

THE LUNA'S CHOICE

Chapter 262: Finley

It may have been a stupid move to kiss Kylee with the emotional state she was in, but I didn't regret it. It was hard to walk away, but I had a job to do. And protecting my Alpha and Luna was more important at the moment than convincing my tentative mate that I wasn't going anywhere.

I rejoined the group just as two cars pulled up beside ours. Luna Ayla greeted them kindly and acted as if nothing was wrong, but I could tell she was still on edge over the phone call we had overheard. So was Kylee. She was sticking close to her sister with dedication.

It wasn't until we were starting to load back into the vehicles. that Kylee left her side. She opted to ride in the car with Sister Mona and her companion and guard. It hurt, but I would give her the space. She wasn't wrong that we needed to focus on the solstice ceremony first. And it would be less of a distraction not having her so close to me while I tried to get a read on the situation with Luna Ayla and Alpha Kingston.

We loaded into the SUV and started on our way back to the packhouse. Luna Ayla continued to check her phone. nervously. I was working out how to approach her privately once we were home when Alpha Theo addressed her discomfort.

"What's up, babe?" he asked casually.

She sighed heavily. "Kingston isn't going to be here tonight," she said worriedly.

L

I noticed Alpha Theo tense slightly. "What happened?"

"He said nothing has happened," she explained, "but he's worried something will. He found out that Grogan's men have. been watching the place where he hid the Moonstone. He hasn't been able to

retrieve it yet."

"You're kidding," Gamma Jimmy hissed from the driver's seat. "He's cutting this pretty damn close."

“He insisted he would have it tonight,” Luna Ayla informed us. “Him and Pierce have come up with a sting operation to get the men watching the place while he gets it. I told him it sounded like a trap.”

“Which I’m sure he also realizes,” Alpha Theo said, surprisingly calmly. He pulled out his phone and dialed a number. “Briggs, I need you to send a team of warriors to the Sablemane packhouse. They need to be on the road within the hour.” He paused for a reply. “I’ll explain when we get there.”

He hung up. Despite his calm exterior, I noticed him squeeze Luna Ayla’s hand for support. Something was still off. He must have thought so too.

“This wasn’t an unexpected possibility,” he said to her. “There’s something else that’s bothering you.”

She chewed on her lip and nodded slightly. “He sounded weird,” she replied. “I don’t know. I don’t think he was telling me everything.”

“Is sending a team going to cause issues?” I inquired curiously. I knew the relationship between the packs was complicated. “I understand the urgency but if he thinks we’re overstepping, would he hold the stone hostage?”

Chapter 262 Finley

“No,” Luna Ayla said confidently. “That isn’t something he would do.”

Alpha Theo glanced at me briefly. I don’t think he was as sure as the Luna was.

“I think sending help will be good,” Luna Ayla said, almost trying to convince herself: “It’s probably just the anticipation that’s making me crazy.”

‘Can you reach out to Bonnerville when we get back,’ Alpha Theo linked me. ‘I want to know what kind of activity they’ve been seeing the last few days.’

‘Yeah, I’ll call first thing,’ I replied. ‘I spoke to my replacement last week and he said they noticed some movement across the border. But nothing directed at our territory.’

‘That’s what I’m worried about,’ Alpha replied.

The rest of the drive back was uneventful. The Luna’s demeanor eventually shifted back to her normal optimistic state and she was ready to greet our guests. She had arranged to have dinner ready for everyone as soon as we got back to welcome Alpha Harden and Alpha Weston, who had arrived while we were out, as well as Alpha Anthony, who had followed us back. She went straight into her Luna role once we got out of the SUV.

I couldn't help but notice Kylee sneaking off by herself. Escaping into the packhouse. I was nearly tempted to follow after until Beta Briggs approached.

'Come with us,' he linked, giving me a serious look.

Alpha Theo excused himself from the others and allowed Luna Ayla to lead them away. We headed straight across the property to the house with the cellar entrance. Zeff was expecting us because he was at the door to let us in.

"What's going on?" I asked once we were inside.

"I called Beta Pierce after I dispatched the warriors," Beta Briggs informed us. "When I mentioned their plan to retrieve the stone tonight, I believe I caught him off guard. I asked him how the search for Grogan was going and he said they hadn't had any luck up until now. I don't think they had been looking that much."

"We took out the leader of the Waar Pak," I pointed out. "He likely went to ground."

"That is likely the case," Alpha Theo said. "But Alpha Kingston wouldn't just let it go. There is something suspicious going on. While I don't think he would outright betray us, I want every precaution taken. We need to increase our patrols along the Sablemane border."

"I've got that working," Gamma Jimmy said.

"I'll push our patrols, as well," I added.

"Good," Alpha Theo said.

"Is there anything I can do?" Zeff asked.

"You can help keep Ayla occupied. I don't want to worry her any more than she already is," Alpha replied. "This may be nothing, but I want us looking into any possible threat."

We left the house and headed back to the packhouse. I

73 90%

pts 262. Finley

1Belonging veered away from the others once we were inside. The tense atmosphere made it impossible not to make sure my mate was safe.

97815