we just sat quietly in the bright morning sunshine. He sipped his coffee and broke the blueberry muffin into pieces. I ate a bite of mine and let the flavors explode on my tongue. I was trying hard to appreciate everything for what it is. Simple pleasures.

"We can't run away, Stella," Abba said finally.

"I know." I licked some crumbs off my fingers and then wiped them clean with the cloth napkin Cook stuck into the basket. "But if we did, where would you go?"

His eyebrows went up fast and came down more slowly. I could tell he was thinking about it. "I don't even know. Anyway, I'm here now. I'm co-Alpha with your dad. I'm not going to abandon the pack, or you and the twins. Or your mother."

I nodded. I knew that already, and not from any Celestial superpower senses. I knew it because my Abba was one of the strongest and most loyal men I'd ever met...not that I'd actually met very many men. My shoulders lifted and fell with my heavy sigh. Abba nudged me with his knee.

"What's with the long face?"

I shrugged. "I know this is home. I remember being here before, although I was a baby and it's all fuzzy and distant, the way all my baby memories are. But I feel like a stranger, too. Just like you do. Like I'm a square peg trying to fit in a round hole. "

Abba shifted on the bench and cleared his throat. "Do you want to talk about it? Anything? I know that being a Celestial means that when you were a baby you were still aware in ways that normal...I mean... usually...ah, shit. I don't mean to imply that you're not normal, little star."

I burst into laughter and leaned my head on his shoulder. Abba put his arm around me. "Oh, Abba. I'm not normal."

"Hey." He pushed me away from him to hold my upper arms while he scowled into my face. "You're a Celestial. It's normal...for a Celestial. I mean, you're not...weird."

"Oh, I'm weird." I laughed one more time and looked up at the sky with a grin. "But that's okay. Look at who I have for a father."

We laughed together, then. Rollicking guffaws that hurt our sides and brought tears to our eyes. I hugged him hard. This time, when I let my head rest on his shoulder, he didn't push me away.

"It's hard for me to say what it would've been like for me if I wasn't a Celestial, Abba. It's all I've ever known. In babyhood, I knew I had to let you all think of me as an infant. Then when I got a little older, it was becoming more and more clear to me every time the Moon Goddess offered me a vision. How to behave. What to expect. But she's gone quiet. I know there's more for me, but right now, I feel a little lost. I don't know my purpose."

"Oh, Stella," my Abba said sadly. "I hate that for you."

"It's part of life, isn't it? Don't we all feel that way sometimes?"

"Sweetheart, I understand that being a Celestial is important. That it's who you are, and there's no other way you can be. But what I want for you is...shit. A normal life," he finished finally with a hint of apology in his voice. "It's okay for you not to have some kind of purpose right now. After everything we went through, and everything you did for us all, you deserve some time to just...be. Time to do more than survive and help the

rest of us. I want you to make friends. Have a social life, like other young women your age."

"Technically, I'm not their age," I reminded him.

We laughed again at that. More quietly, this time. My father's love for me shone out of his eyes with such strength, I didn't have the heart to keep teasing him.

"Abba," I said with a gentle laugh. "I can't be worried about all of that. I mean, really, what's the point? As soon as I learn my purpose and complete it, the Moon Goddess will call me home."

He made a low growl. "What the hell does that mean? Even if it doesn't quite feel like it yet, Constantine is your home."

I was quiet for a moment. I wished there was a better way to say this to him. A softer way. But in the end, I could only tell him the full truth.

"No, Abba," I told him gently. "I mean that when my purpose is finished here...I'll die."

## Chapter 467

Chapter 467

Stella

I knew my Abba was feeling out of place here. The huge house. The staff. I'd never spoken at length with him about how he grew up, which was very different from how Dad did. I just felt a strong sense of being out of place coming from him.

I understood exactly how he felt.

For a few minutes we just sat quietly in the bright morning sunshine. He sipped his coffee and broke the blueberry muffin into pieces. I ate a bite of mine and let the flavors explode on my tongue. I was trying hard to appreciate everything for what it is. Simple pleasures.

"We can't run away, Stella," Abba said finally.

"I know." I licked some crumbs off my fingers and then wiped them clean with the cloth napkin Cook stuck into the basket. "But if we did, where would you go?"



His eyebrows went up fast and came down more slowly. I could tell he was thinking about it. "I don't even know. Anyway, I'm here now. I'm co-Alpha with your dad. I'm not going to abandon the pack, or you and the twins. Or your mother."

I nodded. I knew that already, and not from any Celestial superpower senses. I knew it because my Abba was one of the strongest and most loyal men I'd ever met...not that I'd actually met very many men. My shoulders lifted and fell with my heavy sigh. Abba nudged me with his knee.

"What's with the long face?"

I shrugged. "I know this is home. I remember being here before, although I was a baby and it's all fuzzy and distant, the way all my baby memories are. But I feel like a stranger, too. Just like you do. Like I'm a square peg trying to fit in a round hole. "

Abba shifted on the bench and cleared his throat. "Do you want to talk about it? Anything? I know that being a Celestial means that when you were a baby you were still aware in ways that normal...I mean... usually...ah, shit. I don't mean to imply that you're not normal, little star."

I burst into laughter and leaned my head on his shoulder. Abba put his arm around me. "Oh, Abba. I'm not normal."

"Hey." He pushed me away from him to hold my upper arms while he scowled into my face. "You're a Celestial. It's normal...for a Celestial. I mean, you're not...weird."

"Oh, I'm weird." I laughed one more time and looked up at the sky with a grin. "But that's okay. Look at who I have for a father."

We laughed together, then. Rollicking guffaws that hurt our sides and brought tears to our eyes. I hugged him hard. This time, when I let my head rest on his shoulder, he didn't push me away.

"It's hard for me to say what it would've been like for me if I wasn't a Celestial, Abba. It's all I've ever known. In babyhood, I knew I had to let you all think of me as an infant. Then when I got a little older, it was becoming more and more clear to me every time the Moon Goddess offered me a vision. How to behave. What to expect. But she's gone quiet. I know there's more for me, but right now, I feel a little lost. I don't know my purpose."

"Oh, Stella," my Abba said sadly. "I hate that for you."

"It's part of life, isn't it? Don't we all feel that way sometimes?" Search The FindNØVEL.NET website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"Sweetheart, I understand that being a Celestial is important. That it's who you are, and there's no other way you can be. But what I want for you is...shit. A normal life," he finished finally with a hint of apology in his voice. "It's okay for you not to have some kind of purpose right now. After everything we went through, and everything you did for us all, you deserve some time to just...be. Time to do more than survive and help the rest of us. I want you to make friends. Have a social life, like other young women your age."

"Technically, I'm not their age," I reminded him.

We laughed again at that. More quietly, this time. My father's love for me shone out of his eyes with such strength, I didn't have the heart to keep teasing him.

"Abba," I said with a gentle laugh. "I can't be worried about all of that. I mean, really, what's the point? As soon as I learn my purpose and complete it, the Moon Goddess will call me home."

He made a low growl. "What the hell does that mean? Even if it doesn't quite feel like it yet, Constantine is your home."

I was quiet for a moment. I wished there was a better way to say this to him. A softer way. But in the end, I could only tell him the full truth.

"No, Abba," I told him gently. "I mean that when my purpose is finished here...I'll die."

## Chapter 468

Chapter 468

Mason

For a second, all I could do was blink. Stella was watching me with a completely calm look on her face. Her eyes stayed steady on mine. They reminded me of Lanie's. She'd always resembled Xander more, so I'd thought, but I had to admit I'd allowed my imagination to sway me so I could pretend that instead of looking like my brother, she looked like me.

It was what let me think of her as my own, even though I knew that was impossible.

"You're joking, right?" I shook my head and got off the bench to pace in front of it. I spun on the heel of my boot to face her, thinking I'd find her laughing. It would be a poor joke, but better for her to show off a terrible sense of humor rather than...

"No," Stella said. "The Moon Goddess showed me."

For another half a minute, all I could do was focus on curling my fingers hard against my palm, feeling my nails dig into the meat of my hand. I wanted to punch something, but I settled for carving wounds into my flesh, instead.

"Are you sure?" The words fell from my mouth like stones, one at a time. Plink, plink, plink. They tasted like ashes.

Stella nodded solemnly. "Yes."

"How!" My voice raised in a shout, but I quickly suppressed it to move closer to her. There were so many staff in this house, I didn't want anyone to overhear us. "How can you be sure?"

"Abba, you wanting me to be unsure doesn't make it happen," my daughter said calmly. She held out her hand and waited for me to take it, then drew me back to the bench so I could sit next to her. "Did you always know?" I asked her, keeping my voice pitched low. I held her hand and put my other one over it, sandwiching her much smaller hand between mine.

Stella gave me a curious look. Her brow furrowed. "I must have, although it wasn't until we came here that I really understood what that meant. After all, Abba, we've already faced death more than once in my lifetime."

"But here, you're supposed to be safe," I hissed at her.

"Here, we are safe." Her gaze went far away for a few seconds before she focused on me again. "But I will be shown my true purpose, and when I've fulfilled it, then my time in this world will be done. I'm a Celestial, Abba. Everything I've ever learned about my kind is that yes, this is how it's all supposed to go. Have I always known it? That's hard for me to answer, since everything the Moon Goddess has shown me over time has been revealed when she decided it was time for me to know it. I am her servant."

I squeezed her hand and let my head hang for a moment, then looked up at her. "I've never been very religious."

"She doesn't need you to make offerings or sing her praises," Stella said softly. "But because I love you, I think you should learn to accept that her will transcends any choices I would make on my own." [SEARCH THE FindNovel.net website](http://www.findnovel.net) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

I gave a sharp, barking laugh. "Will that help me accept when my beloved daughter dies because of the whim of a Goddess?"

"It might," she said.

A thought occurred to me and filled me with a fierce hope. "But you have no idea how long it will take to fulfill that purpose, right? It could be a week, or it could be a hundred years from now."

A faint smile painted itself over Stella's lips. "I suppose so. Sure."

"And, your goal as a Celestial will most certainly be something designed to help people. Right?"

"Yes," she said, inclining her head to study me. "Of course it will, Abba. I might have to cause harm, but my purpose would never be to bring harm."

I thought of her facing the High Council. They'd had the chance to back down, but they hadn't, and so that meant they'd had no chance to stand against her. Stella had been the reason for their deaths, but only because of their own anger and hatred.

"Well," I said with a note of triumph in my tone, "you said that making friends and being social isn't worth worrying about. But what if you have centuries left here? Doesn't it stand to reason that learning more about your pack and the rest of your family isn't such a bad thing? How do you know that the rest of your life's mission isn't to discover what would be best for people here to improve their lives?"

Again, her smooth brow crinkled in thought as she studied me. Her lips pressed together, then parted. I saw a hint of excitement in her eyes that she quickly blinked away.

"You have a point," Stella said slowly. Begrudgingly. "But there's no way I'll be able to do any of that."

"Of course there is," I promised. "We just have to think of it."

## **Chapter 469**

### Chapter 469 Stella

I'd come to accept the will of the Moon Goddess, even if it meant I only had a short time left here in Constantine, and in this world as a whole. I'd pushed aside my sadness, not so much at the thought of leaving my family, since I knew that wherever the Goddess took me would be the place I was meant to be. My sorrow was focused more on the knowledge that my loved ones would grieve for me, and there wasn't anything I could do to ease that pain.

But now...now, my Abba was grinning at me with a wild light in his eyes. He squeezed my hand, a little too hard. It didn't hurt, but it surprised me enough to tug it out of his.

"You deserve a life, Stella. A real, true life. Celestial or not...in fact, maybe even more so because of that," he said. "If the Moon Goddess expects you to be her servant, surely she also has to give you some kind of rewards."

I thought about this. It wasn't like me and the Moon Goddess had heart to heart chats or anything like that. She gave me visions of what must happen, or what was to come. She guided me.

"I think she might intend my reward simply to be...here," I said after a second.

My father frowned. "See? This is why I'm not religious."

I laughed. "Oh, Abba."

"Look. I know you didn't become a Celestial because of anything that came through me. But you are my daughter as much as if I'd sired you." Abba looked grim. "I've seen you do wonderful and terrible things. I know what you are, but more importantly, Stella, I know who you are. And I refuse to believe that your destiny in life includes being lonely."

In Brightsky, I'd been friendly with the other children in the school, but none of them had truly been my friends. My closest companions had been my sister Alaina and brother Isaac, but even though they'd grown up faster than most other wolf pups because they were hybrids, they were still much younger than me, both in physical and mental form. I loved them dearly, but we weren't in the same place. Besides, they had each other.

I'd always been set off. Different. Alone.

My chin lifted, and I tried hard to keep the wobble out of my voice. My father could hear it, though. I hated that this was causing him pain, even though at the same time, I was kind of desperate to hear what he had to say.

"Sweetheart, I don't say this to embarrass or shame you, but you've never really been like anyone else," he began, then stopped.

I laughed, shaking my head. "We've already established that I'm weird, Abba. I'm not ashamed of it. I am who I am. What I am."

"You've also never really been able to just... be," he said.

I pondered this. "When I was a baby-"

"Even when you were a baby," he said.

We sat in silence for a few minutes. A soft breeze caressed my face, bringing with it the scent of the blooming roses and other flowers in the garden. I closed my eyes and let the sunlight make patterns behind the lids. I reached out to the Moon Goddess and felt her presence, but she was quiet. Listening? Waiting for me to make a choice?

How could I know which was the right one?

"I do want friends, Abba," I said finally and opened my eyes. "For however long I have in this world, I don't want to be alone."

I wanted to laugh with girlfriends over silly outfits. I wanted to be asked out for coffee, to join a book club, to do one of those paint and sip wine things I'd overheard my grandma talking about once on the phone.

I wanted a boyfriend.

A mate, children...I shook my head, not wanting to get too far ahead of myself. I told myself the Goddess would provide what I was meant to have. [SEARCH THE FINDNOVEL.NET](http://www.findnovel.net) website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

But oh...how I yearned to have a life.

When I focused on my father, he was staring at me intently. I loved all four of my parents, of course, but Abba was the one I sometimes felt most alike. My Papa Zane and Dad Xander had each other. My mom had all of her mates, plus her pups. But Abba and I always seemed to stand a little outside of everyone else.

"You've always been special, Stella. Even before we discovered you're a Celestial. The pack here in Constantine isn't really going to have the chance to think of you as anything other than that. Something to be marveled at, be curious about..."

"Maybe even a little afraid of," I added, and Abba nodded.

"That too. But there is a way for people to learn about who Stella the person is. Not Stella the Celestial."

I frowned, feeling disheartened. "But how?"

Abba grinned. "I've just thought of the way."

## Chapter 470

## Chapter 470 Mason

When Lanie needed to sneak into the hybrid facility to rescue the twins, she'd used a potion from the witch Rhiannon to change her appearance.

When I described that quickly to Stella, she tipped her head back in laughter that rang throughout the walled garden. When she looked back at me, her eyes twinkled. She patted my hand.

"I don't need a potion, Abba! I can access the powers of a shapeshifter, remember?"

I shook my head with a chuckle. "Sweetheart, there's so much you can do that I can't even begin to comprehend."

As I watched, Stella's features rippled. Her eyes turned a dark amber, while her hair faded into pale gold. Faint freckles scattered suddenly across her nose and cheeks, which were pudgier than they'd been a moment ago. Her smiling mouth changed, too. The effect lasted only a few seconds before she returned to her familiar face.

"That's beyond amazing," I told her, the hairs rising on the back of my neck. "It's incredible."

"It's weird," she said matter-of-factly.

I laughed again. "It's not something I think you'd want to trot out in front of people who don't know you, that's for sure. But it's still an amazing gift."

"How's it going to help me, though?" She bit her lower lip with straight, white teeth, then let her head hang so her hair covered her face for a moment. Her fingers knotted in her lap as she shook her head. "Looking like a different person isn't going to make me into a different person."

I thought of Lanie when she'd been Katie. She had looked the same as she did now, but she had been different. And why? Because those of us in Stillwood hadn't known her already. We hadn't had any preconceived notions of how she ought to behave, or anything about her personality at all. [SEAR\\*ch the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.](#)

"Looking like a different person is going to give you the chance to figure out who you want to be. Not who the Goddess expects you to be," I cautioned her. "You're still discovering yourself, little star. You might have every gift a supernatural can have, and you might have all the weight of the universe on your shoulders, but so far in your life, have you ever had the chance to truly understand yourself?"

I could tell she had not. Her eyes welled with tears she dashed away with quick swipes of her fingertips. She gave me a watery, brave, and genuine smile.

"I think I'm starting to. I definitely want to," she added quickly.

"If you look like someone else for a while, you might be able to put down some of your burden. Just for a short time, here and there," I said hastily when it looked like she meant to protest. "But you are not only a Celestial, Stella. You're more than that."

"I don't know if it's possible to be more than a Celestial, Abba." She shook her head. "I'm not trying to brag, but Celestials are a pretty big deal."

I laughed and leaned forward to hug her with one arm. She leaned against me. "So let yourself be ordinary sometimes."

She was quiet for a moment or so before she pulled away with a nod. "I think I understand what you're getting at."

Excitement edged her voice, and the gleam of tears became a shine of interest.

"As long as everyone here recognizes me, I won't be able to do much. I won't be able to hang out with anyone other than people who already know me...which is a very small group," she said.

I nodded, letting her put the pieces together, as I knew she'd be able to. "Yep."

"But if I change my appearance, I could go out. In public. Anywhere I wanted to go!" She sounded even more excited and even clapped her hands together a couple of times. "People I meet won't be stuck on the fact that I'm a Celestial. Heck, they won't even know!"

"That's exactly right. It will give you some freedom. You'll be able to have some privacy, too," I told her.

Stella's excitement faded. She frowned. "But...Abba, won't people be upset with me once they find out? It will feel like I've tricked them."

"That's possible. But if you make the right sorts of friends, they'll care more about what's inside of you, the real you, than how you look."

"But when they find out I'm Stella the Celestial, they'll be upset I didn't tell them already."

"Why would they?" I point out. "Unless you straight up lie and say 'Hi there, I'm absolutely not a Celestial, happy to meet you,' what could they really say?""

"Abba," Stella said with a frown.



I grinned. "I know it's splitting hairs. A technicality. As your father, I certainly wouldn't suggest you practice dishonesty as a general rule. But..."

"But," Stella agreed after a second's hesitation. Her grin returned. "Maybe it's better to ask for forgiveness than for permission?"

I held up my hand so she could fist bump it. "Let's start with that."

## Chapter 471

Chapter 471 Stella

"What are you two up to?"

I turned toward my mom's voice as she approached us with a smile. She looked so much more relaxed here in Constantine than she did when we were living in Brightsky. My Abba and I shared a quick look of mutual understanding before he got up off the bench to greet her with a hug and a kiss.

I watched them wistfully, but with some hope brewing inside me. My father's suggestion that I use my shapeshifting skills to change my appearance was a wild idea...but one that I really hoped would work. It was also something I wasn't sure I wanted to tell my mom about. I figured she'd worry about me. And I definitely knew that Dad would lose his mind over the idea of me going out into the world. Papa might be okay with it, but for now, Abba and I shared another look that said he was going to help me keep my secret.

After all, it was just a small one.

Right?

"Mason? Stella?" Mom frowned, looking from him to me and back again. "What's up? Everything okay?"

The edge of worry in her voice made me sad. I didn't want her to fret, especially not here in the packlands, where we were all supposed to be happy. I stood up to give her a hug and a kiss on the cheek. "Everything's great, Mama. We're just getting used to being settled. That's all. And Abba says he stayed up too late last night."

He hadn't actually said that aloud, but I'd sensed it in him.

Abba laughed and slipped his arm around my mom's waist. "I must be getting old. Can't party like I used to back in the olden days at Stillwood, when I was a young, single, rogue wolf..."

Mom smacked his arm playfully. "Uh huh. Keep talking about how it was back when you were young and single, and you might find yourself single again!"

He laughed and pulled her close for another kiss. "Never."

They hugged and kissed before my mom turned back to me again. "The twins are still sleeping, but I thought after they woke up that we could all take a little trip downtown? They need new shoes, and honestly we could all use a bit of a new wardrobe, don't you think?"

We'd brought hardly anything with us from Brightsky, and although I figured my mom probably had some clothes and personal belongings here in the Alpha's mansion, she'd also been a very different person when she left here. Hardly more than a kid, I realized now with a start. Sure, she'd been mated to my dad and papa...pregnant with me...

"Little star?"

I shook off my thoughts and smiled at her. "Yes, Mama?" [SEARCH THE FINDNOVEL.NET](http://SEARCHTHEFINDNOVEL.NET) website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"You looked so far away," my mom said. "You don't have to go shopping in town if you don't want to. We could order things to be delivered. I didn't think about what it would be like for you to go out in public, I'm sorry."

I shot Abba another look. "I can't hide away here, Mama. If I want the pack to accept me, I have to go out among them. It'll be okay."

"Are you sure?" She looked concerned.

I nodded firmly. "I'm sure."

She still looked hesitant but let go of Abba and stepped away. "I'm going to grab some breakfast and check in with the staff. I haven't had much chance to be the acting Luna here, so I want to get started on that right away. But as soon as the twins get up and I can get some food into them, I'll be ready to go shopping."

"I can be ready then. Abba and I are just being lazy."

"I'd say you both deserve it," Mom said. She kissed his cheek again, stretching up on her tiptoes to do it. "What are you up to today, my love?"

"I'm sure Xander has a bunch of meetings lined up for us. Other than that, just getting the lay of the land. He said he'd take me on a driving tour of the packlands," Abba told her.

My mom chuckled. "Sounds like it's back to work for all of us. Stella, I'll see you in a bit."

When she'd left us alone again, Abba turned to me. "You don't want to tell your mom about my idea?"

"I want to see what it's really like today when we go to town. Maybe I won't even have to do what you suggested." I sounded hopeful, but I knew that wasn't going to be the case. "But, can we plan it out anyway?"

He grinned. "Of course."

We spoke quickly, in hushed tones. Abba had the best idea that I should say I was a rogue wolf who'd arrived in Constantine because I heard that it was becoming a sanctuary. I'd be just one of many new faces joining the pack, so I wouldn't stand out. I could get to know the current pack members and anyone else who showed up, too.

I picked the name Elleah Whitehaven because it sounded pretty to me, and Abba assured me it was a fine name for a rogue because it didn't tie to any current packs.

Now, all I had to do was decide what I was going to look like.

## **Chapter 472**

### Chapter 472 Lanie

Why I'd thought taking a pair of cranky twins shopping for clothes and shoes was going to be a good idea the day after an all-night party, I could never know, but I was definitely cursing myself for it within the first half an hour. Not only did Alaina and Isaac complain and literally drag their feet as we went from shop to shop, we couldn't make it more than a few feet down the sidewalk without being stopped.

I'd thought people would be curious about and want to meet Stella, of course, but I hadn't quite counted on how many people wanted the chance to get close to their new Luna. Sure, I'd technically been the Luna before we left, but it had been for such a short time, and there'd been all that mess and confusion with the assigned mating. Gabriela had been the Luna for Xander after his father gave over the leadership to him, and the pack had been used to her.

Well, now they had me. I hadn't realized how exhausting it would be to smile and engage with everyone from the people passing on the street to the cashiers and sales staff in the shops, to other customers... by the time we got out of the final store and were heading toward the ice cream shop where I'd promised my cranky twins we'd get a treat, my face ached from forcing the smiles.

"Come on, you two. Settle down or else we're going right back to the house, and it'll be nothing but broccoli for you both." I scolded, but there wasn't much force in my words; I wanted ice cream, too. We found a booth toward the back and, fortunately, once we ordered our giant ice cream sundaes with all the extra toppings...people left us alone in peace. The twins dug in right away, but Stella only nibbled at hers.

"You've been quiet all day. Was it too much for you, little star?" I kept my voice quiet, but the twins were so busy gobbling their sweet treat that they didn't seem to be paying much attention to us.

She shook her head and licked the tip of her spoon. She'd chosen, not her usual vanilla or chocolate, but the more exotic black cherry chocolate alongside a scoop of butter pecan. Not a combination I thought I'd enjoy. I couldn't tell if she was, either.

"People have been so nice. It's just weird to feel them watching me all the time. Even if they're not talking to me," she said, then shrugged and dug her spoon deep into the ice cream. She took a bite and smiled. "Yum!"

She looked like an adult, but there was still so much childish joy in her that I had to smile back. I waved my spoon at her. "You didn't get the chance to buy many new clothes."

The twins had been so irritable that I'd had to keep my focus on them while leaving Stella to purchase her own items. Most of our packages had been sent on to the house so we didn't have to carry them, but she had a few bags at her side. I leaned to take a peek into one, but it was so close to her that I couldn't see what was in it.

"Did you at least pick out some pretty things? Whatever you got, it has to be better than wearing your old mother's stuff."

We both laughed, but our chuckles were a little strained. Stella looked the same age as me, if not maybe even a couple of years older. We were similar in size, but she was taller. My clothes didn't fit her the same way.

"I'm still deciding on my style," she told me. "I guess I'm trying to figure out who I want to be."

Something in those words rang a little off to me. I studied her face. "Nobody says that what you picked out today has to be it forever, Stella. You're allowed to discover your

own preferences." Search The FindNOvel.net website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"It's just that I grew up so fast," she said in a low voice, not meeting my eyes. "I didn't have time to learn about how to dress or style my hair or do my makeup or anything like that. Don't girls usually do all that with their friends or sisters?"

At that, my heart panged. My sister and I were only a year-ish apart in age...and it had been so long since we'd been able to hang out and do our hair and nails...I missed her.

"I'm going to have to invite your Auntie Selena to come over. She was always a lot more into fashion and makeup than I was." My heart panged again.

Stella smiled. "That sounds like it would be fun."

A figure appeared at the side of the table. The young woman could barely string a sentence together as she stumbled over her greeting to Stella. She was clearly overwhelmed at meeting a Celestial. I was proud of Stella, though. She handled the girl's obvious star-struckness with poise and calm.

There was something shadowed in her expression, though. A sadness there I hated to see and wished I could take away.

"I'm fine, Mama," she assured me, even though I hadn't said a word. "Just learning exactly what it's like when people find out what I am, that's all."

I wanted to believe that's all it was.

## Chapter 473

### Chapter 473 Stella

Even though I'd known that everything Abba and I had talked about made sense, I'd held out a small hope that interacting with the people of Constantine wouldn't be so...freaking...weird.

Everyone had been super nice, whether they were talking to me or about me. There'd been a few who'd touched me, though. Even if it was just my sleeve, it was odd to be such an object of attention. My mom had noticed it, too, but she hadn't said much about it. She'd been caught up with my bratty siblings. I was kind of glad for their fussing. Her lack of attention had let me pick out a bunch of different outfits that I wasn't sure Mom would have approved of.

I stared at myself in the mirror wearing one of those outfits right now. The jeans were loose around the waist and the butt. Even the legs were a little loose, and also too long. They'd drag on the ground if I didn't roll them up. The blouse I'd picked out was of sheer fabric printed with flowers in bold colors of red, purple, green, teal, and black. It had flowy sleeves and a high neck-but the see-through cloth made it sexy. Well, at least I hoped it was sexy. I really had no idea what that meant beyond the sound of the word. As long as I'd been aware of my mom's clothing, she'd favored practical, well-fitting jeans, boots, and T-shirts, or long, flowy skirts and dresses.

I lifted my chin. This outfit wasn't quite right for Stella Constantine. It didn't fit, and it wasn't a style that I felt matched my personality. Search the FindNovel.net website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

But for Elleah Whitehaven? These jeans were going to make her ass look amazing.

Shifters who changed into wolves or dragons or any number of other creatures had to expend energy to access their inner beasts. They didn't have to focus hard on becoming their animals, because their internal companion was as much a part of them as their very souls. Still, the change took effort, even if it was an unconscious one. It ate up bodily resources. For some, like dragon shifters, it meant a period of recovery time to compensate for the enormous changes in mass from dragon to human form.

The kind of transformation I was undertaking didn't take anywhere near that kind of effort or energy. Although I'd never done it before, I knew I could access my shapeshifter gifts...I just needed a little bit of practice. First, to decide what I wanted to look like. And then, to hold that form in place no matter what else I was doing.

If I thought being a Celestial freaked people out, I didn't want to think about what would happen if I was talking to someone and I forgot to keep my eyes the right color...or in the right place.

Also, deciding on a face and body was an important decision, and one I didn't want to rush. If I was really going to embark on this grand new adventure, I wanted to make sure I did it looking like someone I could feel comfortable being for as long as I had to be her.

Abba had pointed out that looking like a different person was going to give me the chance to meet people as someone they didn't think they already knew. So. Who was she?

A blonde? Brunette? Ginger? Did she wear her hair in long waves or tight curls? Was she blue-eyed, or green, or brown, or something totally wild, like purple?

I was giddy with the possibilities as I watched my face go through every change as I thought of it. My body, too. Big breasts, thick thighs, wide hips, narrow waist... When the body filled out the clothes I'd chosen to perfection, I stopped.

I ended up with longer legs, but a slightly thicker waist. A bigger butt and bust, but my face was fuller, too. Long golden curls reached to the small of my back, giving me plenty to play with. I settled on gray-blue eyes rimmed with thick lashes that looked natural but would pop with the right amount of mascara.

Elleah Whitehaven was pretty, but not beautiful. She'd blend into a crowd of other regular people, not much to stand out or call attention...but she wasn't ugly, either. When I used "her" mouth to smile, she looked...

Nice.

Normal.

She looked like someone I'd like to get to know.

More importantly, she looked like someone I'd like to be.

I paused for a moment to close my newly colored eyes and send up a message to the Moon Goddess. I asked her to help me make the right choices. To serve her will, but also, I asked for her blessing as I ventured out and tried to learn how to live. In return, I got a sense of peace and comfort, which I took as her blessing.

I opened my eyes. I smoothed my blouse. I practiced Elleah's smile until it felt natural, like my own.

Now all I had to do was try it out on someone else.

## Chapter 474

### Chapter 474 Zane

I'd spent much of my adult life in this house, and as much as I'd enjoyed living among the wonders of Brightsky, I had to admit that it felt good to be home. Really, really good to have my own space, a place for my belongings. Room to stretch out and breathe that did not include three other adults.

"You good?" Xander asked with a rap of his knuckles on the doorway to the small office I'd claimed as mine. "I'm taking my brother out and about to check out the packlands. Figure we'll be gone for a few hours, then come back in time for the afternoon meetings. You sure you don't want to come along with us?"

"Dude. No." I laughed at his sour expression. "I want to sit on my ass and read a book with a glass of whiskey and a cigar, and I want to do it in this little room, and I want to do it all on my lonesome. I'll be ready for the afternoon meetings by the time you get back. Right now, all I want is the sound of my own breathing."

His lip curled, and he let out a growl, but it wasn't a serious one. "That sounds fucking amazing. No lie."

"I'm sure it will be. As soon as you get your ass out of here." I grinned at him, enjoying the chance to rib him a little bit.

All of this felt good. The ability to take a break. To laugh. Yeah, we had a shit-ton of work ahead of us as the pack adjusted to all the changes we'd be bringing, but hard work was a lot different than running for our lives. In fact, I welcomed the hard work, since during the time we'd been in Brightsky I'd ended up feeling mostly like I didn't have anything important to do.

Back here in Constantine, I had a good, solid place. Responsibilities. A job.

And for now...I had a book, a cigar, and a glass of whiskey.

Well, at least I had the book, the cigar, and the glass. As it turned out, my decanter was empty. Considering I hadn't been using my office for months or longer, I shouldn't have been surprised, but I was annoyed. I could've rang for someone to bring me more, but I figured I could get to my relaxing much faster if I did it myself.

Not much had changed in the mansion while we were gone. New staff faces, but it wasn't as hard to get around as it had been in Brightsky. I made my way to the storage room without a problem, grabbed a bottle of The Macallan from one of the shelves and took a long minute to admire it with a wide, satisfied grin.

"By the Moon," I said out loud. "It's really good to be home."

"Oh... Sorry." A soft female voice had me turn. "I didn't realize you were in here."

I didn't recognize the young blonde woman standing in the doorway. "No problem. I was just grabbing a bottle of whiskey." Search the [FindNovel.net](http://FindNovel.net) website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"I came to get a bottle of...wine?" She sounded hesitant, then got a more confident look on her face and took a step closer. "If that's okay. The woman in the kitchen said that the...uh...the Alpha was um...well, it's a welcome gift? I'm new."

"I'm Zane. The Constantine Beta." I looked her over curiously. "I hadn't heard anything about Xander offering newcomers access to the liquor storage. But welcome. What brought you to Constantine?"



"I heard it's going to be a sanctuary for anyone without another place. So long as we abide by the rules and are useful and kind." The girl lifted her chin. "My name is Elleah Whitehaven. I'm a rogue...but I'd like to be part of the pack."

"Welcome to Pack Constantine, Elleah." I nodded, still studying her. I stepped aside. "What kind of wine were you looking for?"

"Oh. Red."

I laughed. "Well, we have Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Noir, Merlot... you name it, we probably have it. Orion really loved his alcohol."

"I hadn't thought much about it. What's the best?" She paused, looking embarrassed. "I don't mean the most expensive. Just, like... the best tasting."

"You don't drink much, huh?"

She shook her head and bit her lower lip. "Not really."

I plucked a bottle of a red blend from one of the alcoves on the shelf and handed it to her. "This is a nice one. Fruity, not too sweet."

"Thanks." She hesitated. "It was really nice to meet you, sir. I look forward to being a part of the pack, and I promise to do my best to fit in."

"Great to meet you, too, Elleah." I watched her walk away down the hall.

Then I took my whiskey and returned to my office where I could enjoy my relaxation. I made a mental note to ask Xander what we were doing about new arrivals, since if we were going to be giving away free bottles of wine to anyone who showed up, his dad's stash was going to dwindle fast. Maybe that could be one of my new duties, I thought with a grin. Official alcohol orderer.

I made myself laugh at the thought, and then settled in for a few hours of alone time.

Life was good.

I just hoped it stayed that way.

## **Chapter 475**

Chapter 475 Stella

I could hardly hold back my giggles as I raced down the hallway toward my bedroom. I dodged a few of the house staff who gave me odd looks, but they didn't try to stop me. By the time I got upstairs, I was out of breath.

I was still getting used to having my own room that wasn't joined to my parents' or my siblings' or grandma's. My room was small but precious for being so private, tucked up away in an attic space with sloping ceilings and a view that took my breath away. Now I flew through the door and tossed myself on the bed, mindful of the bottle of wine I kept gripped in one hand.

I rolled onto my back and let out another long string of giggles as I felt myself shift back into Stella's shape. Papa had looked right at me without guessing who I really was. A hot flood of guilt washed over me, but I felt good, too. If my Papa didn't recognize me, nobody else was going to.

I sat up and looked at the bottle of wine. I had been planning to try some before going out later. I didn't want my first time drinking to be alone in a bar, just in case my body couldn't tolerate it. I was going to be in an entire different body shape, which would be hard enough to handle without also being unexpectedly hammered. Of course, I knew I didn't have to drink at all...but I wanted to.

Now that I knew this face and body could fool even one of my fathers, I wanted to try everything that life could offer me. Drinking, dancing, flirting with strangers. All of it.

First, though, a glass of wine. Just one, while I freshened up my hair and makeup. I'd already looked up the bars in town to make sure they were close enough that I could get there easily without needing to ask my parents to borrow a car.

I didn't even know how to drive.

"Stella?"

I jumped up and off the bed at the knock on my door. The bottle of wine in my hand suddenly felt very heavy. I set it on the desk with a thump. "Come in!"

My mom poked her head around the doorframe. "Just checking in on you."

"I'm fine."

She frowned. "You look a little flushed. Are you "

"I'm fine," I said again, more firmly this time. I cleared my throat and softened my tone as her eyebrows raised. "Sorry. I just...I'm really okay."

"Is it because your clothes aren't right?" My mom's frown deepened. "I told you, we can go shopping again, just the two of us..."

I looked down at the ill-fitting jeans and top. "Oh, no...they're fine. I mean, yeah, they don't... Mom, I really just would like to be alone!"

The shouted words hung in the air between us, which surprised me. They felt so heavy, I was sure each one would plummet to the ground and stab the hardwood floors with the force of bullets. Instead, all that happened was my mother took a step away from me.

"Of course," she said in a stiff tone unlike any I'd ever heard from her before.

It was so obvious that I'd hurt her feelings, and I wanted to cry. At the same time, I wanted to shout again. To drive her back, out of my room. I wanted her to leave me alone so I could try out this wine and get my face on the right way so I could go out and try to meet friends.

"I just thought we could spend some time together," my mom said. "That's all."

"Mom, I love you, but I'd just like to be by myself. I don't need you to try to be my best friend. Even if I am a grownup now, I'm still your kid."

I tried to keep my voice light, but it came out harsh and grating. It was honest, though. I could see she understood that. It didn't make me feel any better, but what had happened was done.

Her gaze cut over to the bottle on the desk. Her eyebrows arched even higher, but the corners of her mouth turned down lower. "I'm not sure I care for your tone, young lady. As you pointed out, you might be grown up, but you're still my kid."

My mother had rarely raised her voice to me. I'd been a model child, of course. I'd only ever gotten in enough trouble to keep anyone from suspecting that I might look like an infant or a toddler, but I was, in fact, fully aware of everything. She'd never had to discipline me for being truly naughty.

I don't think either one of us liked this very much.

But neither one of us was going to say so. No matter what kind of talents I had, once cruel words were spoken, I couldn't take them back.

"I'll just leave you, then," she said.

I nodded. "Close the door on the way out, please." Search [The FindNovel.net](http://TheFindNovel.net) website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

She did.

## Chapter 476

Stella

Once my mom left the room, I locked the door. I uncorked the wine and poured myself a little glass. My first sip made me wrinkle my nose. It wasn't the first time I'd ever tried some, but it was supposed to be the first time I really tried some.

The next sip wasn't much better, but I turned on the clock radio that had been in this room when my parents told me it would be mine. That meant the radio was mine, right? The desk, the bed, the chair, all of it? Mine, mine, mine.

Hey. Maybe those sips of wine had been bigger than I thought they were. Standing in front of the mirror, I watched my features ripple and change. For a moment, I looked exactly like my mom. Then my fathers one after the other. Just the faces, though. No way would my fathers' huge bodies fit inside these clothes.

By the third "sip," I'd drained the glass. I was feeling pretty good as I danced to the tunes coming out of that radio. Music I'd never heard before, something catchy, with a great beat. I tried snapping my fingers along with it, which was easier than getting my feet coordinated.

Outside, night had finally fallen, which meant I felt okay sneaking out. I took a few minutes to shift and make sure everything was where it was meant to be. Then I stuffed some pillows under my covers and shut my door behind me.

Nobody stopped me as I left the mansion. My navy ballet flats crunched on the gravel of the driveway as I hurried as fast as I could without looking suspicious toward the road. I didn't need a map to guide me. I could rely on the tracking and guiding skills of several different supernatural types. All I had to do was point myself in the right direction.

Okay, so maybe drinking half of that bottle of wine on a mostly empty stomach hadn't been the best or brightest idea I'd ever had. I felt good for now, though. Light, almost like I could fly.

Well, I could fly, couldn't I? [Search the website](#) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

I could sprout wings, like a griffin shifter. I could make myself lighter than gravity, or I could give myself the ability to control the air currents under my feet. Instead, I kept one foot moving in front of the other along the road, reminding myself that the entire point of all of this was to blend in. Look natural. I couldn't do that by flying to a downtown bar!

Downtown looked different at night than by day. There was still a bustle of people moving along the sidewalks, but most of the shops that I'd visited before were closed. So was the ice cream shop. The three bars, however, were all open with bright lights spilling from the windows.

I paused to listen to the music. With my regular hearing it was a bit of a jumble, but when I tuned in with some more specialized skills, I could differentiate between the songs. An upbeat tune that felt good for dancing competed with a slower song with more instrumentals, and the final bar was playing songs with voices that sounded a little bit like whooping and hollering.

I picked the bar with the dance music. My heartbeat pumped a little bit quicker as I moved closer. I mingled with the people on the sidewalk, holding my breath when any of them looked at me. Nobody gave me more than a passing glance, though.

My disguise was working!

The bar I picked was called The Silver Crescent. The man at the door gave me a long, up and down look that at first made me nervous. I thought he was going to stop me from going in, or question me, but as I turned out, he just gave me a slow smile.

Oh, my.

He was totally checking me out.

I was a little giddy, and no longer from that wine I'd had. I gave him a small smile and a nod like I did this every day...or even like I'd done it at least once. I pushed through a small crowd near the door and smiled and nodded at everyone I passed. My heart was still beating harder than normal. My palms felt a little sweaty, and the music beat throbbed in all the places my heart was pounding.

I didn't think I wanted to drink too much more tonight, but I also felt weird without a glass in my hand. Everyone else had one. So, I went up to the bar and confidently tried to place my order. "One beer, please."

The woman behind the bar looked at me with a funny expression. "Bottle? Draft? Can? Any brand in particular? We have a pretty big selection."

Shoot. I didn't know anything about beer. All I could do was smile at her and hope she didn't think I was a complete idiot.

"What do you recommend?"

The bartender rolled her eyes but filled a glass and slid it toward me. The first sip was horrible, so I allowed myself to use one of my Celestial skills to turn the sourness into sweet on my tongue.

I turned to watch the crowd. The dance floor was hopping. In the center of it was a girl who looked like she was having the time of her life.

To my surprise, I know exactly who she was.

## Chapter 477

### Chapter 477 Stella

Even if we hadn't met right after my family and I got back to Constantine, I'd have known my Aunt Selena from her resemblance to my mom. Not just in the shape of her face or color of her eyes, not even by her scent, which my wolf-self caught at once. Something else connected my mother's sister to her, something I couldn't quite put my finger on.

"Too much wine," I said to the woman I bumped into.

She looked at the glass of amber fluid in my hand and rolled her eyes before turning back to her companion. The two of them giggled and looked sideways at me as I tried to get past.

A hot blush spread up from my chest, up my throat and into my cheeks with their unfamiliar plumpness. I blinked hard to hold back a rush of embarrassed tears.

"I didn't mean any harm," I said to the two of them. "It's just so crowded in here..."

The first woman, a blonde, turned back to face me with her eyes wider than they ought to be. She let them skate over my hair, my face, down to my clothes and back again. Then she shrugged and returned to her friend.

Stung by the dismissal, I pushed past them. My beer sloshed over my hand as I got buffeted by people who were dancing, drinking, and laughing. Everything I wanted to be doing, except I wasn't. I needed to find a place to get out from the crush of all these bodies.

I wasn't used to being around so many people.

My heart pounded. Even in Brightsky, I hadn't been surrounded like this. I'd been a child for most of the time I was there, though, so much smaller than everyone else. Being in a group of people who towered over you should have felt scarier than this did, but suddenly, I wanted to run out of The Silver Crescent as fast as my longer legs would take me.

Too bad for me, because I'd pushed my way to the opposite of the bar, as far away from the front doors as I could get. If I wanted to leave, I'd have to fight all the way back through that pushing, laughing, celebrating crowd. Instead, I decided to shrink back against the wall and watch everyone else having a good time.

I didn't like the beer very much, but I took slow sips of it so I didn't look even more like an idiot. I smiled with my new face and tried to bop along with the beat of the music. As much as I tried to look like I was waiting for someone, I could tell that I just looked...

"Weird," I whispered to myself.

Selena wasn't weird. She'd left the dance floor to grab another drink at the bar. She was laughing, tossing her hair over her shoulders as she tipped her head back. She shook her finger at the bartender as though the woman had said something naughty, and then they both laughed together.

"Excuse me. Hey, 'scuse me!" A male voice poked me into turning to face him.

The guy trying to get past me had four mugs of beer in each hand. Golden, foamy liquid splashed over the rims of the mugs as he got jostled from behind. Some of it splashed on my arm, soaking the sleeve of the blouse I'd picked out so carefully.

"Can you move?" he growled, his lip curling and his eyes flashing with the light from his wolf. "C'mon, kid. Shift it."

"Where do you want me to go?" I gestured at the wall behind me and the table at my side. The rest of the space was filled with people.

He rolled his eyes at me kind of like the first woman had, and then twisted his body to press past me. More beer splashed, wetting my other sleeve. He was ruining my outfit, but I couldn't bring myself to care. As far as I was concerned, my night was already ruined.

The guy set down all eight beers on a table surrounded by a group of men and women who looked only a little bit older than I looked. My aunt joined them after a minute, not sitting but greeting them all with a fist bump, a hug, or a kiss on the cheek.

None of them were asking her to move out of the way.

I downed the rest of my beer, now warm, and put the empty mug on the thin railing behind me. I gave myself a little pep talk.

"Come on, Stella. I mean Elleah. You came here to dance, so get on out there and start dancing!"

With my head spinning, I ducked and wove through the throng and found a spot on the dance floor just as the song changed to something slower. Smoother. All of the people jumping and twirling around me either left the floor or paired off, leaving a lot of suddenly open, empty space.

And me standing in it, obviously, terribly, and embarrassingly alone. Search the [FindNøvel.net](http://FindNøvel.net) website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

## Chapter 478

### Chapter 478 Stella

The awkwardness hit me like a shovel to the face.

I'd had a short life so far, but I'd had a lot of people paying attention to me during it. I should have been used to the weight of so many eyes on me. The whispers and the giggles.

I couldn't handle it. I got myself off the dance floor as best as I could, bumping into people and earning their angry comments as I did. I fled for the restroom, slamming open the door and hurtling myself into a stall, where I sank onto the toilet and put my head in my hands.

The tears rose in me like a rising storm.

No matter how hard I tried to hold them back, the best I could do was clap my hands over my mouth and bite my tongue as hard as I could, hoping the pain and the taste of blood would hold back my cries. It didn't work that great. Tears flooded from my eyes. My entire body shook.

All I wanted was to fit in, and even in this new body, with this pretty face, it was so obvious that I was never going to. I could dress up in new clothes, but the outfit I'd picked also didn't fit in here. All the women in this bar wore torn jeans with fitted T-shirts and cowboy boots, or sleek little dresses that showed off their cleavage. My dark denim jeans and flowery blouse looked out of place.

I heard the door to the restroom swing open and footsteps on the concrete floor. Women's laughter. I caught a hint of perfume. Sweat. A tang that might've been alcohol or something else, something smoky. "It's crazy out there tonight," said one voice.

Another answered. "Yeah, well, now that the Alpha's back, everything's going to be different."



"Co-Alphas," a third voice said with a serious tone. "Which is so freaking weird, am I right?"

"Whatever. They're both hot as fuck, and their Beta is fine as fuck too," said yet a fourth voice. "I used to think about leaving Constantine, but I guess it'll be cool to stick around and see what they do now." "Where else would you even go?" said the first voice. "It's not like any of the other packs are in any better shape."

"Yeah, but if I went to live in another pack, I'd probably have a better chance of finding a decent mate," said the second voice. "Everyone around here is so borrrrring."

"You don't think the co-Alphas are going to make us...you know. Let them choose our mates? The way the High Council did?"

"I don't know. I mean, they were forced to take Selena Stanton's sister as their mate, and we all know they didn't want to do that. They were totally in love with what's-her-name."

My tears had slowed. I grabbed some squares off the toilet paper roll and wiped my face as I listened to the conversation. Had I known about this, my Dad and Papa being forced to mate with my mom? If I had, I'd forgotten. My head spun more. I swallowed hard, hoping I wasn't going to be sick.

"They said they were opening Constantine as a sanctuary to all supernaturals," said the third voice. I heard the faucet splashing water into the sink. "To tell you the truth, I'm kind of nervous about that."

"I never believed the High Council when they said that they were bad, by the way," the first voice piped up. "The Alpha, his Beta, and the Luna, I mean. My mom and dads didn't, either. So I don't think that othe supernaturals have to be bad, either. Like, I'm sure the co-Alphas wouldn't allow dangerous people to come here to Constantine."

"Maybe not," said one of the voices, "but it's not like they're putting any kind of like, you know, standards, in place."

Guffaws rang throughout the bathroom.

"You mean that random chick who showed up tonight? Where the hell did she come from? Mars? 'Cuz it sure wasn't the Moon," said a voice edged with laughter. "Did you see the way she was wearing her hair?"

"Yeah, well, that outfit was a choice, huh?"

"It sure was," laughed someone else. "A bad one."

Heat slammed into me so hard I fell back against the wall. Silence fell outside the stall. I was breathing too fast. It made whistling sounds in and out of my throat. Search the Findnovel.net website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"Someone's in here," said one of the voices.

A hand rapped on the door of the stall.

"Hey. You okay in there?"

"I bet it's Candace. She's always drinking too much and having to throw up," said one of them.

I could hear the roll of her eyes in that tone.

I struggled to my feet and pushed open the stall door. I didn't wait to look at any of them, just ran out of the restroom. Through the crowd, I headed for the bar's front door. I didn't care if I spilled drinks or stepped on toes.

I had to get out of here.

This had been a mistake. I burst through the door and out onto the sidewalk. I took in great gulps of cool night air. I needed to just get home.

That's when I heard the shouting coming from inside.

## Chapter 479

### Chapter 479 Stella

Every hair on my body rose as a crackle of tense energy swept over me. I honed in on the sound of the scream, which I realized hadn't been loud enough for anyone else to notice out here on the street, even those tuning in with wolf hearing. A ripple of anxiety ran along my spine as I stopped myself mid-run.

Someone had screamed from inside The Silver Crescent, but it didn't seem to be causing a panic. I didn't have to respond to it. I could keep on running my sad little self right on home and leave all those people to their own tragedies.

But I didn't. I turned around and went back through the doors. I scanned the crowd. My senses were on high alert, tingling. For a moment, I was almost overwhelmed. I could

draw on so many different talents, it was hard right this second to figure out which to use and how...without giving myself away.

No more screams had come, but there was a different kind of tension swirling through the air. Heat, but also cold. A smell like rich earth, but also like metal. Like the electric zap of lightning. I'd forced the hair on my head to stop floating around me in a cloud, but the hairs on the back of my neck were still twitching.

Aunt Selena was back in the center of the dance floor. The song had gone back to something uptempo, and she moved to the beat with such easy precision that I couldn't stop the wave of jealousy poking at me with tiny kitten claws. She moved like she didn't care who was watching her...but everyone was.

Every male was, anyway. Even the ones with other women. Their eyes followed every move she made, tracking her like she was prey. Almost in unison, they lifted bottles or glasses to their lips and drank, but on nearly every male mind was not the flavor of the alcohol but what it would be like to taste Selena's lips...and other places.

A different sort of heat rushed into me, deep in my gut. I knew what sex was, not that my parents had ever talked to me about it. I'd carried the knowledge of how people joined their bodies for pleasure and procreation inside me, the same way I'd come into this world knowing so much else. But knowing how body parts could join wasn't the same as having experience.

Watching my aunt dance, watching all these men stare at her, I began to get a better sense of how it all worked, only it wasn't as fun as I'd expected it to be. In fact, the growing sense of friction emanating off the men in the room was twisting my stomach into knots.

Selena kept on dancing even as a man came up to her and tried to take her hand. She shook him off with a toss of her hair and spun back around, showing him her back. A cluster of women I assumed were her friends circled her, but there was a strange feeling coming off most of them, too. Not the same as from the men, which was all need-focused. These women were feeling more like they were pushing away. Kind of angry.

Oh, it was jealousy. Not overt. Most of them didn't even know they were feeling it, or at least they were pretending they didn't. They all smiled and danced and tossed their hair the same way she was, but it was so clear that Selena, in the center, was still getting all the attention. Positive or negative, pretty much everyone in this room was thinking about her in some way or another.

The more she refused them, the more fervent they got. Angrier. Denial wasn't sitting well with any of these men, even the ones I could tell thought of themselves as "nice guys." Maybe particularly the ones who believed that of themselves.

I knew it was a risk, but I couldn't stand here and watch her fend off that unwanted attention. It was going to get ugly in a few more minutes. I could see fists clenching. Eyes were narrowing. What the heck was going on in here?

I shrank back against the wall, hopefully out of the way, so I could give myself a minute to close my eyes. I had to picture my mind like a vast library full of books, each of them an instruction manual of a different set of skills or talents. Because, like a library, I could only "check out" a few of them at a time. That was something I was only slowly learning, that being a Celestial didn't mean constant access. Since I was already using shapeshifting energies, I'd have to be careful about what I pulled next.

The information filled my head in seconds. My aunt was in her first heat, and because she was a hybrid, she was drawing every male within miles. She didn't even know it, and neither did they.

Which meant that it would be simple to ease them all off her without calling attention to myself. I pulsed out some distraction energy to get everyone to ignore Selena's hybrid heat energies. Within half a minute, the tension eased. The men still paid attention since she was gorgeous and confident...but they were all leaving her alone.

And I'd seen enough to know I needed to get out of here. [SEARCH THE FINDNOVEL.NET](http://SEARCHTHEFINDNOVEL.NET) website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

## Chapter 480

### Chapter 480 Stella

I wanted to belong with the crowd in a place like The Silver Crescent, but I didn't. Not yet, anyway. Nor would I, not without some help I couldn't get from the library in my head or even from the Moon Goddess. I didn't even bother reaching out to her. She couldn't possibly be bothered with something as mundane as my stupid little yearnings.

I guessed there were some things no supernatural talent would ever be able to give me.

As soon as I was sure my aunt wasn't going to get kidnapped and brutalized, I ducked out of the bar. The night air was wonderfully cool against my face, which still felt puffy and hot from the weeping fit I'd had in the restroom. I let the breeze waft over me with my eyes closed for a minute, until the doors opened behind me, and I heard people coming out.

Their laughter still made me envious, but I kept myself in the shadows so I didn't catch their attention. A couple helped each other down the sidewalk. The pulse of their sexual

energy was so strong I didn't need to use any special skills to feel it. I could practically smell it.

The doors opened again, letting out another courting couple and a surge of music that thumped all through me. It didn't make me want to dance anymore. All I wanted to do was get home, sneak back inside the house without anyone seeing me, and crawl under my covers.

This time, I took the risk and let myself fly.

Not up into the air, like a bird with flapping arms in the place of wings. I just drew on the ability to make myself weightless. My body rose a few inches, so the tips of my toes barely skimmed the road, and I pushed myself along by manipulating the air currents. It was much faster even than running as a wolf would have been, but it wasn't very fun. It made it hard to hold onto my different face and body, too, but that made sense.

Stella Constantine was the Celestial, not Elleah Whitehaven.

My first night out had been an utter failure, but I didn't have any more tears left by the time I made it back to the mansion grounds. There were still a lot of lights on. I paused on the very edge of the lawn, among the trees, and opened myself up to see if I could sense my parents. They were all still awake. Dad and Abba were in the dining room, having a very late dinner. Papa was in his office. Mom was checking in on the twins, who were asleep.

Guiltily, I realized I hadn't even seen Alaina or Isaac today. The distance between us felt so much bigger than it had before. They were still very much children, but what was I? Something caught in between two places...I hadn't been alive long enough to call myself an adult, but I'd never really ever been a child.

Inside that house, my family was settling in. They were happy to be in the place they considered home. Even Abba was feeling more at ease. The pack had accepted him. [SEARCH the FINDNOVEL.net website](http://www.findnovel.net) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

I was the only one who didn't really belong here, and I had to accept that it was possible that I never really would.

Abba's idea had been a good one, but the experiment had failed.

I didn't feel like taking the risk of running into any staff or worse-my parents, so instead of letting myself in through any of the doors on the ground floor, I let myself get even more weightless. I drifted upward to my bedroom window. I considered letting myself keep on going, up, up into the night sky and then just...flying away. Somewhere, anywhere, to a place where nobody knew my face as I usually wore it. Maybe all the way up to the Moon's broad silver face.

"You are loved. Do not despair."

The sweet, soft whisper tickled my ears as I used a pulse of strength to unlatch my window from the inside. I slid it open and floated into my room. My feet touched down lightly, but I was breathing as hard as if I'd run up a mountain.

"Moon Goddess?"

But she didn't answer me or send a vision. All I had was those six words imprinting on my mind. I knew I was loved. That had never been the issue. What I wanted...what I needed...was more than the love of my parents, though.

I needed to know my purpose. Until then, until I knew why I was here and what lay ahead for me, everything else was only going to feel like a placeholder. For tonight, though, the comfort from the Moon Goddess would have to be enough.

It was all I had.