

## Chapter 54

Violet

"What do you mean she's not a Hybrid?"

Grandpa, Jasper, Tracy, King, Ashwell and I were sitting in one of the common areas. As soon as Grandpa realized something was off kilter with me, he'd told me to mind-link the boys right away for an emergency meeting. I'd invited Tracy along; I wasn't entirely sure why, but her never-ending positivity made me feel better.

Grandpa paced back and forth, occasionally wringing his hands together. Like me biting my lip, that was his nervous habit.

"I suppose the technical term could still be 'Hybrid', but... She doesn't use her abilities like one."

"She is sitting right here." I said from my seat on the sofa. "Why don't you think I'm a Hybrid anymore?"

"Ever since we discovered what you were, I've been reading non-stop. I even went to visit an old friend, Alistaire. He was always intrigued by Hybrids, always wanting to learn more. Naturally, he had tons of books and journals I could read. He even had an old scroll, dating back to who knows when!" He threw his hands up. "Most of what I read I already knew; Knowledge passed down from the time of their extinction. What I didn't know is how they used their abilities."

"But I'm assuming you found out?" King inquired.

Grandpa nodded. "The one piece of Hybrid history that was the same in everything I read. To access one side of themselves, they had to pull away from the other side."

"I don't understand." Ashwell said.

"For example, imagine a wolf and a vampire Hybrid. Vampires have vast abilities that are actually similar to our own. However, they are far stronger, faster, and they need blood to survive. Unlike us. So, in order to tap into that extra strength or speed, the Hybrid would have to mentally and emotionally pull away from the bond with their wolf, giving themselves over to their vampire side. The same goes for a witch Hybrid." He stopped and looked at me. "It should not have hurt Hala when you tried to tap into your magic. You were not severing your bond with her, simply pushing it to one side temporarily. And you should not have been able to use magic without any incantation."

"But you do?" Jasper asked confused.

Grandpa shook his head vehemently. "It's not possible. I've all but mastered saying spells in my head. Same with Clara. You don't need to vocalize the spell for it to work." He tipped his head to the side. "Is that what you did?"

"I... I don't think so." I replied carefully. "I remember the words. But I wasn't thinking about them, not really. I was imagining a rose growing, like you did. And then lots of them grew."

"And you felt the sparks?"

"Sparks?" My brows came down on confusion.

"When you used your magic."

"It doesn't feel like sparks."

He sat down across from me, leaning in. "What does your magic feel like Violet?"

I thought about it for a second before answering. "It feels like... an energy. And it's warm. Like stepping into a warm bath, I guess. It's not...spark-

like...it's more of a ...buzzing? Like adrenaline." I looked at Tracy, Goddess knew why, but she smiled and patted my shoulder.

Grandpa didn't say anything, and I began to worry. My whole life, I'd never gotten anything truly right. I was the trouble-maker, the odd one out. I did alright in most things, but I always felt kind of off. Then I learned I was a Hybrid, the most off anyone could be in this day and age. Now, here I was, debating whether or not that's what I truly was in the first place. Could I be defective? Was something wrong with me? Could I not even be a good Hybrid?

Finally, Grandpa spoke, his voice very low. "You have different magic than I do."

My heart sank. "What does that mean?"

"It means that I was wrong. I really don't think you are a Hybrid Violet. You have magic, that much is obvious. But it's different than a witches magic."

"Remember what you said the other night?" Ashwell leaned over the back of the sofa. "You said that you're the first of your kind, that your ancestors maybe weren't Hybrids. Maybe that's true."

I sighed. "I don't know why I said that. For all we know, every witch Hybrid had different magic than regular witches."

"Not according to Alistaire's books."

"Well, maybe those are wrong. It's been centuries since a there was a living Hybrid. Information gets scrambled."

"Violet-"

"I don't want to talk about this anymore right now." I interrupted whatever Jasper was going to say. "I was just learning to accept that I was a Hybrid. Now I might not be one. I announced to the whole pack what I was

Jasper!" My head sank into my hands. "I just want to know who I am." I mumbled.

Tracy rubbed my back in soothing circles. "Well, that's easy. You're Violet, silly."

I raised my head slowly to look at her. As usual, she was smiling.

"That's not what I meant." I told her.

"I know. But does it really matter what you are? Look at everything you've done. You're a good person Violet. You're loving and attentive and you care about others above yourself. You're a great mate as far as I can see, and you're going to be a great Mother too! You could be a dragon mixed with a fox, and I wouldn't care! As long as you were the same person you are now on the inside."

A soft smile touched my lips at her little rant. "Thanks Tracy." I whispered.

"She's right. "King stepped forward. "It doesn't matter to any of us what you are."

"Damn straight." Ashwell added.

Grandpa and Jasper both nodded as well. I already felt better, knowing I had their support and love. As long as I had that, I was good.

"I think I know who to ask for some answers." I said, getting to my feet.

"I'll see you all in a little while, I'm going to bed."

Everyone looked at me with varied expressions. "Vie, it's only quarter to twelve." Jasper said.

"I know. But I think I have to be sleeping for this to work."

I gave a half wave, leaving them all in a state of total bewilderment. I maiden a quick detour to the kitchen, grabbing a sandwich out of the fridge, and eating it on my way upstairs. The elevator door opened to our floor as I was brushing the crumbs from my fingers. Going straight to our

bedroom, I made a beeline for the toilet; I'd never fall asleep if I had to pee. I did my business, washing my hands quickly. Then I was under the covers, my eyes closed, and calling out with my mind.

"Celeste? If you're there, I would really like to talk to you. I don't know how I did this last time, but I'm hoping this works."

I focused on calming my breathing while calling out to the Goddess. My advancing pregnancy actually helped the process too; I'd been taking at least one nap a day lately, becoming tired more easily. Soon, my breathing evened out and I drifted easily off to sleep. At first, it was just blank. And then I was thrown into an extremely vivid dream. Large, mossy trees surrounded me, with equally mossy rocks spread on the ground between them. The air was crisp, the smells of the forest floating to me on the light breeze. Unlike most dreams, I wasn't watching from a third person's point of view; This time I was in my own body, experiencing things first hand.

I realized I was standing in the middle of a dirt path. Shrugging, I started walking deeper into the thicket. The further I went, the darker the forest became, the trees growing closer together. Shadows fell over the path, but I passed them over casually, feeling calm and carefree. My thoughts drifted as lazily as the wind in my hair, a soft melody humming from my throat. It was when the black wolf ran into my field of vision that I stopped. It looked oddly familiar...And then it clicked.

"Hala!" I called. Her head turned at the sound of her name, her brilliant eyes watching me.

"She is quite beautiful, isn't she?"

I screamed, spinning around so fast my vision blurred. "What the fuck?!"

The words fell from my lips involuntarily, my face paling considerably at the sight of the Moon Goddess standing before me. She stood like a Queen amongst mortals, gazing at me with those mesmerizing violet eyes of hers.

Her skin matched the white of her dress, her raven hair standing out against both magnificently. However, her expression was amused.

"I-I'm sorry!" I squeaked.

Her laugh was like the most endearing music.

"No harm done child. I have heard worse."

I suddenly remembered why I was here, but I was too shy to start asking my questions after my inappropriate outburst. Celeste, ignorant to my inner embarrassment, raised her hand, crooking her finger to Hala. My wolf jumped and leaped over rocks and bushes, stopping in front of her mother and rolling playfully in the path.

"You've been having quite an adventure at Silver Moon." She said the words as easily as if we were discussing the weather.

"Uh, yeah. It's been interesting."

"How do you like being a Luna?"

I rocked back on my heels, unsure if I should tell her the whole truth. "I like it."

Her eyes met mine knowingly. I bit my lip.

"It is not an easy task, taking on the role of a leader." She stated.

"Not really, no." Looking away into the trees, I decided to ask an easy question first. "Why did you choose me?"

"Because I know you will succeed."

"You sound very certain of that."

"I am certain of the person you are."

I swallowed hard. "And who am I?"

Celeste smiled softly at me, love and adoration in her expression. "You are a Midnight Wolf."

I almost groaned aloud. Instead, I asked, "But what does that mean? Am I not a Hybrid?"

"No, you are not a Hybrid."

So, Grandpa was wrong about me after all. I thought I might feel relieved at this news, but instead I felt even more downcast. Didn't I fit in anywhere?

"Do you know what this place is Violet?"

I shook my head. Nothing about this place was familiar to me.

"I brought your mother here once." She drifted backwards, sitting on a large rock at the edge of the path. I followed, listening closely. "At the time, she was very unsure of herself. Of her position in the pack, her role as Luna. As a mate. She got through it all though. A strong woman."

"She is that." I agreed.

"Back then, Hala had a different name. Nia. I brought your mother here to ask if Nia could get a second chance."

I gasped, my gaze going to my wolf. She was laying peacefully at Celestes feet, her eyes closing sleepily.

"This is where Hala was reborn?" I asked.

"It is. This is where your fate was decided too. I gave Hala to you as a gift, but I knew together you two would do wonderful things. You were made for each other."

"But she was made for Jennine first."

A sharp growl echoed out of Halas mouth at the name.

The Moon Goddess sighed sadly. "Jennine was... difficult."

"In what way?"

"I will tell you, but it is complicated Violet. You must try to understand." She crossed her legs under her, leaning back on her hands. Her beautiful face was tilted up, looking into the sky. She looked so young, yet as old as the world itself. It was a dizzying experience.

"I had every faith in Jennine." She began softly. "She was so bright, so outgoing. Creative too. I know you all believe that I have a hand in your creation, but that isn't true. Not in the sense that I choose who is born and who isn't. When a child is conceived, I only hold the power to grant them a gift. For some, it is an animal with which they bond their souls with. For others, it is magic. And then there are the vampires, which I do love, but sadly, they pay a steep price for. So, I do consider you all my children, in a way."

"When Jennine was born, I gave her the gift of Nia. A wolf as brilliant and creative as she was. She was such a good child; I had no doubt in my mind that she would do what I had set out for her to do." Her eyes closed, her fair lips turning down. "I'm not sure where I went wrong. I've had so long, too long, to think that if perhaps I had visited her, encouraged her, things would have turned out differently. But it is what it is, and I cannot change the past."

"I don't think you should beat yourself up this much." I offered. "You can't help what people do with their freewill."

Celeste peeked at me through her long lashes. "Maybe you are right. But even a Goddess can feel remorse."

"Why? Because she went crazy with jealousy?"

She laughed once, but it was not music like. The sound grated against my eardrums, making me wince.

"If it were only jealousy that drove Jennine to where she is today, I would not feel as I do. You see child, I neglected Jennine. I neglected to tell her how special she was to me, neglected to set her on the right path. And in

my ignorance, she started listening to another. I knew it, but I did not nothing to stop it, having faith that she would continue to walk in the light."

"Bastian?"

"No. A far more sinister being. It was whispers at first. I cannot tell you when they became more than that, but eventually, Jennine started to turn away from me. She no longer looked to me for advice or good will. She became driven by greed, and selfishness. Her life became about what she wanted, instead of what she could do. Her mind was poisoned against me, but still.... I had hope. That hope disappeared when she sent Nia back to me." A lone tear that shone like a crystal ran down her pale cheek.

"Who poisoned her against you?" I whispered.

"A demon." She spat. "As cold and cunning as a snake. His name is Phoebus. And..." She turned her face to me, stealing my breath with the anger only a Goddess could possess, "He is my brother."