

King Breeder 171

Chapter 171 Ethan Needed Help

**Georgia's POV

My jack*ss brother forbade any of us from talking to Rosalie, but he couldn't forbid me from walking past her tent from time to time. I longed to go in, but I didn't want to anger the Rogue King any more than he already was.

I was on my way to speak to Vicky, mostly just to vent since she had no answers either, when I saw a young girl stopping outside of Rosalie's tent. I looked closely to see what she was doing and noticed she had a bouquet of flowers in her hand, and it looked like she was praying.

When she was done, she placed the flowers by the tent and turned to walk away

"Excuse me," I said, running up to her. "What's this for?"

Her eyes widened slightly, as if she thought she was in trouble. I forced a smile to my face, which felt unnatural, given my emotional state, but she relaxed a bit. "I was bringing flowers to the wonderful woman in the tent," she explained. "I'm not allowed to go in, but I wanted to thank her for her kindness."

"What did she do?" I asked. I had no doubt Rosalie was kind, but I was obviously missing something.

"My mate was one of the men the Rogue King had ordered to be put to death, but was spared by Beta Talon. When I went to thank Beta Talon for his kindness, he said it wasn't him who was able to change the Rogue King's mind. It was the lady in the tent."

I didn't know the word was already out about Rosalie. I heard her continue, "I also heard that the reason a few others were spared from their poor performances a couple weeks ago was also because of her. So many of us wanted to do at least something for her. It's almost as if the Rogue King has the Moon Goddess locked up in there."

I almost laughed, but then, I thought... she had a point. "That's cool," I said with a nod, "Yeah, she's pretty great."

"I wish she could... come out where we could thank her in person." The girl looked back over her shoulder at the tent

"Me, too," I told her. I gave her another smile and then bid her good day. As I walked by the guards, I saw one that I knew had been wounded horribly in battle just the day before. I was surprised to see him standing there, guarding the tent, like all was well.

With my eyebrows furrowed, I approached him.

Apologetically, he said, "I'm sorry, Miss Georgia. We won't be able to let you in."

"No, I know," I said, rolling my eyes. "As much as I would like to speak to Rosalie, T actually wanted to ask you something. Didn't you get hurt pretty badly in that skirmish yesterday?"

He nodded. "Yes, miss, I did."

"How are you... standing here?" I wanted to know.

The two guards exchanged glances, like they weren't sure whether or not they could tell me, but then he said, "It was the White Queen, Miss Georgia. I was struggling so badly, hurting from my wounds, I could hardly stand. She noticed when her dinner was served, and she gave me... something." He suddenly seemed secretive again, but he didn't need to say more about that.

I knew what it was.

Her blood.

"And now you're better."

It wasn't a question, but he nodded, "Yes, Miss Georgia."

Not wanting to linger near the tent where I could get myself into trouble with my big brother, I stepped away.

It seemed Rosalie was making quite an impression on all of the people. I had also heard her singing, especially at night, and that

ways seemed to soothe everyone and bring a spirit of peace over the entire camp, despite the deaths and injuries of the day from * latter battle of wac

* We Orw except for Ethan.

I stepped away just in time to hear my brother's deep voice bellowing across the camp. "And, if you don't like it, Richard, then I'll take you out into the woods and beat the living sh*t out of you instead!"

"Yes, Alpha," Richard was saying, as he pulled along one of the rogues that had joined our side recently. It seemed clear to me that Ethan was mad that Richard hadn't beaten the boy enough for his liking.

It irritated me to no end. Someone needed to tell Ethan that he was out of line.

And like most things, whenever there was something real that needed to be said, it was going to be me to say it.

I followed Ethan, ready to try to talk some sense into him, even though I was pretty sure it wouldn't do me any good.

I wasn't sure exactly what I thought I was going to accomplish, especially when he was in a bad mood. Still, I wanted to make a point, and I was going to make sure that he listened.

He walked inside of his tent and over to the makeshift desk where he'd been conducting his business.

The map spread out in front of him was crude at best, but it was easy to tell what he was looking at. It was a drawing of our area, and it showed the lands he was currently holding in relation to the area where Rosalie's pack had control. He had a few rocks spread around the map as well, and I took it that those were meant to represent the rogue packs and other hidden enemies like James and Kal.

"What do you want now, Georgia?" he asked me, not looking up from his so-called map.

"I wanted to talk to you about this shift in your attitude," I told him.

He growled at me, and then said, "I don't know what the hell you're talking about."

"I think you do," I told him. "I just don't understand why you're so angry all the time!"

"How am I supposed to be, Georgia?" he asked, finally looking up at me. "Sitting here smiling when others come to kill me? I'm a f*cking rogue! A man without a country. My mate despises me. My son is gone-again. The only satisfaction I can get is from tearing out the throat of one of my enemies."

I wanted to yell at him, but everything he'd just said was so godd*mn sad, I decided to swallow down my original words. Instead, I tried to reason with him, "Maybe Rosalie wouldn't despise you if you'd stop treating her like she's a prisoner."

Once again, he was growling at me. "Stay out of it, Georgia."

"She is literally the nicest person alive. She would do anything for anyone, even a stranger, and you are keeping her locked up in there like she's some sort of a criminal! It's not fair, Ethan!" I couldn't help raising my voice to him.

All he did was glare at me in return.

"Even your band of rogues can see how much she cares. She infuses love and care into everything she does, and you... don't give a d*mn about anyone. Not even yourself," I concluded, folding my arms.

Surprisingly, he didn't yell back, and just looked back down at his map, moving a few of the rocks around slightly.

I decided I was getting nowhere with my older brother, so I may as well change the subject. “Which one is Behar’s army?” I asked him, gesturing at his little rock figures.

Ethan glanced up and then looked back at the map. He grunted and half flicked a finger at a large rock not too far away from our border.

“They’re getting close, huh?” I asked him.

“They’re trying to,” he corrected me. “But I won’t let him.”

“Ethan, you have to know, as long as we continue to expand, both James and Kal will see you as a threat. Growing your territory is just making the bullseye on your back larger to them.”

– It seemed clear that he still wasn’t listening. I tried to get his attention to focus back on me, “They are likely to unite against you. Behar managed to take some territory from James for his father, however, that doesn’t matter now because both kings have a common enemy”

Ethan leaned back in his chair and crossed his arms “Tell me something I don’t know or I’m not already dealing with.”

Wared at the rocks on the map. All of them continued to come at us while Ethan continued to push back, trying to keep them as far way for the far North as possible,

“Ethan, they will combine in order to destroy you and take Rosalie prisoner, and then work out their own differences afterwards. Not to mention Madalynn and her d*mn rogues. You can’t fight them all on your own!”

“Of course I can! I have been and I will!” He roared.

There we go; he just lost his sh*t again.

i stared at him, weighing my words. I finally decided to say what was on my mind. “Power and killing won’t win you the war.”

“What the f*ck are you talking about, Georgia?” he asked, looking up at me with his red eyes narrowed.

I took a deep breath and pursed my lips together. “I know you’re fine in the short run. You gained strength and power as a rogue, and you’ve been able to handle these skirmishes and smaller battles. But they’re going to be out there for the long haul. Ethan, even if you are one hundred times more powerful, you can’t fight all the rogues and two entire kingdoms alone.”

He stood up then, his hands pressing against the flimsy makeshift desk. “So you’re suggesting that I give up my strength and let them slaughter me instead? What, so that I could have a so-call f*cking pure soul?”

“Ethan, if you continue going down this rogue path, you’ll end up killing everyone around you before James and Kal even get to you! You can’t even make f*cking rational decisions!”

“Get the hell out of here, Georgia!” he shouted, “I don’t need to hear this shit from you right now! You don’t know what the f*ck you’re talking about!”

“Yes, I do! And so do you!” I wasn’t willing to back down, “You’ve got a potential ally to the north, one that will be willing to help you if it means they can have their queen back, and you just f*cking refuse it for no reason!”

“Get. The. F*ck. Out!” he shouted, and I left, knowing I had probably done more harm than good.

Nothing unexpected, I guessed.

I felt so heavy in my chest that I needed to vent to someone.

“What is the matter?” Vicky asked when she saw my angry face as I walked into her tent.

“My f*cking brother is the matter!” I shouted, trying to keep my anger from boiling over. “Why can’t he just listen to anyone? For even a moment?”

She poured me a cup of cold water and I gulped it down, trying to cool myself. “Seriously, Vicky, what the actual f*ck are we going to do about this?”

She sighed and shook her head. I knew she had no answers either.

None of us did. I’d come to vent, but I was only upsetting her.

“I don’t know,” Vicky said. I saw tears welling up in her eyes. It hadn’t been easy for Vicky, especially when Ethan poured most of his unfair fury on her brother. Those who were closest to Ethan were hurt the most,

I put my arm around her shoulder and hugged her. “I’m sorry,” I said. “I didn’t mean to make you cry.”

“It’s not you,” she said. “It’s just... this is all so hard.”

“I know.” I agreed with her there.

If this continued, sooner or later, Ethan would totally lose his soul, and by, then only two things could happen.

Esther his lack of rational sense would make us lose the war, and we would all be killed by James or Kal; or he would defeat his enemies, but became a terrible tyrant himself before leading us all to

destruction. Either way, it was hopeless.

We needed help- he needed help.

the Moon Goddess to help him get out of this situation without costing him the little he had left-his mate, his son, and

Chapter 172 Rosalie, Can I Trust You?

****Rosalie's POV**

After my efforts to save Talon, Ethan kept his distance for a few days. Without him keeping a close eye on who was coming in and out of my tent, I was able to see Georgia and Vicky more than I had been

While I was grateful to be able to see my friends, with every day that passed, I missed Rowan more and more. My arms ached from being so empty

"We need to think of a way to get you home," Georgia said one afternoon when she snuck into my tent. Vicky was out helping Paul with an assignment Ethan had given him.

"I know," I said, pulling myself from the thoughts of my baby. "But how?"

"I don't know." Georgia shook her head. "The only person that has the slightest possibility to persuade him is you."

I commented bitterly, "I might be able to talk some sense into him, but not on this matter. It's already bad enough, I didn't want to ruin everyone else's already difficult lives."

She stood up and started pacing back and forth. "I think it will just continue to get worse. The more this rogue state takes over his life, the more likely he is to completely lose the part of him he has left."

Ethan... even though we were physically close to each other, I felt he was so far away. All the days back in the Drogomor pack, in Mirage, or even on the islands seemed to happen so long ago that I started to question whether those were all just my imagination.

Did that calm, cold, graceful and sometimes even gentle Ethan really exist?

"There has to be something we can do," Georgia said. She bit her bottom lip. "You sure with all of the magical healing abilities you have in your blood, you can't fix him?"

I knew she wasn't being serious and was just venting. "It doesn't work that way, Georgia."

"But surely there must be something that can be done to save the soul of a rogue, right? Wait, a rogue is just a wolf without a pack? What if he joined your pack? Wouldn't that make him no longer be a rogue? Would that do it?" She looked at me with a hopeful expression on her face.

I shook my head. "He was just banished. He chose the rogue way. Once a wolf chooses to give up their soul for power, nothing can be done...."

My voice trailed off as my mind went back to the books I'd been studying when I was in the palace, the ones about the pack's laws and rules. Some of them also mentioned ceremonies and magical abilities.

I had read something about souls, hadn't I? As my mind went back to the passage I had read, trying to remember exactly what it said, Georgia continued to lament the changes in her brother.

Then... it all came back to me.

"Wait a minute!" I declared, standing up from the cot where I'd been sitting. "I think... there might be a way."

Georgia hopped up as well, her eyes wide as she studied my face. "You do?"

I nodded, "Yes. Now that I think about it, I remember reading a passage in one of the books in the library back in the palace that talked about how to perform a sacred ritual related to souls."

"Really?" Georgia asked, and for the first time, I could see hope in her expression.

"Yes... but i don't know whether it would help in this case, nor do I know what kind of ritual would be needed."

Georgia's eyes were already lit up. "This is already amazing news, Rosalie! At least we have a starting point!!"

She was walking faster and faster in small circles which made me a bit dizzy. I waved her to sit down next to me as I explained, "There's a sacred altar in a temple in my lands, That's where the ceremony has to take place. The temple is built upon the land where the first queen is buried. Her blood is said to have blessed the earth there, so they built a temple. This is where all of the sacred ceremonies take place, where all of the miracles are performed whenever someone needs something beyond what the current white queen's blood can manage."

"And even though the first white queen's body was buried so long ago, her blood still manages to perform such miracles?" Georgia asked me

"All of the queens are buried there now, so perhaps it is a compounding effect that makes the miracles work, but the people truly believe that this holy place is capable of healing the worst afflictions." It all came back to me, the more I talked about it.

I had been so preoccupied that I didn't realize that my own mother must also be buried there as well.

No wonder my father never allowed me to visit my mother's grave – because he didn't know where she'd been buried!

It made me a bit sad that I never thought of going there. The sacred land was only an hour or so away from the palace I'd been staying in!

"We could get Ethan to go there." Georgia stood up and started pacing again as she thought aloud. "We would have to find a way to trick him into doing it, but it's possible, isn't it?" She turned and looked at me with wide eyes.

I nodded. "I hope so. Maybe... I can tell him that I want to go back to visit my mother's grave, that I'll go with him, wherever he's planning on going, if he'll just come with me."

"He has to know that, in his current state, he can't possibly continue to battle against all of these forces that are combining against him," Georgia said. "He's strong physically, but his mind is growing weaker by the day. The more he slips away, the less likely his chances are that he'll be able to keep the war effort going for the long run."

"I understand," I told her. "Let me see if I can convince him to go and visit my mother's grave. Maybe he'll agree to do something like that if he understands that it means I'll go with him wherever he wants me to go without fighting him."

"But... that's not true, is it?" Georgia asked me, her forehead puckered.

I shrugged. "It doesn't have to be true if I can get him to the sacred altar and change him back from his rogue mindset to who he was before. I don't think the Ethan from before would be willing to take me against my will, would he?"

I remembered how Ethan had acted on the island. He'd told me he'd go away if I wanted him to, and I believed him.

Georgia shook her head. "No, I don't think he would."

"So let's just hope that he is able to change his mind and get back to the person he was before."

We talked through a few more things. Georgia would reach out to Seraphine and Cerina, while I needed to find the right opportunity to persuade Ethan to go with me.

With that, Georgia left the tent, and I sat back down on the cot, resting my head in my hands.

When it started to get dark again, everything seemed to quiet down. I had the feeling of someone watching me again.

This time, I sighed and asked the person outside of the tent loudly. "You are already there, why don't

you come in?"

The tent flap opened, and a broody frame entered my tent, making the originally large tent seem small.

It hadn't been that long since I last saw him, but the aura around him just seemed darker, and I could almost smell blood.

Whether Georgia had told him I wanted to speak to him or he was just coming to make sure I didn't run away, I didn't know. But he was there, and it was time for me to try to convince him to go north with me.

He stood at the entrance as if he wasn't sure whether he should get close.

"Hi, Ethan," I greeted him. He frowned and didn't reply. Maybe he didn't expect me to be the first to speak.

"You wanted to see me?" he asked tentatively. For some reason, his uncertain tone made me sad. He was always the person dominating in our relationship. Why would I feel that he was a bit... afraid of me?

I replied, "Yes, I do."

"Are you all right?" He cleared the space between us and bent down to kneel next to me,

"I'm okay." I said, looking up at him. But I miss the baby."

I know!" He gritted his teeth, like he was angry at Soren that the baby was gone when it was really his fault.

Ethan hear me out. There's something I want to ask you, and I need you to listen to all of it before you say no, okay?"

He didn't even blink at me, but I got the impression he was going to listen because he didn't interrupt.

So I continued. "I want to go see my mother's grave. It's in a temple. I didn't get a chance to see it while I was in the palace, and I think it's very important that I visit there, at least once, while we're this close to her gravesite. After that, if you want to go somewhere else, to get away from these rogues and the others that are hunting us, that's fine. But... I want to go pay my respects to my mother."

Ethan was shaking his head. "It's too dangerous, Rosalie."

"Is it, though?" I asked him. "The battlefield keeps pushing us further south. You have other warriors who can stay here and hold the line while we go north. It's not that far. If you let me visit my pack, let my people see that I'm okay, let us collect the baby, and let me visit my mother's grave, then we can continue on our way. But Ethan, we can't leave Rowan behind. And... with the battleline

getting pushed further south every day, who knows when we might have another chance to go get him?"

"What if they won't give him to you?"

I smiled at him. "They will give me our son," I told him. "They trust me. I am their queen."

"But what if they try to take you from me?"

That was his true concern. I shook my head. "I already told you, Ethan, if you let me go pay respects to my mother, I'll come with

you."

Ethan's tone was wary, "Why all of sudden you want to do this?"

I looked up at him. "Because I'm tired of everything that has been going on. I'm tired of the war here, and I'm tired of how our relationship has become."

"What if you're lying? What if you..." His voice lowered, and he was seemingly talking to himself.

"You lied to me too. We're even."

"It's not the same!" he argued.

I retorted, "I don't see any differences."

He looked away, thinking about my words, and I gave him time.

When he finally looked back at me, he asked, "Rosalie, can I trust you?"

"That's not a question for me." I looked him right into his crimson eyes and asked him back, "Do you trust me or not?"

He took a deep breath, and I braced myself for his response.

Chapter 178 Trapped

I turned around, my eyes almost filled with tears.

He walked out of the temple at full strength. Georgia was behind him, my son strapped to her chest.

· He sighed, "I owe you my life, Rosalie!"

I was about to say something, but I then my gaze met his gorgeous blue eyes. They were full of tenderness and... emotions I didn't comprehend. It was as if I was the only one in his whole world. I lost my speech.

However, there was no time for small talk. He simply reminded me, "I'm ready!"

I nodded and turned back to face the crowd, Raising my voice, I announced, "Everyone! It's time for us to get going! Follow me and keep your formation. You have my word that we'll get to the palace safely!"

I turned to Ethan, who nodded in confidence. A wave of relief washed over me. It was as if as long as he was around, there was nothing I should be worried about.

"Let's go that way," Ethan said, pointing to the northeast. "Maybe we can loop around the enemy and make it back to the palace."

Looking at the direction where he was pointing, I saw that the path was relatively clear-for now. "All right," I told him. "Commander Landon, organize the citizens to follow Alpha Ethan's lead."

Those who couldn't shift were paired up with someone who was willing to give them a ride. I was the only one who chose to stay in my human form so that Georgia and I could be the communication bridge between the two packs.

Under Ethan's insistence, I rode on his back, while Georgia rode on Talon's. We couldn't run as fast as Madalynn's rogues, but luckily, we had a head-start of at least one hour. Hopefully, by the time they caught up, Soren would have been able to get troops to us already.

The escape had gone as smoothly as it could be. Talon and Paul must have done a great job setting up obstacles for our pursuers. If everything went well, we may even be able to get back to the palace without a fight.

However, I was being too optimistic. It was about halfway through our run, suddenly, I could sense danger in front of us. Ethan must have felt the same, as he slowed down his pace.

It was about that time that a group of wolves appeared in the trees in the distance. In the front of them was a large, dark wolf, and I knew instinctively that it had to be Behar.

There was no point turning back. We needed to make Behar believe that we were not afraid of him. The best result would be that we deceived him enough that he let us pass. If not, as long as we could intimidate them enough that they would take the time to re-evaluate us, it would buy us time.

As long as we could avoid direct battle, we'd have hope.

I swallowed hard. Even though we had kind of prepared for the possibility, it didn't make it any easier to really face the crisis.

Behar had shifted into his human form. He stood before us, a massive man with a scowl on his face. Thankfully, it was dark, so I didn't have to look at his ugly naked body.

"Look what I found?" he smirked, "A little mouse..."

"I am Rosalie Thorn, the queen of the Winter Forest pack. May I ask who am I speaking to?"

He burst out in laughter. I jumped off Ethan and watched him quietly.

I didn't mind keeping the conversation going since my goal was to buy us time for my troops to arrive.

"Behar, West King Kal's son."

Ethan kept his wolf form, ready to attack at any time. His wolf muzzle gently rubbed against my shoulder as he moved

to stand next to me. It was as if he was telling me, "Don't worry, I'll handle this."

Just like that, my anxiety and fear seemed to have dissipated a great deal. However, I gestured for Ethan to hold back for the time being

I cleared my throat and pulled up a smile. "It is too bad that we didn't know we'd have distinguished guests arriving in our land."

Behar laughed again and then he pulled out a sinister smile. "You're right! Too bad, isn't it? However, I'm a generous guest. Why don't you come over, and we can have a chat?"

"I am afraid I have somewhere else to be."

"Tsk, tsk, tsk," Behar shook his head in amusement. "Where are you rushing to, Your Majesty?"

"It's none of your business."

"Well, let me guess. I bet you're on your way to your palace?"

I watched him move forward, but I remained silent.

He continued to say, "Where is your Rogue King, sweetheart?" His tone was filled with amusement."

It struck me that he probably didn't recognize Ethan because Ethan's eyes were no longer red! That meant... We may have an opportunity to take him down!

As this thought flashed through my mind, Ethan had already charged at an incredible speed toward

Behar along with three other wolves!

Behar obviously had not expected Ethan to attack first. He cursed and immediately shifted into his wolf. The two of them collided in an eruption of power.

Talon, Paul, and Richard followed Ethan and prevented the other wolves from approaching the battle between Ethan and Behar. Everything happened too fast, and Behar's men didn't dare to move without the order from their leader.

In a few minutes, the battle ended. Behar was pinned on the ground with Ethan's teeth at his neck.

I'd long heard about Ethan's reputation on the battlefield, and about how formidable he was. But up until then, I'd never fully understood how terrifying his speed and strength really were.

I'd only seen Ethan fight once, and that was against Soren. Now I realized that had he really wanted to kill Soren, there was no way Soren would have survived.

Ethan didn't kill Behar. Because both Ethan and I knew Behar was more useful alive than dead at that moment.

We needed to hold him hostage. Only if Behar was alive, his army would have to wait for their Alpha's order. It would be our best way to get through.

Otherwise, if we killed him, most likely, his army would want to seek revenge and start attacking us. At that point, fifty of our warriors would have to go against a few thousand. We wouldn't be able to win.

I walked to Behar.

"Your Highness," I said with a sweet smile, "please allow me to introduce you to Alpha Ethan Gray, also known as the... Rogue King!"

Behar couldn't speak, but I could see the disbelief in his eyes. He was probably expecting to see Ethan's crimson pupils.

"Surprising, isn't it? Not only is Alpha Ethan here, but so are his troops!" I continued, but I also knew the more I tried to make up lies, the less convincing it would sound. I decided to get to my point. "Let us pass!"

He didn't respond, so I raised my voice and shouted out again, this time toward Behar's army.

"Let us pass and we'll spare your Alpha! Now!!" I managed to make my voice sound calm, but I could feel cold sweat moistening my palms.

After a few moments of silence, Behar's army split from the middle and formed a path for us while

Ethan still kept Behar pinned down on the ground.

I mindlinked Cerina and Landon to lead the citizens to walk past Behar's army as soon as possible. The crowd was

instructed to stay quiet, but I could feel the fear pulsating through the group.

It felt like it took forever before the first batch had finally gone through. I let out an exhale of relief inwardly and kept praying to the Moon Goddess to look after us for tonight.

However, I was happy too soon. As the second batch started to move forward, from behind us, howls and thunders of paws were heard.

I didn't need to guess to know who had caught up.

We had underestimated Madalynn's speed. I turned to look over my shoulders and saw another group emerging from the woods behind us.

The she-wolf in the front had a menacing look on her face.

Madalynn.

She immediately saw me, and noticed Behar was pinned down by Ethan at the same time.

"Rosalie, you b*tch!" She shifted back to human. Her scream pieced through the night. "Let go of my mate, or I'll make you suffer the most horrible nightmare and make you regret every single second of the rest of your life!":

We were trapped between their forces, so I tried not to provoke her. "Madalynn, we'll release Behar as long as you stop right there!"

At the same time, I shouted through mindlink. 'Cerina, move! We had to get everyone through!

I saw Madalynn's expression falter briefly. When I turned my head back to look at Behar, I saw his wolf was also conflicted.

"You will release my mate right now," Madalynn countered. "Don't make me come over there and strike you down, little b*tch! With Ethan holding down my lover, you've got no one to protect you, and you know your miserable little wolf is no match for mine!"

"I have an enormous amount of warriors between myself and you, Madalynn!" I reminded her. "You will not make it two steps closer to me before my army rips you in half!"

Madalynn began to laugh maniacally, but I did notice she wasn't moving yet. So perhaps she was

believing my ploy the same way that Behar was. After all, he hadn't used the mindlink to tell his troops to attack, so he must have thought our numbers were at least somewhat comparable to his.

"Laugh all you want to, Madalynn, but when my army chews yours up and spits it out, you will not be laughing any longer!"

Cerina was moving the people through Behar's forces as quickly as she could go. Behind her, I could see that Madalynn's rogues were growing restless.

They wanted a fight, even though she was still hesitant.

"Let him go, now!" she shouted at me. Ethan growled in response.

"Over my dead body!" I told her, praying Cerina could get the people through a little faster.

"That can certainly be arranged," Madalynn said.

"No, not today," I said, my head still in the air. "My forces will destroy you. Now, back up fifty paces, and we will let Behar

go."

With a scowl on her face, Madalynn began to do what I asked her to do. She was retreating.

And then... a child began to scream. "Mama! Big wolves!"

Horror shot through me as I realized our plan was falling apart. Behar's face twisted into a grimace. He knew-we had been fooling them!

Chapter 179 The White Queen Emerged

With her eyes wide, Madalynn shouted, "Attack!" with her human voice as she shifted into her wolf, leaping into the air to lead the charge from behind us, her shout morphing into a howl.

Behar's troops were trained to follow Madalynn's commands as well, so even though Ethan was still on top of Behar, when she gave the order, the line in front of us moved forward as well

At that moment, many of the children were trapped between the lines of wolves led by Behar because they'd been in the process of moving between them.

Now, they were ripe for the picking.

The battle was upon us, but we were not prepared for it- we had tried to prevent it from happening. We were greatly outnumbered, and we had innocent children to protect. My mind went to Rowan. I saw Georgia, preparing to keep him safe the best she could, but as skillful as she was, Georgia couldn't even

shift yet.

It wouldn't be enough.

Ethan and Behar were fighting again, and even though Behar had wounds in his neck, he'd gotten a breather while Madalynn and I were having our discussion. In the split second of the child's cry, his wolf was able to push Ethan off of him.

LOREAL

Ethan wasn't injured at all, and his strength didn't falter as he and Behar clashed again, their claws and fangs ripping at one another. I wanted to help, but I felt so hopeless, standing there, watching all of the chaos unfolding around me.

Looking around, I saw women and children screaming and cowering. I saw warriors being double- and triple-teamed because we were so greatly outnumbered.

One group of Madalynn's wolves were charging toward the center of the last group of citizens, and there were about twenty infants and children among them!

"No-!!!" I screamed.

I couldn't let this happen! I had to do something to stop these innocent lives from being taken! I had to do something to protect them! There must be a way!!

On the ground, I saw pools of blood and tufts of fur and it was as if my heart was bleeding.

I prayed to the Moon Goddess. And never in my life was I longing so much for power and strength. I needed to be stronger. I needed the power. I needed help!!

Please...help me. I'd pay any price!

With my eyes on the full moon hanging above me, I implored the Moon Goddess, "Give me your strength! Give me your power!" Ancient words came to me, either from a text I'd read or passed down through my ancestry, and I began to chant, "Preme Luna Goddesta, dao mi li muscula, dao mi li energista!"

Over and over again, my tongue ran through the words like I was born to speak them.

"Your Majesty, stop!!!" Cerina's desperate cry echoed in my head through the mindlink.

"Rosalie! Rosalie!! I heard Ethan's voice in my head, something I'd never experienced before.

Why were we linked? Was it because of the ritual? However, it didn't matter....

A flash of light blinded me, and I found myself closing my eyes to preserve my sight as others around me yelped in surprise. The ground beneath my feet began to shake as if a mighty earthquake were unfolding, and then... I felt a rush of energy overtake my body.

My hands began to tingle, my legs began to shake, and within me, I could feel my blood begin to stir within my veins, as if my body were a pot at the tipping point, about to boil.

My hair flew out around my head, and in my peripheral vision, I could see it... gleaming and glowing in the light of the moon.

White as freshly fallen snow...',

I felt compelled to leap into the air to shift, and as my feet left the ground, paws emerged. My body went through the usual cracking and popping of taking on my wolf form.

But this time this was different,

I didn't see two tiny front paws like I always did before,

My paws were massive,

in front of me, I saw Ethan's wolf hanging in the air a moment, too. We were joined now, so when I began to levitate, so did he.

But when I came back down, and my feet hit the ground, my view was still as if I were floating up in the clouds,

I was massive!

Not the normal sense of massive, but my wolf was ten times, or even twenty times bigger than any average wolf!

My wolf mouth broke into a menacing grin as I glowered down at Behar. His wolf stared up at me, shaking with fear.

The Moon Goddess had given me her power, and now, as a giant wolf, I would find a way to free my people before one more drop of blood was spilled.

Looking down at the wolves around me, I couldn't help but notice most of them looked to be no bigger than large mice.

I avoided stepping on any of my own people....

As for my enemies, they would simply have to be careful not to find themselves beneath my giant paws.

My first priority was to make a path for my people to run to safety

As I concentrated on the situation in front of me, Ethan, who was looking at me with wonder in his eyes, led the measly fighting power we had to the back of our line, taking on Madalynn and her rogues who had attacked just before the Moon Goddess had given me her power.

Despite my unimaginable size and strength, Madalynn and Behar's forces did not seem to be slowing. They continued to fight on,,, though I did see apprehensive looks in the eyes of many of their so-called warriors.

LID

They couldn't fight me, and they knew it. Their teeth would be like pins sticking into my flesh. It would do nothing.

I swiped the enemies aside with ease to clear the path for my people. The enemy soldiers and rogues were brushed eighty to a hundred feet away with a flick of my front left paw. I watched them tumble through the forest like an army of toy soldiers pushed away by a child who no longer wanted to play. However, some of them stubbornly returned and were smashed into smithereens beneath my feet.

I continued to set my left paw down and did the same on the right knocking the attacking wolves into trees and bushes as I made the path for my people to get through as clear as possible.

With a relieved smile, I watched my people run through the forest, headed for a clear path on the other side that would take them to the palace. From this vantage point, I could clearly see that they were going to make it. Whenever one of Behar's wolves got up to attack again, I simply knocked the warrior backward, giving my citizens the opportunity to run freely.

Once I saw that my people were on their way to safety, I returned my attention to the battle behind me.

Ethan and his warriors were doing a good job of keeping Madalynn at bay, even though they were greatly outnumbered. For a few moments, I found myself staring at Ethan's wolf as he attacked five of Madalynn's warriors, all on his own.

Amazement washed over me as I saw him easily take down the five male brutes. He picked them up with his teeth and tossed them around like they were rag dolls, chomping into their necks and leaving them bleeding out on the forest floor.

However, I couldn't take time to appreciate his impressive moves. I didn't know how much longer I could continue to channel the Moon Goddess's energy. I was starting to feel light-headed, and my body was beginning to feel a bit fuzzy, like I was disconnected from my own physical existence.

I forced myself to recover from my moment of awe and I turned my attention to Madalynn's forces as well, knowing I needed to give Ethan and our warriors a chance to get away.

I used my front paws the same way I had against Behar's army, pushing the tiny rogues aside, launching them as deep into the forest as possible. A few of them slammed into tree trunks, and I watched as they wriggled and slid down, not getting up again as their bones were crushed from my blow.

I didn't like killing, but if that was what was necessary to hold off Madalyan's forces, so be it. I saw that all of my forces were able to move beyond the perimeter I had established, including Ethan and his men.

However soon I realized that Behar's army gave up the fleeing citizens and came back to us. Even with my giant wolf, I started to det di Hoult to clear the path. We were outnumbered hundreds of times, and the biggest problem was that I knew I couldn't maintain the size of my giant wolf now.

I needed to get Ethan and the rest of the group out of there!

I gathered more of my strength and tried to run faster, but there were just too many enemies and I wasn't able to clear out the path fast enough as my wolf was getting smaller.

And unfortunately, I wasn't the only one who noticed my wolf's shrinking.

Madalyran was now with Behar, watching me from far away as I shifted back to human form. "She is shrinking! Slow her down and get her!"

I couldn't let her get to Ethan... I could do it...!

However, my head was spinning, and it was harder and harder to maintain my wolf. I glanced over at Ethan, who was next to me, and wondered whether he and I would die together.

Maybe that wasn't such a bad thing after all. Just that I'd miss Rowan so much...

"Doohooo!"

Howls echoed in the distance and I looked up to see a large number of troops coming over a hill. My eyes scanned the advancing troops, and I saw a familiar-looking wolf at the lead.

I could feel my sight blurred.

Soren

Our troops had arrived! We were saved!!

A wave of gratitude washed over me. I was so thankful to see that we were about to have reinforcements. Madalynn had not given up yet, and even though she was keeping her distance from

me, she was still trying to rally her troops.

All I needed to do was hold her off until Soren arrived!

didn't know where I had gotten the strength, but I pushed myself to my extreme to move forward and create a narrow path so that Soren's reinforcement could get to us sooner.

Ethen stayed with me.

As soon as I saw the lead detail of my army reaching the clearing where we were situated, I let the exhaustion that had been threatening me from all sides come crashing down over me.

I didn't even have the strength to stand up anymore. Before I fell down, I caught a glimpse that Soren had Madalynn and Benar on the run now

knew they would be back and that we hadn't destroyed their armies. But for now, we were safe, and I was so thankful to the Moon Goddess for her assistance and mercy.

watched as my forces from the palace continued to run after Madalynn and Behar's retreating packs.

te mysekt growing weaker and weaker. My eyes closed, and I drifted down to the ground in much the same way I had floated up to begin with

A moment later, I found myself lying on the ground, blinking up at a star-filled sky. I closed my eyes again too tired to move.

Chapter 180 Fading Away

"Rosalie? Rosalie!" Ethan calling my name brought me back around. I was in his arms. He covered me with something, and it was then that I realized I had shifted back into my human form.

I didn't even have the strength to keep my wolf any more.

His chest was warm and his scent... soothed me even though it was mixed with dirt and blood.

'Your Majesty! Cerina cried in mindlink, 'Can you hear me? Please say something!

I can hear you,' I managed to respond to Cerina but my eyes were still on Ethan. How's the battle going?'

"General Vandough brought reinforcements, and Soren is leading the vanguard.'

The citizens?

'Luckily, minimum casualty.'

I let out a breath but I didn't know how much longer I'd be able to hold on to my consciousness as I felt my life force fading away.

"Rosalie!" Ethan's tone wasn't as leveled as usual. It sounded to me that he was trying to control his emotions. That made me wonder... if I die, would he cry for me?

I tried to focus my gaze on him as he said, "Rosalie, let me take over!" As if he wasn't certain I would give him command, he added quickly, "Trust me!"

The only move I could make with the strength I had left was to blink my eye lids twice, and I mindlinked Cerina, Alpha Ethan will be in charge...'

Then darkness took over me.

When I woke up again, my head was heavy and it took me a while to get used to the light.

"What can I get you, Your Majesty?" It was Seraphine's voice.

"Wa...water, please." I managed.

She poured me some water and shouted to someone else in the room, "Tell everyone that Her Majesty is awake," she said. I heard the scuffle of footsteps behind me but didn't turn my head to see who it was or where they were going.

After taking a sip of the cold liquid, I put down the cup, looked around, and realized that I was back in my room in the palace.

I'll get some food for you!"

I nodded and watched her run off.

I remembered our battle and my giant wolf. Then Soren was able to get there in time and Ethan took over command,

Now that we were back in the palace, I assumed everyone was probably okay for now and we had some quiet time to prepare for their next attack

Not long after Seraphine left the room, I heard steady and powerful footsteps approaching my room.

It was Ethan.

He had stopped walking toward me now, and was just standing in the distance, observing me.

Neither of us said anything.

I hadn't said much of anything to him since he woke up in the temple. Ever since the ritual, he had kept his distance. Did he regret everything that he had said or done to me?

He told me I was his mate when he was rogue. At least I remember he seemed to want me and needed me as his mate: since he was back to being himself, it seemed to me all he did was to keep his distance...

I shook my head. I looked at my long white hair, and couldn't stop the bitterness from spreading in my heart. What was I expecting from him anyway? I was the one who had cut off the mate bond.

In fact, it was probably better this way.

As I was staring at him, he slowly began to walk over toward me.

"Rosalie." He finally said something to break the awkward silence

I looked up into Ethan's blue eyes. "Hi," was all I managed.

He sank down beside me, his eyes more focused on my hair than on my face. "How are you?"

"Fine." That was pretty much all I could say.

He wrapped his arms loosely around me and pulled me close to his shoulder. "I'm glad to hear that. I was worried."

As he released me, I said, "We need to make sure we are ready for them to come back."

His eyes widened slightly, as if to say he couldn't believe I was trying to lead the army at the moment, but then he began to nod. "Yes, of course. I'll take care of it."

"Thank you for your help," I said politely.

Again, he had a questioning look on his face. "Sure." Ethan stood and backed away from me, and I felt confident that he could handle this situation without my help.

Someone hurried over, "Alpha, Report-!"

Ethan held up a hand and interrupted him. Then he turned toward me. "You get some rest, and I'll be back soon."

I watched Ethan walking away with the messenger, I called him without thinking, "Ethan!"

He paused immediately and stared at me. I thought I saw fire in his eyes.

" My mouth opened and closed, and finally I said, "Do I have your promise to look after my people?"

I knew it was selfish to ask, but he was our hope.

The fire in his eyes dimmed. "Yes, I promise," he said, and he walked away.

VINES

My heart began to sink. Had I blown a chance to say something meaningful to him? I wondered how many more opportunities might have.

| gazed at my white hair and I knew what it meant. It was a sign of my life force being drained.

My thoughts went to my mother.

She passed away at such a young age for the same reason.

Yes, our power was a blessing and a curse – it was unleashed at the price of the White Queen's life!

Few people knew it, and that was why Cerina had warned me over and over again to be cautious whenever I exerted the power in my blood.

It was just that... I couldn't watch that many people die under my watch. I had no other options!

Ethan didn't come back any time soon. I knew he was busy – he took on my responsibilities for me.

"Your Majesty, we are in a solid defensive position, Madalynn and Behar's forces have retreated. But we know they are just going to lick their wounds and then they'll be back, especially with Kal and James backing them up." Seraphine updated me later in the afternoon

I replied, " I don't want to stay in bed, I'm well enough to attend the meetings too."

Seraphine disagreed, "Alpha Ethan has been leading the steering committee. His troops also arrived late last night and joined our forces, so there's nothing Your Majesty needs to worry about. Please take it easy on yourself."

I had quite a few of visitors since I woke up. People came to check on me whenever they could. They were amazed by my long white hair, but they didn't know what it meant I'd told Cerina and Seraphine not to mention it to anyone else. Not even our pack members.

turved people to focus on their responsibilities and told them to stop worrying about me. There was no point in having them know about A wouldn't help anyone.

spent most of my days with Rowan, Cerina and Seraphine tried their best to act normal around me, but I could still see sorrow in their eyes

I wanted to tell them, "Don't look at me that way. I'm not dead yet! PK

But by the end of the second day, I was beginning to feel the changes taking over my body. No matter how hard I forced myself to keep moving. I was fading fast.

That night I tried to avoid going to bed for fear that I wouldn't be able to get up again, and when I woke up the morning of the third day after the battle.. the worst had happened.

I couldn't get up.

My eyes were wide open, but my body was so tired, I simply didn't have the energy to pull myself out from between the sheets.

A dull ache radiated throughout my body. It wasn't an intense, sharp pain, but it felt as if my limbs weighed a thousand pounds each and even sucking in a breath was uncomfortable.

My body was giving out on me.

"Your Majesty!" Seraphine called as she came into the room to check on me. "What's wrong?!"

I shook my head slowly. "I... can't...." was all I managed to get out./

She had tears in her eyes as she looked down at me. "What can I do?"

My eyes went to the glass of water on my nightstand. Seraphine lifted it to my lips and helped me to take a few sips.

*Ask Georgia and... Vicky to see me., and Rowan..."

That was enough movement for me. I was exhausted. I closed my eyes and leaned my head back on my pillow.

The world slipped away again.

I fell into a restless sleep, with my mind arguing with my body that I had to find a way to go on. I thought of my son... and I thought of Ethan

When I opened my eyes again, the sky outside the window was growing dark. Familiar eyes looked down at me.

Vicky, Georgia.. and my son. Rowan.

The women had tears glistening in their eyes; I knew Seraphine had told them.

My son was so happy to see me. All I wanted to do was reach up and take him.

However, I couldn't lift my arms.

"Rosalie! Why didn't you say anything...how could you..." Vicky exclaimed before she burst into tears, burying her head on Georgia's shoulder. Even my strong warrior friend, Georgia, began to cry.

"Don't..." I tried to tell them. "It's okay."

"It's not okay." Vicky disagreed. She pulled her head away from Georgia as my son reached for me. "If we had known this earlier... we'll find a way to save you! There must be a way!"

I managed a small smile. "Vicky...It's okay, really,"

Was there a way to save me? Maybe. But everything came with a price, a price that I wouldn't want anyone to pay.

Thus, my fate was doomed.

However, I didn't regret my choice. In fact, I was appreciative. I was able to save many people, those whom I cared for and I loved.

Georgia took Rowwi from Vicky and laid him down against my shoulder. I wanted to lift my hand to stroke his hair, but I couldn't even do that. He nuzzled up against me, blowing spit bubbles between his thin, pink lips.

"You are a dream come true for me, my sweet little boy," I told him, looking into his blue eyes. "I love you with all of my heart. One day... you will be a mighty king. But even when you have so much power and might, remember that it is the people, the ones who need you most, whom you must pay attention to. Be a strong leader, but don't be proud. Be fair, but also be kind."

He cooed at me, his chubby hand reaching up to stroke my face, and I felt a tear begin to slide from my eye.

"Marna..." Rowan's sweet baby voice filled my ears, and I was stunned for a second.

It was the first time I ever heard him call me. Tears fell off my cheeks and I could not stop them at all.

I sobbed, "I waited a long time to meet you, and now you're here, and you are my everything." I couldn't imagine spending my life without him, and it broke my heart to know that, despite all of my efforts, he was still destined to live without me.

But at least it wouldn't be with Madalynn as his stepmother, at least he would be with people who would love him and care for him. So everything I had done was worth it.

"Aunt Georgia and Miss Vicky will take care of you, my precious bby," I told him. I looked at my friends, who were both nodding their heads. I knew I could count on them. He would always be loved, and he would have two amazing women to act as his mother.

It wouldn't be the same, I knew that, but it would be the best possible scenario since I was clearly not going to be there for him for much longer.

"You are my heart," I told him. His hand landed on my lips, and I managed to kiss his palm. I hoped he would always feel that kiss in his heart. "I love you so much."

Rowan grew restless, and I didn't have the strength to hold onto his wiggling body to keep him from falling off of the bed, so Georgia lifted him up and held him in her arms near me as she whispered, "What about Ethan? Do you have any messages for him?"