

Chapter 6 My Mate

Kiran’s POV

On the night of the full moon, the altar square of the Blackwood Pack was brightly lit. I stood at the highest point, my deep-blue Alpha uniform shining in the moonlight. Below me, the pack gathered—eyes eager and reverent—waiting for my declaration.

My mother, Luna Isabella, sat in the most prestigious seat, her face radiant with pride. Lilith leaned against me; her white dress cascaded like a waterfall and her purple eyes glimmered in the moonlight.

I loosened the pressure of my Alpha presence, and the noisy square fell instantly silent.

“Tonight, under the witness of the Moon Goddess, I, Kiran Blackwood, Alpha of the Blackwood Pack...” My voice was steady and strong, echoing through the crowd. “I declare that Lilith Eldritch will be my only mate.”

I paused for emphasis. “In a few days we will hold a grand wedding, and she will become the new Luna of the Blackwood Pack.”

The crowd erupted in thunderous cheers. Lilith tiptoed forward and kissed my cheek lightly, smiling brilliantly.

I forced a smile in return, but my eyes drifted to an empty corner of the crowd. A hollow, reluctant ache settled in my chest. I swallowed it down and continued to receive the elders’ and nobles’ congratulations. Their praises buzzed in my ears, but my mind kept slipping away.

When I finally found a moment, I turned to Lilith. “You should go with Mother first. I have a few things to take care of.”

She nodded obediently, eyes flickering with something I couldn’t read.

I made my way through the crowd toward the edge of the square. Sienna stood under a huge sycamore tree, Talia holding her arm. In the dappled moonlight her figure looked particularly fragile. She didn’t watch the platform; her head remained bowed and her expression was distant. This grand celebration meant nothing to her.

A vague irritation rose in my chest. I walked over; the Alpha’s aura quieted the werewolves nearby. Talia stiffened and immediately positioned herself between Sienna and me.

“Brother, what do you want?” she asked, defensive.

I ignored her and looked straight at Sienna. “Sienna.”

She looked up. The admiration that had once softened her eyes was gone—now they were cool and still as water. The sight of them made my chest tighten.

“Just apologize to Lilith now, for what happened at the fountain,” I said, choosing my words carefully. “Do that and I’ll forgive you. You can still stay in the pack.”

Sienna smiled then—an odd, detached little smile that felt like salt on an open wound. “Kiran,” she said softly, her voice clear and cold, “where do you get the confidence to think I want to stay in the Blackwood Pack?”

My brows drew together and my heart began to race. “What do you mean?”

She didn’t look at me. Instead she glanced toward the lively crowd and spoke flatly, “I mean, since you’re already engaged to Lilith, please—don’t bother me anymore.”

Her words stabbed like a thorn. The pain was sudden and raw; I took an involuntary step back and my face went pale. For a moment it felt as if something inside me had been ripped away—my breathing shallowed, blood thudded in my ears.

What was happening?

I pressed a hand to my chest, feeling a strange emptiness.

Sienna turned and walked away with Talia. She didn’t glance back.

I stayed where I was until her thin figure vanished into the night. The ache in my chest subsided slowly, leaving behind a numb coldness. Dazed, I found an empty alcove and leaned against a stone wall, silently reeling. My heart pounded; my thoughts were a tangle.

Dark. I sent the call to my wolf.

Why does my heart ache like this? I asked.

After a pause, his reply came—curious and confused.

I didn’t sense anything.

I pushed further. What didn’t you sense? Could Sienna really be my destined mate?

Even as the words left my mouth, I felt how absurd they sounded.

Dark’s voice was steady when he answered. I didn’t sense a mate bond from her. Alpha, maybe her wolf soul hasn’t awakened yet; without that, our bond can’t be fully established.

His words were like a cold glass of water poured over my confusion; they calmed me. Of course—that made sense. How could the Moon Goddess make the mistake of matching me with an Omega whose wolf soul hadn’t even awakened? The pain I’d felt must have been nothing more than the discomfort of disrupting a five-year habit.

Yes—just discomfort.

I squared my shoulders and forced my expression back to seriousness. My destined mate, my future Luna, must be strong, noble, and worthy of the pack’s honor. Lilith was the right choice.

Resolved, I turned and walked back into the dazzling celebration that belonged to me.

But the festival had a problem: the ceremonial “Luna Tears” were missing, and all signs pointed to Sienna.

My pulse quickened until it felt like my throat would burst. Mother ordered the guards to bring Sienna to the center of the square. The elders gathered around the altar, faces grave. Elder Edgar pulled up the surveillance footage.

On the screen I saw a figure—blurry, but unmistakably wearing the same dark cloak Sienna favored. The shape moved furtively through the shadows toward the place where the Luna Tears had been kept.