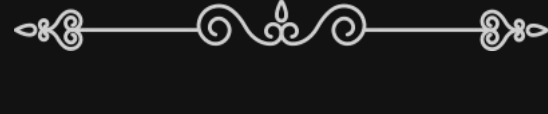


# The Lycan Princess and the Temptation of Sin by Moonlight Muse

Chapter 123



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A Beautiful Moment

ROYCE.

My heart is racing as I hear their footsteps approach. I'd recognise Mom's heartbeat anywhere... and right now it's racing as she steps inside the office that I'm waiting in.

She doesn't know that today I haven't just brought myself to her, but someone else too.

"Royce," her voice is thick as she fights her emotions.

I turn and give her a smile. She looks beautiful in a white dress that lights up her eyes.

The first woman in my life, the first goddess. who I'll always respect, the woman who went through so much pain to bring me onto this planet. My mother. 5

She stops in the doorway, her eyes glimmering with tears that she's so desperately trying to contain, and I close the gap between us, pulling her into my arms.

"Royce," she whispers as she clutches onto me tightly. "Thank the gods."

She cups my face, tugging me down and kisses my forehead and cheeks as a few tears trickle down her cheeks.

She's examining my face as if making sure I'm not hurt... just like she used to do long ago.

"I'm alright Mom," I reassure her before taking her hands and kissing them gently.

"Great, there goes my makeup.

I glance up to see Charlotte standing there, looking a little emotional too, and I reach over, motioning her to come closer.

She obeys, and I wrap my arm around her tightly. I kiss her forehead before I hug them both.

"Where have you been? What is going on?"

Why do we have to hide the truth from your father and brother? I'm terrified to think of the possibilities... and you faked your death, Royce... why?"

Deep down, I know she knows something is wrong.

Tonight, I'm going to give my mother happiness... and at the same time, I'm going to destroy her with my father's truth.

I kiss the top of her head, inhaling her scent.

"It's a long story... but I needed to accept my destiny as the Solaris King.

She stiffens before she pulls back, staring at I know the rumours of the trial have spread but rather than have Charlotte tell her, I wanted to tell her my truth, myself.

I smile faintly and raise one hand, letting lightning crackle around it.

"You must have heard the rumours?"

"I've learned not to listen to rumours," she whispers, cupping my face when she freezes, slowly moving my collar back. "You ... That's..."

"Have taken a mate. She's beautiful, inside and out. Strong like you. Confident, loving, a little wild, and maybe a little crazy, but I love her dearly. She's my everything and there's no way that I could deny myself her." 4

Mom smiles. "You're in love... and this time.

it's different, isn't it?" she whispers, and I nod.

"Yes, trust me, it's really different and so much more... It's... terrifying yet beautiful how you can love someone so much..."

Mom nods, smiling softly, "And who is the lucky girl?" she asks me, her eyes sparkling as she looks into my eyes.

"Yeah Royce, do share," Charlotte smirks.

I tilt my head, "Her name's Skyla..."

Mom's eyes widen before she smiles. "Skyla Rossi, the fiery young woman who stood up for her father earlier. She's perfect." She cups my face, kissing my forehead once more. "Treat her right, because she's given you her heart."

I nod, the emotions in her voice, make me feel emotional too.

"Is she marked too? I didn't notice, but then her hair was covering her neck. To think my son's beautiful woman was right before me."

"Yes, I marked her too..."

"She's studying at the academy, isn't she? She's the one you went to help train..." Mom's smile fades as she looks at me, concerned. "You are her teacher... Didn't you say that, Aleric-"

I sigh. Nothing escapes Mom.

"I know... and I knew Skyla before I started at the academy. I know it's no excuse, but when I learned she'd be my student, I did try to stay away from her. Until she was almost killed, and I realised I couldn't. I loved her too much for that. Aleric had his own intentions, I assure you... we are not alike. I also talked to her father and told him I'd leave the academy if he wanted me to, but he's fine with us together."

She lets out a laugh. "I know you Royce, I also know you won't take advantage of someone because you have a good heart... however, I don't think I know my son well enough. She's very... something tells me my son isn't as innocent as I thought."

I tilt my head, cocking a brow

I guess my girl gives away how naughty she is, and I'm guilty. I'm nowhere near as innocent as Mom probably presumed. 1

Charlotte laughs. "Trust me, Mom, he isn't innocent. He chose a fiery princess as his mate, one with tattoos and all," she teases.

"If you're both done teasing me, there's someone I want you to meet Mom..." I glance at Charlotte as her laughter fades away.

"Skyla of course, where is she?" Mom says with a smile.

"Yes, you'll meet her too, in a short while, but first, I want you to meet someone else..." I say. My heart thuds as Mom looks at me curiously. "They'll be here any minute." 2

Mom raises an eyebrow. "Alright, I wonder who this person is, but Royce... why are we hiding your being alive from your father and brother? Your father has not slept well since then..."

"I doubt Dad cares that much," I say shortly, not wanting to break the news of his reality until after she's met Winona.

"Tell me what you're feeling. What's happened between you and your father?" Mom pushes, not wanting to drop it, concerned.

The sound of two pairs of footsteps makes me look towards the door. "I'll tell you soon ... she's here."

Mom looks up curiously, as do I – hearing the footsteps stop, and then the lighter one's approach.

The sound of her thumping heart is loud, and when the door is pushed open, there she is, wearing a white floor-length dress. Her eyes find Mom first, her breath hitching before her eyes dart to mine. 1

There's fear and anxiousness in them, and I can see she's trembling slightly I let go of Mom and walk over to her, wrapping my arm around her shoulders, her brown eyes are fixed on mine and her breathing is uneven. I give her a smile, silently promising it's going to be ok.

"Mom..." I begin, glancing towards Mom, but the words die on my lips when I see her staring at Winona. Her smile is gone but her eyes hold an emotion I can't place.

There's a recognition in them, yet confusion

Charlotte's already struggling to keep her emotions in check, her lips pursed as she looks away.

I nod at Winona, guiding her towards Mom and with each step, Mom's eyes are becoming blurred with tears.

A mother's heart cannot be deceived and deep down I know she's recognised her. She may not know it's her daughter... but she can feel that pull toward her.

"Mom, I want you to meet Winona, perhaps it's more fitting to introduce her as Victoria Elizabeth Arden. She's alive Mom, she was not stillborn, She was left at an orphanage for so many years until Leo Rossi found her and took her to his pack," I explain softly. 1

Mom's heart is thundering violently.

"Our Victoria is right here, Mom." 2

Mom's eyes flicker honey brown as she blinks, making the tears in her eyes spill.

Winona's already in tears, her eyes blazing a honey topaz shade.

Mom shakes her head slowly as if trying to clear her mind as she slowly reaches out to her. Almost if she's scared, she'll disappear.

"Please don't let this be another dream," she whispers, her voice breaking and those words sting. 3

"It isn't," Winona murmurs.

Her fingers touch her arm and both women gasp, most likely feeling the sense of familiarity I did back at the hospital. 2

Both are staring at one another and seeing them standing opposite one another shows their similarities. Both are the same height, both hold themselves with the same grace, and they are both wearing the same expression.

"How..." Mom's voice breaks before she steps forward, pulling Winona into her arms. and hugging her tightly, giving up on her words.

Winona breaks into soft sobs as she wraps her arms around Mom tightly.

"It's her...I can feel it... oh, thank the gods. My precious baby girl is alive." A heartbreaking sob escapes her, as she cups the back of Winona's head, the other one tightly around her shoulders.

For the first time in my life, I witness Mom break into heart-wrenching sobs.

The pain she's felt for years is clear in her voice and I know this is a moment I'll never forget. So painful that even breathing becomes difficult, yet so beautiful that even the most cold-hearted of souls would feel their emotions. 6

From the corner of my eyes, I see Charlotte shaking and I look up. She's got her hands over her mouth as she tries to silence her own sobs as she watches Mom and Winona.

I pull her close, holding her tightly, as Mom and Winona drop to their knees, still holding one another.

"I am so sorry I was not there for you your entire life. How I've failed you..." Mom whispers. "I am so, so sorry."

"No... you didn't give me away. You are not to blame. I'm just glad I get to meet you after all these years."

"Not just meet me, I am here to stay. I will be a part of your life going forward," Mom promises as she sniffs. "My beautiful Angel, you look just like Aleric." 8

Mom cups Winona's face, brushing her tears away and I look down at Charlotte, cocking a brow. That's an innocent remark, but it sure as hell is an insult. Charlotte scrunches her nose, clearly thinking the same as me. 7

Winona smiles at Mom as she reaches over with trembling hands and wipes Mom's tears away, although more just replace them.

Winona looks up, smiling at me before she looks at Charlotte. "Charlotte?"

"Finally, you remember your sister," Charlotte says, brushing her tears away as she lets go of me and goes over to them.

She drops to her knees, flinging her arms. around Winona. Mom laughs between her sobs as she looks at them both, clutching her hands before her mouth.

I'll always protect the three of you... when the other men of our family are no longer around... I will always be the pillar for them. For the four goddesses who will always be a part of my life, I will always be there for them.