

The Luna's Choice (theo and ayla) by Kat Silver Chapter 16 -

Chapter 16: Kingston

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should have pushed off him, but the pain in my leg and ribs was too much. And he was doing it again. I could feel the burning in my chest subsiding. It made it easier to deal with the rest. I couldn't help it anymore. I leaned into him, wrapping my arms around him, burying my face in his chest.

His reaction surprised me as he embraced me back, holding me tightly as I waited for the pain to pass.

We sat on the hardwood floor until I pulled away. Not sure how I would explain my clinginess.

"I'm sorry," I said, straightening his shirt.

"If you're apologizing for letting me hold you, don't," he said lightly.

But... I... I didn't know how to respond. I really didn't understand him sometimes.

"Ayla," Kingston said gently, "why did you go rogue?"

I released a breath. "It's... complicated."

"Try me," he said, brushing my hair behind my ear.

I wasn't sure about telling him. He had just threatened to kill another Alpha. I wasn't sure if the truth would make things better or worse.

I fidgeted a little, already feeling uncomfortable on the hard floor. Kingston moved to get up but surprised me as he

1/5

III

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Chapter 16 Kingston

#288 (Vouchers

scooped me

up as he did so. He left the bedroom and carried me to the couch. He set me down on the end before grabbing a throw pillow. But I blushed when he sat next to me and pulled my legs onto his lap, tucking the pillow under my cast.

“There,” he said with a smug smile. “Now we’re settled in, and I’ve got **all** the time you need.”

I opened my mouth to say something but closed it, pouting as I realized I was trapped. I looked at Kingston. There was something in the way he looked at me that was unfamiliar. I felt my cheeks warm again and I looked away. Taking a deep breath before I started talking.

“I met Theo a little over a week ago when my sister brought him home to introduce him to us ... as her mate.”

“What...”

“Look, I told you this was complicated. There are likely going to be quite a few more shocking moments. So you might want to hold all the ‘whats’ and ‘oh nos’ until the end.”

He nodded. “Okay. Go on.”

“Well, we couldn’t exactly say anything. I pushed through dinner as best I could, and as soon as we got the opportunity to be alone, he rejected me. And I accepted. I **wasn’t** about to break my baby sister’s heart over someone I didn’t even know.” I explained. “Besides, they had already told us about **their** mating ceremony scheduled in three months.”

Kingston started to say something, but **I raised an eyebrow.**

“**He** showed up again a **week later and tracked** me **down at...** my **friend’s house.**”

2/5

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Chapter 16: Kingston

“And?” **Kingston** urged.

288 Vouchers

“And I **tried** to reject him again, but his wolf wouldn’t **accept** it. So I cut my ties to the pack,” I said, avoiding the more painful

details.

“No, Ayla, there’s more you’re not telling me.”

I ran my hands over my face and through my hair in frustration. “He was pissed off because he found me at a

male’s house. Zeff is my best friend. He was just trying to take care of me. I told Theo it was none of his business anymore.

That I didn’t have a mate.

He liked that even less. He kissed me. I pushed him off, saying I wouldn’t let him hurt Kylee like that. That’s when...”

I closed my eyes, trying to push past the emotions that were trying to flood back in.

I felt Kingston’s hand on mine and took a deep breath.

“That’s when Theo told me exactly why he rejected me.”

Kingston’s hand tightened.

“He said Kylee told him I was selfish, cold, and irresponsible. That I had abandoned her and our mother after our dad died.

That he **could never** be with someone **as** heartless as me,” I said, feeling anger and betrayal break the surface. “And he never **ev**

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tried to find out my side **of** things. Never bothered to **try** to **get** to know me. I don't know **if Kylee**

blatantly lied **or** if it was **Ma's** influence that led her to **actually believe those** things, but I gave up everything to **take** care **of** them. And the one person who was supposed **to see** that **couldn't be**

bothered to think for his fucking **self.**"

3/5

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Chapter 16 Kingston

288 Vouchers

I **hadn't** realized how **heated** I had gotten. I hadn't realized **how** pissed off I was about **it** all. I had been making excuses **for** them all since I left. Thinking if I could explain it **away**, **it** wouldn't hurt so much. But that was bullshit. They all betrayed me. And yes, **I** was pissed.

Everything I had done in the past ten years started flowing out of my mouth. I just kept going on as I realized just how ungrateful they were and that they had taken advantage of me for years.

And this is what I get for it?

"I mean,

I gave up my fucking fated mate for her," I bellowed. "Not that that's much of a loss anyway. Between him taking everything at face value not boding well for him being a capable Alpha and finding out exactly how little my family thinks of me, I wasn't about to stay there. So, yeah, I cut my ties. I'd rather have no pack than one led by people capable of that."

I **was** finally done. I waited for Kingston to say something.

“So, why **not** tell your **sister** everything? Why not tell them all everything? You have the proof to back you up. Why leave?”

“Because **it** wouldn’t change anything,” I stated. “And regardless of what they did, they didn’t do it to be cruel. As I said, I don’t know if Kylee came to these conclusions on her own or **not**. I’m sure Ma had some part in it, but I could **see** how some situations could lead her to that. And **Ma has her** own demons. She needs help I can’t give **her**, and confronting her won’t ensure **that** happens.”

“**What about Theo?**” he asked. I thought I heard sadness in the question.

III

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Chapter 16: Kingston

288 Vouchers

“I know he **has** been **dealing** with a lot with Alpha Torin’s **hea...**” I stopped, not wanting **to** endanger the **rest of** the pack with that information.

“I’m aware of Torin’s condition,” Kingston said. “**He’s a friend.**”

I nodded. “Then you can imagine his son may be struggling. I’m not about to forgive him. But he has enough to deal with. So following some vendetta against all of them won’t help anyone. And it could end up disrupting the rest of the pack. It’s not worth starting a war over.”

“Then stay here,” Kingston said, grabbing my hand. “Join our pack.”

“What?”

“Trust me, Ayla,” he said with a grin. “You belong here. And I can prove it.”

5/5

III

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Chapter 17: Theo