

Dr Luna Book 6

The Lycan Princess Chapter 26-30

“Aiden, your mother, and I will take a step back and let you and Diana handle things when Alpha Sion and Luna Clover arrive. It is important that you two establish a good relationship together. Especially since you will probably be family one day. Diana you have already started that relationship. You took steps to ensure that the sheya would get her mate back. This was the reason you made the agreement what it is. I am sure that you have already formed a lasting impression with her.” Wyatt noticed the minor frown on his son’s lips. “You know... I wouldn’t put this past Selene to have planned long ago. Since Shaun Faust was to be mated with Diana... it is a way for this all to come full circle by bringing the children together. A way to close a chapter that had a sad ending.”

Diana pressed herself against Aiden's side as she placed her fingers around his arm. "I hope this time everything turns out better. Shaun deserved better than he got. I never realized how shallow my feelings were then. It took me being with Aiden to realize what real love felt like. And how trust is the basic foundation to a solid relationship. We can all learn from the past and the mistakes that were made." She glanced up at Aiden as he looked down smiling at her.

"And we have learned from Lucy's arrangement. We will do things differently and visit more often. Our children will grow up as friends and if feelings form then maybe you can help with the mate bond." Aiden looked at his father, who shrugged slightly.

"Their daughter would be part sheya. I do not think I can manipulate that mate bond, though I can try. Sheya's are remarkable. They have resilient minds and are very

powerful. They have the power to protect the minds of those around them as well. They can enhance moods and confuse enemies. A powerful ally... or a dangerous enemy. Remember that.” Wyatt then turned to look at Freya. Are you going to tell them?

There isn't anything to tell right now. For now, we will wait. They have enough on their mind with the Children of the Moon. Freya patted Wyatt's arm and looked at Diana. “If at any moment you need us, just send a messenger fairy.”

“It is hard to hand over the reins, but this is the first important step. Even though this is your mission, we are still here. Don't forget you have us to depend on.” Wyatt was proud of the man his son was becoming and he couldn't think of a better Luna for him than Diana. However, they were both still young and inexperienced. They would gradually be handing the leadership over to them to make the transition as smooth as possible.

“Please be careful. They are very cunning. I don’t know who you can trust. I wish I could be more helpful. I wish you weren’t going.” Colleen said to Kurt as he held her and Sully.

“Mom and Dad will look after you and Sully while I am gone. I don’t want you to worry. I’ll be back before you know it and we will do our best to save as many pack members as we can. I’m sure there are others there like you. They need to be saved too.” He then removed his arm from Colleen to lift Sully up with both hands. “Now you be good for your mother. You sleep through the night and don’t have any blowouts! Keep the crying to a minimum, do you hear me?” He said in fake sternness as he cradled the baby back to his chest. “I’ll be back soon, so be a good boy for me.” He kissed Sully on his head and gently shifted him into Colleen’s.

“Take this time apart to really think about what you want.” He whispered as he brushed his fingers over her neck. “Remember, I am

not going anywhere and you can take as long as you need—”

“Kurt, I’ve told you countless times that I want to be with you. I know you are worried that I am just saying that but it’s what I want. When you come back, I want you to make it official.” She watched as his lips curled up into a smile, pulling her tight against his side.

“Say the word once I’ve returned and it will be.” This would be the perfect time for Colleen to rationalize her thoughts while not being polluted by the mate bond. She has made a lot of progress mentally, but Kurt wanted to be sure for her. He didn’t want to do anything that could later cause her pain. Regardless of how hard it was to push his feelings aside. To him, it was all about Colleen and the pace she needed. If she still wanted this when he returned, then he wouldn’t hesitate to claim her. It has been a real challenge trying to reel in his beast. It

taught him a lot about himself too, but his feelings for Colleen helped keep him in check.

Suddenly, heads all shifted to look out the window. They could all feel the presence that had just entered the pack territory. The Alpha and Luna of the Ankh pack had arrived.

“It feels so good to be home,” Gia said as she squeezed Conners’ hand.

“Better than being with me?” He teased as she giggled.

“Who did I choose?” She turned her head to look at the sour faced woman behind her.

“Ease up Odell. This pack is the safe pack. We aren’t at the Children of the Moon.”

“You ease up. My job is to keep Clover safe and that is what I am doing.” Odell growled, folding her arms over her chest.

“She is just grumpy because Logan stayed behind with Demetri and Nadine to watch over the Ankh pack.” Conner grinned at Odell as she rolled her eyes.

“I don’t want to hear it, Conner. You were ready to hyperventilate when you thought Gia was coming without you.” Clover laughed as the sunlight flickered over her light brown hair. She playfully bumped into the side of the man next to her. “Try wearing a smile.” She watched as his hazel eyes looked down at her as his lips twitched up slightly.

“You know how I feel about this trip. The fact that my pregnant mate has to hike into shriek infested woods to help settle the mood of wolves that need housebroken—”

“Are you afraid the shrieks will be too much for you?” Clover watched as his eyes lit with amusement.

“You are in a good mood, aren’t you?”

“I’m excited to meet her again. I can’t wait for you to meet her. She is beautiful. She has light blonde hair, with ivory skin and eyes that shine like silver. She didn’t even know me but tried to help me. I think we will be good friends. I hope you and the prince will get along well.”

“Aiden is great. I don’t see why anyone wouldn’t like him.” Gia interrupted, turning her head to look back at Clover and Sion.

As they traveled deeper into the pack territory, they saw the pack members going about their daily routines. Children running around and playing while their parents watched over them, warriors training and patrolling the borders, and the scent of freshly cooked meals coming from the pack houses. It all felt peaceful, and everyone looked happy.

“Mom! Dad!” Gia suddenly squealed, diving into her mother’s open arms. Susan squeezed

her daughter tightly and then began to look over her. Adam took Gia into his arms next.

“Well, are we going to be grandparents?” Susan asked eagerly as Gia snorted, shaking her head.

“Moom.” Gia sighed.

“You are young and in your prime. It didn’t take your father long at all to put you in my belly. Are you active? You aren’t using protection, are you?”

“MOM!”

Susan turned to look at the man standing directly behind Gia. Conner looked at Gia’s parents and said, “It’s good to see you again Adam. Nice to meet you, Susan. Gia has told me all about you.”

“That’s nice. Well, about grandbabies... everyone has one now. Even my brother Sam has a grandchild. I am being left out. Are you staying healthy? You aren’t having any

issues in that department, are you?” Susan eyed Conner, whose face turned beet red.

“Wait, Uncle Sam... you mean Kurt has a baby?” Gia’s eyes widened as she ignored her mother’s prodding.

“Sues.” Adam bumped into her shoulder. “Kurt found his mate and she has a baby boy. Sam and Renee are over the moon for the little guy. Kurt is quite smitten too—”

“And I want to be a young grandma too!” Susan interrupted. “If I am losing my daughter already, then the least you can do is give me grandchildren.” She pointed at Conner, who stood there rubbing the back of his neck.

“It’s not like I am not trying—” Conner was interrupted by the low growl from Adam.

“Oh Adam... let’s not forget how you claimed me as a mate, right? My father had to give his okay for you to go and mate with me... remember? How quickly you forget what it is

like when you find your mate.” Susan scolded Adam, who looked away with a crooked grin.

“Anyways... I believe this conversation can wait.” Adam said, clearing his throat and looking at Sion and Clover. “I am here to escort you to the packhouse. The royal family is waiting for you there.”

Sion nodded at Adam politely as he wrapped his hand around Clover’s waist. “Lead the way,” he said as he glanced down at his mate. He had tried to convince her all the way up until they left to stay behind. It wasn’t that Clover wasn’t capable, but she was pregnant. Her body was vulnerable at times due to the changes she was going through. Not to mention he was terribly protective of her and his unborn child.

Gia and Susan filled the air with their chatter as the rest quietly followed Adam along the trail. Sion and Clover looked around the pack and their members. They

were both taking in the surroundings of the formidable pack. This was the King's pack and there wasn't a stronger one around. The people seemed relaxed and happy. It was clear they didn't worry much since they had strong leaders.

Clover could sense the moods of those around her. She had been honing her skills as a sheya with the help of their friend Stilts. According to him, she had a long way to go but she was good enough to go play with werewolves. With her enhanced skills though she was able to get her visions of the past much easier. As they walked the trail, flashbacks played in her mind. She saw the fairy queen Lilly holding a necklace around her neck. Then another image of her running down the trail back to the packhouse with tears in her eyes. Then it flipped to her holding two babies in her arms while two other little boys wrestled with another man on the ground. She looked happy.

Then she saw Rhea as a child running and playing with three other boys. Then an older image of her staring up at Leviathan.

“From now on, I will always be with you... as your summon.” Leviathan’s voice echoed clearly in Clover’s mind as she watched the pink blush spread over Rhea’s cheeks.

Warmth. She felt a gentle warm light that surrounded this pack. She closed her eyes briefly pushing the visions away. Stilts had helped her with that. At first, she didn’t have any control and the past flooded into her. Now she knew how to shut it off and to turn it on.

“Clover?” She heard Sion’s voice, and she looked up at him smiling.

“There is so much positive energy that it drowns out the negative ones. I like this place. If we have a daughter... this will be a wonderful home for her.” She watched as

Sion smiled and squeezed her tightly against his side.

“Are you checking out the place for our future child already?” He teased.

Sion.

He stared at her as her voice entered his mind. Yes, my love?

These people are not our enemy. Please remember that and behave yourself. We may end up family in the future.

Sion chuckled and nodded his head. Yes, my Alpha.

Sion!

What? No bedroom talk here? He winked at her as a pink stain reached her cheeks. I fully submit to you, my Queen. Your will is also my own.

Except when it comes to fighting? She smirked up at him as a sheepish grin reached his lips.

When it comes to your safety, then my will comes into play.

What if I wanted to be with another man? She teased as his predatory eyes locked onto hers.

My dearest love, if it is a list of souls you wish for me to reap early, then by all means... just give me the names. He sneered at her mockingly, his face hovering mere inches from hers before he moved away, pressing an unyielding kiss onto the crown of her head.

Sion... I sense her. She is in that house. Clover said in excitement as her eyes roamed over the large manor they were approaching.

She clutched at Sion in nervous excitement as they walked up the porch stairs. Adam

opened the door and turned to motion for them to enter.

“Alpha Sion, Luna Clover, I would like to introduce you to the royal family. Alpha King Wyatt, Luna Queen Freya, Lycan Prince Aiden, and the Lycan Princess Diana.”

The Lycan Princess Chapter 27

Diana’s silver eyes locked onto Clover’s green eyes. The voices were muffled and all she could pay attention to was this woman. The one she had made an agreement with. They both smiled at each other, sharing a moment. They had both made a decision that would impact their future children. It was something they shared... together. Clover walked towards Diana, and she met her halfway. The two women embraced, and the room fell silent.

“Thank you.” Clover whispered, “for thinking of me the last time we met. You were trying to make sure I got my Sion

back... I won't ever forget the kindness you tried to show me. In a moment, when my world was shattering.”

“I tried... but we were the ones outsmarted.” Diana laughed quietly as Clover nodded her head. The two women held hands as they stared at the other. “I think it was for the best though. If I have a son and you a daughter we will make sure they see each other often. We can have play dates. Maybe we can leave the kids with our mates while we take time to ourselves.”

“I'm liking this plan better and better.” Clover grinned, nodding her head in agreement. “Diana, this is my mate Sion... Sion come here and shake her hand.” She giggled as Sion stepped closer.

“Princess.” He nodded his head respectfully as Diana clasped her hand in his warmly.

“It's Diana, we will be on a first name basis. It is great to finally meet you Sion.” She

looked at him with a small smile on her face as she took in his appearance. “I can see him in you, you look like Shaun, except you are taller. Clover, Sion, this is my mate, Aiden.” She turned her head as Aiden stepped next to her.

“It is a pleasure to meet you both.” He said politely, shaking each of their hands. He watched as Sion’s gaze moved past him to where his father and mother were standing. “These are my parents, Wyatt and Freya.”

“Alpha Sion,” Wyatt came forward, shaking his hand firmly. “Aiden will be handling this mission in full. I also think this will be a good opportunity for all of you to get to know one another. Especially with the agreement that has been made.”

Sion and Aiden stared at their mates before directing their gaze at each other. Green clashed with hazel as the two men sized the other up. Two powerful leaders, a King of the Spirit Realm, the Alpha of the Ankh pack

and the future King of the Lycans. Aiden was curious how Sion felt about the arrangement that had been made. Sion surprised him when his lips curled up in a warm smile, his arm pulling Clover tenderly to his side.

“While my queen’s decision may have been made in haste, it was an excellent decision. Uniting our families can only further strengthen our lines and create powerful warriors for the future.” Sion’s hazel eyes met with Aiden’s. “This is an arrangement that probably would have happened anyway. Lucky for us, our mates made the decision for us.”

Sion wasn’t just okay with the decision, he was proud of his mate for making it. It made Aiden feel a bit shallow with how upset he was when he first heard about it. Though this came from the past experience from his sister. He had seen the damage first hand which was something none of them had seen. However, Diana had put thought into

her decision. They would do their best to build their relationship as children. The way it was supposed to go with Lucy... and it did until they made the switch.

“Yes, I just want our children to be happy. They will be in a position where they will need to lean on each other and their strengths. I think if we plan to meet often and blend our families as much as possible this will help the most.” Aiden watched as Sion nodded his head in agreement.

“So traveling like this is going to be a regular thing?” Odell snorted, receiving a sharp look from Clover.

Aiden chuckled as he looked over at the woman. “I find it fascinating how much Kelpies and Dobhar’s are actually alike. Maybe it is a water fairy thing? Or the fact that you are both dark fairies?” He said thoughtfully as Odell scoffed.

“I am nothing like those prancing water ponies.” She folded her arms over her chest with a small scowl.

“Sorry about her. Odell is my pally... which is like a familiar. She can be impolite.” Clover watched as Aiden waved Odell’s attitude off dismissively.

“We know all about fairies and their temperamental ways. You have nothing to apologize for. Sometimes the guardians can be unwelcoming and rude too. That is just their protective nature.” Aiden listened as a hard gust of air blew from Jason’s mouth, as he arched a brow up at his nephew.

“Rude is a bit extreme. Of course we aren’t welcoming of strangers. It isn’t our job to trust everyone and be a diplomat. It is to protect.” Jason said as Odell nodded her head in agreement. “It only takes one second... one second of trust...it isn’t worth it. I would rather come across as antisocial and ‘rude’.”

“Jason here didn’t even trust his own mate in the beginning.” Wyatt chuckled as he patted his brother on the shoulder. Diana smiled and looked back at Clover, only her eyes were focused in a different direction. She followed her gaze to Colleen, who was wrapped securely in Kurt’s arm. She noticed the small frown that formed on Clover’s lips as her eyes began to water.

Sion’s arm moved over Clover’s side and his intense gaze was resting on her. There was so much tenderness in his every movement and touch when it came to her. As if he wasn’t worthy to be near her side and was going to lose his wonderful privilege of being next to her. Diana watched as his eyes softened as he gripped her closer.

“Is everything alright?” Diana whispered.

“She has had a hard life.” Clover pursed her lips together and looked at Diana. “I could see a glimpse of her past.” She stopped and shook her head. Clover had a rough life in

the beginning too, but it was nothing compared to Colleen. The brief glances of her past was enough to curdle her stomach. The women didn't have any decision making abilities. Men were allowed to r**e women and claim them as their own. Their marks were not consensual but all forced. They didn't own their bodies. They existed for the men and that was it. Forced to bed their mate at all times and bear his children. The vision that broke Clover was that of Colleen at around ten years old. She had started her period while she was sitting on the couch. When she got up, a small red stain was on the furniture. There was a man in the room who called her repulsive and disgusting. He went on a rant of how gross women were and ordered her to be sent away until she was no longer bleeding. She could feel the humiliation and fear from Colleen. She even thought of herself as dirty and unworthy.

Dibs on ripping that man's jugular out. Her wolf Sheena snarled in Clover's mind as she paced back and forth in agitation.

Clover... are you okay? Sion's gentle voice entered her mind.

Sion... I know we are here to accompany Diana and Aiden but this has become personal to me. I am fully invested into either purging or changing this pack... by any means necessary. I want to join Aiden and Diana in this completely.

My Queen, I will do whatever you command. If it is blood you seek, I'll mop the ground red with it.

Clover smiled and tilted her head up to meet the serious hazel eyes gazing back at her. We will follow Aiden and Diana's lead and support them, especially in battle.

"My Queen and I will not only accompany you to the Children of the Moon pack, but we will both fully support you. We will plunge

fearlessly into battle if necessary.” Sion lifted his gaze at Aiden and Diana’s.

“Thank you—” Aiden began to say as Sion shook his head.

“No thanks necessary. I am just obeying my queen. I do whatever she wants me to.” Sion listened as Clover’s voice echoed into his mind. Don’t forget your queen also wishes for you to become friends with the prince and princess. His lips twitched upwards as he lowered his nose into her hair.

“We do have two more companions joining us. They should be here any moment. In the future, they have talked about moving here, especially if we have a daughter. Kai is my Gamma and his mate Epona is a kelpie.”

“Yes, we know of Epona,” Aiden said with a small nod. “They would be more than welcome to join our pack if they ever choose to.”

“Sion,” Wyatt said, as he stared at the powerful young man, “the shrieks have all but taken over the woods near the Children of the Moon. There used to only be a few around, but now there are hundreds. A large mass of them occupy those woods. I’m afraid I do not know much about your power, but with that many shrieks—”

“It isn’t a problem. We will see how bold these shrieks are, but chances are, with my presence alone, they will not show themselves. I will probably have to flush them out. However, even if they come in the hundreds, I can disperse them all in an instant. I have authority over the dead. The only one having more authority than me is Reapus himself.” Sion could see the small smile that rested on Wyatt’s lips. His eyes seemed relieved and, while he didn’t voice it, it was clear he was concerned for his son’s safety.

“I heard that you have become a new creature and are no longer a lycan. You can transform into a lupine and into Anubis, is that correct?” Wyatt asked, looking at Sion curiously.

“I see you are well informed.” Sion nodded his head. “Yes, this is correct. Originally, I would be a lupine here and become Anubis in the spirit realm. However, during my last battle I fought as Anubis here. Maybe it is because of Clover, but I can shift freely as each... no matter what realm I am in. Reapus was very intrigued about this and seemed to not have any answers for this either.”

“So your children...” Freya began to ask curiously.

“They will be lupines, according to Reapus. What you are really asking is what beast would my daughter be if I have one.” He smiled at her knowingly. “And yes, she would be a lupine. I do not know if she will only be lupine or if she will also have a

werewolf side. She will be able to stand on two feet and be superior in strength and speed to a lycan. Plus, she will have some sheya magic, but how much we won't know until later."

"Sounds like she would be the perfect fit for the Diamond pack. We are a mixture of everything here." Freya smiled at him warmly as she rested against Wyatt's side. Sion returned her smile, feeling grateful for the welcoming reception he and Clover had received from the Diamond pack. It was rare for outsiders to be so readily accepted into a pack, but it seemed that the Diamond pack was unlike all the other packs. Which made sense since this was the pack of the royals. The royal family were people that seemed respectful and accepting of others. In fact, it was because of Wyatt that Clover was alive today. He owed the Alpha King all of his gratitude and would be forever indebted to him because without her he was nothing.

Diana. Clover's voice echoed into Diana's mind. Her eyes looked a bit shocked but she made no other motion to give away Clover was speaking to her.

As a sheya, Clover could enter anyone's mind to speak.

I need to tell you about something I saw in Colleen's past. They condition the women there, in order for them to be compliant as adults. Her older sister tried to run from her mate. I couldn't see much but I gathered he was especially cruel and abusive. As punishment, she was strapped down in the middle of the town and r***d publicly by her mate. No one moved to stop it. Her screams and cries filled the air and nothing. Instead, even her parents accepted this as just. Colleen was in her young teens. She hasn't seen her sister since that day. She was chained in her mate's house. Colleen has seen her sister's children but never her sister again. She is still chained and r***d to

this day. Forced to give birth to her mate's children. The reason I am bringing this up is because—

Because something this deep rooted is not redeemable. There are certain actions that can not be overlooked or forgiven. Diana bristled as she glared into Clover's emerald eyes. Her blood boiled with rage as the truth of the Children of the Moon was coming more to light. Those who committed atrocious acts could not be rehabilitated. They were too far lost. Can you see them for who they are? Will you be able to tell what is in their hearts?

It will depend on the individual person. Most of them I should be able to see their minds. However, you need to think about what you want to do. If there are some who can be saved they will have severe emotional damage. This won't be a simple fix. Do you leave the pack standing to be rehabilitated? If so, you would need to place someone there

you can undoubtedly trust. These people will be easily manipulated. If they are taken into your pack, they will need to be watched and counseled. They would be easy targets for predators.

Diana pursed her lips. Even leaving someone in charge wouldn't be enough. A small group would have to be left in charge. They would all have to be trustworthy and strong enough to stop a coup. For now, I think we take one step at a time. We will see what this pack is like. From there we can decide their fate. If there are only a handful of people worth saving then there is no point keeping the pack. However, if we can save them I will do everything necessary to. I will not stand by and let people suffer like this or worse.

Diana felt Aiden's fingers trace over her side gently, causing her to look up at him. His green eyes gazed at her curiously and then glanced over at Clover. It seemed their private conversation was noticed by the two

mates. Sion was also looking intently at Clover, waiting for an answer to his unspoken question.

“It appears your friends have arrived.” Wyatt said, looking out the large window.

“Good. We leave now!” Diana’s command thundered through the room as her emotions threatened to overwhelm her. Rage seethed through her veins like molten lava threatening to burst through the crevices of her tightly contained composure. Aiden’s comforting arm helped keep her grounded. His hand rubbed over her trembling arm as he nodded in agreement.

“Let’s group up. We will reach the Children of the Moon before nightfall.” Aiden looked around the room with a brief nod. “We will send a messenger to keep you informed.” He said looking at his parents before escorting Diana out of the pack house.

Diana watched as everyone gathered for the journey. She looked over at Colleen and Sully, as Kurt said his goodbyes. There had to be others like Colleen who could be saved. She clung to this fragile hope that there were others that weren't too far gone. Especially the children.

The injustice and inhumanity towards these voiceless people would not go unanswered. Her beast snarled and growled uncontrollably, demanding retribution with a blood debt. The thought of the women who had been silenced with punishment and cruelty ignited a flame inside of her. Then there were the helpless children who were enduring the pack's cruelty, unable to escape from the toxic cycle. She curled her fingers up into a ball until her knuckles turned white. She promised herself that somebody would pay dearly for what they'd done.

“Diana...” Aiden murmured, kissing the top of her head. Her silver eyes flashed up at him as he cupped her cheeks gently.

“I don’t know if any of the men there are redeemable. We may have to kill most of the pack. There might not be a pack left.”

“We will do whatever is necessary. What did she tell you?” He asked, seeing her eyes begin to water up. He knew Clover could communicate with others and was curious about what she had told Diana.

“Terrible things, Aiden... that pack... has done terrible things.” She turned into his chest, his arms coming around to comfort her. This was the second time in her life that she remembers demanding blood at such a strong level. The first time... it was Eris’ blood. Eris... she wondered how Ike was doing and if he was close to finding the woman responsible for her family’s deaths. He had become like family to her and she

missed him. She hoped that he was alright and doing well.

Ike, I hope you are safe.

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“Look who is moping now.” Odell turned to look at Conner, who kept glancing behind him. Susan insisted that Gia stay behind so they could spend some time together. Her leaving was so sudden and this was something she needed. “Kai is handling it much better than you.” She nodded her head to the red-headed man walking in front of them.

“Epona is going to visit with her family as well. They are a bit hesitant over our relationship and the suddenness of it as well. They aren’t against it though. Kelpies can just be very particular about things.” Kai looked ahead to where Clover and Sion were walking. They were next to the lycan prince and princess as they led the way. It was

interesting to see Sion seem to take to Aiden. He could see him talking and conversing with him as if they were friends. This was not Sion's way at all. Usually he was fairly aloof with other Alpha's but maybe it was because of the agreement that had been made.

“Why couldn't we take the quads through here?” Jamie groaned as he dragged his feet for emphasis.

“Yeah, because quads are super quiet and won't alert anyone to us coming.” Kurt snorted as Jamie shot him a sideways glance.

“They are going to know we are coming anyways. These aren't humans we are stalking. Yo! Warrior chiefs! Why have we taken a step back from the modern world?” Jamie watched as silver eyes turned to look at him. A genuine sweet smile resting on her face.

“I know I am not exactly from this era, but even I can do the math that we would run out of gas. Surely you are not that dense.” She grinned at him as the others next to her chuckled.

“Oh... well that makes sense.” Jamie had a sheepish grin on his face.

“We should have brought Epona along as a pack horse. We could have her carry the extra gas we would have needed.” Conner received a murderous glare from Kai as Jamie began to laugh, walking up next to him.

“Now this man gets it.” Jamie beamed as the two men chuckled next to one another.

“It’s like there are two of them.” Odell grimaced as she faked a gag.

“I’d like to visit your pack sometime soon now that you’ve merged. I’d like to see how it runs. I heard you have two sets of

officers?” Aiden watched as Sion nodded his head.

“You are more than welcome to visit. It would be an honor to have you both as guests. Yes, we found it beneficial to have two sets of officers. It may seem a bit confusing, but it works for us. All of our officers are dedicated to the pack and to each Clover and myself. However, if anything major goes down each of them can focus their attention entirely on their person. It isn't as if they aren't there for the other, but that there is nothing dividing their attention. Since each of them are competent warriors in their own right. Of course, Clover and I are very capable. Not to mention, most of the time I will be the one to protect my Queen.”

“I don't need protecting.” Clover listened as Sion chuckled and nodded his head.

“If you did though, I am here.” He winked at her, a small smile resting on his lips.

“I don’t know how you are doing it...” Aiden shook his head as Sion looked over at him curiously. “How you are able to let your mate walk into a dangerous situation while she is pregnant.” He listened as Sion snorted.

“It isn’t my first choice,” He grumbled.

“Let?” Clover chuckled and turned to look at Aiden. “Nobody ‘lets’ me do anything. I am here because I have chosen to be here. Do you think Sion should be able to tell me no?”

“Now you put your foot in it.” Sion mumbled, giving Aiden a sideways smile.

“If Diana were pregnant, the child growing inside of her is part of each of us. Going into a dangerous situation could also be putting the child at risk. My mother did this, so did my aunt, and my grandmother for that matter. Everything turned out okay. And chances are it would be okay, but what if? What if it wasn’t?”

“Are you saying I shouldn’t have a say over myself because I am pregnant?” Clover glanced over at Diana who was now waiting for Aiden’s answer curiously.

Aiden shook his head. “You are misunderstanding... yeah our baby would be important to me but that isn’t my main concern.” His eyes met with Diana’s. “The pain... the hurt you would go through if something happened because you fought. I can be here for you, but how could I help you with that? I know the amount of guilt you would have. You would be beating yourself up and weathering that storm alone.” He sighed as his eyes softened. “My mate tends to carry her burdens on her shoulders instead of sharing them with me. My thought is still on protecting my mate and her emotional state. She has been through enough.” For a few seconds it was quiet before Diana spoke up.

“Then imagine her emotional state if you don’t return. She would constantly wonder what if. What if she had been there? If there is a chance that me being there means you are safe, then I will take the risks. Because we are stronger together, we shouldn’t be apart. I’ve lost a lot already, as you know. I won’t lose you, while losing the hypothetical baby would be hard, it is nothing like losing you.” Diana smiled at Aiden and then took in a slow breath. “I know I’m not the best at sharing my burdens and I can see that worries you. I’ll try to be more open.” Aiden’s strong arm encircled her waist, drawing her closer until she felt the heat of his body radiating with an intensity that made her tremble. His grip was like iron, tightening around her until it seemed like the two were bound together in an unbreakable embrace.

I can’t lose you, Aiden.

I can't lose you, Dee. Not physically and not emotionally. Aiden pressed his lips on the top of her head as he continued to keep her close. He wasn't sure why, but something inside of him screamed not to let her come.

“Well I feel worse about it now.” Sion laughed as he looked over at Clover. “He does have a point. If anything were to happen—”

“Then this is when the big bad Alpha protects his mate so nothing does happen.” Clover winked up at Sion, whose chest rumbled with a gentle baritone laughter.

“There is no winning with you.”

Diana laughed, “What she said.” She then tilted her head up at Aiden, “All joking aside, I can protect myself. Your job isn't to protect me. I shouldn't have joked about that. I don't want you putting that burden on your shoulders.” Diana watched Aiden's green

eyes stare at her quietly and then he shook his head.

“You are wrong. My job is always protecting you... it is my burden to bear.” He watched as Diana opened her mouth to object and he raised his brows at her. “I won’t give in. This stance is concrete.”

“I was just going to say... that I can understand that... so long as my job is to protect you.” Her silver eyes gleamed up at him, a small smile now resting on his lips.

“What she said.” Clover giggled up at Sion as he let out a sigh.

“You don’t need to protect me. Don’t you go rushing into danger for me. If there is anything that I can’t handle, I don’t want you anywhere near it.”

“Too bad.” She waved her hand dismissively. “If you need help you can guarantee that I’ll be there.”

“Clover,” Sion frowned as she shook her head.

“Really there isn’t any point discussing it. It isn’t like you can do anything about it. You would already be in trouble.”

“Actually, there is something I would do about it.”

“Sion, don’t you dare! I swear if you ever do that to me again!” Clover’s green eyes narrowed up at Sion, who simply shrugged his shoulders.

“My Queen, your safety is my only concern in this world. If I have to send you to another realm to keep you safe... I will. I can’t exist without you.”

Aiden let out a low whistle. “Another realm? Sounds like a very useful tactic.”

Sion nodded, “It was necessary at one point. I thought there was a chance I wouldn’t be able to protect Clover. I was afraid the

nycrops would get to her first... so I sent her to where she would be safe.”

“Ugh, that b***h, huh? Yeah, that was the right move.” Aiden nodded in agreement.

“Do you hear this crap, Diana? Can you imagine how they would feel if we sent them to another realm when we were in trouble? Diana?” Clover looked over at the blonde-haired beauty whose face looked like she had seen a ghost.

“Dee, what is it?” Aiden stopped walking to stand in front of her. Her silver eyes were darting around the wood as her brows were knitted together.

“What is going on up there?” Kurt asked as he hurried towards the front. The others grouping closer as well.

“I got a faint whiff of something or, well, I thought I did. Maybe it was in my head? I don’t smell it now.”

“What did you think you smelled?” Aiden asked. As he did, a shrilling yell pierced through the quiet air. As if it was a battle call, it was echoed by hundreds... maybe thousands of more screams.

“The shrieks.” Sion’s forehead wrinkled as he looked at the trees. “They should have sensed my presence. I would have thought they would have tried to avoid me.” He glanced behind him at Conner and Kai. His eyes spoke the words they seemed to know. Odell was already front and center in front of Clover the moment the shrieks wails were heard.

“Everyone bunch together and stay right where you are.” Sion grabbed onto Clover’s arm and turned her into him. He tilted her chin up and stared into her green eyes. “My Queen, stay right here... please.” She nodded at him and he pressed a tender kiss against her forehead. Gently he pushed her back into Conner’s arms. “I can handle them... no

matter how many there are. I just need you all to stay right here and don't move.”

Diana's heart was pounding in her chest as she watched the scene unfolding in front of her. The screams were getting louder and closer, and she could feel the hairs on the back of her neck standing up. Aiden was standing protectively in front of her, his hand gripping her waist tightly.

Suddenly, the trees in front of them began to shake violently. As the shaking continued, the wails became almost deafening. They were coming from all around them... surrounding them. The air around them grew colder, the icy feeling of vengeful souls.

Suddenly, a figure appeared through the trees, sprinting towards them with a look of terror on her face. As she grew closer, Diana could see that she was a young woman, her clothes ripped and torn, her eyes wild with fear.

“Help me!” she screamed, her voice hoarse with panic. “They’re coming! They’re coming!”

Diana felt Aiden’s body tense beside her, ready to defend her at a moment’s notice. But before the woman could reach them, a group of creatures burst through the trees behind her. White orbs began popping through the dense forest. Their wails tried to cause disarray among their targets.

They were unlike anything Diana had ever seen before. Though she had read about them before, this was her first time seeing a shriek. A shriek was a dangerous vengeful spirit that claimed the life of anyone who feared death or wished to live. They were bitter about others’ lives and the one they had lost. Now, they claimed the lives of all they had encountered. Though she heard that Freya and the Vampire King’s brother, Jester, were not killed by the shrieks. She also heard there were intelligent shrieks out

there. One in particular was after those who loved. It could even speak.

“Hmmm well this is interesting.” Sion took a small step forward but stayed close to the group. They were surrounded and he was going to have to go into full protection mode. As Sion, he wouldn’t be enough to handle all of them. He was going to have to change his form. A dark cloud began to form around him and the shrieks halted in their place. His body began to change, growing in stature, with short black hair covering his body. His head grew into a snout as claws formed at his fingertips. Black chained shorts covered him, his abdominal muscles protruded out from under his thin layer of fur.

He was now in his form as Anubis, King of the Spirit Realm. And it was time to harvest some souls.

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The shrieks hovered in their place, swaying side to side. They looked conflicted. As if their will was to flee but they were being forced to stay. An eerie silence came over all of them for just a moment. Then, like an eruption of coyote howls, they started. High pitched screams began to ripple into the air. These were creatures that none of them could face, except for Sion.

These spirits couldn't hurt Sion, but the numbers were much greater than he anticipated. It wasn't the hundreds that he had anticipated... they were in the thousands. A phenomenon that couldn't have happened on its own. Even with the wars, something had prevented these spirits from moving on. Something... or someone. Was this the work of the nycrops, Meryl, again? And for what purpose?

Aiden shifted his body so that Diana was more behind him as Kurt and Jamie came in front of both of them. He had tried to outrun

the shrieks before and knew it was pointless. Especially being surrounded. He looked at his two officers in front of him and shook his head.

“Stand behind me, you two!” Aiden ordered as the two men turned with smiles.

“Our job is always protecting the two of you... it is our burden to bear,” Kurt said with a wink, as Jamie shrugged.

“Can’t let anything happen to our prince and princess, now can we? Better us than either of you.” Jamie looked at Diana’s horrified eyes and he tilted his head to the side. “Don’t worry. It isn’t our plan to die today. This is just as a precaution.”

Black energy wisped around Sion (Anubis) as he waited for the charge. He couldn’t get them all at once. Their numbers were still pouring in behind them. It would be all he could do to keep Clover safe. He would give it everything he got.

“Sion, if anything happens—” Aiden started to say as the wolf-like head glanced at him. He gave him a faint nod as his concentration moved back to the evil spirits.

Sion’s eyes narrowed as he prepared to attack. He could hear Clover’s rapid breaths, but he couldn’t turn to look at her. He couldn’t afford to let his guard down even for a moment. The shrilling screams roared and then they rushed forward. Black bolts of lightning crashed into the spirits, disintegrating hundreds of them instantly.

The shrieks erupted into a frenzy, their screams turning into deafening screeches. Sion continued to channel the dark energy, his body glowing with an ominous aura. The dark spirits were obliterated by every wave of Sion’s wrath, their cries of anguish echoing throughout the battlefield. The screams of terror built into a deafening roar that drowned out all other noise, an impenetrable wall of sound. As the horde of

shrieks continued to surge forth, their cacophonous wails filled every corner and crevice until it felt like the world was shaking with fear.

Sion had barely scratched the surface of his powers since he was still new as a minor god. He realized he wasn't ready to dissipate this many spirits at once. Reapus could eradicate them all in a single breath. One day he would be able to do the same... but not today. Right now, they were in trouble.

Diana's heart pounded in her chest as she watched the scene play out in front of her. It didn't take long for her to analyze the numbers. At the rate the shrieks were pouring in, they would end up overcoming them. She wondered... maybe... just maybe her powers could help. She could bend the light into blades, but could those blades hurt the shrieks? In either case, she had to try. Even if she failed, it was better than sitting there and doing nothing.

As the black lightning continued to knock out wave after wave the light in the area began to move. Lifting into the air and turning into sharp blades. The blades circled the group and began to spin around defensively. Just in time for the first surge of shrieks to reach them. The white blades hissed as they hit the shrieks who became engulfed in a white flame for a moment before evaporating. It was working. She ignored the pain her body was going through as she felt Aiden completely engulf her in his arms.

“Please stop. Please.” He begged as her blood trickled over his body.

“What is happening to her?” The woman who emerged from the woods earlier asked in shock. A person they hadn’t had time to even speak to with everything that was going on.

“It still isn’t enough.” Clover said, her eyes scanning the masses of incoming shrieks. If only she had her powers as Anubis’ mate,

then she could help. But she wouldn't get those until after she died. And dying now would mean losing her unborn baby she was carrying.

“Alright, I've seen enough.” A woman's voice called from the trees as she dropped down from a limb. Her deep green hair floated behind her as she lifted up her hand. White tree leaves sprung out from her hand, making the shrieks freeze. As she did this, pinecones began to fall from the sky and then... they began to run. The pinecones ran at the shrieks, smashing them into nothing.

Pink ribbons of energy flooded inside of Sion. He felt her warmth and knew his mate was giving him power. Like a waterfall, his power poured out from him, eliminating the shrieks in his path. However, as soon as he cleared a gap, it instantly filled in again. The situation was dire.

Suddenly, the earth rose from the ground and the shrieks collided into the earthly barrier.

“This feels like deja vu. Aiden, are you still playing with the shrieks?” A familiar voice asked, appearing near the group. Diana then collapsed into Aiden’s arms, soaked red with her blood.

“Aken...” Aiden breathed out as he held Diana close.

The shrieks screamed loudly and Aken rubbed his ears. “Shut the hell up!” He roared. His voice eliminated all the shrieks in the area instantaneously.

“Aiden, what happened?” A man with dark hair and blue piercing eyes said as he appeared next to him.

“Uncle Levi...” Aiden’s fingers trembled as he held Diana’s unconscious body. “She has a vampire power that hurts her when she uses

it. She—” Aken leaned forward and looked at the bloodied woman.

“She will be fine. She isn’t going to die from that. She was just mentally exhausted.” Aken watched the sharp gaze Levi gave him.

“What? He doesn’t need to worry for nothing. And seriously, why did she even have to use her skills?!” His green eyes then landed on Sion who had shifted back into his human self. He was by Clover’s side, holding her as if she would disappear. “Not to be pointing fingers, but you should have been able to handle them.”

“He is still learning, Aken. He wasn’t born a god and will learn his strengths over time.”

Levi growled as he checked Diana over.

“Aken is right. She is going to be just fine.”

“See... I told you, Dad.” Aken said with a twisted grin as Levi growled.

“Don’t...”

“Yeah, I prefer Flipper to Dad anyways.”

“Out of everyone who exists... you are the one mated to my daughter.” Levi rubbed his forehead as Aken chuckled.

“Talk about being lucky. Of course, maybe that makes me a bit unlucky. The only reason I am here right now is because my mate is incredibly persistent.” Aken scowled as he looked up.

“Yeah, she is just like her mother.” Levi chuckled as he looked over everyone. “You know you could have helped out...” He said as he glanced upwards.

“What? Frosty the Snowbitch?” Aken laughed as a big ball of snow fell on his head.

“I would have intervened at the last minute. I promised Ike I wouldn’t let anything happen to her.” Shiva appeared hovering over everyone.

“Well, aren’t you precious. Though I don’t think this is what Ly had in mind,” Aken

snorted as he rolled his eyes. “We were on our way to Ly when we sensed this little party happening. I knew if I didn’t intervene that Alexis would murder me. Of course, I am faster than Old Blue so I made it here first.”

“Sorry, this is my fault. I didn’t anticipate this many shrieks. Something like this didn’t happen on its own.” Sion finally said, straightening up. He eyed the two women who he didn’t know.

“Of course this didn’t happen on its own.” Aken listened as Shiva clicked her tongue.

“Well Mr. Know-It-All do you know who did do it?”

“Well, since it seems you have frozen some of those brain cells, I’ll help you. Only someone who has control over the dead can do something like this. So that leaves us with a necromancer, a nycrops, or a demon... perhaps an original demon like the one we

are hunting now.” He arched a brow up at her triumphantly as she pursed her lips together.

“You think this was Eris and not Meryl?” Levi asked, watching Aken nod his head slowly. “Why?” He watched as Aken turned his head to look behind him.

“I think she knew certain people would eventually travel through these woods. Like a lycan princess who escaped her curse?”

“Why would she know that?” Levi straightened up as Aken shrugged.

“I haven’t pieced it all together, but my hunch tells me this is a welcoming gift meant for the princess. Only she wasn’t expecting the wet nursing Anubis pup who isn’t paper trained yet.” Aken pointed his thumb over his shoulder as he motioned to Sion.

“Hey!” Conner growled as Sion held up his hand, shaking his head.

“One of the very charming things about the Kraken is that he thinks he is funny. Such a simpleton... the poor dear.” Shiva then waved her hand, sending ice to freeze the feet of the first woman who appeared.

“Where do you think you are sneaking off to?”

“Easy! You almost hit the skints.” The woman who jumped from the tree said as she bent down to pick up one of the pinecones.

“Relax, I could see the little tree spirits. I missed them intentionally.” Shiva pursed her lips together and glared at the green-haired woman. “You are a feisty little dryad aren’t you?”

The dryad turned around and began checking the trees in the area for damage, completely ignoring the goddess.

“Is she a dryad too?” Jamie asked, pointing at the woman with her feet frozen in place.

“I’m a pure-blooded werewolf!” She declared indignantly.

“A pure-blooded werewolf who was saved by non-werewolves.” Clover said pointedly.

“One guess where you are from, Children of the Moon pack?”

“Perfect. You’ll stay with us. That is just the place we are headed. Now, on to other matters. You said that is an elite vampire skill Diana used?” Sion turned to look at Aiden who was tenderly wiping the blood from Diana’s face.

“Yes, that is what my mother had told her. Why?” Aiden glanced up to see Sion look up at Levi, Aken, and Shiva.

“I didn’t know vampires were able to wield purifying powers.”

“Maybe that is why it has this effect on her?” Shiva muttered out loud.

“Maybe that is why it has this effect on her...” Aken said in a mocking tone and shot an annoyed glance up at Shiva. “If you don’t know, just don’t speak. But I know who would know and we will be seeing him soon.”

“Eeeeeee....” Shiva scrunched her face up and clicked her tongue several times. “That could be bad. If Rogio blessed her with this skill... a skill that hurts her when she uses it... and you ask him about it in front of Ike. Well, how do you think that will go?” She watched as a big grin spread over Aken’s face.

“Can’t wait.” Aken chuckled as Levi groaned. “This might make this whole trip worth it.” Amusement filled his eyes as a mischievous smile rested on his face. “Oh, and then I get to tell Ly about how you sat and watched her get shredded like minced meat for the shrieks. I can’t wait for show and tell.”

“Aiden, I’ll stay with you until she wakes up. I can see how anxious you look.” Levi placed

his hand on Aiden's shoulder, giving him a warm smile. "I promise you she is fine." Her silver eyes fluttered open and Levi nodded for Aiden to look down. "See?"

"Diana." Aiden said, full of relief as she stared up at him.

"She really was fine. It was mental exhaustion. However, if Alexis looked like that— well I would be a mess too. It's funny how mates do that to you. They take away all rational thought." Aken then looked up at Levi. "Speaking of my mate... let's get this Eris business taken care of so we can get back to ours."

"I smelled her." Diana quietly said and everyone turned to look at her. "Before the shrieks showed up— I could have sworn I caught a trace of her scent. But it was gone just as fast."

"Now how about that?" Aken looked up at Shiva with a cocky wink.

“Hmm, we need to discuss this with Lycaon.” Levi said, his brows knitted in deep thought.

“Well, let’s go find the Scooby-Doo Gang and put them on the right trail.” Aken glanced up at Shiva. “Do better, Elsa.” With that he vanished.

“He’s been hanging around my son too much.” A small smile rested over Levi’s lips before he glanced back at his nephew. “You okay, now?” He asked, assessing Aiden, who nodded, keeping his eyes on Diana. “I had better catch up to him. Aken can’t wait to get some payback for being cursed to the sea.” He glanced up at Shiva, “Be careful...” then he vanished as well.

“I’ll be around.” Shiva disappeared, a blue light twinkling for just a moment.

“I thought I was going to lose you.” Aiden whispered in Diana’s hair.

“I really was fine. The cuts looked worse than they were.” She placed her feet down to

secure her footing. Aiden kept a sturdy arm around her, not daring to let her go. Her silver eyes looked around and then settled on the two women she didn't know.

“Who are they?”

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The woman with the green hair turned around, in her arms she held many of the pinecone-looking creatures, skints, tree spirits. Her eyes were like green gems that almost sparkled. She was a petite young woman with skin that was a beautiful almond color.

“My name is Novalie and, as Shiva mentioned, I am a dryad. I am temporarily looking over this part of the forest. There are a couple of shrieks that I have been looking for. They change color and are intelligent. They have been eating the tree spirits and need to be eradicated.” She

looked over at Aiden and smiled. “I feel the royal lines in your veins.”

“He is the Lycan Prince,” Jamie said proudly as the woman shook her head.

“I’m talking about fairy royalty. I could care less about the beasts of this world. If memory serves me... you should be Aiden.” She watched as he nodded his head, looking at her curiously.

“You can sense my bloodline?”

“Yes, I know what all of you are.” She then looked at the woman whose feet were starting to thaw. “You may wish to detain her before she runs.” Kurt and Kai grabbed onto the woman at the same time. They glanced up at the other and began to laugh.

“Great minds.” Kurt said with a grin.

“Please don’t...” The woman whimpered as she tucked her chin against her chest.

“We aren’t going to harm you.” Kurt said softly, thinking how this woman knew his mate. Maybe they were friends. “What is your name?”

“Audrey.” Her voice was barely a whisper. The woman’s brown hair had mud clumped in the strands. Her body was dirty and she had cuts that were not healing.

“Audrey, what were you doing in the woods all alone? Surely your pack knows how dangerous it is.” Diana straightened up and the woman’s eyes widened.

“Princess.” Audrey turned her head bearing her neck to Diana. “I wronged the Luna. I am here so that I may learn to do better. If I died, then it was what the goddess deemed fit as my punishment. But she brought me to you so that I could live. Now I can repent and do better.” The woman’s voice quivered as her brown eyes glanced back at Diana.

“You were sent out into shriek infested woods because you wronged your Luna?” Conner asked, arching a brow incredulously.

“I tripped and spilled her tea and snacks.” The woman muttered in shame.

“It was just an accident. There shouldn’t have been any punishment.” Diana sighed and glanced over at Clover. Clover’s eyes were glazed over, and she was fixated on Audrey.

“You can change things however you like. You’ll become the head, Luna.” Audrey said, with a sense of pride.

“Wait... you already have a Luna...” Kai glanced back at Sion, who looked to be mentally communicating.

“Our Alpha has several Luna’s. Women worthy of bearing his pups.”

“Well, the princess has a mate already.” Aiden watched as the woman shook her head.

“That won’t matter to him. He has taken women who were mated before. Since their mates were inferior, he was the better match.”

“Well, this is a topic I will happily discuss with your... Alpha.” Aiden’s eyes darkened for a split second, but then he instantly regained his composure. He didn’t want to frighten the skittish woman.

“Audrey, did you know a Colleen?” Kurt asked and felt the woman’s body become tense.

“She was judged and sent to the next life. She was impure and tainted. A plague that she could spread through the pack—”

Kurt snarled and the woman began to shake. “Kurt, step away. This is too personal for you,” Aiden commanded. “Colleen is alive

and well. She now lives in the Diamond pack and has found a lycan mate. There is nothing impure or tainted about her.”

“That’s impossible. They brought back her remains and scattered them in the bog.”

Audrey shook her head adamantly. “You must be mistaken.”

“Colleen has a son who is part fairy. This was the reason she fled from the pack. The reason she was called unclean. Your pack members did pursue her but they were met by our lycan officers. They fled, leaving her with us.” Aiden watched as the woman began shaking uncontrollably. Her lips were quivering, and her eyes were widened with hysteria. Then suddenly she stopped. Her whole body seemed to relax. He glanced back at Clover, who then nodded her head. It was nice having someone around who could calm someone down.

“We won’t let them punish you, Audrey. You are safe now. We are here to fix things in

your pack... by whatever means necessary. I know you don't believe it. I know you don't trust us. You've been conditioned not to trust others. Your leaders are clever. They knew they had to keep the pack isolated or else there would be trouble." Clover felt Sion's hand come to rest on her back. She had seen a lot digging into Audrey's past. It was horrible. This poor woman had been beaten, r***d, and starved. Sadly, she believed she deserved it all. Everything that happened to her was her fault. Though it seemed there were a few who spoke against the pack. In one of the memories she had seen a young man speaking out against the treatment of women and lower ranked males. The memory faded before she could see more, but this gave Clover hope that not all were lost.

"Colleen is... alive?" Audrey whispered, looking up with watery eyes.

“Yes, and she is doing great.” Jamie said as she watched the woman sigh in relief.

“Thank the gods... but the pack can’t know. They will come after her and—”

“Let them try to come for her.” Kurt challenged as Aiden shot him a look full of warning.

“Colleen is very safe. They can know she is alive and well. We will not let them touch her.” Diana went to take a step forward and noticed a bunch of little skints around her feet. She smiled and squatted down to look at the little tree spirits closer. Instantly, they climbed up her arms and perched on her body. They let out little chirps and nestled against her skin. She was shocked at their soft texture. The cones were not cones at all but uniquely shaped fur that camouflaged them. A few of them hopped onto Aiden and began to chirp happily. She noticed chirping above them and glanced up to see hundreds of little skints in the branches.

Novalie smiled and nodded her head. “They want me to go with you. I guess they think I should be helping our kin.”

“It may be dangerous,” Aiden said and she laughed.

“Just a moment ago you were in more danger than I was.” She flipped her green hair behind her shoulder. “Besides, with most of the shrieks taken care of, this seems to be my obvious path now.”

“Novalie, thank you. We would love to have someone with your skills.” Diana turned her attention back to Audrey.

“Your Alpha has several Lunas, but one in particular isn’t treated like the rest, right? She actually has a lot of say.” Clover furrowed her brows as she tried to focus. “Erin?”

“Erin doesn’t leave the pack house much. She doesn’t mingle with those of us who are unworthy. She is the Diamond Luna. They

Lunas are ranked with Diamond being the highest to Bronze being the lowest rank. There is one below bronze but she is an unranked Luna.”

An unranked Luna... are you hearing this s**t?! Jamie mind linked to Kurt.

Yeah, the more I hear, the angrier I get.

Lock it up, Bro. Aiden already has his feelers out on you. He will pull you from the mission if he thinks you are too emotionally connected.

I know. I need to be here for Aiden and Diana. Gods know I can't leave them alone in your hands.

Bro!

“So your... unranked Luna... which is weird since Luna is a rank but whatever... what authority does she have?” Odell asked, folding her arms over her chest.

Audrey shook her head and looked down at the ground. “She doesn’t. The officers have more power than her. She is just chosen to have the Alpha’s children. That is her privilege and purpose.”

“Oh THAT is a privilege? I see, well, who wants to do me the privilege of peeling the skin off of my body with a knife, then tossing me on an ant hill.” Odell spun around and pointed a finger at Conner. “Shut up.”

“I didn’t say anything.” He chuckled, his eyes gleaming with mischief.

“You didn’t have to.”

“I think you misunderstand. It is a great honor to be chosen by the Alpha. It means you have the right qualities to have his pups. Our Alpha is just. He disciplines us to make sure we don’t stray from the path.”

“And punishing someone for having a fairy mate or being pregnant with a hybrid is

just?” Kurt watched as the woman’s eyes flipped up at him.

“Our Alpha is keeping us safe. Vampires destroyed the three packs years ago. We all came together under our Alpha’s ancestors. The Children of the Moon pack protects us from those who would destroy us.”

“I can feel the warm reception we are going to get.” Jamie chuckled, shaking his head.

Diana sighed and looked up at Aiden. She knew they couldn’t convince Audrey to join them, not yet at least. They needed to build trust and show her that there was a better way. It has taken Colleen a while to finally begin to trust again. Audrey was a reminder of how hard this transition was going to be.

Maybe we can speak with the Diamond ranked Luna? Perhaps that is a good place to start? Clover mind linked Diana.

I don’t know. If she is second in command next to that crazy Alpha, then she is

probably just as disillusioned. Though I don't want to think of everyone as a lost cause. However, there are some that can't be redeemed. Clover, I will be needing your help to see what I can't. If you can, get a list together of those who must be punished. Either by exile or death.

Clover nodded her head, understanding the gravity of the situation. It was never an easy task to decide who should live and who should die. But it was a necessary one, especially when dealing with a pack that had become as twisted as this one.

“Audrey isn't the first pack member they kicked out to the shrieks. They have done this a few times. It's weird. I feel like the shrieks are both a barrier to keep others out and a way to prevent anyone from leaving.” Novalie took a few steps towards a large tree trunk where she placed several little tree spirits. They scurried up the tree, high into the branches until they disappeared.

“That is a very interesting observation. One that I have to agree with.” Sion turned to look at Aiden, his face full of concern. “This pack may be more than meets the eye.”

Aiden nodded his head, his eyes looking down at his mate. Maybe he should have left Diana in the Diamond pack. As if sensing his thoughts, she smiled up at him and prodded his nose lightly.

“We have a lot of ground to cover and a lot of work to do once we get there. It is time to move out.” Diana then looked at Audrey. “I understand you wouldn’t feel comfortable leading the way. How about you give us a brief explanation on the fastest way to your pack? I understand that a mountain surrounds one side of it. Which way would be the fastest?”

“A mountain isn’t going to block our paths. A quick shift is all it takes.” Jamie said as Diana shook her head.

“If we enter the territory in our feral forms it will be looked at as a hostile act. Our best chance for communication is to arrive in a non-threatening manner.” Diana watched as Audrey looked out into the forest.

“If you go straight that way it is the fastest way to the pack. But they have look outs hidden in the forest. They will know you are coming long before you arrive. Visitors are not welcome. Only the princess would be welcomed.”

“Whether they wish to die or live is up to them. It will be their choice.” Odell snorted with a crooked smile.

“Right, and we have the express lane open for souls to move on.” Conner chuckled as he winked at Sion.

Audrey looked over the group and confusion washed over her face. “You are all severely outnumbered. The Children of the Moon are

skilled fighters. This isn't their death sentence but yours."

Jamie smiled as he stretched his fingers above his head. Tiny sparks of lightning jumped from his fingertips as he smirked over at Audrey. Jamie's mother was a witch, and his powers came to him easily. More so than his father ever thought possible.

"Thanks for the concern and warning. It is noted. Anyone want to turn back?" He said looking over everyone. "Eh, guess not."

Novalie sighed and then clicked her tongue. "The fastest way to the pack is actually that way." She said, lifting her finger to a different direction.

"No, it isn't." Audrey's voice began to tremble slightly.

"Yes, it is. The skints know exactly where your pack is located since trees surround it. You were leading them towards the undead bog." Novalie walked ahead and then looked

back at Aiden and Diana. “I’ll lead the way as long as you trust me to.”

“Yes, please do.” Aiden glanced at Diana with a small frown. She was leading us into a trap. Maybe Colleen was right and no one can be saved.

I think they just need help. They are so brainwashed that they can’t see we are here to help. Best to keep this in mind. No one there is an ally. Everyone is potentially dangerous.

“Kai, keep her in your grip at all times. We don’t need anymore surprises from our new friend.” Sion said in a low tone as his hazel eyes flickered at the woman.

She just needs help, Sion.

Well, her needing help could have hurt you. Clover, we will do the best we can but you need to prepare yourself... we might not be able to save anyone but the children.

Sion, I can feel her emotions and see her memories. She isn't a bad person. She has been conditioned and needs help.

If they try to hurt you there is no one who can help them. I will give them eternal peace.

“Hey Novalie, my Luna's pack was called the Nova pack. Kind of interesting.” Kai said thoughtfully as Jamie clapped his hands together.

“I love it. Supernova Girl!” Jamie said as he began to hum.

Novalie glanced behind her to look at Jamie. “Do you have a mate?”

“No, I am still young and haven't found her yet.”

“She is probably hiding.” Novalie smirked, turning back around as the others chuckled.

“Yep, we are going to be great friends.”
Jamie trotted up to her and shot her a wide grin.

Diana, I don't know what we are heading into. Please be careful. Aiden felt Diana's fingers interlace with his.

As long as you're also careful. She linked back to Aiden, squeezing his hand lightly. This time, she wasn't going to lose the people important to her... no matter what.

“Let me explain!” Rogio yelled as Lycaon came after him. Aken leaned his back against a tree with a small smirk resting on his lips. “Look! This was his plan... now wait!”

“Is it a lie?!” Lycaon growled.

“No, but—” Rogio started to say as Lycaon grabbed his shirt.

“You have a skill, Aken. You are here for less than a minute and look what you’ve caused.” Gaia sighed as she walked over to Lycaon and Rogio. “Alright, that’s enough. How about you hear him out first? Come on Ike.”

Lycaon glared at Rogio but slowly released his grip on him. “You have one minute to explain.”

“Diana is not part of the royal family. She isn’t one of the elite guards... so this skill is considered a gift. Since she was given such a gift it comes at a price. Yes, it does inflict injury but... now wait... let me explain... she can’t die from using it.”

“Really? She was soaked red with blood.” Aken added as Rogio growled at him.

“Ike, it is just the nature of the skill, but I promise it won’t kill her. Not a strong hybrid like herself. She will heal too quickly. It is an asset to help protect her in a desperate situation. It is a rare skill, something only

she can wield because she isn't a pure-blooded vampire." Rogio listened as Lycaon growled and turned away from him.

"She might have vampire in her... but she is mine. Don't mess with what is mine again. Or else I'll give Lucy a gift of my own."

Lycaon listened to the dark chuckle coming from the side. He glanced over to see Aken straighten up, his green eyes locked onto him.

"I'm not on Rogio's side. Hell, I'd love to see hell brought upon him. However, I can't allow you to touch Lucy. Pick another vampire. How about Alaric... the king?" Aken watched as Lycaon waved his hand.

"Fine, Alaric then."

Rogio growled and stomped towards Aken.

"There you go again. You would have thought you would have learned your lesson."

“Oh, I’ve learned my lesson…” Aken’s eyes darkened as a smirk rose over his lips. “I’ve learned that next time you throw a temper tantrum to silence you before you can cry to the council.”

“Fvck you, Aken!” Rogio growled as he swung his fist towards him. His hand collided with another hand that glowed blue.

“Hey!” Aken growled as his brows furrowed at Levi. “I was waiting for this moment.”

“I’d think about what move you want to make, Rogio.” The blue light around Levi’s hand pulsed over Rogio’s. The man clenched his teeth and then stepped away. He then felt a hand land on his shoulder. He glanced over to see Reapus’ crooked grin.

“Levi just saved your life. You owe him a fruit basket or something.”

“Shut up Pus!”

“One minute... you were only here one minute without me. Aken, you have a gift...” Levi sighed, shaking his head. “Did you even tell Lycaon about what happened?”

“I was trying to but as soon as I mentioned Diana’s new skill—” Aken shrugged with a grin.

“What else should I be aware of?” Lycaon asked, turning his attention to Levi. Leviathan wasn’t the hot head that Aken was, and it was easier to talk to him.

“We think there is a chance that the overabundance of shrieks in the woods has to do with Eris.” Levi watched as Lycaon’s jaw set. His fingers curled at his side as his gaze darkened.

“Diana also thinks she caught a whiff of her scent,” Aken said, and Lycaon reeled around angrily.

“And you left her?!” He growled.

“Shiva is still there—” Levi said as Lycaon interrupted him angrily.

“No! I won’t risk losing her. Take me to where it happened.” Lycaon growled.

“Idiot.” Aken snorted. “You think Eris will just prance out of hiding if you are there?”

“I’m not waiting for her to come out of hiding, Aken. I am going to hunt her down and shred her apart.” Lycaon watched as a grin spread over Aken’s lips.

“Hard to argue with that.” Aken shrugged as he looked at Levi. “Let the hunt begin.”