

My Hockey Alpha #Chapter 251 - Read My Hockey Alpha Chapter 251

Chapter 251

Chapter 251: A New Life

Nina

The next morning, after spending the night in Enzo's apartment, I woke up feeling filled with a new sense of life. Despite all of my sleep deprivation, I surprisingly jumped out of bed before my alarm even went off. Enzo found me a little while later in the kitchen, making coffee and breakfast.

"You're up already?" Enzo asked, rubbing his eyes sleepily. "And dressed, too?"

I nodded and smiled as I plopped two pieces of toast onto a plate and began to spread butter on them. "I'm going to class," I said.

Enzo raised his eyebrows. I knew that he was surprised that I wanted to get back to class so soon, and he immediately voiced his concerns.

"Are you sure you don't want to rest first?" he asked. "Everything has been so hectic. I'm sure the dean and your professors will understand if you need to miss a couple more days."

I shook my head vehemently. "Nope. I'm going to class. I just want to feel like a normal person again, and I've already missed too much class this semester."

Enzo stared at me for a while, but he said nothing. Instead, he finally seemed to give up and came over to pour himself a cup of coffee. He wrapped his arms around me and planted a kiss on the top of my head as he passed, then stole a bite of my toast with a cheeky grin before pouring his coffee. It made me smile; if I just pretended that I didn't still need to deal with the Luna at some point, and if I pretended that the Crescents weren't planning on taking over the world along with her, then I could imagine that we were just a regular couple getting ready to start our day. Someday, I hoped that we could live with that sense of normalcy. Once all of this was over, I was certain that could happen.

"Well, just don't burn yourself out," Enzo finally said. "I'll walk you to class."

Just as promised, Enzo did walk me to class. I gave him a deep, passionate kiss before I went in, ignoring the disgusted looks from other students over our blatant public display of affection, and sat down and began to study.

Even though it had really only been a couple of days since I had been in class, it felt like it was an eternity. I supposed that it was partially because I hadn't been able to pay much attention since Enzo had been gone, but now that he was safely home, my friends were safe, and Selena was no longer here to bully me, I felt as though I could finally focus on my studies.

However, as class came to an end, I couldn't help but think about Selena. Matt and Luke had decided to keep her in the infirmary and were taking shifts to keep an eye on her, and even though she had plenty of comfort, access to food, and was able to use the locker rooms to shower and get changed, I still felt bad knowing that she was essentially our hostage now.

Selena was a human now — for the time being, at least. I planned on using my Claiming ability to turn her back eventually if she wound up working on herself and proving that she wouldn't cause any more trouble, but for now she was pretty much harmless. Of course, we would still need to keep an eye on her in case she tried to do anything, but she didn't have any special abilities anymore. She wasn't any real threat to us, and I was also fairly certain that my words from the night before did strike a bit of a chord with her, so I didn't think that she was planning on jumping at the opportunity to work with the Luna; not that the Luna would have given her the opportunity, anyway. Selena was clearly useless to the Luna and was worth nothing more than dirt now that she was a human.

Besides, I knew that Selena still had some information that she could offer us. It just needed to be drawn out of her, and I felt as though the only way to do that was to show her that we were on her side.

And so, when I went to my friends and told them my plan, they were all shocked.

"You're planning on doing what?" Jessica asked.

"I think it'll help the situation," I replied. "I know she liked being a student here; she's never been able to experience real college. And if we can make her happy and show her that we're not the enemy, maybe she'll come around and help us."

My friends fell silent. When I looked up at Enzo, he was leaning against the wall outside the infirmary and staring blankly at me. Selena was inside and couldn't hear anything that was being said; in fact, she wasn't even looking at us. She was still lying listlessly on her infirmary bed, facing the wall with her back turned to us. From what Luke and Matt said, she had hardly moved from that position since we first put her there.

Finally, after I stared at him with pleading eyes for several long moments, Enzo let out a sigh. "She's right," he said. "There's no use in keeping her locked up and making her hate us even more. She could prove to be an important ally if we show her that we want to make amends."

A small sigh of relief hissed through my lips. The rest of my friends stared at the ground thoughtfully before they finally agreed.

“Okay,” Matt said. “I guess it wouldn’t hurt. We should still keep an eye on her, though.”

I nodded. “We’ll just let her enroll in some classes if she wants,” I said. “Maybe the dean will assign her a dorm. If we keep the guard subtle, then maybe she won’t notice so much and will feel like she has some freedom.”

With my friends’ approval, I finally opened the infirmary door and stepped in. They waited outside while I slowly walked up to Selena.

“Hey, Selena,” I said gently as I approached. “Can we talk?”

Selena let out an angry huff. “What do you want?” she snarled, still with her back turned to me.

I bit my lip, wondering how to phrase things. I knew that she would still be terribly angry with me, and there was still a chance that she would reject any form of reconciliation. Enzo and I had, after all, stripped her of her werewolf abilities.

“Do you want to be a student here again?” I asked.

Selena was silent for several moments. I thought that she would refuse and tell me to leave, but after a while she slowly looked over her shoulder at me.

“Why?” she asked. Her voice came out like a hiss.

I shrugged. “I know you liked it,” I said. “Everyone deserves to have the college experience, and you’re not a hostage.”

Selena chuckled. “Not a hostage?” she snarled, sitting up finally and facing me. She swung her legs over the side of the bed and faced me, pressing her palms so hard into the mattress that her hands turned white around the knuckles. “You turned me human, stripped me of my power, tore me out of my home and have been keeping me locked up here.”

“Let’s not forget all of the things that you did, Selena,” I said quietly. “You had me locked up, too, remember? You brainwashed Enzo.”

My twin fell silent. Her eyes were narrowed and full of hatred, but there was a flash of something else that came across her face.

Understanding.

She didn't say anything for a long time. I waited patiently, not wanting to push her. And finally, she spoke.

"I did like being a student here," she said, staring blankly down at the floor. "I guess I wouldn't mind doing it again."

I couldn't help but smile. "Good," I replied. "I can take you to the dean now, if you want. We'll get you enrolled and get you your own dorm."

Selena looked up at me then. Her eyes weren't as hard now, and for a moment, I swore I saw a bit of happiness behind them — a ghost of a girl who was probably once sweet and innocent. And although her eyes quickly turned cold again, I tried to keep that initial image in my mind.

Chapter 252

Chapter 252: A Little Kindness Goes a Long Way

Enzo

As if I wasn't already shocked enough by Nina's sudden high energy and motivation, she then told the rest of us about her plans to help Selena get enrolled in some classes.

At first, I had to admit that I was pretty angry by this decision. I wished that she had mentioned it to me ahead of time; Selena had, after all, made our lives a living hell for weeks. She had brainwashed me, poisoned my father, tried to kill me, and tried to keep Nina as a prisoner.

But, the more I thought about it, the more I realized that Selena really was just the Luna's puppet after all. She was a frightened little girl who was being manipulated by someone who was far worse, and although it didn't absolve her of her crimes, it did help me understand why she did what she did a little bit better. And besides: we needed Selena's cooperation if we were going to take down the Luna. Selena was the only one who knew about the Luna's real plans. The Alpha King was stuck in the Luna's grasp, and it would only be a matter of time before she accomplished her goal of cleansing the earth of all humans. In fact, I was already fairly certain that she was working with the Crescents all along and that her plan was already underway.

So, when Nina showed her kind hearted yet brilliant nature and decided to let Selena enroll in school here, I finally had to admit that it was a good idea.

After all, I couldn't crush Nina's spirit. Her kind heartedness was one of the biggest things that I loved about her, and I didn't want that light to go out. If she was so certain that her plan would make Selena join our side, then I was willing to support her until the very end. I loved her, and soon, she would be my mate.

"I hope it's going okay in there," Luke said, subtly peering in through the infirmary window. I followed his gaze to see that Selena was now sitting up and glaring at Nina. Nina was standing in front of her with her arms folded across her chest. She looked confident, which made me confident.

"I'm sure it'll be fine," I said. "Selena did enjoy being a student here. And who knows; maybe this really will make her trust us a bit more."

Matt stared at me for a moment with a dark look on his face before speaking. "After everything she did, are you really sure that we even want her help?"

I shrugged. "People can change. She was the Luna's puppet; we don't know what sort of manipulation was going on behind the scenes. The Luna had years to get inside her head."

"She had years, and we only have days at the most," Matt replied, sounding defeated.

I looked over my shoulder again at Nina and her sister. They were looking at each other now; neither was speaking, but I saw something flash across Selena's face. Something soft and innocent.

"The Luna didn't have the power of the twin bond on her side," I said.

...

Eventually, much to everyone's surprise, both Nina and Selena walked out of the infirmary. Selena was standing behind her, glowering at the floor with her arms folded across her chest. But she wasn't being overly standoffish or aggressive.

"We're going to talk to the dean," Nina said with a bit of a smile as she looked up at me.

I nodded and pushed myself off of the wall. "I'll come with you."

The rest of the group stayed behind while Nina and I walked Selena to the dean's office. Selena was silent the entire time and only stared down at the ground, but I could tell that something had changed. Even if it was only just a tiny change, it was a change nonetheless.

When we reached the dean's office, all three of us went inside. Dean Cynthia was sitting at her desk and shuffling through paperwork when we arrived, and when she saw us, her eyes widened.

"Enzo! Nina!" she said, standing abruptly. "Where have you been?"

"It's a long story," Nina said, then stepped aside to reveal Selena, who had been standing behind us. "And she would like to enroll in school here."

Cynthia stared at Selena with wide, unblinking eyes, taking in the scene in front of her. She hadn't seen Selena before — or at least, she had never seen Selena without a magical disguise.

"U-Um... Nina, I didn't know you had a twin sister," Cynthia said hesitantly.

Clearly not wanting to explain too much, Nina just nodded slowly. "Introduce yourself," she said to Selena.

Selena slowly stepped forward. Her face was red and she fiddled with her fingers as she spoke, much unlike the evil princess I had come to know. "I'm Selena," she said. "I want to enroll here."

Cynthia stared back and forth between all three of us for a few moments before clearing her throat. "I'm afraid the semester is just a few weeks from ending," she replied. "Maybe you should enroll next semester."

Selena jerked her head up and looked over at Nina with pleading eyes. Nina, sighing, stepped forward. "Are you sure she can't just enroll in a class or two for now?" she asked. "And can she have a dorm, too? Please. It's really important."

For another few moments, Cynthia stared at Nina before finally nodding. "Alright. You can enroll in two classes, Selena. Next semester, if you want to enroll as a full-time student, let me know."

"And a dorm?" Nina asked.

"Yes," Cynthia replied. "It's too late to bunk with another student, but I think we do have a few empty single dorms. I'll take a look and see what we can do."

I didn't say anything. Nina thanked the dean, and then the two of us left the room to wait outside while Selena and Cynthia got to work. They were in there for a while, and the entire time, I had to admit that I still didn't know how to feel about the whole situation. Nina, noticing this, took my hand and smiled up at me.

"This will all turn out alright," she whispered as we leaned against the wall outside the dean's office. "I promise."

"I hope you're right," I replied with a sigh. If she wasn't right, then... We would be giving too much freedom to someone who would only use it to stab us in the back. But if Nina was so sure that it would all go according to plan, and that Selena would eventually change her ways and help us take down the Luna and maybe even stop the Crescents, then I was willing to believe her.

Finally, Selena came out of the dean's office a little while later with a bundle of papers and a dorm key in her hand. She stood outside the door for a few moments, staring at

us and not saying anything. I couldn't quite tell if she simply didn't know what to say, or if she didn't want to give us the satisfaction of her gratitude.

"Well?" Nina asked. "What classes did you enroll in?"

Selena stared at Nina for a few more moments. Then, with a hmph, she simply flicked her hair over her shoulder and stormed down the hallway without a word.

Chapter 253

Chapter 253: Redemption

Nina

Without a word, Selena made a hmph sound and took off down the hallway. Enzo gasped slightly and went to follow her, but I held my arm out to stop him and shook my head.

"It's fine," I said, watching as she disappeared around a corner. "Luke is gonna watch her. Besides, where would she even go?"

Enzo relaxed a bit and nodded in understanding. "I guess you're right," he replied. "I just worry that she'll try to pull some stunt and screw us all over."

"She won't." I took Enzo's hand and began walking down the hall with him. "She's powerless. She knows that the Luna wants nothing to do with her. We're her only chance at survival at this point, because soon the Luna might come to kill both of us."

Enzo froze at my words, his hand tightening around mine. When I looked up at him, his brown eyes were wide and there was worry drawn across his face. I knew that he was immensely worried about the Luna and what she would do if she found me; and I couldn't deny the fact that I was worried, too. But right now, we needed to just do our best to have a positive outlook. In my mind, that was the only real way to prepare to fight back against the Luna's plan.

"Come on," I said, tugging on Enzo's hand a bit. "Just for today, can we pretend that we're a normal couple? I've spent too long missing you to want to stand around all day and wait for doom."

Enzo paused for a few moments. His eyes searched my face, and his jaw clenched and unclenched. But then, finally, he nodded and followed me. I led him down the hall and back out into the fresh winter air. The sun was out and there was a cold breeze blowing across the campus. Soon, it would be

Christmastime. Every year, the campus was decorated with garlands and red and green ribbons to celebrate the end of the semester, and I always enjoyed the festive spirit. No

matter what, the Luna and the Crescents wouldn't get in the way of that. I would stop them before that happened.

As Enzo and I walked across campus, I noticed that he was still silent. I was determined to cheer him up and get him to relax, even if it was just for one day.

"I'm hungry," I said, tugging him in the direction of the town. "Let's go to the diner."

It seemed that my persistence had an effect on Enzo, because he let out a low chuckle and wrapped his arm around my shoulders. "I'm hungry too," he said, giving me a squeeze.

...

A little while later, Enzo and I were seated at a booth at the diner. The town felt as though it was returning to normal; the hockey team had done a good job of keeping the town secure, and many of the shops and restaurants that had previously been closed were open once more. As we sat, we looked up at the television that was mounted high on the wall to see that there was local news coverage of the rogue outbreak, and it seemed that more towns were fighting back. I had been so preoccupied with everything with Enzo and Selena that I didn't notice at first, but Luke had in fact distributed some of the antidote to our surrounding towns. They distributed even more during the time that Enzo and I were gone, and images were already on the news of people being turned back into humans and reuniting with their families. Things were looking better on our island. I just hoped that the Luna and the Crescents didn't throw a wrench into things before we had time to fully regroup. But at least, if they did attack again, we would be prepared.

"I still don't fully understand why you're so willing to forgive Selena," Enzo said, picking at his French fries as he spoke. "I guess you know something that I don't, but still..."

I shook my head. "I'm not forgiving her. I'm giving her a chance to redeem herself. We need her help, and this is the only way to do it... Now please, can we talk about something normal for once? I'm tired of only worrying about all of this. I just want to feel okay, just for a few hours."

Enzo nodded and popped a couple of French fries into his mouth. He chewed slowly, thinking, then swallowed.

"I miss hockey," he said suddenly.

I was a bit surprised by Enzo's sudden candidness, but the fact that he was so open made me smile. I reached across the table and squeezed his hand. "Maybe you should play some hockey tonight," I said. "The team misses you, too. Matt is a good captain, but they miss you."

Enzo paused for a few moments, staring down at his plate. I felt as though I could almost see the gears turning in his head, like he was considering whether or not he could bring himself to relax enough to play hockey and actually enjoy himself, even if just for a few hours.

“Enzo,” I said, still holding his hand. I softened my gaze, but kept it firmly on his. “I know you’re worried, but we’re going to figure everything out. Like Selena said, the Luna has what she wants right now. Look at the news!” I gestured up to the television. “Even our antidote is allowing people to change back, and it looks as though the Crescents are on the run.”

“But it doesn’t mean that we have much time before things get worse again,” Enzo replied quietly, finally lifting his gaze from his plate to meet mine. “She could send the Crescents to attack tonight, for all we know. You are the only real thing keeping her from reaching her goals. You and your antidote. Without you, there would be no antidote, and so taking you out would be the first thing she would want to do. We should just run; we can buy plane tickets, get as far away as possible, lead her on a wild goose chase...”

My eyes widened. I sat up straight, shaking my head vigorously. “We won’t run,” I said. “We won’t. I’m not leaving.”

Enzo stared at me for a while longer, his brown eyes fixed on mine unwaveringly. I knew that he was upset, but I needed him to listen to me.

“Remember how you said that I needed to trust you when we were in the Alpha King’s mansion?” I asked. Enzo nodded. “Well, I need you to trust me now. We can fight the Crescents. We’re prepared, and we have allies from all over. If people around the island hear news about our town getting attacked again — the town that saved them with the antidote — they’ll fight by our sides. The Crescents’ numbers are dwindling. And with my abilities... I think it’ll help us a lot.”

For a long time, Enzo just looked at me. I could see an entire range of emotions flash through his eyes, causing his face to soften and harden over and over again, before it finally softened again. He nodded, still holding my hand.

“Okay,” he said. “I trust you. And I think I will play some hockey tonight.”

Chapter 254

Chapter 254: My Hockey Alpha

Nina

“Okay,” Enzo said, flashing me a bit of a smile as he sat across from me. “I trust you. And I think I will play some hockey tonight.”

Enzo's words made my heart leap in my chest. I was so happy that he was willing to play hockey again. Even if the world was going to crumble around us in the next few days, I just wanted to see him happy and doing the one thing that he loved most in the world, even for just a few hours. Things could go back to doom and gloom after that for all I cared; I just wanted these next few hours to be full of smiles and laughter.

We finished eating quickly after that, both too excited to waste any time. I decided to go with Enzo and watch him skate. He didn't admit it out loud, but I felt as though he didn't want to let me out of his sight; I didn't want to let him out of my sight, either. After we finished eating and paid the bill, we walked back to campus and headed straight to the hockey arena.

While Enzo got changed in the locker room, I sat by the rink and studied for my classes. It really did feel as though we were just a couple of normal college students for the first time, and it made me smile — so long as I didn't think about the Luna or the Crescents.

Enzo eventually came back out into the arena with his uniform on and his helmet under his arm. There was a cheeky grin on his face as he walked up to the bench and put his skates on, and that grin widened when he stepped out onto the ice with his hockey stick.

I couldn't help but put my books down and watch as he skated.

It was as though he had never stopped playing at all. He moved across the ice so fluidly, so naturally, as though he had been practicing this whole time. The smile on his face never faded for even a second, and as he expertly maneuvered around the rink and flicked the puck into the net time and time again, I found myself leaning on the barrier and watching with tears in my eyes.

At one point, however, Enzo stopped and noticed those tears. His smile dropped and he quickly skated up to me before I could hide the tears.

"What's wrong?" he asked, coming to a smooth stop in front of the barrier. "Are you okay?"

I nodded quickly, wiping away my tears with the back of my hand. "I'm fine," I replied. "Don't worry. I'm just happy to see you skating again. I'm happy to have you back."

Enzo looked at me for a few long moments, his brown eyes scanning my face, before he suddenly pointed behind me. When I followed his finger with my eyes, I realized that he was pointing at the rack of rental skates against the wall that were usually reserved for public ice skating nights.

"Put some skates on," he said, almost in a demanding tone of voice.

I turned back to face him and shook my head. "No, it's okay," I replied. "You're enjoying yourself. I'll just slow you down since I don't really know how to skate, and I don't want you to spend your practice session constantly picking me up off of the ice."

Enzo frowned, still pointing at the rack of rental skates.

"Now," he demanded.

My eyes widened at his insistence. "O-Okay," I said sheepishly.

Enzo waited by the rink entrance while I jogged over to the rack. I picked out a pair of basic figure skates in my size, then ran back over to the bench. When I slipped them on, I found myself struggling

with the laces and Enzo wound up coming over to tie them for me. It caused me to blush, and reminded me of the first time we ever skated together. So much had changed since then, but at the same time so little had changed. Even though this semester felt like it was years long, it had still only been a couple of months since I had met Enzo. Our relationship was still fresh, still in the honeymoon phase, and it was times like this that gave me butterflies around him.

When he was finished, he stood and held out his hand for me. I took it, and he led me over to the rink entrance. He then held out his arms for me as I stepped onto the ice and let me use him for balance on the slippery surface.

"Come this way," he said, skating backwards a bit. I hobbled after him, struggling just to stay upright, but his grip was strong and I knew that he wouldn't let me fall. "I got you."

He led me out into the middle of the rink. I wobbled there for a few moments before looking up at him with a sheepish grin.

"See?" I said. "I can barely stay upright."

"It's only your second time on the ice, like, ever," he said gently with that mischievous smirk that I had become so familiar with. "You're already doing better than I did my second time on the ice."

Enzo's words made me blush again. But as I was blushing, he suddenly did something unexpected.

He dropped my hands and skated away.

"H-Hey! Enzo!" I called, holding my arms out to keep my balance as I began to teeter forwards and backwards on the ice. "Come back!"

Enzo just laughed and skated circles around me with his hands behind his back. “You’ll have to catch me,” he said with a grin.

“You’re so mean!” I shouted. I reached for him, and my fingers brushed his jersey, but he quickly moved out of the way. I lunged after him again, but once more he moved away just before I got a grip on him. This went on for some time, and the entire time Enzo just laughed and teased me.

And soon, I was laughing, too.

Finally, I managed to catch him. I caught ahold of his jersey and pulled myself closer to him, out of breath and laughing so hard my belly hurt. “Caught you!” I teased, leaning down with my hands on my knees to catch my breath.

But Enzo wasn’t laughing anymore. He was just smiling.

“You’re a natural,” he said.

I shook my head. “No I’m not.”

Enzo laughed. “Look where we are.”

Sighing, I looked up, and my eyes widened. Earlier I had been in the middle of the rink, but now we were all the way on the other side. In fact, I realized now that we had been skating in massive circles all around the rink, and I hadn’t fallen once. I let out an incredulous laugh, and when I looked up at Enzo, he was beaming from ear to ear.

“You’re really good,” he said softly. “You should consider skating more seriously. Have you ever thought about it?”

I furrowed my brow and shook my head, still baffled by my abilities. Maybe it was just beginners’ luck.

“No,” I replied. “I’ve never considered it.”

Enzo’s grin widened, and he reached out and took my hand. His cheeks were red from the cold and from the exercise, and his eyes were shining brighter than ever.

“Let me teach you how to skate,” he said.

Chapter 255

Chapter 255: Not a Drill

Nina

“Let me teach you how to skate.”

I widened my eyes at Enzo’s words. I had just skated circles around the rink with him after only ever skating once before, and I hadn’t fallen once. But I had never thought about skating seriously. In fact, I had never even considered hockey or figure skating as particularly interesting sports until I started to get to know Enzo. After skating with him a couple of times, however, I was beginning to realize that I did enjoy the sport. It was fun, and it was good exercise. Even after just skating around in circles for a few minutes, I was already out of breath and little beads of sweat were beginning to form on my skin, causing my bangs to stick to my forehead.

“Um... I’ll think about it,” I said, somewhat sheepishly. “I have another class to go to right now, though.”

Enzo nodded, still beaming widely with his eyes shining more brightly than ever before. “Of course,” he said. “Tomorrow morning, maybe?”

I shrugged and repeated that I would think about it and let him know later, which seemed to be enough for Enzo for the time being. He continued to practice while I changed back into my shoes and put the rental skates away, and after that I headed to class.

Just before I left, I took one last look at Enzo as he skated back and forth the rink. He had returned to doing his drills from before, and was once again tirelessly zooming around the rink while expertly maneuvering the puck with his stick. Seeing him move so freely, and doing something that he clearly loved and missed so much, made me smile. And, in an odd way, it made me a little envious. Maybe if I put the work in, I could have just as much fun skating as Enzo did.

Throughout class, and throughout the rest of the day, I found myself not being able to stop thinking about how good it felt to skate with Enzo. Once I got past the feeling of being a baby deer with little to no control over my legs, I had actually had a lot of fun playing with Enzo when I didn’t think that I would have had much fun at all. It made the time fly, and it made me feel closer to Enzo, too. Not only that, but it took my mind off of all of the stress that I had been under.

All of those things were why, later that night as I got ready for bed with Enzo, I finally decided to skate with him in the morning after all.

“You know what?” I said as I walked out of Enzo’s apartment bathroom, drying my hair after a shower. “I think I will skate with you in the morning.”

Enzo’s eyes lit up. He had returned to his somber demeanor, clearly stressing over everything with the Luna and the Crescents, earlier that afternoon. But hearing that I planned on skating with him again immediately perked him up.

“Really?” he asked with a smile tugging at the corners of his lips. “You want to try some drills?”

I nodded. “I don’t know if I would play hockey or anything like that, but it could be fun to learn to skate,” I replied. “I don’t know... Figure skating could be fun to try, I think.”

Enzo’s face lit up even more as I said this. He jumped up and ran over to me, picking me up in his arms and spinning me around as he kissed me all over my face. I couldn’t help but laugh and think that maybe his happiness alone was a good enough reason to try ice skating.

...

The next morning, Enzo and I woke up early and got ready to head to the arena. I didn’t have any classes until the afternoon, which would give us plenty of time to skate for a while before having breakfast and getting cleaned up.

By the time the campus started to come alive with activity, Enzo and I were already on the ice. He set up some cones for me, spacing them evenly apart, and stood at one end while I stood at the other.

“Just try to weave between the cones,” he said. “Remember... Keep your knees bent, your weight shifted forward, hold your arms out a bit to the sides to keep your balance, and push out with your feet in a V position. If you want to go one way, just lean into that side with your skate, and push off a bit with the other foot. You can go slow, and just shift a little weight at a time.”

I nodded, taking in all of this information. I did as Enzo said and bent my knees and shifted my weight forward, then pushed off.

I was wobbly at first. On my first turn, I instantly slipped and fell on the ice. Enzo laughed and skated over to me, helping me up before telling me to keep trying. And I did, if not only because it made him so happy to see me try my hardest; but I had to admit that by the time I finished going back and forth a few times, no matter how many times I fell, I was actually having a lot of fun.

“This isn’t so bad,” I said on my fourth time going back and forth.

Enzo grinned. “Wait here,” he said as I came to the end. He skated out and positioned the cones closer together, then skated back to me and pulled a stopwatch out of his pocket.

“Try that. And go a little faster this time. I’ll even time you, and if you can do it in under thirty seconds, I’ll even take you out for breakfast afterwards.”

I bit my lip. The cones were a lot closer together now, and turning was difficult. But when Enzo counted down and told me to go, I couldn't deny the little bit of adrenaline that rushed through me, and the desire to do well made me try even harder. That time, I somehow managed to make it all the way to the end even with the closer space.

"Nice!" Enzo said, clicking the stopwatch. "You did it in under thirty—"

"Enzo! Nina!"

Enzo and I both jerked our heads up at the sound of Luke's frantic voice, followed by the sound of his rapidly approaching footsteps. We shot each other a worried look when he stopped in the doorway, breathing heavily as though he had run a long way.

"Luke? What's wrong?" Enzo asked warily, skating over to the barrier. I followed.

"It's the Crescents," Luke replied in between breaths. "I just got word that they expanded their borders."

Enzo and I looked at each other worriedly again. Enzo shook his head. "Did they get past the island?" he asked.

Thankfully, Luke shook his head. "No. Not yet. But there's been another rogue outbreak. And it's not just that..."

"W-What is it?" I asked, fearing the worst — fearing that the Luna was on her way right now.

Luke looked up, his eyes wide and full of worry. "A pack of rogues is on their way to Mountainview."

Chapter 256

Chapter 256: Togetherness

Nina

Enzo and I both looked at each other, our eyes wide and our mouths open.

"How long until they get here?" Enzo asked, quickly stepping out of the rink and going over to the bench to remove his skates. I followed, although when I tried to untie my skates, my hands were shaking so much that I could hardly manage it. Enzo, noticing this, got down on his knees and untied them for me.

"A few hours, probably," Luke replied. "I don't know if they're coming straight here, or what their plan is. They might try to ambush us in the middle of the night. They don't

know that we know they're coming. If it wasn't for my spies that I have scattered around various towns, I would have no idea."

I didn't bother to ask when or how Luke hired spies, but I didn't care about the logistics. Thanks to his preparedness, we now had a jump start on the upcoming attack.

"Is it just one pack?" I asked. "How big?"

"It was about twenty rogues, with one leader," Luke replied.

Enzo and I looked at each other again. That was a big pack for rogues, and the last time we saw a pack that big was when we hid on the side of the road in the werewolf realm. I swallowed, noticing the enormous lump that grew in my throat, and looked back at Luke.

"What did the leader look like?"

Luke furrowed his brow, thinking. "I don't know if there was a leader... But there was one that was bigger than the rest, and tougher looking. My spy mentioned that it seemed smarter than the others,

but it wasn't a regular werewolf. It was definitely a rogue."

I stood suddenly, feeling adrenaline rush through me. Enzo stood too; we had come to the same conclusion. This had to be the same pack of rogues that were looking for us in the werewolf realm. I had never seen or heard of a rogue who fit that description, except for the rogue we saw the day earlier. Surely it had to be some sort of special rogue... A mercenary, maybe, hired by the Luna?

"What should we do?" Luke asked. "Should we fight? More could come. I don't know. I won't know until my spies tell me anything."

Enzo shook his head, instantly taking on the role of the intelligent Alpha. It was a role that suited him perfectly, as I was quickly realizing lately.

"Tell the hockey team to prepare," he said. "Gather anyone from town and from the campus who wants to help, and send everyone who can't or doesn't want to fight down into the tunnels." He then turned toward me, and gave me a stern look. "Take Lori and Jessica, and leave. Matt will let you take his car."

My eyes widened. I opened my mouth to protest, but before I could, Enzo turned back to look at Luke again and his face darkened. "And get that damn princess in the tunnels, too. Lock her in a cell. I don't trust her, and I never should have given her a chance."

Luke nodded and ran off. Enzo started to storm off as well, but I grabbed his arm and pulled him back, my eyes still wide. "You don't seriously think that I'm just going to run away, do you?" I asked. "I can't do that. I need to be here."

Enzo stared down at me with an intensity that honestly frightened me a little. His eyes were glowing red. "You can't stay here, Nina," he said sternly. "I don't want to put you in danger. Please, just take your friends, take some of the antidote, and get to safety."

"A-And go where?" I asked incredulously. "The whole island is overrun; if not now, then it will be soon. Your dad's house has probably been taken over by Lewis, and there's no knowing exactly what he would do if I showed up. And the werewolf realm isn't safe either, not with the Luna right there. She probably has eyes watching everyone's every single move in that place."

For a long few moments, Enzo stared at me with the same intensity. I could see his jaw shifting as he gritted his teeth, and he was clenching and unclenching his fists at his sides.

"Come on, Enzo," I pleaded as tears began to stream down my cheeks. "You promised! You promised that we wouldn't be separated again, and now at the first sign of trouble you send me away?"

Enzo's face seemed to soften. I knew that I had struck a chord with him.

"Fine," he said finally, after another long few moments of staring at me. "You can stay in the tunnels, with the others."

He started to storm off again, but I followed him, jogging to keep up with his long strides. "I'm not going to hide in the tunnels like a scared little girl!"

Enzo simply picked up his pace, leaving me behind. I stopped, clenching my fists, and yelled after him.

"Enzo!" I shouted. "Haven't I proven that I'm capable of fighting? Think about the murals!"

Enzo froze, his back turned to me. I ran to catch up with him and grabbed his arm again, yanking him around to face me. "Think about the murals," I begged. "Think about the humans and the werewolves working together. I might not be able to shift yet, but I can still fight alongside you. Please."

He stared angrily ahead, at the wall behind me. "Please," I whispered. Finally, he looked down at me, and as he did, his gaze softened ever so slightly. He reached up and brushed a bit of hair out of my face, then sighed and dropped both his hand and his gaze.

“Fine,” he said. “But if shit goes south, you have to leave. I’ll have Matt get his car ready and waiting for you. Deal?”

“Deal,” I replied.

Whether or not I actually planned on keeping that promise was still a mystery to me. I knew that I wouldn’t be able to run, no matter how bad things got. I couldn’t leave Enzo. I couldn’t leave my friends, or my campus, or my town. I was partially to blame for all of this mess; the Luna was sending those rogues after me. And it was my job to end it, once and for all.

Tiffany’s antidote had proven to be too useful against them. They wanted to stop me and take the antidote, destroying all chances of recreating it. I wasn’t going to let that happen; in fact, as Enzo and I split up to make preparations for the upcoming Crescent attack, and as Luke began evacuating scared students and townspeople into the tunnels, I made plans of my own. But even Enzo couldn’t know about this plan, because it was too dangerous and I knew that he would try to stop me from carrying it out. I had to keep it a secret — not just from him, but from everyone.

I hid my supplies to carry out my plan under my jacket, and I gritted my teeth as I prepared to stop these rogues from wreaking havoc on my town again.

Chapter 257

Chapter 257: Still Sisters

Nina

While Enzo was rallying the hockey team and Luke was evacuating the students into the tunnels where it was safe, I was coming up with another plan.

I couldn’t tell anyone about it — not even Enzo, Jessica, or Lori. It was too dangerous of a plan, and I knew that they would all disapprove of it. But it had to be done; I knew that the rogue leader was sent here for me, and therefore I could lure him away from the others.

I hid several vials of the antidote in the inner pockets of my jacket, where no one would see them. My plan was maybe a little too rushed and simple, but it was all I could come up with in the time that I had.

When everyone else was fighting, my plan was to distract the rogue leader and lure him away from the others. Then, once we were far enough away, I hoped to ambush him with the vials of antidote and turn him human.

I just hoped that it would work. The rogue leader seemed to be genetically engineered, so there was no knowing exactly how much of the antidote it would take to turn him

human. For all I knew, the antidote wouldn't even work at all. But I had to try something. If I could just take out the leader, then that would make the rogues under his command lose their momentum. If there was one thing I learned from the first attack on the campus, it was that rogues needed a leader of some kind in order to get anything done. Without that, they would break apart and would be less of a threat. Therefore, I was confident that taking out their leader would make the rogues easily defeated. Maybe it would even make them retreat.

I just managed to finish stuffing the last vial of the antidote into my jacket when Enzo and Matt suddenly burst into the infirmary.

"Have you seen Selena?" Enzo asked, sounding somewhat agitated but still cool and level-headed at the same time. "No one can find her. I hope she didn't make a run for it. She could be up to something."

I let out an exasperated sigh. "I'll find her."

We needed Selena somewhere safe. She was weaker now without any of her powers, which made her an easier target. And if she was killed, then I would die too. She needed to be kept in the tunnels with the others, where no one would be able to hurt her and where Luke could keep a close eye on her.

Enzo looked at his watch. "Judging from what Luke said, we should have a couple of hours before the rogues get here," he said. "I'm going to be busy getting the team ready to fight. Are you sure you'll be okay looking for her?"

I nodded. "I'll be fine," I replied. "I think I might know where she's hiding, and she can't hurt me now that I have a wolf and she doesn't."

Enzo paused for a few moments. His brown eyes warily searched my face; I knew that he was incredibly worried about me. With a weak smile, I walked up to him and planted a gentle kiss on his cheek.

"I'll be fine," I whispered. "I'll be back soon."

Enzo nodded. His hand lingered on my face for a few moments before he dropped his arm back down to his side and nodded for a second time. With a final squeeze of his hand, I pushed the infirmary door open and ran out into the chaos.

Hundreds of students and frightened townspeople were running around the campus. Luke and a few others were wrangling people and gathering them so they could be calmly informed of the situation and taken into the tunnels. I tried to help a bit as I ran past, but I had an equally important mission of my own to find Selena.

"If I were Selena, where would I be..." I whispered to myself as I jogged across campus. I knew that she couldn't be in her dorm, as Luke would have looked there first. I decided

to try the lecture halls first, since they had no windows and had desks to hide under. Plus, she knew those rooms well compared to the rest of campus.

I jogged into the classroom building, then down the stairs into the basement where the three large lecture halls were held.

“Selena?” I called, pushing open the first door. I ran up and down the rows of seats, checking beneath the desks, but she wasn’t there. She wasn’t in the maintenance closet, either. In fact, as I ran through all three lecture halls, I realized that she wasn’t there. I cursed under my breath as I finished searching the last one, then ran back out into the hall and looked around wildly for another option.

She was my twin; even though she didn’t have her wolf, we still had our twin bond. I knew that if I just closed my eyes and focused really hard, I could get a sense of where she might have gone...

Suddenly, I got a feeling.

The bathrooms. She had to be in there.

I ran over to the girls’ bathroom and flung the door open.

“Selena?”

I was answered with silence, but I knew she was in here. I could sense it. I slowly began to walk down the row of stalls and pushed each door open, looking for her.

“Selena, it’s safe to come out,” I said. “We have a place where we’re taking all of the refugees. You’ll be safe there. I promise I won’t let anything happen to you.”

Suddenly, I heard someone clear their throat from the stall at the end.

“Fuck off,” Selena growled.

I sighed and walked down to the last stall. When I tried to push the door open, it was locked; but I could see Selena crouching on the toilet through the crack in the door.

“Selena, come on,” I begged. “We don’t have a lot of time. I’m just trying to keep you safe. The Luna sent those rogues for us. You can’t hide on your own.”

“I’ll be fine,” she croaked. “Go away.”

A groan rumbled in my throat. “If you don’t come out, I’ll break down the door and drag you to safety myself. I don’t want either of us to die, Selena. Please.”

There was a long silence. I could see my sister's wide, blue eyes staring at me through the crack in the door for a long time before she finally jumped down off of the toilet and slowly opened the door. When she opened it, I could see now that she had a knife in her trembling hand.

I held my hands up in surrender and took a step back.

"There's no need for that," I said.

Selena's face darkened. "How do I know you're not trying to play a trick on me or something?"

I sighed. "There's no way I can convince you for certain, and I know that," I replied calmly. "I just need you to trust me. Regardless of everything, you're my twin sister. If the Luna gets her way, we won't have any family left except for each other. I promise I'll protect you, but you need to trust me."

Selena stared at me for a few long moments. For a long time, I wasn't sure if she would make a stab at me, run, or listen to me.

But finally, she lowered the knife and stared down at the floor.

"Fine," she whispered. "I'll go with you."

Chapter 258

Chapter 258: A Bond of Trust

Nina

"Fine," Selena said, slowly lowering the knife. "I'll go with you."

I let out a relieved sigh at Selena's words and smiled gently, then led her over to the door and opened it for her. She stepped out into the hallway, still avoiding eye contact, and walked alongside me with her head down. As we came out of the building and headed back out into the chaos, I was surprised to find that she continued to follow me with no complaints; although she didn't drop her knife.

Finally, we made our way back to the infirmary. Luke, Lori, and Jessica were guiding the refugees into the tunnels.

"I'm not going in there," Selena said, shaking her head and folding her arms across her chest when she saw where the refugees were headed. "No way."

"It's safer down there," I said, trying my best not to upset her even more. "I promise you won't need to be down there for long."

Selena stared at me warily for a few moments before finally sighing and storming off with the others. Just before she disappeared into the tunnel, I saw Jessica take the knife away from her with a look of disgust on her face, and I let out a sigh of relief to see that Selena was complying. I just hoped that she wouldn't cause any trouble down there.

"Keep a close eye on her," I said, turning to face Luke. "Don't let her run off, but try not to freak her out. I'm trying to keep her on our side. She's the only one who knows what the Luna is up to."

Luke nodded. I watched as he jogged off to gather more students. Then, Lori and Jessica came up behind me.

"We're going to fight with you guys," Jessica said. When I turned to face her, I noticed that her expression was stern. She seemed to have fiercely made up her mind, and if there was one thing I knew about Jessica it was that it was impossible to change her mind once she had decided something.

"Are you sure?" I asked nervously. "You guys don't have to if you feel unsafe."

Lori shook her head vehemently. "We're joining you whether you like it or not. We're your friends, and we can't just sit around and hope for the best."

Even though I wanted nothing more than to see my friends hide somewhere safe, I realized that it wouldn't be fair to expect that of them. Maybe this was how Enzo felt when I insisted on joining the fight.

"Alright," I said finally. "Just promise that you'll be careful."

"You, too," Jessica said quietly.

I managed a weak smile. "Have you seen Enzo?"

Lori nodded. "Last I saw, he was heading over to the locker rooms," she replied. "He seems really distressed."

Lori's words made me worried. I pictured Enzo fuming on his own in the locker rooms as he tried to pull himself together after everything that had happened. He was trying so hard to be a perfect leader right now that he had shoved down the fact that he was battered and exhausted from everything, and it made me realize that I needed to check on him. Without another word, I took off toward the hockey arena.

"Enzo?" I called out as I pushed the locker room door open. I was met with the sound of the showers running and so, furrowing my brow, I followed the sound.

A few moments later, I found Enzo in the shower. He was standing there beneath the steaming hot water with his head bowed and his hand pressed against the wall. He looked up and saw me, and shot me a faint smile.

"I just needed to relax for five minutes," he said over the sound of the water. "I couldn't focus. Matt's handling stuff right now."

I watched him for a moment. My heart ached to see him like this. Without a word, I slowly slipped off my shoes, followed by my clothes. Enzo watched quietly as I stripped down. His eyes wandered down my body, lingering on my full breasts, and as I approached he slowly reached out for me and pulled me up against him beneath the hot water.

"Nina, I—" Enzo began. I quickly shook my head.

"Don't talk," I whispered.

With our wet bodies pressed up against each other, I stood up on my tiptoes and wrapped my arms around his neck. I began to gently kiss along his neck, feeling the droplets of water hit my tongue and the way that his skin raised in little bumps as I ran my lips along his skin. His hands began to travel down my slender back and sent a chill down my spine.

While he stroked up and down my back, I reached down and cupped his cock in my hand. It was warm and damp from the water, and it was already a little hard just from my touch. I heard a soft groan rumble in Enzo's throat as I touched him, and with a grin, I lowered myself onto my knees and came face to face with it.

I began by gently running the tip of my tongue along his shaft, flicking my tongue over the head of his cock. He twitched beneath my touch. When I looked up, his eyes were squeezed shut and he was leaning his hands against the wall again, as though my tongue made him so weak that he could hardly stand.

Seeing Enzo like this made me grin again. I ran my tongue up and down his shaft, relishing in each of his trembles, before I worked his cock into my mouth.

I started slowly at first, focusing on the head as I swirled my tongue around it and sucked gently. Then, when I felt Enzo weaken more and hear another groan escape his lips, I worked my way down the shaft.

He was big, so big that I had hardly even made my way halfway down his shaft before I reached the back of my throat. I tried to push myself down further, but failed.

Suddenly, Enzo let out another moan. He grabbed me by the back of my head and did something unexpected: he shoved my head all of the way down onto his cock.

I felt myself gag, and saliva squirted out through my lips. My eyes instantly began to water from the force and I pulled back suddenly with another gag and a cough.

“Look at me,” Enzo said. He reached down and tilted my face up by my chin, his dark brown eyes gazing intensely at me. “Try again.”

I couldn't explain it; I had never tried anything like this before. But at the same time, it made me wetter than I ever had. When I felt his cock slide down my throat and felt my throat muscles contract from the gag, I felt my entire body throb with pleasure.

“Try again,” Enzo repeated, slowly stroking his cock over me. I nodded and parted my lips, allowing him to thrust himself into my throat again. My head pushed back against the wall of the shower and I fell backwards onto my butt, but I didn't care. He thrust himself a little faster and a little harder, not hard enough to hurt but enough to make me gag more. Saliva spilled out of my mouth and onto my chin, dripping down my chest and over my breasts. My eyes watered intensely, but when Enzo finally pulled his cock out of my mouth and I saw it shining with my saliva, I couldn't help but grin up at him.

Enzo stared down at me for another few moments, the head of his cock touching the side of my face, before he suddenly reached down and lifted me up as though I weighed nothing. He flipped me around and pressed me up against the shower wall with his entire body, causing me to shiver in delight.

“Do you want it?” he whispered, rubbing himself between my legs as his fingers began to work their way around my neck.

I nodded.

“Speak,” he growled. “Say what you want, and say it nicely.”

I felt my face go red. “I-I want it,” I whispered.

“What do you want?”

I shivered at Enzo's words. “I want you to fuck me... Please.”

“Please, what?” he growled, his hot breath spraying across my neck. I bit my lip and shut my eyes as I felt his fingers tighten around my throat, causing my dripping pussy to throb with excitement at this new side of him that I hadn't experienced before.

“Please, sir.”

Enzo let out a loud growl. He firmly thrust himself inside of me, causing me to cry out from the sudden feeling of fullness inside of me, and he hardly even waited for me to acclimate to his large size before he began to work himself back and forth with seemingly only one goal in mind.

I didn't care if Enzo used me to come. As he fucked me roughly up against the shower wall, panting and growling under his breath, I was overwhelmed by his scent. It almost felt as though my own feral instincts took over, making me want to feel what it was like to be bred by my Alpha.

Enzo thrust himself even deeper somehow. One hand stayed firmly wrapped around my neck while the other dug into my hips, pulling me up against him as he grunted. I didn't hold back with my own whimpers and moans.

Together, our hot voices mixed with the sound of the running water and made for a chorus of pure pleasure.

Chapter 259

Chapter 259: The Waiting Game

Nina

After our shared passion in the shower, Enzo and I quickly dried off and got dressed. In my flustered state, I almost forgot that I had hidden vials of the antidote in my jacket; it wasn't until I heard them clinking against each other from my haste that I realized that I had almost given myself away, and slowed down so as not to reveal my plan to Enzo; if he found out, he would surely not let me go through with the plan. Thankfully, he didn't notice the sound of the vials clinking together.

Something about having to take on the role of Alpha made Enzo more dominant in the shower, but I loved every moment of it. After we got dressed, however, he pulled me close and planted a kiss on my forehead.

"I hope you liked that," he whispered. "I hope it wasn't too much."

I shook my head and blushed deeply. "... I think I like that side of you," I admitted. Since I had only ever had sex with Enzo, my experiences weren't varied. It made me happy that we could try new things together, and I hoped that I would get to see more of this side of him. Something about it made my wolf react strongly too, and as we met up with our friends and made our way to the edge of town to wait for the rogues, I felt her bristling with excitement inside of me.

"Took you guys long enough," Matt said as we made our way to the edge of town. "Everything okay?"

Enzo nodded. I stared down at the ground to hide the fact that my face was turning red again, but when I looked up, I saw Lori giving me a knowing glance with a smirk on her face.

We arrived at the edge of town, where the rest of the hockey team was waiting. As we approached, I noticed that there were a lot of other people there as well. Bryce, from the hockey team, jogged up to

us.

"A bunch of the townspeople want to fight," he said. "We told them they could hide in the tunnels, but they insisted."

I glanced over at Bryce's shoulder at the crowd of people who had gathered. Pickup trucks lined the entrance of the town like a barricade, and dozens of people — men and women — with shotguns and other homemade weapons patrolled the road. As I looked at the crowd, I instantly recognized a familiar pickup truck.

"It's alright," Enzo said to Bryce. "We could use the— Nina, where are you going?"

I had begun to run off toward the familiar pickup truck, and just gave Enzo a wave over my shoulder. When I ran up to the truck, my eyes widened as I saw the older couple sitting inside.

"Dan? Laura?" I called.

The older couple both perked up and looked over at me. Their faces lit up upon seeing me, and both of them swung the truck doors open and ran over to me. Just as I had thought, it was indeed the older couple who saved me when James shot me in the leg.

"Well, I'll be damned!" Dan said, taking off his baseball hat. "You made it after all!"

"Oh, sweetie, we were so worried about you!" Laura beamed as she hugged me tightly. "I said to Dan after we let you go, 'We should'a never let that little girl go!'"

"I can't thank you two enough," I said with tears in my eyes. "Thanks to your help, I was able to get the antidote and save our campus."

Laura's eyes widened. "So you're the one who's been making all of that blue stuff?" I nodded, and she gasped. "You've saved so many lives! Our daughter was... changed, but the blue stuff saved her. It's

us who should be thanking you."

Just then, Enzo and the others walked up to us. Enzo gave me a puzzled look.

"This is..." I looked up at Enzo, unsure of what to call him. We had never put a label on our relationship. We had spent so long battling against the idea of being in a relationship, and then it became so complicated after that. Everything had felt so rushed lately too that we hadn't had a chance to talk about it.

"I'm her boyfriend, Enzo," Enzo interrupted, sticking his hand out to shake Dan's and Laura's. My face went red as he said this; to think that he was my boyfriend now... I couldn't fathom it, even though we had just had rough, kinky sex in the locker rooms twenty minutes prior.

Dan looked Enzo up and down, then smiled. "You got a good girl here," he said. "Take good care of her."

"Dan and Laura got the bullet out and kept me alive when James..." My voice faltered, but I didn't need to say anymore. Enzo already knew it all. He nodded solemnly, then cleared his throat.

"Thank you," he said. "Are you joining the fight?"

Dan nodded vigorously. "Of course. We have to! This is our home!"

Enzo managed a slight smile and looked around at the crowd. More people had gathered around the entrance to the town. We had a whole militia of townspeople and students who wanted to fight to protect our town. I just hoped that they would stand a chance against the rogues.

After that, we waited for a long time. Enzo sent the hockey team to patrol up and down the road that led to the town, and Enzo, Matt, and I stayed behind to get people ready to fight.

However, hours were spent like this. The rogues never came.

Even as the cold winter sun began to lower over the mountains, casting the landscape in a dark blue tinge, the rogues still never came. I began to wonder if this was a big fake-out. Were they just distracting us so that they could get us off guard at another time?

"Luke, I thought you said it would be a few hours at the most," Enzo said, sounding a little agitated.

Luke nodded. "My spies saw them headed this way. I don't know... Maybe they changed course?"

Enzo shook his head. "Maybe we should..."

Suddenly, his voice faded away. He was still speaking with Luke, but they both suddenly felt very distant and muffled. I felt as though I was launched a hundred meters away, and it felt as though everything was crushing in on me.

“They’re coming.” My wolf’s voice echoed clearly in my mind. I felt as though I was floating above everything else, looking down over the trees and the roads. And in the distance, not far from the town... The rogues.

They were sneaking up on us. I couldn’t see it, but I could feel it. They had snuck past our patrols; they were too smart for rogues. Their genetically engineered leader had outsmarted us.

I felt myself return to my body, and quickly turned to look at Enzo. My heart was racing. I opened my mouth to warn him, to tell him that we were about to be ambushed...

But it was too late.

We heard screams to our left. We spun around to see that a rogue had leaped out of the woods and pounced on someone.

Gunshots.

More screaming.

More rogues.

“Nina, please run,” Enzo said. I could tell that he was already beginning to shift. “Go with Luke.”

I shook my head and took a few stumbling steps backwards as I saw more rogues come and pounce on terrified townspeople, whose bullets were doing nothing. Luke’s hand brushed mine as he tried to pull me away, but I was frozen in terror. Enzo shifted and growled at me, warning me to leave, before he took off with Matt into the fray.

“Nina!” Luke shouted, tugging me. “Come on! Let’s go! There’s too many—”

Suddenly, I looked up at the road and met two glowing yellow eyes. It was the rogue leader.

And he was looking right at me.

Chapter 260

Chapter 260: Bad Timing

Nina

I locked eyes with the rogue leader.

He was standing apart from the rest, and his glowing yellow eyes were fixed unwaveringly on me. I knew instantly from the way he looked at me, and the way that my wolf reacted strongly inside of me, that this was his plan all along. He thought that he could kill me while the rest of the rogues ambushed everyone else, but there was a crucial detail that he didn't know.

He didn't know that I had come prepared with my own plan, too.

"Nina!" Luke begged as he tugged at my arm. "Hurry! We have to go now! I know you want to stay and fight, but there are too many—"

I suddenly wrenched my arm free and whirled around to face Luke. "Go without me," I ordered him. "I'll meet up with you. I have to do something first."

Luke furrowed his brow and shook his head. He tried to grab me again, but I pulled away and continued to stare at him sternly.

"Go, Luke. I promise I'll meet up with you soon."

"Where are you going?" he asked, raising his voice over the sounds of screams, guns, and werewolf growls.

I looked back up at the rogue leader. He was stalking closer to me, slowly, with his hackles raised and his head lowered. His eyes never wavered away from me, and I swore I saw him lick his chops hungrily.

"No," Luke said, seeing through my plan immediately. "I won't let you go off on some grand adventure. Right now, you need to listen to everyone else and get the hell out of here."

I snapped my head around to look at Luke. Behind him, against the treeline that led to the campus, I could see Lori and Jessica watching from afar with wide eyes. They were waiting for me, having realized that humans were no match against these rogues. I shook my head slowly, then turned back to face Luke again.

"I promise I'll be okay," I assured him. "Please, just get Lori and Jessica to safety."

Luke opened his mouth to answer, but I was already turning on my heel and running off down the road. Luke's, Lori's, and Jessica's voices all echoed in the distance, but were soon overpowered by the sound of my shoes slamming against the pavement and my heavy breathing. I threw a last glance over my shoulder to see Luke ushering Lori and Jessica into a truck that someone had pulled up. Jessica screamed as the rogue leader leaped over the truck, narrowly missing all of them by a hair. But it wasn't interested in them; it was coming for me.

Cursing under my breath, I picked up my pace and pushed my legs harder. I could feel the rogue leader advancing on me.

"Give me the strength I need to run faster," I urged my wolf, Cora. "Please."

"I'm on it."

Cora's power surged through me. I felt myself shoot forward like a lightning bolt. The wind rushed through my hair and whistled in my ears as I sprinted down the road faster than I ever thought possible. I glanced over my shoulder again to see that I had gained a little more distance between myself and the rogue leader, but he was still following me. That was what I wanted, though. I needed him to follow me so I could isolate him and use the antidote.

There was a break in the treeline up ahead that led to the forest hiking trails. I picked up my speed even more and broke off of the road to go into the woods, crashing through the underbrush. Thorns and tree branches whipped at my limbs, tearing up my clothes and drawing blood, but I kept going.

Just a little further, and then I could get the rogue leader alone and use the antidote...

But then, suddenly, I felt something change in me as I leaped over a fallen tree. I lost momentum, slowing to a normal speed, and felt Cora's strength go elsewhere.

"Cora?" I said out loud, breathing frantically. "What's happening?"

My wolf writhed inside of me, her strength fading in and out. At the same time, my own vision faded in and out of blackness, causing me to stumble over an exposed tree root and trip. I tumbled onto the ground, rolling down a small slope a little ways, and groaned as I dug my fingers into the dirt and tried to regain my composure. But the world was spinning around me, and I was certain that I would fall off of the face of the earth at any moment.

"Cora?" I called out again. My voice was choked by saliva. I spit, and a wad of wet dirt sprayed out of my mouth from the fall.

"I... I think..." Her voice was strange, as though it was fading in and out. One moment it was too loud, so loud that it rang in my ears and made me wince, and then the next moment it was so soft of a whisper that I could have easily mistaken it for the wind.

What was happening? I had never felt this before... Was the Luna putting another spell on me? Was I going to lose my wolf again?

I could hear the sound of the forest being destroyed as the rogue leader crashed through the underbrush searching for me. Groaning, I rolled up onto my feet and

stumbled forward, using the trees to balance myself as I half-ran through the woods to put more distance between myself and him.

But it was no use. I lost my balance and fell again, scraping my arm and my cheek on the rough side of a tree. I clamped my hand over my mouth to muffle the cry of pain, but as I heard the rogue slow its pace and then saw its glowing yellow eyes appear through the trees, I knew that it had found me anyway.

“Cora, I need you,” I pleaded.

“I... I think I’m shifting,” she said.

The rogue bared its teeth in an animalistic grin. It growled almost sadistically as its massive paw stepped out from the shadows.

“Now?” I asked.

“Yes. Now.”

I cursed aloud again. Why now, of all times? Why did it have to be when I needed to be clear-headed? All I needed was to get the antidote out, and use it on the rogue...

I groaned as a shooting pain coursed through my entire body. It felt as though my bones were moving inside of me, growing and changing. A bit of vomit bubbled up in my throat. I gagged, and it spilled out onto the pine needle-covered ground. I felt forward onto my hands and knees, and began to cry out in pain while the rogue stalked ever closer, as though it was toying with its prey.

I couldn’t shift now. It wasn’t the right time. I should have shifted earlier, or it should have happened later. Why now? Why did something always have to happen at the worst time?

The rogue growled again, and finally blocked the light of the moon as it stood over me. I writhed in pain beneath it, feeling my throat constrict as I looked up at it.

“If you’re going to shift, at least do it before it’s too late,” I pleaded with Cora.

“Otherwise, we’ll both die.”