

The Ivory Queen Chapter 22

Aurora's POV

It's been a 2 days since the attack on Lluvia Blanca and Mia happened. In just a couple of hours, the Alphas from the River Moon, Lluvia Blanca, Jade Crescent, Cerulean Sea, and Blood Moon packs will be holding a meeting at the company office, Artaud Inc. to discuss the recent rise in rogue attacks. While I haven't officially received the title of Luna, I am expected to make an appearance to show solidarity with my Alpha. I'm extremely nervous, though.

"You're going to be fine," Oliver reassures. "Just be yourself."

"Right. Just be myself," I mumble to myself while taking deep breaths.

Oliver comes close, lifting my face with his fingers on my chin. I'm mesmerized by the pools of deep blue staring into my soul. He gives me a dimpled smile and my heart flutters.

"Everything is going to be just fine, nena. I promise," he murmurs, kissing me softly on the temples. He brushes his finger along the small cut and I can tell he's still angry at my family for hurting me.

I take his hand away from my forehead and interlock my fingers with his. "Oliver, please let it go. It was an accident," I quietly plead.

He is silent, clearly fighting with his emotions before he lets out a heavy sigh. "I just don't want them hurting you again. Promise me you'll never go back there again. At least not without me."

"Ok."

I get on my tippy toes and reach for a kiss. His hands move to the back of my thighs and he lifts me up. I wrap my legs around his waist and bury my hands in his hair. Our lips move slowly against each while his tongue licks my bottom lip. I part my lips to grant him access and he greedily explores my mouth. He walks us towards the bed and suddenly I'm on my back with him on top of me. His hands roam my sides lower, sending sparks throughout my body. The hard lump in his pants grazes my thighs as he slips his fingers up my shirt.

Too far.

Suddenly the memory of Andrew's filthy hands on me invades my mind and I panic.

I let out a scream and push Oliver off of me. "No!"

Oliver rolls over onto his side and I sit up, sobbing into my hands. He doesn't say a word, nor does he touch me and I'm grateful for that. Rio gets up from his bed and runs up to ours. He squirms into my arms and attempts to wipe my tears away. After a while Oliver speaks up.

"Are you ok?" He asks with concern.

I don't look at him and wipe my tears with my sleeve. "I'm so sorry. I don't know- it's just- I'm sorry," I stammer. Rio whimpers in my arms and I give him a kiss on top of his head.

"Aurora?"

I'm trembling as I struggle to keep my composure and push my thoughts of Andrew out of my mind.

"Aurora, please look at me," Oliver pleads.

Finally, I turn my body to face him but I refuse to meet his eyes and keep my gaze on his hands. He finds the courage to touch me and reaches over a hand to lift my chin, forcing me to look at him. There are tears staining his cheeks.

"I'm sorry I wasn't there for you," he whimpers. "I'm so sorry I hurt you."

A new wave of tears stream down my face as he leans his forehead onto mine. Rio whines and squirms out of my lap while Oliver pulls me into his arms. We fall over onto our backs and I snuggle up to him. He wipes my tears gently and holds me close.

"I'm sorry I'm so broken," I weep into his shirt. "I'm sorry I'm not the best ma-"

"Stop it. You're everything I could ever hope for," he says sternly. "You're kind, and you're selfless. You're perfect. You're the most beautiful girl I've ever laid eyes on and I can't wait to show you off at the meeting today."

I blush at his kind words and I can feel his smile against my forehead. We lay in each other's arms for a few more minutes before Rio decides he needs

attention and jumps on us, licking our faces excitedly. I burst into laughter and get up to grab Rio's favorite pig shaped chew toy. We engage in a game of tug-of-war while Oliver happily watches us from the bed.

I feel Oliver hug me from behind and I lean into him as Rio continues to pull on the little pig in my hand.

"Aurora?"

"Mhmm?"

"Will you -uh- Will you go on a date with me?" he asks sheepishly.

My heart skips a beat and I drop the chew toy in my hand. I turn around to face him and realize he's blushing. He looks adorable as he waits for my answer. My wolf is jumping excitedly and the butterflies in my stomach flutter.

"Yes," I say without hesitation and Oliver smiles at me.

He kisses me softly. "This Friday. Just you and me."

I giggle with excitement. "Where are you taking me?"

He shakes his head. "Nope, I'm not telling you!"

I kiss him, hoping to convince him to spill the beans, but he refuses to give me a hint.

"Time to get ready," he says with a grin, knowing he's won.

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Rosalie comes to help me with my hair and makeup. Beta wives were not allowed at Alpha meetings so she won't be going but I don't think Rosalie really minds it. She's too free a spirit to be confined in an office for hours discussing pack issues. When she finishes her work, she trots off to meet with some friends at the mall.

Oliver comes into the room and finds me completely made up before handing me a short fit and flare dress with a satin finish. It's blush pink with long sleeves and a full pleated skirt. I panic.

"Oliver, my scars. I don't want to show them," I plead.

“That’s why, you’re also wearing these,” he says handing me a pair of black tights and thigh high heeled boots.

I smile at his preparation and head to the closet to change. As I look in the mirror I can’t help but twirl around in my dress. It’s been a long time since I’d worn one and for once I feel pretty. Rosalie curled my hair and braided the front portion of it into a head band. When I walk out, Oliver is dressed in a dashing grey suit and wears the River Moon Alpha ring on his right hand. Our eyes meet and I blush under his gaze.

“Umm, h-how do I look?” I ask timidly.

He blushes. “You look ... beautiful.”

Rio barks in agreement and I bend down to scratch his outstretched belly.

“T-Thank you,” I mumble and walk to his side. “You- you look, um, beautiful, err- I mean h-handsome too.” I blush in embarrassment and he laughs.

We make our way downstairs to meet Evan and Carter. They both shower me with compliments and Oliver shoots them a warning look but they both ignore it and continue to say nice things to me. I hand over Rio to an omega and we set off to the meeting.

On the drive, Oliver briefs me on the basic etiquette of official Alpha meetings. Only Alphas, Lunas, and Betas were allowed inside meetings. Gammas must remain outside and guard the main entrances. Alphas in training may attend but only after they’ve completed their warrior training (typically at the age of 18) and are not allowed to speak or interfere. All leaders must enter in triangle formation, where the Beta enters first, followed by the Alpha and Luna. All members must remain standing until the final pack leaders have entered. Lunas present must sit between their Alpha and Beta. Once the meeting begins, Betas may not speak unless spoken too. Titles must be used all times to address leaders. By no means is shifting allowed. Should meetings escalate, meetings must adjourn.

As for politics, only official Alphas and Lunas carry votes. Since I am not an official Luna, I will not be voting on any measures today. All decisions made must receive a majority vote from the parties present. Any missing members can have their votes represented by someone of their choosing (Any Alpha present at the meeting). This is usually the case for absent Lunas or packs who couldn’t make it.

Eight packs reside in the region surrounding the city, 5 of which are known as the Allies: the Cerulean Sea Pack, the Jade Crescent Pack, the Blood Moon Pack, the River Moon Pack and the Lluvia Blanca Pack. A treaty was signed by the five Alphas over 50 years ago when the region fell victim to a witch attack and since then, the five packs have acted together. Two of the remaining three packs (Maple Moon and Desert Sky) are neutral neighbors, neither enemies nor allies. Oliver actually spoke with the Desert Sky Alpha to apologize for my intrusion back when I ran away. The Amethyst Lake Pack, however, is notoriously vicious and thus considered an enemy of the Allies.

When we arrive at the meeting place, Oliver gives me once last reassuring kiss before linking his arm with mine. Carter takes his place before us while Evan stays behind. I hold my breath as we enter the board room. The tension is suffocating as I glance around the room. The Cerulean Sea and Jade Crescent Alphas are already in their places while Lluvia Blanca and Blood Moon have yet to arrive. I force a smile and try to avoid direct eye contact with the Alphas as we walk to our place beside the Cerulean Sea Pack.

The Cerulean Sea pack is mostly African American and is among the most revered Warriors in Northern California. Their Alpha, Wesley Holbrook, is a tall, 24 year old man with deep brown eyes and a well-groomed beard. His piercing eyes glare daggers at me and I force my gaze to the ground. My father had saved Wesley's father, Abraham, on multiple occasions during battle and the Holbrook's never forgot that. When my father died and I was accused of his murder, I became the public enemy of the Cerulean Sea Pack.

Beside him stood his beautiful Luna, Kehlani. If I thought Adeline was pretty, Kehlani was a goddess and the definition of perfection. She wears a stunning form fitting red dress with a sleeves and gold designs. Her hair is braided in elaborate designs and pulled back into a single braided high ponytail. She looks regal, fierce, and classy.

I know very little about the Jade Crescent pack but from what I gathered, they are of English descent and among the wealthiest in the region. Their Alpha, Jonathan, seems indifferent to my presence. He is a very handsome man of 31 with green eyes and ash blonde hair. His Luna is absent as she is in the late stages of pregnancy.

Blood Moon is led by Alpha Patrick. He is the eldest of the Alphas in the alliance, aged 51. His Luna is not present, dealing with matters on their territory and his son has yet to complete warrior training (he's only 16). Blood

Moon is one of the oldest packs in the state, having settled here during the gold rush. Yes, they're f*****g old.

Lluvia Blanca is predominately Mexican American, although they have a few Central American members. It boasts over 700 members, two of which are silver wolves, making it the second largest pack in the region and one of the strongest. Alpha Miguel is set to give his title over to his son, Javier, this December as he's turning 21 on the 16th (Alphas take over once they reach the age of 21).

As for River Moon, most of its members are French American (Oliver himself was born in France and holds both French and US citizenship). It's mother Pack, Lune de Minuit, is situated in Paris and is a power house in Europe. Thanks to former Alpha David, Oliver's father, River Moon is heavily involved with Lune de Minuit in terms of business deals. Oliver only took over in January when he turned 21 and is thus the youngest Alpha in the alliance at the moment.

Suddenly the doors open and the Blood Moon and Lluvia Blanca packs arrive. My stomach drops as Alpha Miguel, his Luna Ximena, and Javier, take their place beside River Moon. I feel sick realizing that I'm standing directly between the two packs that hate me the most. I lean into Oliver and squeeze his hand tightly, turning my knuckles white.

Oliver leans close to my ear and whispers, "I'm right here, baby. Just breathe." Turning his attention to the Alphas, he announces that the meeting has begun. We all take our seats but the Lluvia Blanca pack remain on their feet. Oliver gives them a puzzled look.

"Alpha Miguel, what is the meaning of this? Please take your seat so we may-

"We will not begin this meeting until that monster," Miguel spits, pointing a cruel finger at me, "leaves the premises. She is not fit to be Luna."

Wesley stands too. "I agree, that murderer is not welcome here."

Oliver trembles with anger "You will respect my Luna-

"Listen here, Alpha Oliver, you have no right to tell me who to respect! Respect is earned!" Miguel roars. "And that girl-

“Need I remind you that my Luna healed one of your own? She saved one of your precious silver wolves! She saved Mia!” Oliver interrupts. “Let me inform you all that Aurora is also a silver wolf! She’s a healer like her father!”

The room fills with whispers at the mention of my father and my powers.

“Do not disrespect Emiliano’s memory. That girl will never be half the wolf her father was!” Ximena berates.

“She is a killer!” Miguel snarls.

“She is not!” Oliver snaps and attempts to lunge at Alpha Miguel but Carter pulls him back while the Lluvia Blanca’s beta, Hector, manages to restrain Alpha Miguel as well. With the tension high, everyone is on their feet, ready for attack.

I had spent the past 5 years trying to convince Ximena and Miguel that I did not kill my father but it was all in vain. I knew they would never believe me. There was no point in Oliver trying to convince them otherwise. I hold Oliver’s face in my hands and plead with him. “Oliver, please stop it! I can- I can go wait outside with Evan.” I kiss his cheek softly. “It’s okay. I’m okay,” I lie, holding back tears.

“No I will not-“

“If she is not welcomed here, then I’m not staying.”

We look towards the voice that just spoke. Kehlani stands confidently with arms crossed. Wesley gives her a sour look and reaches out to her but she steps away from him.

“Kehlani, what are you-“

“I will not stand by and watch you all tear down an 18 year old girl any longer!” she snaps as she walks towards us.

I flinch as she reaches for my hand and her face saddens. “Are you okay, sweetie?” she asks.

Stunned, I manage to give her a shy nod.

“Luna if it’s okay with you, I’d like to take a walk,” she says.

I look over at Oliver who gives her a questioning look.

"I promise, she's safe with me," Kehlani smiles.

I like her, Reyna says.

"Okay," I whisper as I take her hand. Oliver holds me back and I turn to give him a small smile. "I'll be okay."

"Kehlani!" Wesley snaps, but she ignores him as she leads me out of the room.

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When we are safely in the hallway and away from the boardroom, I finally let the tears fall. Evan rushes over.

"Luna, what happened," he asks with anger.

"They're all idiots," Kehlani answers.

Suddenly another male appears. "Luna are you—"

"Cameron, I'm fine, we just came out for some air," she waves him away.

"Way too much testosterone in there," she laughs. She turns her attention back to me. "I'm sorry for what my husband said," Kehlani says as she rubs my back. "He can be a butt sometimes but I swear he's a good man."

"What did he say?" Evan roars causing Cameron to step in front of Kehlani and growl at Evan.

"Will you boys cut it out with the snarling. Sheesh! Are all males idiots today?" Kehlani snaps as she pushes Cameron out of the way.

I laugh at her comment and Evan scowls at me.

"Aurora, what happened in there?" he asks. "Oliver told you needed me via mind link."

"Nothing I didn't expect," I say solemnly. I turn to Kehlani. "Thank you for helping me. It must have taken a lot of courage to stand up to those Alphas."

"It was no biggie. I just can't stand injustices. Hell, I get belittled or accused of theft whenever I walk into an affluent part of the city just for being a black woman," she laughs bitterly. "I've had to grit my teeth and hold back tears as cops search my car or my bags. Business men laugh at Wesley when he says he's the CEO of our company." There are tears in her eyes. "It's not fair," she whispers. She clears her throat and stands tall. "So I will not stay silent while a bunch of grown a*s men tear down a girl!"

I don't know this woman, but she's already become my favorite person and I pull her into a hug.

"I'm so sorry my husband called you a murderer," she whispers.

"Thank you for standing up for me," I reply. I give her a tight squeeze and pull away from her embrace. "Evan can you take me home?" I ask.

"Of course," Evan says as we turn to leave.

"Luna, I've received a message. I'm very sorry. He isn't doing too well," I hear Cameron tell Kehlani, causing her to sob.

I stop in tracks. "Who isn't?" I blurt out. I turn bright red with embarrassment. "I'm sorry, that was rude."

"It's ok," she responds, collecting herself. "Well, you see, I gave birth to my son 2 months ago."

"Oh congratulations!"

"Thank you," she says solemnly. "Umm about two weeks ago, I noticed he had a terrible cough. I took him to the hospital and ..." her voice breaks. "and he has pneumonia." I hold her in my arms and she continues. "M-My baby is dying. His lungs are giving out. And I can't do anything about it!" She weeps.

My heart shatters at the news. Werewolves are known for their exceptionally strong immune systems but until they complete their first shift, they have the immune system of a human. Children and infants are therefore highly susceptible to human diseases.

"Take me to him," I say rubbing her back and giving her a squeeze. "I want to help."