

THE MOON GODDESS' CHOSEN

Chapter 14: Chapter Fourteen

The bell for the end of class rang signalling the end of the school day, a moment that Shaemus should have been dreading in Katie's opinion as well as the hunters that had heard Sandra's talk with Cole. Katie picked up her bag before leaning back into her seat as the students got out of the classroom, impatience playing a key role in her behaviour. Cole, once again, who had taken over Sandra's seat turned to Katie, "Where is this hunters' training ground?"

"It's a clearing in the forest not too far from here where junior hunters from around this area train from most of the time. It is rarely used by hunters because it's known by everyone and doesn't allow any sort of discretion. So the newbie hunters, or should I say hunters-in-training, are the ones who use it," Katie said, looking him in the eye. It was getting easier, in her opinion, to look him in the eye. Scanning those bright blue irises didn't seem to be a bad thing after all.

Katie remained seated even after the class was empty her eyes focused on something outside the window. Cole moved over for a closer look and was able to see the small groups of students that kept sneaking into the forest, probably heading to the clearing that Shaemus had decided to hold the fight. "Sandra speaks highly of your abilities... she says you even have Prometheus' gift," Cole spoke up when the room was left with six people, Kyle included. The boy was so quiet sometimes that he could have done well for an assassin.

"Did she now?" Katie shifted her eyes to Sandra who showed no sign of backing down, "Well it's no secret anyway. No one's ever asked, so I keep it to myself." Katie finally stood up, handing her bag over to Kyle, "would you hold this for me, just in case?"

"Sure," he replied, "but isn't it a bit excessive?"

"It is and I am hoping we won't have to resort to it, however, I can't shake the feeling that we might need it," Cole gave up on figuring out what was in the bag as the level of discretion in the room skyrocketed. The walk to the clearing began from there, everyone staying insanely quiet as Katie, Sandra and Kyle led the way.

Cole's mind began to soar, rushing through his memories to remind him of exactly what a Prometheus gift was. During the war between the werewolves and the humans, well... at that point it was more like a one-sided massacre; humans snapped and decided to train elites for the one task of killing werewolves. For a while, the war had been one-sided as the wolves were superior to the humans in more ways than could be counted, easily thinning their numbers every time they were attacked. At the time, the first hunters were being trained and each time a squad of hunters would be sent to fight the werewolves, they would be murdered or turned into werewolves. Those that did not give in to the transformation would even commit suicide just so that they were not used against their comrades and family.

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It was a dark time and nothing was going well for the hunters. Each time there was a failure, the hunters would train more and soar to new heights stretching the limits of their human capabilities. Forging weapons that could help them bridge the gap of power. The first time the hunters managed to kill a werewolf counted as a great victory for them and they continued to train harder until one of them killed a beta.

The alpha of that pack was enraged and mounted an attack on the group of hunters. It was the first time hunters stood against a pack of werewolves and actually struck fear into the wolves that faced them. Fear, hatred, determination... these emotions fueled each and every one of them to fight back against the werewolves in this war. It was said that when the hunters showed this bravery, the patron god of the humans, Prometheus, gave each of them one of two gifts. The gift was either strength or agility.

This newfound power shone the first torch of hope on the human race, something that Prometheus had deemed to be mankind's greatest power. Once humans found hope, there was no stopping them. Everything changed on that day, hunters were trained at a very young age and only allowed into battle when they had been granted a gift by Prometheus and this was humanity's weapon against the werewolf that gave them equal footing in the world.

Combined with the intense training that the hunters went through, a Prometheus gift made them lethal. Agility made them impossible to even land a hit on while strength made them equal sparring partners. This allowed them the power to even capture werewolves and experiment on them, finding out their weaknesses and turning the tide of the war even more in their favour. Introducing poisons such as wolfsbane prevented werewolves from healing and weakened them at the same time. One might have said that this was

going to make life better for humans, but alas, bloodshed breeds more bloodshed. The attacks on civilians increased exponentially and in retaliation, the attacks on the werewolf packs also increased. That was until the Royals and hunters called for a summit that set the rules that would then become our world today. The summit that happened two hundred years ago put an end to the pointless bloodshed and brought rise to the barbaric Rogues that still wanted to wreak havoc.

“We are almost there,” Katie spoke up snapping Cole out of his thoughts. The rich scent of damp nature hit Cole’s nostrils as he took in a deep breath, along with the scents of all the humans who were waiting at the clearing not so far ahead. The turnout was unexpectedly high and there was no kind of rule on conduct, noise came from the on-lookers as though they were in some underground fight club placing bids on fighters. Their numbers littered the sides of the clearing ahead that was the training ground for the junior hunters.

The clearing soon came into view, Shaemus standing in the very centre of it with his hands crossed across his chest and a smirk on his face. His heartbeat was somewhat erratic, going up and down as though he was trying to calm himself and failing miserably at it. Katie took some time to look at the crowd from the shadows. She spotted one of the less involved hunters and called him. “I want you to get all the hunters that still have a sane mind and surround the area,” she said.

“What is our assignment?”

“Guard the civilians and if you notice anything out of the ordinary, stop the fight and alert me immediately.”

“Are you really going to fight him? This is pointless,” he said.

“All the more reason to keep your guard up,” everyone finally picked up on Katie’s logic at this point. The hunter she had called then quickly left to inform the others that were not caught up in the chaos. “These dummies, they are all slacking off. Their trainers would be disappointed in them... I guess all newbies deserve lessons.”

“You say it like you aren’t a newbie like them,” Cole chuckled, only to stop when Sandra gave him an alarming look to get out of the territory that he was starting to tread in from behind Katie’s back.

“Oh well, we might as well get this over with,” Katie said, raising her hands up in mock defeat before stepping into the clearing from the shadows. The people who saw her appear immediately gave her way to pass. As she walked

through them, she could soon tell that the people in attendance weren't only students. Townspeople as well had come to watch it all with their own eyes.

"If it isn't the soon-to-be-history head hunter," Shaemus spoke up, arousing the portion of the crowd that was on his side.

"Shaemus, this is a waste of time and you know it... anyway, you still have time to back out. If you do, you won't suffer any consequences," Katie said.

"Sandra is not here to save you, you know," Katie couldn't help but facepalm on hearing that. There was no getting through to him. The only way Shaemus was going to snap out of it is if he lost and was brought to the realization that he was indeed out of his league.

Dexter came from the crowd along with two of his wolves flanking him. "Hey, Katie. You ready to get your ass handed to you?" he said, sparking laughter amongst them and earning a disappointing sigh from Katie. "I'll be the referee for this match. Now if you could just begin so we can get this over with."

That seemed to be the signal for the start of the match as Shaemus started circling Katie, keeping his footwork flawless as he did so, always keeping his back foot with more energy than the one at the front to allow him the chance to dart forward given the chance. Katie, on the other hand, put her hand into her pockets and retrieved what appeared to be a stop-clock. She was totally relaxed and even seemed more focused on the clock than Shaemus as she messed with the winding wheel.

"What are you doing?"

"I did say that I will give you five minutes into the fight for you to surrender before I myself take the fight seriously. In the meantime, feel free to attack in whatever way you wish," Katie said. Shaemus' face transformed from one of fury to one of rage, the difference being a slight facial distortion that made Shaemus look crazier and much less composed. If there had never been a difference between the two, now there was one and Katie could see it clearly. A vein pumped in Shaemus' forehead and he seethed uncontrollably before lashing out, a fist aimed to connect directly with Katie's jaw. 'Going for the kill already,' Katie thought as she stepped out of Shaemus' way allowing him to pass by, losing his balance in the process.

Shaemus' struggled to find his balance, his back turned to Katie who had sidestepped him without breaking a sweat. "What the hell..."

"Didn't your trainer teach you never to turn your back on an opponent?" Katie said, watching what had become of one of the most promising hunters in the school. He had even been helpful during her climb to the top to earn the title

of safest school in the world. From the time Katie had been admitted, there had never been a single human casualty and human-werewolf hostility had plummeted tremendously. Shaemus was in the same year as Katie and at first, when it had been clear that Katie and Sandra were ahead of him, he had looked up to them and even come to them for training tips. 'Oh, Shaemus, how did it get to this?' Katie asked herself. If this had been a life and death battle, he would surely be dead by now. An attack out of pure anger was just the quickest way to get you killed.