

The Luna's Choice by Kat Silver #Chatper 251 - Read The Luna's Choice by Kat Silver Chatper 251

Chapter 251: Ayla

We talked Alpha Anthony and Luna Aniya into taking our experiment to the woods. | thought being outside in the trees would help the process. Besides, if it did work, she would want to go for a run first thing. They both would.

It was a dark night. The full moon was still almost two weeks away, so the moon only offered a sliver of light in the sky. However, that worked out nicely for what we needed. It was better to keep this between us for now.

Theo led us to a clearing not far from the packhouse property. There were a few small solar lights along the edge, indicating the area was often used for similar purposes to ours. Pack members would meet here to shift for late-night runs. Although, based on the over-growth, | didn't think this one had been utilized in a while.

"Okay," | said as we found a spot. "Are you sure you want to do this?" | asked Aniya. "The first shift is painful. If this does work, | have no idea if the command will make that pain worse.

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"I'm sure," she said eagerly. "I understand. It's a risk I'm willing to take."

Sister Mona stepped toward Luna Aniya with outstretched arms. "Before you proceed, may | see something?" Aniya nodded.

Mona took Aniya's face in her hands, closing her eye and resting her forehead against the Luna's. They held that pose for a few moments before Sister Mona pulled away.

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"Your wolf is there," she said softly. "She got a little lost, but she's ready to come out. Have faith." "Thank you, Sister," Luna Aniya said.

Sister Mona stepped back and Theo turned around as Luna Aniya started to strip down. There was a determination and a hope radiating off of her. | prayed that this would work. | wanted to do this for her, but | was weary of any possible damage | could inadvertently cause.

"I'm ready," Luna Aniya said with a nod toward me.

| took a few deep breaths. | looked her in the eye as | searched inside for that power | had touched just a few hours ago. It was harder to reach this time. It didn't feel as right as it had before. But | promised | would try. | could see in her eyes how much Luna Aniya wanted this. | adopted that determination as my own and made the command.

"Shift."

The night fell quiet and everything stood still for a fleeting moment. Aniya fell to her knees with a grunt. "It's working," she said breathlessly. "But it's not enough."

| took two steps toward her. "Shift," | commanded more forcefully.

She cried out as the sound of her bones snapping out of place filled my ears. Fur started to erupt from her skin, but the process rippled over her, not truly progressing.

"Again," she gritted out.

One step closer and | was less than a foot from her. | pulled at my core, tapping into the strength that had gotten me through so much.

"SHIFT."

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Chapter 251 Ayla

The change burst from Aniya, happening faster than | had ever seen a first-time shift. | barely registered Theo's arms pulling me out of the way as Aniya's yell transformed into a roaring growl. A tawny brown wolf now stood on the spot, panting heavily before collapsing to the ground. Theo and | stood

nervously waiting. A grey wolf, | assumed was Anthony, jogged over to her side and nuzzled her.

She was faced away from us but my eyes were fixed on the rise and fall of the animal's chest. The movement began to slow and | begged for it to be a good sign. Anthony's wolf began to nudge her more strongly, urging her to stand up. | gripped Theo's hand and released a long heavy breath as Aniya's wolf lifted her head.

She soon recovered from the ordeal and was on her feet. Anthony's wolf was nipping and licking at her so much she could barely move. She tested her legs, stretching out as she got used to the feel of the body she now had.

| was smiling from ear to ear and a tear ran down my cheek. I had done that. | had given this to them.

| never would have thought | could do something so... monumental for another one of our kind.

Theo kissed my temple. "Come on," he said softly. "Let's give them some privacy."

| nodded, finding a way to tear my eyes away from such an amazing sight. As we crossed the packhouse yard, | could feel Theo's pride in me radiating through our bond. It only made the experience that much more exhilarating.

"That was incredible," | said. "Being able to help them like that." 55.57%

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Chapter 251 Ayta

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"You know, young Alpha," Sister Mona said, "you can do that, too." "Me?" Theo scoffed. "No, my command isn't nearly as strong as Ayla' Ss."

Sister Mona shrugged. "Perhaps not at the moment," she stated. "But it will be. Although, it's more likely you just haven't tapped into that part of yourself yet. You've been trained to hone your power over others. You set barriers for yourself you never realized you could cross. It's easier for Ayla because she is so new to the ability."

Theo thought about her words. “Do you have any idea what else we could do to help?” | asked. Sister Mona paused with a look as if we should have already figured out the answer.

“MY dear, you can fix everything.”

Chapter 252: Ayla

Alpha Anthony and Luna Aniya were gone most of the night. Jimmy said a couple of the guards saw them come back a few hours before sunrise. We decided not to disturb them. We could work out any more details regarding the pack alliance later. For now, we needed to get the rest of the leaders on our side.

We were deciding who to speak with next when there was a knock on our suite door. Theo and | looked at each other curiously. Theo went to see who it was to find Alpha Vincent and Beta Aaron on the other side.

“Forgive the intrusion, Alpha Theo,” Alpha Vincent said politely. “We understand you are planning to set up meetings with us all today. However, we just got done speaking with Alpha Anthony.”

Theo nodded knowingly and welcomed them in.

“Luna Ayla, we apologize for our impatience,” Alpha Vincent said when he saw me in my robe.

“It's okay,” | replied. “Trust me. | understand your curiosity. Do you mind if | take a moment to get dressed?” “No, of course not,” Beta Aaron rushed. “Please, by all means.”

“Thank you, gentlemen.”

| retreated to our room and quickly dressed, dragging a brush through my hair and throwing it up in a clip. When | returned, the men were all speaking quietly together. Theo sensed my presence and turned his attention to me.

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“Alpha Anthony and Luna Aniya have been speaking with the others,” Theo informed me. “They have told them what you did for Luna Aniya.”

“And a little about some kind of sisterhood or something,” Beta Aaron said. “And something about a prophecy that will save our species.”

“That makes it seem a bit severe,” I said as I joined Theo on the couch. “But yes, the Moon Haven Order has been protecting information along those lines for centuries.”

The two men looked at each other seriously. I noticed that Beta Aaron seemed on edge. His posture was tense. Completely opposite of the laid-back nature I was used to seeing on him.

“Alpha Anthony said that you were able to command Luna Aniya to shift for the first time,” Alpha Vincent said. “I’m sure I don’t have to say that after yesterday, that act will help in your favor today.”

“That’s not why I did it,” I rushed. “It was a consideration, of course. But I helped because I could. Because everyone deserves their wolf.”

Vincent smiled warmly. “I assumed as much,” I replied. “Which is why we are here.” He glanced at Beta Aaron. “We would like to know what the limitations of your command abilities are.”

“I’m not sure,” I said honestly. “Honestly, you all are learning all of this at the same time I am. I only found out I could command a few months ago. Much of this information is tied to our family bloodlines. Sister Mona would have a better idea. Although, she likes to talk around the question sometimes.”

“I’ve sent someone to retrieve her already,” Theo informed them. “She should be here any...” Another knock on the door interrupted him.

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“That’s probably her, now,” | said with a chuckle.

Theo let her in. He offered her a cup of coffee and she settled in with us. We took a little time to briefly explain who she and the Moon Haven Order were, and what she believed our next move should be. The whole time we were talking, Beta Aaron seemed to be getting more and more tense. He wasn’t exactly agitated, but he was definitely anxious about something.

“Is everything alright, Beta Aaron,” | asked gently when Mona got to a stopping point. He looked at me in surprise and then a little sheepishly. He glanced at Alpha Vincent who nodded his approval of something.

“We were theorizing,” he began, “if you can command someone to take their own life, would you be capable of commanding another to keep theirs?”

My brow furrowed. “I’m not sure what you mean,” | stated.

Beta Vincent reached into his pocket and pulled out a picture. He handed it to me and Theo. It depicted a little girl with dark brown ringlets and bright blue eyes. She was smiling fiercely in the image, showing the gaps from her missing baby teeth as she hugged Beta Aaron.

“My niece, Renee,” he explained. “She was diagnosed with a congenital heart condition last year. We have been trying every possible treatment we can find, but she hasn’t been improving. Our doctors don’t think she’ll make it to her tenth birthday.” The content is on [Read the latest chapter there!](#)

“I am so sorry, Beta Aaron,” | urged, my heart aching for him.

Alpha Vincent rested his elbows on his knees. “It’s not just his niece,” he said. “Her diagnosis hit the pack house hard. So | started looking

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into our healthcare system to help them as much as | could. That's when | noticed that we've seen an uptick in these kinds of conditions, as well as other degenerative illnesses, throughout our population over the past fifteen years or so." The content is on [Read the latest chapter there!](#)

"That's concerning," Theo agreed, sitting up straighter. "I've done the same since my father's diagnosis. We have experienced a similar trend. However, it wasn't enough to be too alarming. Our own pack has continued to grow in that time, so | contributed it to that." The content is on [Read the latest chapter there!](#)

"Your pack is tied to your blood," Sister Mona interjected. "I think if you make some inquiries, you may find that other packs are having the same issues as the Dawnfall Pack." "But what can we do?" | asked, worried that they were expecting the impossible from us.

"| know it sounds insane," Alpha Vincent said, "but we'd like you to try commanding Renee to heal."

Chapter 253: Theo

Alpha Vincent's request had caught both Ayla and me off guard. While Sister Mona explained that what they were asking was entirely possible, | realized that talking to them one at a time wasn't going to work anymore. Before we got farther into the conversation, | moved us to a conference room and sent Briggs and Jimmy to gather the rest. As soon as they were all present, we went over everything we already knew.

| couldn't deny that the story was starting to annoy me already. It didn't help that | kept thinking about my father and what this could mean for him.

Once Mona was done, Luna Aniya shared her story and Alpha Vincent presented his proposition. | noticed several of the others increased interest in this part in particular.

"We have been experiencing the same concerns in our pack," Alpha Weston said. "It's why we have increased our research budgets so much."

"Us as well," Luna Victoria added. 2

"With all due respect," Alpha Trent interrupted, "while | sympathize with these concerns, how do you expect us to believe you somehow magically have the solution to all of our problems? And that the solution is for you, the Alpha who already has the biggest pack, to gain even more power? This is a long way from the assurances you were spouting just yesterday."

“Alpha Trent,” Kingston growled warningly. “Luna Ayla and Alpha Theo have no intention of...” 0.00%

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“Oh, hold your breath, ALPHA Kingston,” Alpha Trent snapped. “We all know you're not exactly an objective party here. Which also doesn't help their cause. All I see are the two most powerful packs joining up against the rest of us.”

“If that was the case, it would be incredibly foolish of us to bring you all here and tell you our plan,” Kingston shot back.

“We all know your tactics, Amvarov,” Alpha Trent retorted. “You thought you could intimidate those of us not gullible enough to go along with this.”

“Enough,” I called firmly, silencing the room. “This isn't a ploy or some kind of scare tactic. This is a meeting of equals. We will speak to each other as such.”

“Agreed,” Alpha Harden offered in support. “We have been provided with enough issues to address without creating more.” “Still,” Alpha Gregory of the Moonvalley Pack interjected, “Alpha Trent has a point. This doesn't speak towards the promise you

extended after the execution. An execution you performed on your own without getting the approval you called us all here to ask

for.

“We didn't ask you here for permission to execute a traitor,” Ayla said. “We asked you here to help us address the Waar Pak and their activities in all of the pack territories.”

“Because mixing words isn't manipulative at all,” Alpha Trent stated.

“Alpha Trent,” Harden barked. “That's enough. “What else would you have them do? If this is your vote against them unifying the Moonstone, then we accept it. But insults and antagonizing won't be necessary.”

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Alpha Trent scoffed. "Please, we all know they are going to do it," he stated. "And I'll admit, it may be the best option. Because I'd rather only have to worry about one magic rock than two. However, I refuse to accept that it stays in their hands. If this Moonstone is as powerful as the legends say, then we might as well say goodbye to our packs right now because there will be nothing stopping them from taking over."

The room fell silent. He had touched on the part that was harder to argue against. I had been up most of the night worrying about that as well.

"That is a valid concern," Alpha Patrick concurred. "Right now, we are only left to take your word that our way of life won't be uprooted. And even if you stick to that agreement, you can't make that guarantee of future generations. Sister Mona's history lessons has reminded us what this kind of power can do."

"We won't be keeping the Moonstone," I said calmly. "Regardless of whether we reconstitute the Moonstone or not, both halves will be protected by a neutral party. The Moon Haven Order."

"How do you propose that will work?" Alpha Weston asked. "From what I gather, the Moonstone should be in wolf territory for it to remain affective. The Moon Haven Order is a hundred miles into human lands."

"I plan on moving them back," I explained. Alpha Trent laughed bitterly. "Let me guess, and set them up in Greytooth territory?"

"No, Alpha Trent," I replied forcefully, pushing my aggravation down.

"Wherever the Order sets up will become neutral territory. No Alpha or Luna will have power on their land. And recruitment will not only be

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open to all packs, but we will agree on a minimum requirement of pack members to join. There is no reason why we can't organize a system of checks and balances to protect such an important and holy part of our history." The content is on [Read the latest chapter there!](#)

"I think we can all agree on that," Luna Emma said. "Power aside, this is a sacred relic. It should be protected. And that protection should be all of our responsibility."

"I agree," I stated. "Which is why I propose that we designate fifty square miles from the center of all territories. I am willing to give up the Greytooth lands to accommodate. That leaves the Sablmane, Wildtail, Dawnfall, and Shadow Claw packs the option of doing the same." The content is on Read the latest chapter there!

Alpha Trent's scowled even more at the mention of his pack losing territory. "And what about the rest? They don't have to sacrifice anything."

"There are plenty of other things we can contribute," Alpha Vincent offered. "The Order will need to be outfitted and maintained. An annual supply contract would be an agreeable contribution."

"All of this can be organized and arranged," I encouraged. "We will all give what we can equally afford to. We won't make a decision about the Moonstone until all packs come to an agreement on the Moon Haven Order arrangements," I turned to Sister Mona. "Does this sound like an acceptable plan to you?" The content is on Read the latest chapter there!

"I think moving us here is a wise move," she replied. "And we have plenty of time to work out the details of that. However, we are running out of time to join the Moonstones."

"What do you mean?" Ayla asked concerned.

Chapter 254: Theo "Why did you tell us this before, Sister Mona?" Ayla asked, as confused and frustrated as I was.

"I could see how important it was that you had all of the pack leaders' support in this," Sister Mona explained. "I didn't think presenting them with such a restraining time frame would be conducive to your argument."

"But you're telling us now," Alpha Harden said.

"I believed we could come to an agreement," Mona stated plainly. She looked around the table, taking in all the faces. "I understand that this is a daunting change for you all. I even understand your concerns that this could be a threat to your way of life. But I can assure you all that not going through with it is an even bigger threat. I think you'll find that Luna Aniya isn't the only occurrence of a shiftless wolf among your packs. There are also fewer fated pairs. The Order has been monitoring these things. We know how bad they are getting." Her eyes seemed to fall heavily on Alpha Trent for a moment. "Even when

your leaders insist on hiding it. How many Alphas has it been since the Dawnfall Pack has had a fated Luna? Four? Five?”

“Seven.”

Alpha Trent looked at Sister Mona with disdain. We could all see she was revealing something that greatly impacted his pack and their standing with the rest of us. No wonder he was so concerned about us trying to take over his pack. Fated mates are one of the few sacred gifts that were culturally significant to us. That and our wolves. For a pack to be lacking in either would be dangerous. It was a grave weakness. A weakness that would be easy to exploit.

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“Yes, that sounds about right,” Sister Mona said. “And the rest of your pack hasn’t been fairing much better. You are all losing the moon goddess’s blessings. Our connection to the Moonstone is waning. It has been separated and hidden for too long. Our kind won’t make it to the next solstice eclipse.”

“Why does the solstice eclipse matter?” Luna Victoria inquired.

“The ritual that is necessary to merge the two halves can only be performed on the night of a solstice eclipse,” Sister Mona explained. “If we are going to do this, it must be done then.”

“That’s nine days from now,” Ayla said. “Is that even enough time to prepare?”

“We have been preparing for this for some time,” Mona replied. “We hoped this would be the year the Blessed One would arise.”

“And you two were already planning on holding your Alpha and Luna ceremonies that night,” Kingston said. “Naturally, we’ve all been invited and would be in attendance regardless.”

“Oh, for goddess’s sake,” Alpha Trent yelled, standing from his chair. “How the hell does this not sound like a coronation to the rest of you? I won’t vote to be ruled over.”

“Alpha Trent, that’s enough,” I said forcefully. “You believe what you wish. We don’t have time to convince you otherwise right now. Despite this new information, we will stick to our original intent. Whatever happens in nine days will depend on all of us. Like we would do at an annual gathering, we will take a vote.”

“And will this be a majority vote?” Alpha Patrick asked. “It seems to me with the seriousness of either outcome, a unanimous approval may be in order.”

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| looked at Ayla with concern. It was a very rare occasion a unanimous vote was asked for. We already knew Alpha Trent would vote against it. | now suspected Alpha Patrick may as well. Or at the very least, rely on the fact that Trent would. | wasn't sure we would be able to The content is on Read the latest chapter there!

convince Trent otherwise.

“Perhaps a demonstration would help,” Alpha Vincent offered. “If we want this to be unanimous, then we should ensure all the information has been presented. We asked for Luna Ayla to command the health of one of our pack members. If it is possible to do so, | think that would go a long way to supporting the necessity of this ritual.” The content is on Read the latest chapter there!

“With all due respect,” Alpha Patrick said, “we are ready to go home, Alpha. We own packs to lead. We don't have time to wait for you to bring someone here for spectator sport.”

have our

“| wasn't Suggesting that,” Alpha Vincent said. “We have all respected Alpha Torin throughout his role as Alpha. None of us will deny he is a good man who doesn't deserve to die the slow and painful death he has been condemned to. | say Luna Ayla start with him.” The content is on Read the latest chapter there!

All eyes fell on Ayla.

“Ayla,” | addressed her, “is that something you would be willing to do?”

Chapter 255: Ayla

My eyes were locked on Alpha Torin's as we waited. He should feel the change. He should have been able to tell a difference. Instead, he shook his head once.

“Keep trying,” Luna Aniya said. | took another deep breath, bolstering my determination with the hope | could feel from the others in the room. “Alpha Torin Arden, you will heal yourself,” | commanded again.

Torin shook his head again. His posture fell. It was a nearly imperceptible shift, but | saw it. It wasn’t working. | felt the tears start to sting the back of my eyes. Then Theo took my hand.

‘Together,’ he linked me. ‘We’ll do it together.’

| nodded, squeezing his hand.

‘Ready?’ | asked.

‘Ready.’

“Alpha Torin Arden,” we commanded in unison, “you will heal yourself now.”

The energy we both put behind the command filled the room like a wave. Everyone fidgeted in discomfort under the weight of it. But | barely noticed. Torin began to breath heavily. He fell to his knees with a grunt before grabbing his chest. He was gasping for air until he stopped breathing altogether. Collapsing onto the floor.

Luna Grace stifled a cry as she rushed to him, the pack doctor right behind her. | was by his side in seconds. My heart beating so fast | thought my chest would explode. ‘Theo wrapped his arms around his mother as the doctor began doing chest compressions. My vision started to blur with unshed tears and | my stomach threatened to rebel.

Had | killed him? Was it the command too much? If it was so powerful, the words may not have mattered. We shouldn’t have tried so soon. We didn’t know enough about the consequences. We were foolish to think this was possible.

| felt hands on my shoulders trying to pull me away, but | wouldn’t budge. “Torin Arden, you won’t die,” | commanded. “You will not die.” My voice was shaky. “Please, don’t die.”

| fell against someone’s chest as a hard so b escaped me. I’d never be able to live with this. Theo would never be able to live with this. We should have never done this. | tried to make my brain work. Tried to make sense of what was happening.

Suddenly, the room filled with the sound of a deep gasp and Alpha Torin shot straight up. He was alive.

Everyone was frozen. We just stared at him for what felt like an eternity as he caught his breath. Luna Grace moved first. Throwing herself at him as she embraced him. Torin chuckled as he held her in return. Theo was next, helping to lift his father to his feet for a strong hug. | was still frozen on the floor until their attention turned to me.

The hands that had been holding me belonged to Mina, who was now pulling off the floor, | found my feet just in time for Torin to lift me off them in a tight bear hug. | laughed as | hugged him in return.

"| thought | killed you," | sniffled. "How are you feeling?"

"Honestly," he replied, setting me down, "pretty d amn good."

"So, does that mean it worked?" Theo asked hopefully.

Alpha Torin put a hand on Theo's shoulder and looked around the room at the other pack leaders.

"There's one way to know for sure," he stated. "But I'd rather not do it here."

We all followed Alpha Torin and Luna Grace out of the packhouse. | clung to Theo as we did, still shaking from the ordeal. 'It's okay, Ayla,' Theo linked me as we walked. 'He's okay. We did it. | know we did.'

"That was a bigger risk than imagined, Theo," | said. 'If he...'

'But he didn't.' Theo insisted, rubbing my hand that was wrapped around his arm. 'We will address the what-ifs later, baby. Right now, look at my father. We did that.'

'We don't know for sure it worked,' | replied. 'Yes, we do, Ayla,' Theo said. 'You know it in your heart. It worked.'

| watched Alpha Torin walking a few feet in front of us. He moved so easily. He had a grace and agility | hadn't seen in him since the first day | met him after my father died. It was now that | realized just how much he must have been hiding. How stiff his movements actually were before. This man before me was completely renewed. The content is on [Read the latest chapter there!](#)

'Yes, | think we did,'

Alpha Torin led us to the clearing we were in just the night before with Luna Aniya. We had accumulated a few other pack members to the group on our way who were now eager to see what was going on. If this worked, he wanted to run. His wolf had been cooped up for too long. He needed this. The content is on [Read the latest chapter there!](#)

Before he went to the center of the clearing, Alpha Torin came to me. He reached up and cupped my cheeks.

"I never doubted who you were, Ayla," he said to me softly. "From the moment your father told me, I knew. I didn't know why I was so sure, but I never doubted. Thank you for all the gifts you given me and my family."

I smiled as he kissed my forehead and turned away before I could say anything. This time he stripped all the way down naked. With the crowd hold there breath, and a wink toward Luna Grace, Torin shifted.

It was smooth and beautiful. And within seconds his gorgeous ebony wolf was standing before us in all his glory. There were cheers from us. When we quieted. Torin's wolf, Maximus, bowed toward me in gratitude. I swiped a tear away as a smaller brown wolf rushed to Maximus. The content is on [Read the latest chapter there!](#)

It was Leona, Luna Grace's wolf.

Suddenly, the rest of our pack mates started shifting along with their Alpha. Maximus let out a strong, clear, and commanding howl and the pack chorused it before taking off into the trees.

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It was smooth and beautiful. And within seconds his gorgeous ebony wolf was standing before us in all his glory. There were cheers from us. When we quieted. Torin's wolf, Maximus, bowed toward me in gratitude. | swiped a tear away as a smaller brown wolf rushed to Maximus. The content is on [Read the latest chapter there!](#)

It was Leona, Luna Grace's wolf.

Suddenly, the rest of our pack mates started shifting along with their Alpha. Maximus let out a strong, clear, and commanding howl and the pack chorused it before taking off into the trees.

Chapter 256

Chapter 256: Theo

Kieran was bouncing around in my mind, itching to be let loose, as we watched them disappear. More than anything, | wanted to go with them. Apparently Dasha did, too. But we couldn't. Not yet. We had business to finish.

Ayla and | turned our attention to the other pack leaders.

"Alphas, Lunas," | addressed, "I believe the demonstration can be considered a success. As such, this has provided Ayla and | with a renewed sense of urgency on the matter of the Moonstone. It is our belief that the Moon Goddess requires this from us. We are ready to take a vote."

"All those in favor of Alpha Theo and Luna Ayla reconstituting the Moonstone..." Kingston announced, raising his hand.

The rest of the pack leaders followed suit, lifting their hands in agreement. Save for Alpha Trent. The rest looked at him sternly. "Alpha Trent," Alpha Harden growled softly.

"I'll agree to this on one condition," Alpha Trent insisted. "Before you do this, you have to provide all of us with the same ritual that broke the Moonstone in the first place. | think we all deserve a failsafe if you go back on your word."

"| don't think we're going to be needing that," Kingston replied.

"But we'll provide it all the same," Ayla stated. "You all will be able to review it by the ceremony. After that, it will be kept with the Moon Haven Order. Able to be accessed by all packs."

Alpha Trent sighed. "Fine." He raised his hand.

"Then it's settled," Alpha Harden said judiciously. "I think it's time we all returned home. We have a lot of preparations to do before the solstice. And we'll have to inform our packs of the changes that are coming."

"Of course," | said. "We will keep everyone up to date on ours as well and all lines of communication will be open for the interpack arrangements."

"We will leave you two to yourselves," Luna Victoria said with a smile before taking Alpha Harden's arm and guiding him away. The rest followed, except for Kingston.

"Will you be leaving as well?" Ayla asked him.

He gave her a gentle smile. "I have one more visit with our friend Lloyd," he said, "but yes, it's time for me to head home. Pierce has held things down long enough. Besides, I have to retrieve the rest of the stone. Can't do much without that."

"Yes, indeed," Ayla laughed, "all of this would be pretty pointless without it."

"It's safe, right?" I asked. "Do you think you need extra protection getting it here?"

"It's in a safe place," Kingston confirmed. "I should be okay getting it back. After all, we didn't disclose that I was actually still in possession of it. They believe both pieces are still here. So, you may want to prepare for possible interference. And hey, you need to open that damn box first. It would be even less conducive if the other half wasn't even in there."

I had almost forgotten about that, but I wasn't worried. After everything that had happened, I didn't need to see what was in there to know. Ayla didn't either.

"We'll get it taken care of," I said. I started walking back toward the packhouse, my arm wrapped around Ayla. "Did you manage to get anything out of Lloyd in all your time with him?"

Kingston stiffened a little. "Not what I had hoped," he replied.

He had seemed very distracted lately. He wasn't present much outside of the required meetings. He had reportedly been spending a lot of time in the cellar, both questioning Lloyd and researching. Ayla had previously voiced concerns about his behavior. I had assumed some of it had to do with being here away from his pack and around me and Ayla together.

But even I could tell there was something else weighing on him.

"Nothing more on Grogan?" Ayla probed.

Kingston gave her a tight smile. "Nothing I can do anything with, unfortunately," he said evasively. "Now that Anderson and Malcom have been taken down, it's likely he'll go underground. I'll keep searching, though. I'll find him someday."

"You know we'll help you however we can," Ayla urged.

"He's still a threat to us," I pointed out, "whether he has the Waar Pa k baking him or not."

Kingston nodded a little absently. "Yes, I suppose he is. But he won't get far. I've already started speaking to some of the other Alphas to help track him down."

"What if he hides in rogue territory?" Ayla asked.

"That is very possible," Kingston agreed. "Since the nearest rogue territory is along our borders, we can assume he would be there if he is. We can use that to our advantage at least. Speaking of... I would like to help supervise the Moon Haven transfer. They'll have to travel directly through rogue lands. It's a good place for an ambush."

"Do you really think they would attack them?" Ayla asked. "What threat do they pose with us having the stones?"

"They have knowledge," I offered. "And a lot of it. Sister Mona said we've only begun to explore what they have to offer. I can imagine there is a great deal of information Grogan would love to get his hands on... and/or keep out of ours."

"Yes," Kingston agreed. "The last thing we want is Grogan finding a way to manipulate some prophecy or text against any of us. The sisters need to be protected. I'd like to ensure that happens."

"I think that would be a big help," I said. "Run it by the other pack leaders. They may want to offer their assistance as well. The more people we can put on this, the better."

Kingston gave me a tight smile and a nod. "Of course," he replied. "Well, I've got some packing to do. And I know you two are dying to try and catch up with your pack mates. So, I'll leave you to it."

"Thank you, Kingston," Ayla said sweetly.

Chapter 257

Chapter 257: Kylee

All the other pack Alphas and Lunas had left and preparations for Theo's and Ayla's Alpha and Luna ceremony were well underway. Luckily, there wouldn't need to be many changes for the Moonstone ritual, but there were a few things that needed to be handled. I had nervously approached Luna Grace to see if there was anything jobs she would like me to do. I was relieved when she had me help organize the decorations.

I had felt like such an outsider since | had come home. It wasn't a surprise, really. | still understood that | had lost the place | had before in the pack. But Amy's betrayal hadn't helped. Many people avoided me or gave me dirty looks whenever | walked by. I'm not saying | didn't deserve it but it was still hard. Especially after what happened on the day of the executions. If it weren't for Ayla and Mina, | probably would have just gone back to Blue Fang territory.

But Ayla wanted me here. And after all of the struggles she went through to keep me happy growing up, | knew this was the least | could do. And at least someone was noticing my efforts. Even Annabelle and Maggie were surprisingly kind and supportive toward me. | know it was for Ayla's benefit, but | wasn't going to argue with it.

More than anything, | needed to stay busy. Just like Ma said. She was doing the same. Although, | think coming back had been easier for her. Which | was grateful for. | had been worried that if this transition was too hard on her, she'd relapse. However, she seemed to be doing quite well. She had already joined a local AA group and was volunteering at the recovery center not far from the hospital. Seeing her starting to thrive here at home was a big push for me. If she could do it, | could too.

Besides, staying busy helped me avoid certain people. Well, one in particular. He had been at the packhouse every day since the ritual was agreed upon. He would have a lot to do to help get the packhouse secured and ready for all the visitors we would be having. He had tried to speak with me a couple of times, but something pulled one of us away before we could talk.

That was fine with me. | wasn't ready to face that right now. | wasn't even sure what | was going to do. The nicest thing would be {eos

"Hello... Yoohoo," Ayla's voice broke through my thoughts, waving one of the ribbons we were working with in front of my face. "Earth to Kylee."

"I'm sorry," | said, shaking my head. "I was distracted. What's up?" "Yeah, | could see that," Ayla replied. "You alright, kiddo?" | smiled at hearing her old nickname for me. It had been a while since

she had called me that. We were working on some decoration items and the past few hours had actually felt a little like the old days. So it felt nice to hear from her.

"Yeah, I'm good," | lied. She raised an eyebrow, seeing right through me. "It's just been a bigger transition coming home than | thought it would be. But I'm fine. Really."

Ayla sighed. "I know it's not easy, Kylee," she said, brushing a stray hair away from my face. "Just give it time and keep doing what you're doing. People will move past it eventually."

"I suppose," I said absently. "I'm not even sure they should." "What are you talking about?" Ayla said, setting a finished vase aside.

"I know you say you've forgiven me, but a lot of others haven't. And I'm not sure they should," I said with a shrug. "I don't deserve it. I'm still too selfish and vain. I have no idea what I'm going to do with my life from here because my delusional fantasies had me ending up in a very different place than this. That in itself should make anyone run for the hills, whether I deserved to have someone or not. So, the idea of any of them accepting me into the pack let alone as anything more..."

"Whoa, whoa, whoa," Ayla rushed, stopping the word vomit that was flowing from my mouth. "Where is this coming from? We've talked about this. We all make mistakes when we're young. Yeah, you've still got some growing to do, but so does everyone else your age. And a lot who are older. Including me. I've seen the work you've been putting in, Kylee. You do deserve forgiveness. You deserve to be a member of this pack."

"Yeah, I know," I sulked. "I guess I'm just having a pity party. Which I know, I know, I shouldn't be. I'm in this position because of my own actions and I should do a better job living with the consequences. It just takes a minute when a new one inevitably comes to bite me in the ass."

"What new consequence?" Ayla asked. "Are you sure there isn't something else going on?"

"It's not a big deal," I insisted. "I really am fine. I'm just working out how to handle it, that's all. You know, coping tools and such."

"You sure?" The content is on [Read the latest chapter there!](#)

I smiled at her. "Yeah, I'm sure." The content is on [Read the latest chapter there!](#)

That part was true, at least. I was just trying to figure out how to cope with what all had happened. But I knew it was only a matter of time before I would have to tell her what it was that was bothering me the most. I just didn't know how I was going to tell her that I

Chapter 258

Chapter 258: Theo

| closed out of the video chat with Alpha Harden and Alpha Vincent just as my dad walked into the office. He had been going almost non-stop the last couple of days. And who could blame him? He felt better than he had in years. We had the pack doctor and his specialist do

thorough exams the day after we healed him, and they both agreed he was in perfect condition. Even for his age.

“Maggie and | have the guard rotation complete for the three days before and after the eclipse,” he informed me. “The Moonstone has a twenty-four hour guard.”

“Thanks, Dad,” | said. “Zeff and Holly should be here soon. This should be their last trip. So, they’ll be occupying the house from here on out. I’ll give him a walkthrough of the access tunnel and cellar security this afternoon.”

We were interrupted by a knock on the door.

“Enter,” | called.

McCabe opened the door and came in, followed by my cousin Will. “I’m sorry to interrupt,” he said seriously. “There’s something you should know.”

His tone was concerning and he had my full attention.

“Lloyd is dead,” Will informed.

“What?” | replied, instantly on my feet. “How?”

“Not entirely sure,” McCabe said. “I’ve got Mina heading down to run forensics. | thought you might want to check it out.”

| was already heading down. The new tunnel access was complete, so at least we could avoid attention now. | wasn’t exactly upset about Lloyd’s death. We knew we needed to address him soon, but we wanted to wait until after the ceremony. He would have been executed anyway. What bothered me was how.

| had ensured he was kept fed and healthy enough to keep him sane. | knew every guard that was assigned to him. There was no reason he should have just died. Something was up and | didn’t like it.

Mina was already there when we entered the cell. The place didn't smell the greatest, but Lloyd didn't look any worse for the wear. There was no apparent sign of what caused his death.

"Any ideas yet?" I asked Mina as she finished drawing blood and pulled out some swabs.

"We'll have to wait for the test results for confirmation," she said. "But my guess, poison."

"What makes you say that?" McCabe asked.

"It's strangely subtle but" — Mina reached up and pulled Lloyd's mouth open — "smell that."

I moved in and breathed in, instantly pulling back with a grimace.

"What the hell is that?" I asked.

"I'm pretty sure it's wolfsbane hybrid that Harry was working on," Mina replied. "I recognize the smell from going through his stuff. Plus, I found this." She held up an evidence bag with a small glass tube in it. "It was under him by the wall."

"How would he have gotten that?" Will asked from the door. "You don't think one of ours gave it to him?"

"We'll question them just in case, but no," I replied. "Could he have been hiding it on his person?" I asked McCabe.

"He was searched when we arrested him back at the border," he stated. "But that was primarily for weapons. I wouldn't say it was thorough enough to find something like that."

I nodded. "We know Harry was working with Grogan and Grogan was working with the rogues. It's reasonable to think they either crossed paths or it was given to him at some point. We'll keep looking into this to be on the safe side. I don't want to leave anything to chance right

now.

"Yes, Alpha," they said in unison.

I left Will and Mina to finish their work and headed back upstairs.

McCabe followed me.

"How are the rest of the preparations coming?" I asked.

"I've coordinated with Maggie and Alpha Torin," McCabe said methodically. "I have a few last-minute personnel issues to address, but it doesn't seem to be anything major. I think I've cleared out most of Hawkins' men. Any that may be left aren't in a position to do much."

"Okay, keep me updated," I replied. There seemed to be something else on his mind but I wasn't sure if he was going to bring it up or not. Either way, he had been in a weird mood the last few days and I wanted to get to the bottom of it. "If there's something else, you can tell me, Finley."

"Hmm..." he said, pulling out of whatever zone he was in. "Oh, yeah, well... There's been some issues at the campus. And at the packhouse really. It's about Luna Ayla's sister."

"Kylee?" I asked, stopping in my tracks. "What about her? Has she done something?"

"No, no," he rushed. "There's just been a lot of negative comments and rumors about her. And regarding her relationship with Amy. It's all pretty petty stuff really. I've just been hearing a lot of it, I guess."

"Oh," I replied, continuing on my way. "We can't really be surprised. The truth about what she did was bound to sink in with the rest of the pack at some point. I guess I can at least be grateful that Amy's betrayal has made Ayla's position much more stable. "But at the expense of her sister?" McCabe questioned.

I shrugged. "We can't control how they handle the truth of things."

McCabe pursed his lips with a nod.

"I wasn't here when all that went down," he said as we walked. "And I haven't heard the story from you two, but... do you really think she deserves the harsh treatment she's receiving?"

It wasn't an accusation, but a genuine curiosity. However, there was something else in his voice that said this wasn't a purely professional question.

"Are you asking me as your Alpha or as your friend?"

He rubbed the back of his neck. "Both, I guess."

"Well, as a friend, yes, I think she does," I said bluntly. "But I'm also aware that I'm biased. And that bias isn't inclined to let me view her in a completely fair light. As the Alpha of the pack, no. She was a pretty

66 HOT

shi tty person. And | think the pack has a right to be disappointed, even a little angry, with her behavior over the past few years. However, | wouldn't agree that she should be shunned or made the pack pariah as long as she continues to make steps to change."

McCabe nodded and a tension seemed to leave his body.

"Why are you asking?" | asked.

He waved me off. "Oh, it's nothing. Just kept hearing so much about her it's hard not to think about."

| nodded and let the subject drop, but something was telling me there was more to this than he was telling me.

Chapter 259

Chapter 259: Ayla

"When did Alpha Kingston say he was bringing the other stone?" Sister Mona asked as we waited in one of the rooms in the cellar for Theo.

"He'll be here two days before the solstice," | informed her. "He didn't want to return sooner in case it drew too much attention to him moving it. Besides, he has things to take care of in his own pack. He was here too long."

"And you're sure he still has it?" she asked.

She had been worried about Kingston's half of the Moonstone ever since he left. | don't know what had changed but she seemed suspicious of something.

"You keep asking about Kingston and the stone," | pointed out. "Why are you so concerned he won't be here with it? He's one of our biggest supporters."

"Is he?" she asked. "Why are you asking?" | snapped, getting a little annoyed. Seeing my change in attitude, Sister Mona sighed. "My apologies. | know you and Alpha Kingston were close."

"Yes, and he's a good man," | insisted. "He understands full well how important this is. | know he will be here. What | don't know is why you seem to think he won't be."

"It's not that | don't believe he will bring it," Sister Mora said. Her 0.00%

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Chupam 259 Ayla

193 Vouchers

brow furrowed as she searched for the words to explain. "Before he left, I felt a dark cloud around him. Something changed. Something shifted with him and he seemed conflicted."

"He was upset that he was at a dead end with finding Grogan," I said. "He's one of the main perpetrators of the Onyxcrown massacre. There's a lifelong vendetta there. So it's no surprise he seemed upset."

"I suppose you're right," she said. "But I suppose this Grogan character is another concern we should be worried about."

"Yes, we are aware," I said. "that's why Kingston is taking every precaution when bringing the stone over. He will keep us and we will keep you informed throughout the entire process. But it won't matter much if we don't learn what it is Theo and I are even supposed to do to get the stones back together."

I was indicating the reason we were there. We were meant to be going over the ritual so we would be prepared. We were just waiting on Theo to come back with our half of the Moonstone. Which he walked in right at that minute carrying the metal box that held the stone. He paused for a moment, feeling the slight tension in the room.

"Everything okay?" he asked, eyeing me curiously. "Everything is fine," I said. "Just voicing some concerns about the ceremony and upcoming move."

"Ah, yes," he replied. "We'll get all the logistics sorted out with the Moon Haven move right after the ceremony. How do the rest of the sister's feel about rejoining wolf society?"

His tone was cheerful as he sat next to me, giving me a kiss on the temple. He had been in such a wonderful mood lately. It was hard not to adopt the same excitement. 19.21%

11:27

Jumpman 250 Ayla

"They are quite pleased with the suggestion, actually," she said with a bright smile. "Most of them at least. They are all packing and preparing for the move as we speak."

"That's good to hear," Theo replied. "Now, what are we supposed to be doing with this thing on the solstice?"

Theo turned the key to the box and opened it up. Resting on a black velvet cushion inside was a red stone. It wasn't faceted like a gemstone but still translucent. Almost like glass. However, it was more than evident that this stone was far more than just simple glass. There was a feeling a sense of power that radiated from it that was impossible to miss when standing close to it.

"We've designated the spot where you two will stand," Sister Mina explained. "It is important that you are outside in the open so that you are completely under the eclipse. The ritual has to happen during the totality period. Luckily, that should give us about an hour, so we have some wiggle room. The most important part is that you perform the blood offering within that time."

"Blood offering?" Theo repeated.

"The Moonstone was created using the blood of your ancestors," Sister Mina stated. "That is why your families have such a strong connection to it. It will take both of your bloods to reconstitute it."

"That's no big deal," I replied. It wasn't any different than what I had done for the blood oath to the other pack leaders. "That's it?" Theo asked. "That seems pretty easy considering how difficult it seemed to pull it apart in the first place."

"Well, the stone was meant to be one," Sister Mona pointed out. "However, I fear it does sound more simple than it may be in reality."

46.26%

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Chapter 292 Ayla

288 Vouchers

You both will have to hold the stone entirely uninterrupted until it

Qi becomes one again. No one can touch you. You can't move from your spot. And your blood must flow for however long it takes." The content is on Read the latest chapter there!

Theo and I looked at each other.

"But we heal too fast," I said.

Sister Mona nodded. "Yes, a small dose of wolfsbane will be necessary to counteract that."

I fidgeted a little. "One problem with that," I replied. "I'm immune to wolfsbane. It won't have the same effect."

“Oh,” Sister Mona breathed. “Oh dear. I guess we will need to find another option. I would patatdcjobtShave te conti Susly cut yourself to get through this. I’m not sure how long it will actually take.” The content is on [Read the latest chapter there!](#)

Theo muttered something under his breath. “What was that?”

“Mina said Lloyd killed himself using some kind of poison that Harry had developed,” he explained. “It was some kind of wolfsbane hybrid. She said he died of massive internal bleeding.”

“We don’t want that much of her blood, Alpha,” Sister Mona interjected.

“Of course not,” Theo said. “He took a huge, unadulterated dosage. But all of his research on it was with hi stuff. We can have Mika ard the pack doctor. ta Pand look and see if it could be a safe alternative. It would make sense that that was Harry’s reason for creating it in the first place. He was looking for the stone’as is was.” The content is on [Read the latest chapter there!](#)

288 Vouchers

“Yeah, he wouldn’t have known there were two pieces that had to be united,” I pointed out. “Couldn’t he?” Theo replied. “There was already so much he knew that

we had no idea about.”

He was right. It did make sense.

“Okay,” I agreed. “Let’s check it out.”