

Chapter 41 - Pregnant After One Night With The Lycan

Tanya's POV

I'm a little stunned to speak upon realizing that the Messenger Mage who has been listening to me, has been Marco all along.

'But- but how,' I stutter.

And although it is Marco who replies back to me, it's the voice of the Messenger Mage that I hear as it flows past his lips. "Greetings Tanya! It's incredibly lovely to finally meet you from beyond the veil!" I blink in surprise, the tone and mannerisms, not at all a reflection of Marco's nature.

He seems to notice this. "Oh so sorry! I should've introduced myself first, I'm Marco's wolf," Marco starts to cough and cannot help but roll his eyes, seemingly speechless at his wolf's mannerisms. Then a different male voice exits his vocal chords. "I'm Manuel," the voice sounds rich and smooth, matching the polite greeting he offers me.

"Nice to meet you, Manuel," and while I am delighted to meet him, I finally realize he has been pretending to be the Messenger Mage. My eyes grow wide, as a rosy, red shade of embarrassment flushes my cheeks.

"Does this mean you've both known my secrets all along?"

Marco nods.

"About our first night together?"

He nods.

"Your birthday?"

He nods again.

"Did you also enforce the fixture of the streetlights outside too?"

He nods once more.

Oh goodness... he's been here every time...

But before I can find the will to apologize for all my chaotic thoughts and doubtful worries, Marco steps towards me. He silences my stuttering with his piercing gaze, and I almost lose my breath as I look up at him.

“Truthfully. I don't fall for people easily,” now it is fully Marco speaking, as he gently places a hand on my arm, pulling me closer with a fierce tug. “The more time we spent together, the more I got to see that your heart is truly pure. Your kindness, your honesty. I'm surrounded by people who are riddled with anger and savagery,” he says.

“And you're the one person in my life that shows me true genuine love and loyalty. Not for money, or for power, or my fame. Just simply because you care for me. And I've fallen deeply in love with you because of this.”

Even while confessing his love to me, Marco's tone maintains its strength, filled with conviction and certainty. He's made his decision, and whereas before I never knew what to think, right now, I don't doubt a single word that leaves his lips. There's a silence that hangs in the air between us, still in utter disbelief. But I finally gather my thoughts.

“Well, you already know how I feel about u...” I whisper shyly.

I watch as the corner of his lips tug upwards into a playful smile. “Then I don't need permission to do this.”

Other than his words, he gives little warning as he pulls me in close, suddenly capturing me into a passionate kiss.

I don't remember getting home. Much of the walk back has been a blur. I now stand in our doorway, a nervousness bubbling within, while a deep urge to kiss Marco again rushes upon me. Almost as if reading my thoughts, Marco places a hand against my back, guiding me both gently and assertively into his room.

I don't turn around upon hearing the door click shut. I sense him quietly come up behind me, his slow shallow breaths indicating he's inches away from my neck. I can tell his waiting, calmly reading my body language, despite his ability to always take what's his. He's waiting for my permission.

I smile, my hand pulls back, searching the air behind it for his. Finally, his hand intertwines with mine, and I gracefully move it over and onto my shoulder, and press back into him. Marco hums in approval, and goes ahead, placing soft sensual kisses behind my ear, and trailing down my nape and to my collar bone. So delicate, yet they spark fires beneath my skin in the places his lips have been.

While he does this, I roll my shoulders, allowing the tension of today's events to roll off my back, leaning my neck as his subtle kisses grow longer and more intense. Soon I feel his fingers playing with the hem of my shirt. I follow his needs with ease, reaching down to pull at it. Marco helps me get the fabric over my head, and in the process turns me round to face him.

"You're so beautiful," he whispers.

Making me smile as I lean in for another kiss, his fingers rest just underneath my chin, holding my head up to counteract our height differences. I'm understandably desperate to unveil the skin beneath his shirt. But before I can, Marco taps my needy hands away with a chuckle.

"Not yet. You wait."

And before I can plead, I lose his lips again as they scour my chest. Now dangerously close to my cleavage. This time he doesn't ask, and I don't need him too. He easily unclasps the buckle of my bra, and I let it drop to the floor. He observes me for a minute, and although a sense of shyness looms beneath, I can't help but see only admiration in his gaze.

Finding myself so in tune with his movements, I don't hesitate to wrap my arms round him, my legs trusting the strength of his arms as he carries me to the bed, setting me down on the edge, so I'm positioned closer to him than my stature wouldn't allow.

Hands resting on my hips, Marco leans down to press soft kisses on my exposed mounds. They're of average size, proportioned to my smaller body. But Marco finds no trouble indulging in what they had to offer. I somewhat knew of the enjoyment they gave him, what I didn't expect was the sensual elation that his nibbling would offer me.

I gasp as I'm swept under in a wave of bliss, unintentionally running my fingers through his velvety blonde locks, playing with his glossy curls, ever so gently tugging so his mouth is plush against my chest. My head feels heavy from the pleasant stimulation, and he senses my drowsiness as my body slopes further forwards.

"Lean back baby."

I oblige to his command and the tender force of his palm that pushes my stomach, so I rest on my back, melting into the soft quilt beneath me. He doesn't follow me. Instead, I feel his hands slip down to my skirt, undoing the zipper, and peeling it away so my legs lay bare.

He's not so slow about my panties. Hastier with unveiling my trimmed flower beneath, he eagerly licks away at the mess he's already caused from his touch alone. My breath hitches as his tongue skillfully swipes at the most sensitive of areas. Maintaining a slow but consistent rhythm that has me arching my back from the pulsating passion growing within me.

But before I can lose myself completely, he pulls away. I sit up in mild confusion as he steps back. The dim lighting casts him as a towering shadow above me. Dauntingly gorgeous in his build, I find myself dazed by his figure.

“You’ve been very patient, haven’t you?” he says in a teasing tone.

I quickly nod, well aware of what he was referring to. I watch in awe as Marco unveils the muscle beneath his shirt, I want to glide my hands down his chest, but I’m just out of reach. Remaining dutifully on the couch as he unbuckles his belt, dropping both his pants and boxers in one go.

My body knows what it wants, sending vibrations up my spine in disorderly signals of lust. Marco finally closes the distance, allowing me to return the favor. I embrace his impressive length, taking it into my mouth with slow gentle motions. My eyes flicker up innocently to his as I do this, loving the look I receive in return, enjoying the effect I have on him.

I continue for a little longer, till I start to hear Marco’s breath grow uneven and jagged. I sense he’s no longer in the mood to talk. Only jerking his head with a blazing look, suggesting I move back and onto the bed. I shimmy myself backwards till my head meets the pillow, propping myself to see Marco maneuver himself above me, caging me in with his muscular body and powerful aura.

He uses his hand and elbow so as not to put pressure on my smaller frame. But there’s a pause in his movements, he looks at me with a careful expression, his eyes speaking volumes that words don’t need to explain.

“I’m ready,” I whisper.

His lips are at my mercy as I take hold of them with my own, easing the initial discomfort as he slowly slides into me, proceeding with immense caution. I nod my head to reassure him, allowing him to proceed as he begins with a slow and steady motion.

We eventually grow more and more comfortable. My hunger for both his mouth and manhood escalates. I kiss him deeper and for longer, my hand clasping round his neck to pull him in closer, intentionally urging him to go faster.

Our bodies mesh into one solid frame as Marco thrusts. My moans ultimately become louder as my sensations mount in tangent with his. We breathe the same air through every kiss, and as Marco starts to accelerate, our hearts pound in union.

The finality nears, my back arches as Marco jolts into me one last time. Waves upon waves of bliss ripple through my system as I cry out in pleasure. Marco too, releases a masculine moan as he reaches climax with me. I’m swept away in the elation, intertwined in his embrace as the darkness invades my delighted senses.

Chapter 43 Mark

Chapter 42 - Pregnant After One Night With The Lycan

Tanya's POV

My eyelids softly flutter open, the blurriness of my vision slowly fading as I grow conscious of my surroundings and my body awakens. But I'm too groggy to do anything by lying in bed. The soft pillow beneath my head urges me to sink into its depth and rest my eyes some more, but I can't.

Not when I can feel a warm muscular hand laying limp upon my waist, not when I can feel his gentle breaths against my skin as he lies asleep beside me. Not when the slight breeze tickles my cold but completely bare skin beneath the quilt. Not when I'm so sore in all the right places.

I smile. My current situation has me filled with nostalgia, identifying the parallels between this very moment and the morning of my very first one-night stand with Marco. Where somehow, by fate, or mischievous methods of the universe, our paths have crossed in such a silly way. Only for now to be awaking from our night in bed together that has been done not strictly out of lust, but through true romantic desire and love.

He loves me.

I still couldn't fathom the feeling, couldn't fathom that I would from now on wake up every morning and remember the fact that the man beside me loves me with all his heart. Gone is my fear of dying alone. Gone are my doubts for my future. Gone is the depressive need to end my previously miserable existence. This man has saved a life. My life. He's given me a job, a future child, and now, his heart.

"What are you smiling about?"

I couldn't suppress the playful titter from leaving my lips as he reveals that he's awake. His voice beckons me to look over and soak in the beauty of his features that still look half-asleep. I'm also very aware as the hand on my waist begins to move, his fingers drawing delicate circles with gentle strokes, slowly rousing the butterflies within my stomach.

I see the way he watches me, as a hint of curiosity hides behind his naturally composed and apathic expression. I don't know if the morning after is what's making me feel a tad bit more confident in myself, or it is just my hormonal attraction to him that is instigating my playfulness.

"Nothing important."

I do poorly to hide my lie, as I can't help but smirk at him. Course, as I expect, Marco easily maintains his calm, yet the movement of his hand seems to mean something else. It stops mid-way down my thigh, continuously brushing lightly against my skin.

"Is that so? Well, I don't believe you," he mutters.

"You don't?"

"No. I don't."

"How come?" I bat my eyes at him innocently, as I still don't relay the information he desires. Again, his face gives nothing away, but his hand sharply dips down the inside of my thigh, just low enough to brush the first strands of hair surrounding my delicates. I can do little to subdue my reaction, as my mouth unlatches for a deep intake of air before I bite down on my bottom lip.

I can at least tell he's enjoying slowly fracturing my defenses. However, I notice something stirs in the depths of his eyes that suggest he's ready to up the ante of this harmless game we're playing.

"You have three seconds to tell me."

My breathing abruptly stops upon hearing his statement, my brain divulging into a million possibilities of what he's about to do next.

"One," he raises a brow as I clamp my mouth in protest.

"Two..." his hand retreats from its position, and I find myself sighing in relief. Only to gape as he brings it up from under the covers, staring directly into my eyes as he nonchalantly inserts two fingers into his mouth, sucking on them deliberately. They leave his lips with a pop and go back to rest exactly where they have been on my body.

Oh god, what have I done?

"Three," I have no room to surrender as Marco leans over to get a better angle. There is no subtleness this time, he suddenly slips two fingers down below, thrusting my insides with unexplainable force and precision.

I break out in stuttering gasps, and my whimpers are loud and erratic while he shows no sign of slowing. The palm of his hand smacks against my flower's outer lips, while his fingers vigorously rub the small bump inside of me that alters the frequency of my pleasure. I'm drowning in pure ecstasy with little room to breathe as Marco pumps me towards climax.

"That's it, you're almost there. Cum for me princess."

My repeated use of the 'yes' escapes me without my permission, wanting, needing, to do as he's asked. I beg for his continuous rhythm and perfect speed before I lose all sense of control over

my body. I burst with gratification as my thighs clench down on his fingers, I shake and spasm in bliss, unable to stop my eyes rolling back from the thrill.

I'm like this for what feels like forever before I finally come down from my high. My naked chest rises and falls to exhale heavy breaths as I'm eventually able to make proper eye contact with him again. He's watching me. Predatory lust seeps from his gaze that leans over me. And while I'm elated from the sensations sizzling within, I can't help but shiver as one corner of his lips pulls upward in a small yet visible sly smile.

"You're not done. I want you on your elbows and knees."

He gives me time to move whilst he throws back the duvet that previously covered us. Although clearly dominant, he's still thoughtfully aware of the soreness of my body, and helps me to roll over onto my stomach, kissing my body gingerly as he does so. He sets a pillow beneath to rest my elbows, while I obediently lift my bum.

Dark sable strands of my hair cascade round my face, limiting my vision. But I can feel his hands hold me at the hips as he aligns himself. He leans forward, kissing the lines of my back with sensual grace as he slowly inserts his length into me, whispering sweet nothings in response to my soft moans.

Marco starts slow, even with my slickness, he still lets me grow comfortable with his size. Nevertheless, it feels good, and I start to feel myself pushing back into his manhood, enjoying the sliding motion that sends pleasurable vibrations through me. "Faster," I say breathlessly. But there's no change to his pace.

"Please Marco... Go faster."

Finally, the grip he has on my hips tighten, he pulls me back and sends his hips forward with quicker movements. Soon the bed is rocking in union to our combined force. Marco starts to pound faster, grunting with every strike, his thighs slapping against my bare flesh with loud claps.

Soon my moans escalate into love making screams of delight, and I'm begging for him not to stop. I can tell he loves this, cause while still pounding me hard, he leans over, wrapping a hand round my waist to pull himself closer, so his breathing tickles my ear. While his other hand has one of my breasts tightly in his grasp.

"I want to mark you Tanya," he admits in a whisper.

"Do it Marco. Do it please. Mark me as yours," I say in a moan, giving him consent and expressing my desire to be his.

I tilt my head to the side, willingly exposing my jugular to the Lycan. He takes this as a gesture of my submission to him and moves forward. Suddenly, an explosion erupts from the depths of my core as Marco sensually bites down on my neck, canine fangs sinking down into my flesh as

we both reach full climax. I scream out his name as he jolts his firm throbbing length into me a couple more times, as his jaws remain clamped on my throat.

Eventually, we both succumb to the exhaustion. He unhooks his canines from my skin, and I crumble into the bed beneath us. Marco falls at my side, even with his uneven breaths, there's no falter to his movements. He protectively spoons me from behind, wrapping his arm around my waist to pull me into the safety of his embrace. Slowly and softly Marco begins to affectionately lick away the blood from my wound, gently revealing his mark that I'm so proud to behold.

Chapter 44 Leave My Son

Chapter 43 - Pregnant After One Night With The Lycan

Tanya's POV

Later that day, I get a call from the palace. One of the messengers says the King would like to meet with me. Although I'm a little unnerved by the proposal, I still say I'll be there soon, and hang up and get dressed.

Marco drops me off, and I walk nervously into the palace, and into one of the rooms where the King is waiting for me. "Your highness," I curtsy before the King. He sits comfortably in one of the chairs, a glass of whiskey in hand.

"Welcome Tanya, please have a seat."

I sit down on the chair opposite him, placing my hands on my laps to stop their nervous twitching whilst under the placid gaze of the King. "The reason I've asked you to come, is because I have an offer that I'd like you to consider."

I can't get a read on his expression, nor think of anything that would warrant the King to be upset with me. "An offer Sir?"

He nods. "Yes, as you've witnessed, Marco's curse appears to have been lifted, or at least been subdued. With this being the case, I would like to pass on the throne to him due to his superior power."

I nod my head in understanding, although I wonder what this happens to do with me. Till I realize, if Marco becomes King, I'll be Queen...

The King's judgmental voice infiltrates my thoughts. "I'm willing to give you a large sum of money, more than you or the little pack you come from could ever imagine. You could do whatever you like with it. Build your own perfume store for all I care. So long... as you divorce Marco and leave his life for good."

My heart indivertibly sinks upon hearing the King's request. How could I not see this coming? Not only am I the daughter of a surrogate, but I am a lowly omega, disowned by my Alpha father, and no wolf form or wolfish powers. I am a snowy white lamb, that stick out like a sore thumb, trying to fit in with predatory carnivores. I have no place among them, and the King knows this.

I can see him studying my expression whilst I battle with my thoughts. But even if I am an outcast, Marco is the love of my life. Losing him would shatter my world and my heart. And now that I know the way he feels for me, I would not shamelessly dare to sever the tie between us for money. Love has no price. And even though I fear the King's reaction, I must refuse.

"I'm sorry your Highness. But I can't agree to that," he tries to maintain his cold hard expression, but I notice the flicker of irritation in his eyes as I continue. "You could offer me all the money in the world, and yet I'd still refuse. I love Marco. And my loyalty lies with him. I will remain at his side as long as he needs me."

I ready myself to face King Joseph's wrath, but before he can respond, in walks my lover with a determined look in his eyes. Knowing I have seen his naked glory just this morning, I can't help but sweep my gaze down his muscular form, undressing him with my eyes in deep desire. I have to internally reprimand myself for doing so, realizing that I am still in a serious conversation with the King.

But Marco seems to know this. Without the King seeing, Marco flashes me a generous smile, as if he has heard my previous words, before swiveling his back to me to face his father.

"Marco... this isn't a conversation that includes you-"

"You're speaking to my wife about our future together. This conversation definitely involves me," Marco doesn't miss a beat as he retorts to his father's blatant disregard. "Tanya we're leaving," I slowly rise from my seat, slightly hesitant as Marco adds. "And don't ever interfere in my marriage again."

Marco's tone betrays no hint of warmth, it's bitter, and laced with poisonous zeal. He doesn't even need to raise his voice to get his point across. But as a true testament to his pride, the King doesn't bother to acknowledge either of us.

And so, I quietly follow behind Marco, with my own pride towards the strength of our love, growing by the day.

Lily's POV

I've lost everything to that gold digging peasant! It didn't matter that Tanya had been born with a genetic talent for perfumery, I had worked just as hard to both execute and maintain my perfume making abilities so no one would suspect my foul play. I'd be excruciatingly precise and careful with every action I made since I realized Tanya and I had been switched at birth. And I was not going to lose it all now because of her.

She is somehow my evil twin, sent out to topple my wealth and nobility with nothing but her innocence and naivety. I am intelligent, follow my noble obligations, and is the perfect embodiment of a true Alpha Queen. I deserve this life, and I will fight to keep it.

I pace the length of my lavish room in an utter rage, trying to rack my brain for a way to earn back my reputation. More importantly, earn back my rightful place beside Marco. He didn't know it yet. But he needed me...

He needed me...

Through my exasperated thought process, I suddenly recall a specific detail that I thought little of at the time. During the competition, Tanya swirled droplets of her blood into her perfume, it must've been how she was able to create perfumes with a special function. Moreover, it must've been why Marco's curse was suppressed when he smelt her perfume.

The gears in my head begin to turn. Long ago, I actually found information relating to Marco's curse. I knew that the key to curing the Lycan curse lay in his fated mate's blood. On the contrary, blood that wasn't from his fated mate would only aggravate the symptoms. Course, by then I'd already known I wasn't Marco's fated mate, so I kept the information to myself as to not to reveal the truth.

But now... the information gives me an advantage that I haven't thought about before. And my new plan sets in motion as I rush out the door.

I know he's still within the palace somewhere due to Tanya's meeting with the King. Before I go find him, I hastily grab a glass of water, before rushing off. He stands quietly in one of the rooms, looking at something on his phone. I approach him, baring a broad smile.

"Hello Marco."

He doesn't react to my presence. The sides of my lips dig deeper into my skin trying to maintain their formation.

"Marco, please, may I have a moment of your time?"

"Is it important? I've already said I don't want to speak with you unless it's truly necessary."

“But it is. I want to apologize for framing and copying Tanya. It was an atrocious thing for me to do. And I’m sorry.”

“Shouldn’t you be apologizing to Tanya?” his tone is still flat and unbothered, but I don’t let it affect me, or disrupt me from what I’m about to do.

“Yes, but I-” I pretend to trip over my legs, toppling the glass and spilling its liquid contents all over Marco’s clothes. He tries to recoil, but it’s too late, his clothes are now completely drenched and soggy. His glare could’ve murdered someone on the spot, but not me, I have a job to do to save my reputation.

I squeal as if horrified by my actions. “Oh goodness. I’m so sorry Marco. How clumsy of me. Please, let me help you wipe your clothes.”

I barely move an inch when Marco immediately backs away from me. Part of myself despises the fact that he doesn’t want my hands on his body, but the other half acknowledges that this is for a greater cause. Soon I’ll have him all to myself.

“No. It’s fine. I can clean up by myself.” Despite his words, my eyes light up with a sense of victory as Marco shrugs off his wet jacket, before departing the room. In haste I kneel down and fish through the pockets, quickly finding the vial of perfume Tanya made for him.

I elongate my fangs, and prick my finger, before letting my blood drip into the liquid. I give the glass bottle a decent swirl to combine the solution, before returning it to Marco’s coat pocket. Satisfied, I leave the jacket where it is and triumphantly return to my room.

Tanya’s POV

Two days have passed since that conversation with King. Today, when I leave home and plan to go shopping at the supermarket, I’m suddenly surrounded by a group of people. But they’re no strangers, I recognize the faces of my old pack, all looking at me with fear and despair in their eyes. Then, to my utter surprise, I lay eyes on my family members. My father, my stepmother Maya, and Alina. Even Bradon and Malik are there.

But before I can question what the members of my old pack are doing here, I watch as my father steps out from the crowd.

I always saw him as strong and majestic. However, I can’t fathom to believe his next action as he suddenly kneels down in front of me.

Chapter 45 Marco’s Curse Attacks Him Again

Chapter 44 - Pregnant After One Night With The Lycan

Tanya's POV

What I learn from my family and old pack members is that the Lycan King has started imposing harsh sanctions on my pack. Using methods such as increasing taxes, restricting imports and exports, all to displace the economy and profits my pack earns to maintain a comfortable living for its residents.

They have all come to the capital to find me after the King set an ultimatum. That if I'm to divorce Marco, then he'd undo all the restrictions and sanctions. Despite their cries, I find it all so difficult to process. My fingers wriggle nervously with the hem of my shirt in considerable discomfort.

I was a nobody before I married Marco, declared an abomination and a worthless lost caused that no one cared for. My father didn't see me as his daughter, and my stepsister pretended to care despite her betrayal by sleeping with my boyfriend.

"Please Tanya, the King's sanctions have left us in a deficit. In months' time, we will have no money," says my father, showing more humility in this very moment than I have seen in years.

"Why should I?" my eyes well up with tears, barely able to articulate my words as I wish to sink deeper and deeper into myself. I'm finally receiving the love I have been pleading for, only to realize it's because my life affects there's, and it hurts to realize this. "You wanted to sell me to a perverted old man! Why should I care?"

My father is still kneeling at my feet as he says, "Well then think of the rest of your pack. Not just us. Malik won't be able to run his store for much longer with all the sanctions."

My eyes flicker to see the man I previously worked for, one of the few whom treated me kindly. "It's true Tanya, if the King continues with this plan, I won't have the money to run my store, I'll go bankrupt."

My chest hurts, my heart throbbing with anguish to my terrible fate. I used to be insignificant. I have just finally established myself as a talented perfumer after ongoing rigorous setbacks caused by Lily, and Marco has devoted and expressed his true love for me.

And now... I have to choose to sacrifice all those things for the greater good. I know I couldn't selfishly watch my pack wither away into poverty, but it means I have to give up everything I hold dear to me and return to a life I wish never to go back to.

With a heavy heart ripping at the seams, I loose hold of my tears that spill from my eyes. Pushing past my pack, I rush home in despair, crying all the way there.

I quickly swab away my tears upon returning to the house, pressing a cloth against my cheeks to wipe the wetness away and hide my sadness before Marco can see it. He usually greets me right away when I enter the house, but thankfully today he doesn't, and I have time to look less of a mess.

What alerts me though is glass that lays shattered beneath the kitchen table. I hesitantly move towards it, eyeing the spilt liquid and the splinters of glass that eerily spread across the wooden flooring. Almost as if someone had been setting it down on the table but somehow missed the edge, letting the object plummet straight down to the ground.

While still in the midst of my thoughts, I hear the identifiable sound of a large object colliding with another in a loud thump. The noises that follow suit are erratic and change with each second. I take a careful step forward, the floorboards creaking loudly beneath me that only escalate my confusion and alarm. And just before I can react, a bestial roar rips its way through the air around me.

Marco...

Immediately I rush to our bedroom, slamming the door open to see my husband writhing in indescribable pain. Although still human, he fails to see me as he fights with himself. Thrashing into the walls uncontrollably, tugging at his hair, scratching his sharpened nails down the length of his arms, and scraping the skin that covers his ribs. It's almost as if the Lycan within is trying to push its way out, putting pressure on all his body parts from within that meld in a reckoning force that has Marco desperate for release.

My body jolts in fright as Marco bashes a rage filled fist into the wall, denting the cement with his strength. His breathing harbors a monstrous undertone reminiscent of the beast. Without warning, his skull snaps to look in my direction, eyes dripping in a blood red that does not bear any resemblance to my lover.

He stalks towards me in predatory pursuit, almost reaching me when the pain strikes him again. He screams, crumbling to the floor on all fours, looking up at me as I finally see a fragment of the Marco I know, his face staring at me in agony.

Desperate, I attempt to walk towards him.

"NO!" His shout has me stricken with terror.

"Tanya get out! Run! Lock the door!" his growl triggers the transformation, and I watch in horror as his body shifts and morphs uncontrollably. Bones crack and bend in all the wrong places, skin stretches to accommodate for the next form and transcends into a blackish hue that sprouts wolfish fur.

Marco's legs elongate into stocky legs and claws, as his hands do too. His face reshapes, snout protruding through his skin into a menacing muzzle with a dangerous row of canine teeth.

To save my own life, I pull myself out of my terrified trance, slamming the door shut and locking it, able to still hear his monstrous thrashing and bashing from behind the door.

I grab my phone, hands shaking vigorously as I have trouble trying to dial the number. Finally, I press call, Oliver immediately picking up the line. "Oliver, you have to get here quick! It's Marco."

I don't have to say anything else as he hangs up. A couple of minutes later Oliver finds me sitting on the floor by the door, twitching with panic as I have sat listening to Marco's bestial growls as he paces the room. I'm thankful as Oliver pulls me away, and we sit on the couch in an agonizing wait for Marco to return back to his human state.

I barely sleep, Marco's transformation lasting a day and a night as Oliver stays with me throughout the duration. Finally, when it thinks it's safe, we step into the trashed room. I find Marco slumped against one of the walls, naked and drenched in sweat, the silver line on his arm still visible, now even longer than before, as it stretches up to reach his bicep.

The doctor arrives quickly, and it takes him one look to conclude that Marco's curse has become severe.

Under the order of the King, we rush to the palace that evening so Marco can be under the watchful care of the best doctors in the capital... but none of them can relieve the symptoms of his curse.

The attacks become more frequent and unbearable to witness. My husband is placed in a sealed room so that he can be monitored as well as to protect himself and everyone else within the vicinity. I barely eat, barely sleep. I sit frozen by his door despite his pleading for me to leave and look after myself during the stages that he is human.

I stay by his side, making sure I'm awake whenever he is human so I can go in and see him. However, today, the doctor comes in with me, checking Marco's vitals before sighing in uncertainty at the silver vein that trails higher and higher. Marco still appears incredibly tired from the repeated transformations, so we step out of the room to let him rest.

"What is it, doctor?"

"I'm sorry. But if this line reaches his neck, Marco will probably die." my face falls, completely astonished, my heart crumbling from within as I hear the news. "I've explained this to Marco years ago. There's not much we can do."

Trying to maintain my composure, even if I'm losing all ability to cope, I excuse myself from the doctor to go freshen up, feeling completely numb and disconnected, unable to accept a life without Marco.

However, as I make my way I'm stopped by the presence of the King.

"I understand that you love him Tanya, but this is a matter of reputation and noble right. You're just not meant to be royalty, it would look 'wrong'." I don't have the strength to dispute with him. I hang my head with a tired gaze.

He takes a moment, before saying, "Also, Lily is his fated mate, and she has found a way to cure his curse, but it's under the conditions that you leave the capital and Marco forever."

Chapter 46 I Want Marco Alive

Chapter 45 - Pregnant After One Night With The Lycan

Tanya's POV

I sit in one of the rooms, as I bury my head in my hands, my mind is filled with turmoil. How could this be? Why did things have to be so good, before being snatched away from me?

Before I can sink further into a hole of my own misery, I hear the click clack of heels as someone walks into the room. Instantly I realize it's the last person I am interested in seeing. My eyes slowly lift up to cast upon Lily.

There's no longer a requirement for formalities between the two of us. We know where we both stand. And most important of all, she's won. Lily's won.

Hence, I'm not surprised as she gets straight to the point of the matter. "I've checked the ancient books. And I now know of a way to cure Marco of his curse and save his life," part of me is relieved that Marco can be saved, but knowing what it's going to cost me is detrimental to my sanity.

Lily continues to talk. "The most important ingredient to the potion is the blood of Marco's fated mate. In fact, if he's exposed to any blood that isn't of his mate on a regular basis, it will only aggravate his curse."

My eyes widen upon hearing this. My drops of blood in the perfume that Marco uses to sleep must've been increasing the fatality of his curse. Me. I was the one who brought this upon him. If it wasn't for me, Marco would've been okay. Instead, he is now fighting for his life.

Tears slip down my cheeks slowly and sadly, picking on the skin of my fingers in growing upset and self-blame whilst Lily turns to me, her eyes showcasing true noble composure, making me

understand that I'm staring into the eyes of the true future Queen of the Mador kingdom, the true fated mate of Marco. I can't look away as she nails the final nail into the coffin of my and Marco's love.

"I will save Marco. My only condition is that you leave Marco and the capital forever... You are not to tell him the real reason why you're leaving. And if you really love him, Tanya, you'll do what's best for him, and the Kingdom."

I always knew life was unfair, but now more than ever I have come to realize that I am nothing but a side character in Marco's world. And that's the way it will be.

"You'll be saving Marco's life this way. It's for the best Tanya," I'm barely able to take in the rest of her words, stuck in a disheveled trance of my own misfortune.

"Here, drink some water, take some time to calm down and think about my proposal," in a robotic motion I take the glass in my hands, but only after a second my hands register the scorching hot temperature of the cup. And in reaction to the burning sensation I drop it, letting it shatter suddenly across the floor.

"Oh god, I'm so sorry," I drop to my knees instantly, hissing in pain as in my hurry to collect the glass I cut my fingers on one of the pieces, staining it with my blood. Lily doesn't seem bothered however, instead her eyes seem wide and almost satisfied with the predicament.

"Leave it, it's no bother at all. I'll clean it. Please, go tend to your wound." She ushers me off almost in a hurry. I leave Lily. My legs just know where to go, easily maneuvering through the maze of the palace I find myself at Marco's door.

When I'm informed it's safe for me to see him, I carefully withdraw all my emotions that might allude to my true feelings, meticulously putting away my fears and devastation within my mind. I need to save his life for the pain I've caused him. And if it means I have to leave him forever, then that's what I'll do.

Quietly, I step through the door, shutting it behind me as I see that he's wide awake. His tired smile is only a small kindling flame that's overshadowed by my anguish. But I maintain strength, making my way towards him, and sitting myself on the edge of his bed, just happy to finally be in his presence while he's conscious.

It feels like we talk for hours. Like old friends catching up, speaking over trivial things, like if it would be nice to refurbish the house, what Marco would like me to cook him for dinner, whether I look better in the blue or green dress.

All little things that allow us to bring a jovial air to the depressing situation we are in. With an unspoken rule to not speak about the true depth of our problems. And despite the pain in my heart, I'm able to smile and laugh throughout our conversations, truly at ease with the one I love like I should be.

Marco rests his arm on my thigh, and it invites me to pull myself closer. He offers the blanket and I choose to join him, cuddling beneath the fabric. In all honesty, I am desperate to let loose the bucketload of tears that put pressure upon my eyes. If only I can unleash everything, I harbor in my heart to him, knowing that somehow, he'd make it all better.

But I can't. Lily's conditions sit bitterly in the back of my mind, like a terrible monster ready to feast on my insides if I so much let a single word of the truth. So, I only grasp onto him tighter, as if my locked embrace would stop me from ever leaving.

Finally, I decide that I want to make this my final memory. I want it protected, so it has a place in my heart that can never be washed away by time or age. No matter what happens, I have this precious memory of him, and I want to make it special, so it lasts forever.

At that moment, my shyness and typical sense of nervousness are pushed aside for my desire to have him. With my head previously pressed into his chest, I pull back, lifting my head to his. I stare into his eyes, memorizing their captivating hue, fully determined to have them cast into the depths of my memory.

And then I press my lips into his. I can sense his slight surprise, but he doesn't stop me, kissing me back with similar eagerness. Our kisses are slow and deliberate, fueled by hunger, but gentle in motion. I often forget to take a minute to breathe, desperate to have his lips on mine for as long as possible. Terrified that each time I pull away, it will be the last.

Recognizing Marco's exhaustion from his uncontrollable transformation, I take initiative, lightly pushing his shoulder so his back is now fully pressed against the bed whilst I roll on top. So I'm straddling his mid torso while I continue to kiss him.

Given the freedom, I kiss every body part made available by his bare chest. Almost like I'm trying to kiss away his pain, as well as my own. His head tilts back attentively as I plant long kisses against his neck, gently sucking the skin that creates a reaction in Marco.

Whilst doing this, I feel Marco's hands rub and stroke my back and lower body, consistently squeezing the skin every now and then in a sensual display. But while his hands remain heavenly romantic in their maneuvers, I still think about how this would be the last time I'd be touched by them. It would be the very last time hands rummage through my body in places so delicate and vulnerable.

Because in truth. I couldn't see myself ever loving again. Marco is allowed to move on as he pleased. But I don't think I would ever get to the stage where I could be with someone other than the man beneath me.

And it hurts. It pains my heart to an indiscernible degree. But as I lay kisses against the silver line that dangerously runs up his arm and taints his skin. I recognize that it's for the best. Marco deserves to live. He has given me life... and now I am giving it back to him.

Marco's POV

Through all the nights within my dedicated room, never have I awoken feeling so well rested. I recall last night, the feelings stirring warmth and light into my cold heart. And despite my predicament, never have I felt so at ease.

Even if I am to die... yes, it's something I've thought about. It's the reality, I can't help but be almost logical in understanding my fate. I was cursed, and it's remarkable that I've lasted this long. But even if I am to die... I would die knowing I've found the love of my life, and created memories with her that will last a lifetime.

I trust her to bring up future child with poise and strength, and I know she'd tell them who I am. She'd tell them all the things she loves about me even when I don't see it myself sometimes. And she'd remind them that I love them and would always be there. In spirit.

I sigh through my smile, turning over to face her...

But my brows narrow when I find the space beside me empty, and confusion racks my brain with the growing uncertainty in my normally ruthless heart.

Chapter 47 | Leave You For Money

Chapter 46 - Pregnant After One Night With The Lycan

Tanya's POV

The car Lily has arranged to take me away feels like a portal. It is like I have been living in my own made-up fantasy land. Where I have been someone important, a princess, married to a prince. I have lost myself in this dream, that felt so real. And now.... I am being forced to return to the real world, to a place where I am nothing and no one.

The car hasn't made it far till my eyes are forced to flicker up to look into the rear-view mirror. I see the familiar figure of Marco, and he's running, chasing after me with all his heart. I think that he'd eventually give up and let me go, but he doesn't. He just keeps running, and I can't bear it anymore.

"Stop. Stop the car." The car screeches to a halt.

“Just give me a minute to sort this. I’ll be back.” The driver simply nods his head before I exit the vehicle. As I walk towards Marco, I mentally prepare myself for what I’m about to say. It has to be believable.

“Tanya, where are you going?” despite the calmness of his voice, I can sense the slight concern hidden beneath as he steps towards me. “Has something happened, is there something urgent you need to attend to?” all are valid questions, as if I have just forgotten to tell him, as if I would be back later this evening and all would be right in the world. But that is far from the reality...

My expression sharpens like never before, I huff, trying to sound irritated. “Marco. Go back to the palace.” I clench my fists. “You shouldn’t be out here. You can barely run without risking the curse overtaking you. You shouldn’t be here.”

“But where are you going?”

It pains me to see the concern in his features, and his surprise as I remain cold and detached in my responses. If I let the pause last any longer, I fear I’ll break, so I continue berating every ounce of his existence, even though it tremendously hurts every fiber of my being.

“Listen very clearly Marco. You’re dying. You can barely look after yourself, let alone protect me. You’ve lost all your strength,” I say, trying to sound as if I only wanted him for his strength and power. My lips dip harshly as I portray my fabricated disappointment in him. “There’s no benefit for me to stay. I don’t want to be stuck here looking after you. So I’m taking the money the King offered me. And I’m leaving.”

I watch the realization shine into his eyes as I say my peace, in response he shakes his head incredulously. “No. You wouldn’t. You’d never do such a thing. That’s not who you are Tanya.”

Marco is right of course. I haven’t even taken the money from the King when I chose to leave, it doesn’t feel right. And my husband knows that. But I can’t let him know the truth.

“Do you think it’s easy looking after you? Your curse is a crippling disease. I’d waste years of my life looking after you, before you’d eventually die. What then have I lived for?” God it hurts everything within me to see his anguish as I express his weakness, but it is the only way I assume Marco would believe my actions, that I’m not interested in staying with him through his suffering.

“But- but what about our child? Please, even if you don’t love me. Stay for our future child, don’t let them grow up without a father. I’ll do whatever it takes to overcome this curse.”

I’ve never seen Marco so desperate, never seem so willing to drop his guard and lay out his heart to anyone. The pleading in his voice is a knife to my heart as he holds my hand, trying to create some form of connection between us that I made him believe is lost. And I must continue making him believe it’s lost.

It takes all my willpower to snatch my hand away from his hold in a ruthless display. “Our marriage is a contract, Marco. It is nothing but a piece of paper, it can never replace true love... I need to live my life, I can’t forever live in your shadow. I’m going to abort the baby.” His eyes widen, true despair wrenching its way through his expression, but I force myself to continue. “And if you aren’t selfish, you’ll let me go. Now I need to leave, the driver is waiting.”

I’m filled with torment as my words spit like venom and stink of repulsion. I want to take it all back, every damn word. But I can’t. Not when it might just save his life. I watch the pain infiltrate his gaze, I’ve hurt him so much that I see the sadness swelling into his features, and I have to run to the car to stop my fabricated lie from shattering then and there. But even then, he tries to stop me.

“No, Tanya wait! Please! We can work through this together. This isn’t like you! Please Tanya, let’s just talk.”

I throw myself into the car, slamming the door shut and telling the driver to get on with the rest of the journey. I watch Marco’s actions turn into one of desperation, he pulls at the locked door handle, trying to talk to me through the car window, and picks up pace as the car does too trying to run alongside me and yell through the window.

And I am forced to watch in horror as Marco is left behind, still chasing after me with every fiber of his being, never giving up, calling out my name before the nightly fog blurs him out of view.

By now I can’t contain my sorrow. I don’t care about the driver’s presence. The tight chain on my feelings unleashes, and I let out soft sobs of utter despair. Tears stream down my cheeks and I pray that this is all worth it. I pray through my painful sorrow, that Marco gets to live.

Lily’s POV

Tanya’s a terrible actor...

But at least Marco has to believe it. And that’s all I truly care about.

What I am surprised to hear whilst watching the excruciatingly dramatic soap opera, is that Tanya is pregnant with Marco’s child. I watch her car disappear out of my view, and I come to the conclusion that I can no longer let her go as I originally planned.

Even though she told Marco that she’d abort the child, I know she’d not. No way. And if she gives birth to Marco’s baby, then there would always be a connection between Marco and Tanya. And I couldn’t allow that to happen.

My eyes gloss with realization of what has to be done to ensure my control over Marco and the throne. Furthermore, with Tanya still alive, Marco would never let her go mentally, she’d somehow slip back into his life, and I couldn’t allow that.

I watch him now in an irritation as he chases Tanya's car. So much determination in his blazing blue eyes. The sky suddenly erupts with thunder, opening the heavens to release a downpour of rain that whizzes down like bullets. But Marco keeps running....

Thankfully, he doesn't get far, eventually the curse crawls up upon him like a dark disheveled shadow. And I watch him stumble from the pain, he slams down onto his knees, gazing endlessly with empty optics at the road head.

His once golden hair is now darkened by the rain, laying lifelessly flat against his head, no longer showing any of its former sheen. While his clothes soak through and drip sadly with wetness. Gone is his pride that I'm used to seeing in Marco, the man that always holds his head high no matter the situation, always portraying strength in all matters that concern him.

Now however, he looks disheveled and displaced. Completely at a lost, not caring that he's being drenched by the torturous clouds above.

Again, the curse strikes at the silver line that's reached his shoulder, making him flinch and cry out, before he eventually collapses in the middle of the street, passing out beneath the troubled sky.

Tanya's POV

The car windows that are blurred by the rain, mirror my vision as tears silently run down my cheeks. I wrap my arms round myself, unable to bare the cold. All I can do is try to numb myself to the events of today. I settle down in the back car seat, eventually succumbing to my own exhaustion.

I eventually stir when I realize we've stopped, thinking we've arrived at my destination. But when my eyes flicker open and I'm met by something far worse.

My eyes widen in panic as the driver leans over to me from the front seat. A wicked smile is on full display as his arm outstretches, showcasing a werewolf claw that inches towards my neck with clear intent to kill.

Chapter 48 Murder

Chapter 47 - Pregnant After One Night With The Lycan

Tanya's POV

I can't help the scream that escapes me, immediately I veer away from the outstretched claw. My hands fumble and slam against the car door, before finally slipping hold of the handle. I roughly tumble out of the car, pushing myself desperately to my feet and breaking into a sprint for my life.

The rain rushes down in thunderous rage as I run blindly, screaming out for help. But no one hears me, not with the wind's terrible screams, and not when the earth ruptures with ground shaking thunder.

With no wolf form, with no wolf speed, and with the fetus barely protected by my weak body, I fail to maintain much distance. I look back to see white glowing eyes in the dark, and a large menacing shadow resembling the form of a massive wolf can be seen through the slits of downpour.

No....

I look ahead pushing to run faster, but I can hear his ominous paws galloping after me, each contact they make with the ground sounding loudly in my head, counting down to my demise. With my mind in disarray, I don't see a branch blow by the wind in my path. I trip over it, flustering my steps and causing me to slide straight into the rumble. Scathing my palms and knees.

My breathing escalates as I roll onto my back, trying to back away whilst I watch the ungodly wolf seep into view. His pelt is as white as snow, eerily pale with the ends tinged in a silvery shade like the blade of a sword. I'm frozen in fear as the wolf releases a daunting snarl, before shifting back into the human form of the driver.

On his lips is a devilish grin, the only resemblance to his wolf form being the grey hair that looks dulled by the pouring rain. He hauntingly embodies the essence of the grim reaper, coming to snatch my soul away to the afterlife. He cockily struts towards me, knowing I can barely get away.

"Why?" That is the only word I'm able to scream.

He shrugs, unbothered by my panicked disposition. "Aren't you a pretty thing?" His playful tone sickens me. "If only you weren't pregnant with Marco's child, and then maybe Lily wouldn't have wanted you dead."

"But-how?" how did Lily know? I'm panic stricken, unable to crawl away as he steps closer.

He chuckles, suddenly crouching down so close to me, I can feel his breath on my face as he quirks a brow. "I owe her a favor you see? And even if you're prettier than her. I never... break my promises..."

Just before he can make another move to kill me, with measured timing, I move quickly, spraying a bottle of perfume I have been silently getting from my pocket. As best I could, I tried to slow his pace towards me, let him talk for as long as he wanted so I would have enough to be ready with the perfume.

It's one of my creations also with a special function. It's laced with hallucinogenic ingredients, inducing those who inhale it into a psychedelic state that makes them hallucinate for thirty minutes.

I zap him with a decent amount of the mist, forcing him to shut his eyes from the burning sensation. I notice his surprise, not expecting me to fight back in the way I have.

But I don't have time to dwell on my small victory. I take it as my chance. I push myself to my feet, and once again take off. I know I have no chance out on the open road like this. Even if I have no wolf senses, My scattered brain concludes that I had better try to lose him in the woods.

I run across the road and past the tree line. My hair flails around me frantically at the mercy of the wind, and the soles of my feet throb in agony, but I push on, moving aimlessly through the wooded landscape.

I repeatedly have to pick up the hem of my floral dress to stop it from dragging, it's drenched in rainwater now, the floral design stained and destroyed by mud and dirt. My arms lay covered in wet leaves and moss, and I consistently scratch myself on bark and branches trying to pull me down.

I catch myself from nearly stumbling multiple times. And while the driver's lack of presence makes me believe I've evaded him, I realize the false sense of hope I've given myself when I'm forced to stop dead in my tracks.

No...

My horrified eyes settle on what looks like the edge of the world. I stand at the forest's edge, and before me, it drops into what seems like a bottomless cliff. The wind howls in a cry as I back away from the edge. I turn around ready to look for another escape route, only to see the driver slinking out from the forestry, a crazed smile playing on his lips.

"This can't be possible," I whisper.

He shrugs. "You're a smart cookie aren't you with that little trick of yours? But unfortunately," he snaps his fingers, and this ignites a flame into the palm of his hand. The combustion dances to the rapid beat of my heart, while the smoke that leaves it is dark and misty, almost sickly as it soars into the sky.

"I should probably introduce myself don't you think? I'm Dorian, and I'm no ordinary werewolf," his head tilts maliciously, watching me with trained eyes. "I really don't want to do this Tanya... I hate that our time together was so short..."

In an instant, his hands shift into dangerous claws as he threateningly stalks towards me. I have no choice but to back away, edging closer and closer to the cliff behind me. At this very moment, I have two options. I could either allow my life to be ended by some malicious killer, or I could take a risk. If I die, at least it would be quick.

With a hand resting on my tummy where my unborn child resides. My eyes narrow in motherly protectiveness before I turn round and bolt to the cliff. I jump with all the courage I can muster, plummeting with forcible speed, before I'm submerged into rough waves of water. Soon I lose all consciousness as the world around me fades into darkness.

Joseph's POV

Papers and files surround me as I work vigorously through the night. My hand moves back and forth with necessary speed as I articulate my thoughts into words that coincide with my noble authority. I'm drafting a decree to make Marco the heir to my Kingdom. Soon enough Lily would provide Marco with the potion needed, and soon my son would be cured, and ready to take the throne he is destined for.

Power and strength are what are needed to rule the Kingdom of Mador, and Marco has all of those qualities. Even if Eric's mother is an Alpha like myself, Eric still doesn't have the strength Marco possesses. It is strength that is needed to run this kingdom, there is no space for weakness within the werewolf and Lycan civilization. Power is what decrees our future and prosperity.

I'm so engrossed in my letter writing, I barely look up to see Eric quietly enter my office with a cup in his hands. "Father, you must be exhausted from worrying over Marco's affliction. I thought it'd be wise to have the doctor prescribe a tonic to nourish your system."

Eric is always a gentleman, always courteous in his behavior towards me, even if I'm not the perfect father. "Thank you, Eric," I say, before taking a long sip from the cup, the warm liquid slipping down my throat in a manner that soothes me.

I go to continue drafting the decree, only to notice that I could no longer read my writing. My brows crinkle in confusion, as the paper begins to blur out of focus. I suddenly feel very hot, heat rushing to my head as the world sways. I hold the edge of the table to steady myself, but lose all control over my limbs, my head smacking down hard on the table as darkness splits into the edges of my vision.

Still barely awake, I watch as Eric comes up beside me, pulling out the letter from beneath me, and folding it into his pocket. "After such a long time being King, you've earned some well-deserved rest now," Eric portrays his usual smile towards me, as if completely unaware, or more likely, choosing to ignore my predicament. "Don't worry father, from now on, I will govern the Kingdom of Mador."

And then, I lose all forms of awareness, as my eyes finally slip shut.

Chapter 48 - Pregnant After One Night With The Lycan

Caspian's POV

Dylan and I move like shadows through the forestry in our wolf forms. Dylan's wolf is a mocha brown, whilst the fur on my paws showcases a lighter, ivory hue. We follow our normal routine route that has been allocated for centuries for patrol units. The path we take is a thin line that penetrates through the grass, weighed down into a muddy consistency by the numerous paw prints that litter it day in and day out.

Despite being Alpha, I'm not beyond the usual tasks that are given to my wolves. Moreover, I find a sense of ease whilst conducting patrols. We belong to the forest. We were born here, and we shall die here, and I find no greater comfort than being in my wolf form, surrounded by it all. My eyes are accustomed to the vibrancy of the greenery, nose inhaling soft scents of the florals, leading the way with ease.

That is until I hear a loud splash sounding from the west that halts my movements, ears swiveling to pinpoint the noise, trying to depict the cause. I sense Dylan's presence, his large head and snout pushing against my flank in confirmation of hearing it too.

'Sounded like a splash of sorts, from the lake,' my Beta says through our mind link.

I nod, now finding it necessary that we investigate, as I indicate with a canine gruff, before pulling off the beaten path and galloping towards the noise.

There hadn't been any further sounds emitted by the time we reach the lake. Both of us sauntering over to the water's edge, we spread out. Dylan trots upstream while I make my way downstream, leaping and cantering across rocks and debris, with eyes trained on the water for any signs of movement.

Five minutes pass before Dylan rejoins me at my position, shaking his head to indicate that nothing was found. I lift my muzzle to the sky, nostrils flaring as I breathe in the lake's fresh scents, but nothing seems amiss.

'Maybe we were mistaken. The sound could've come from further down the stream,' Dylan says, lowering his head to the ground, sniffing at the bank in further pursuit of the answer to our confusion.

‘This doesn’t make any sense, I’m sure the sound came from here,’ I say in resolute judgment.

Either way, there is nothing here to prove my belief. I turn to head in the direction Dylan suggested, when my eyes suddenly catch a glimpse of light flickering in the corner of my vision. I snap to look, a rock maintaining coverage over what I wish to see, but a hand sticks out from behind it, a silver ring reflecting the morning sunlight.

Fiercely I sprint to that rock, Dylan following closely at my heels. As I near, I shift back into my human form, stepping round the large rock to find a female hidden within its shadow. My eyes settle on her, realizing it is the Lycan’s wife, Tanya...

Seeing she is unconscious, I waste little time, hauling up her limp, cold and wet body into my arms before Dylan and I make our way back home, to get her to safety.

Lily’s POV

I’m in my private quarters, away from all the palaces on goings. The closed door offers me a sense of focus that I need to curate the potion of my desires. I’m meticulous with each ingredient, careful and methodical with my approach. Three drops of one thing, a gentle knife scrape of another, a cautious turn of the knob of my filtering device that trickles tiny droplets into my brewing masterpiece.

My hair is pulled away into a neatly tight bun, my brows furrowing in concentration, whilst my surroundings are encompassed in a slight mist from the simmering potion. I sprinkle another component into the mix and watch the solution swirl into a dark rich shade of violet, manifesting into the cure that would purify Marco of his curse.

I would be the one to save him. I imagine the faces of all the nobles that would be in awe of my accomplishments, thanking me for saving their prince. I would finally be redeemed, put back on the pedestal that Tanya has destroyed.

Whilst gently dabbing away the sweat at my neck with my embroidered cloth, I sense the presence of another being. Dorian appears before me, rocketing my internal anticipation.

“Is it done? Is Tanya dead?” the word ‘dead’ comes from my lips in a whispered hiss, slightly paranoid by any unwanted listeners.

But despite the urgency of my question, Dorian blatantly ignores me, avoiding my gaze and appearing to seem elsewhere with his thoughts whilst fiddling with his lighter. He twirls the fuel canister playfully between his fingers, lighting a small delicate flame with each twirl of his finger.

But I grow aggravated by his silence. “Dorian,” I can’t yell, but I at least snap his attention with the firmness of my voice. “Don’t tell me there was an accident... that you let Tanya get away?”

His gaze flickers for a moment, before his lips relax into a playful smile, that doesn't immediately ease my suspicion. "What's with the doubt Lily flower?" he purrs cockily. "Do you not trust in my ability to kill?"

I remain silent, my gaze hardened and not giving into his mind games. He sees that I'm not fussed to be toyed with, only rolling his eyes to add. "Course she's dead, I made sure she wasn't breathing."

My chest collapses with a heavy sigh upon hearing the confirmation. Although something about his playful expression unnerves me, my mind wants to believe that the deed is done. Using a ladle, I stir the final mixture of the potion, before pouring it into a glass flask that I hand to him.

"Now add your magic to this... and you're sure this will erase all of Marco's memories of Tanya?"

Dorian barely nods, instead his grin extends as he recklessly plays with the bottle. Swirling it and watching the liquid slide towards the ground as he tilts it back and forth. He obviously enjoys my reaction, as I edge closer to him in fear of anything happening to my precious cure.

"You've gotten so much better at lying, haven't you?" he teases. "Very smart to tell everyone you learnt about the cure from an ancient book, despite knowing the truth all along," his chuckles only intensify my agitation.

"Just hurry up Dorian, stop wasting my time."

He cares little for my annoyance, only raising a brow to me, before his focus trains onto the potion. Holding the bottle with one hand, whilst the fingers on his other slowly curve, as if holding a ball. And from the palm of his hand, a sooty spiral of smoke slowly emerges. It dances gently in the air, before swaying down into the bottle, infiltrating the liquid and swirling with the solution. It makes my cure fizz for a couple of minutes, before the potion settles back into stillness, and Dorian's magic eventually disappears as if it was never there.

"So how come you want Marco to lose his memory, you never cared about it before?" Dorian asks, hinting at subtle curiosity.

"Because before I didn't know Tanya was pregnant. If Marco thought Tanya had abandoned him for the money when he needed her most, he'd never forgive her. But now that I know she's pregnant, if she gives birth, there will always be a connection between them, which I can't allow. If Marco finds out she's missing, he will endlessly search for her. This is the best way to keep him from chasing after her, to have him forget all their memories together."

Dorian shrugs in boredom in response, before casually tossing back the flask. I anxiously capture the glass bottle, holding it protectively against my chest. He childishly jumps off the table he has been sitting on. "Don't ask for my help again Lily. I've repaid your mother for her kindness to me. But if you ever need me again, you'll have to make a deal with me."

Dorian saunters towards the door, turning around to snarkily tease me one final time. “Although, you’ve been terribly cruel to the child that switched places with you... first you steal her family and social status, and now you steal her fated mate. Tut tut... how despicable...”

My eyes widen as he mischievously smiles at me. “You didn’t tell me that Tanya was the child that was switched with you that year.”

I try to maintain my composure, but I’m inadvertently surprised and slightly nervous. “How did you know?”

He cocks his head. “I have my ways Lily flower,” and with a mysterious smile, he gives me one final look, before turning around, leaving the room before I can ask him anymore questions.

Tanya’s POV

8 months later

I’m reorganizing one of the perfume shelves, quietly placing perfumes according to their scents as my mind wonders to how much my life has changed. Caspian saved my life and has let me live with the Blue Moon Pack. He even gave me the freedom to open a small perfume store to earn money. It’s where I’ve remained, while my unborn baby has grown, expanding my stomach to a sizable bump.

The door to the perfume store chimes to alert the arrival of customers. I turn to face them, but the smile on my lips falters as a sharp pain bursts forth from my body. I stumble, eyes shooting down as warm liquid dribbles down my leg. I suddenly realize that my waters broken, I’m about to give birth!

Chapter 50 Daddy!

Chapter 49 - Pregnant After One Night With The Lycan

Tanya’s POV

I’m taken to the hospital by customers who are more than happy to drive me there, and I’m thankful for their generosity. The pain is immense, and I find myself cradling my tummy to cope with the on sudden rush. Every unexpected jolt of the car strikes pain through my body, and I desperately try not to cry.

Finally, we make it. The customers help keep me on my feet as we make our way in. My clear baby bump makes it evident to the staff of my situation. I'm placed on the gurney and rolled into one of the rooms before they move me onto a bed. Despite its softness, it doesn't ease the awful cramps that start escalating in pressure.

The hospital staff all look like worker bees, rushing to and from the room to prepare for the birth. One carries towels, another soft blankets. One adjusts the position of my bed so my back is slightly raised, whilst another attaches me to fluids, injecting the top of my wrist with a needle.

One of the nurses also sets up an ultrasound, quietly rubbing a cold paste over my bump, before rolling a medical instrument over it. Her brows furrow slightly, but before I can ask, she finishes, and puts everything away, flitting out of the room.

Eventually, I hear the nurses talking to each other, saying that my baby is slightly in the wrong position for birth. My breathing escalates in stress, as I worry for my unborn child. I feel myself start to panic, wanting to ensure the safety of my baby.

However, the doctor comes into my field of view with a warm smile, she rests a hand on mine, trying to calm me.

"Don't worry Tanya, we will take good care of you, just keep doing what you're doing," she says,

Sweat soaks my forehead, but I nod hesitantly, still immeasurably worried. Either way, I start pushing again. I can't help but scream out from the indescribable pain as the cramps come in waves, some staying longer than others.

This lasts for what I feel like hours, and still no sign of my baby being born. I'm growing weaker by the minute, unable to push like when I initially went into labor. Sweat exudes from my body, and my hair appears frazzled and untamed.

I'm close to losing hope and losing all my strength, and I find myself on the verge of passing out. Till one of the nurse's eyes shine with bright excitement, hurrying over to my side.

"Keep going Tanya! I can see the baby's head! You're almost there!"

With all my might I push one more time, and I feel a sudden rush of relief through my system as I feel the baby being born. A cheer erupts from the hospital staff that surround me, and even from the customers who are waiting for me outside.

A nurse immediately swoops up my baby into her arms, tapping the baby's back until a clear cry encompasses the birthing room. She places my baby in a small medical bassinet, checking the vital organs, and ensuring the airways are clear, being sure my baby is fully healthy and doesn't need any important medical attention. Satisfied, she picks up my baby again, turning to me.

"Congratulations hun, it's a baby girl."

The nurse steps towards me, before slowly placing the baby in my arms. And despite my exhaustion, I look down at my daughter with a sincere smile. Watching as she slowly opens her eyes to reveal optics of the truest blue, a mirror image of her father's.

5 years later

Marco's POV

I know I have a temper. And I know the people around me know I have a temper. The palace's residents stay well away as I storm my way towards one of the meeting rooms, a deadly gaze bearing down on anyone too close to my vicinity.

Not bothering with knocking, I shove the door open, stepping through and unapologetically interrupting the nobles conversing. None of them are of interest to me, just my brother. I stalk my way to the head of the table where he's sitting, a hushed chill following my movements.

I slam down papers on top of whatever Eric's been working on. "Why the hell didn't you tell me that you're cutting down the Blue Moon Tree?"

Unlike the other members of his council, Eric looks indifferent to my rageful brigade. "The Blue Moon Pack's economy is pitiful Marco. It's completely backwards and needs to be industrialized for there to be economic growth. And the best way to do that is to place a dam. And that needs to go exactly where the Blue Moon Tree is situated," he states logically.

"Well, I completely refuse to allow this."

Eric only smiles frigidly to my objection. "That's why I chose not to tell you. I know the Blue Moon tree is very important to you. And we can't afford to let our emotions get in the way of making essential decisions which are in the best interest of the Kingdom."

Fury brewed within, but I showcase nothing but an icy glare, despite wanting to punch the smile off Eric's face. My eyes flicker to the surrounding gentleman, before returning to look at my brother, and eventually, I mirror his cocky smile. "Do you really want to cut down the tree because you care about the Kingdom? Or is it just because you want to help your mother destroy the one thing that's important to me, and was important to my mother?"

I know my words have hit a nerve as Eric's expression falters. I get a second to glimpse behind my brother's carefully crafted façade, before he's able to build back his wall, a calm and gentlemanly smile returning to his lips as he responds.

"Well, since we can't come to an agreement on this, I'll give you a month to find a way to increase the Blue Moon Pack's economic growth. Exactly one month. If you find a way, I'll drop the proposal, but if you can't, then the tree will be cut down as originally planned."

With the deadline in mind, I waste little time, and leave for the Blue Moon Pack the very same day.

But upon arriving at the entrance, a bunch of people come to greet me. I'm given numerous handshakes and I'm offered hotel flyers from various individuals wanting to rent out their houses or hotels to me upon realizing I'm not from the area. Some even offer to give me tours and take me to all the best places.

The unprecedented enthusiasm is almost a little too overwhelming, till a loud wailing bursts through the air. I must stop myself from flinching at the piercing cries, looking to my surroundings to try and find the source. I eventually find myself looking down at my feet, where a young woman bawls her eyes out whilst on her knees.

"What is the meaning of this?" I ask, failing to hide my irritation.

"Please- please sir! My father has just passed away, and I have no money. But if you rent my room, it will be enough to buy a grave for him. Oh, please sir."

I study the girl with an unwavering gaze, my expression remaining emotionless despite her weepy state. "Fine," I say, accepting the flyer from her pleading hands. "One month."

It's all I have to say before the girl springs spritely to her feet, a wide smile beaming on her lips. "Yes, course sir, I'll ready it right away!" and without another word she rushes off.

Whilst the young woman readies my room, I make my way quietly towards the Blue Moon Tree, my gaze befalling upon the beautiful monument. Its elegant branches stretch up towards the glistening sun, as its ribbons of love dance to the swaying breeze.

I'm humbled to think about my parents standing beneath it, devoting their love to one another beneath its glory. I saunter towards the tree, eyeing the many ribbons that decorate its woody limbs. But my eyes seem drawn to one ribbon in particular that somehow looks familiar.

However, I'm momentarily pulled away to the sound of a little girl's laughter. I turn to see an Alpha playing with her. The Alpha offers her a candy as he says. "Oh, dear child, stop always calling me your uncle. I want you to call me daddy!"

With the ribbon still at the back of my mind, I turn back to the tree, gently reaching up to take it. But before I can, the corner of my eye catches the rush of movement to my right. I turn only for the little girl to collide with me, wrapping her dainty childish arms round me in a hug.

With her face buried in my lower chest, all I initially see is her black hair that falls to her shoulders in soft delicate waves. But eventually she pulls back, peering up at me with sapphire eyes that are filled with childlike zest.

“Daddy!”

Chapter 51 Meet Again

Chapter 50 - Pregnant After One Night With The Lycan

Tanya's POV

The afternoon sun casts its waning rays of light through my shop window, declaring it the typical time for Mr. Barlow to waltz into my store in clear dire need of some company. And in my store, he is. Despite his elderly appearance and stumpy stature, one could tell he was quite the looker when he'd been in his prime.

He has a smooth bald head, and broad shoulders, although his age means the loss in some strength, it's apparent he has once been very muscular. If it is not for his terrible drinking habits, maybe he'd still look the same, and smell less of age-old whiskey which tends to put people off. If not for that, Mr. Barlow would've had more people to talk to other than just me.

For he is rather charming, in a childish, temperamental, playful sort of way, always cracking a joke or two, before going off on long rambles about stories he deems ever so interesting. Course I never mind, I enjoy the company, and arguing over the drink in his hand that he technically isn't allowed to bring into my shop. If only he'd buy one of my perfumes.

Our odd friendship began when I saved his life. Three years ago, I found him terribly wounded on the edge of the Blue Moon Pack territory. I nursed him back to health, and he hasn't missed a day to come see me since. And every time I attempt to convince him to take home one of my perfumes. At least he gives me a chance to practice my skills in sales.

“Mr. Barlow, all these perfumes will have a substantially positive effect on your life.”

“Ha! Yeah right. How so child? How so?”

“Well, this one will keep the air in your home smelling nice and fresh, since we both know you bother little about the state of it. Don't you want a nice smelling home?”

He scoffs, but there is a playfulness in his gaze. Nothing is ever personal between us, all our conversations are in jest as he would charismatically criticize the price of my perfumes, whilst I'd take pot shots at his willingness to only talk to me.

“This one is meant to be sprayed on your back to help reduce the pain from your old injuries and help with any sore joints. It can even reduce the pain of arthritis,” I show him a sparkling orange bottle, before putting it into his hand.

“Then this one is to help you quit drinking. Really Mr. Barlow, you must stop consuming it, it’s terrible for your health. And it does nothing good for you.”

He impatiently rolls his eyes. “Liquor is my gallant old friend, why must you try to get me to part with the one thing that I care for? Also, I’m a man! I don’t want to be smelling like a feminine daisy!” now I playfully roll my eyes as the man continues. “Plus, I much rather the smell of whiskey than be scented in your overpriced perfumes.”

We both pause, glaring at each other as if upset, before we erupt in joyous chuckles, “You’re a stubborn old goat Mr. Barlow.”

“And I’ll never deny it,” he says with a grin.

“Just take the perfumes. You don’t have to pay. Please.”

“Never!”

As Mr. Barlow tries to scurry off, I hurry round the counter trying to shove the multiple perfume bottles into his hands, whilst he tries to shove them back. Our silly back and forth only last for a minute, till the bell of the shop chimes like a boxing bell, signalling the end to our charades as other customers walk through the door.

“Is this store forcing customers to buy goods regardless of their wishes?”

My eyes snap towards the voice, only to see two identical pairs of pupils, both emitting the same soft blue glow. I’m left stunned, and of course Mr. Barlow takes this opportunity to escape my grasp. He shoves the perfumes back into my arms and scurries out the door in an old man like fashion.

The reason I’m stunned however, is because... it’s Marco... and he is holding my daughter-our daughter-in his arms. I couldn’t believe what I’m seeing, and I’m barely able to acknowledge Caspian who comes up beside me.

“Mommy!”

My daughter spreads her out in a joyous display, clearly happy to see me, and pulling me back to my senses. I quickly force myself to adjust my expression. “Hello Marco, long time no see.”

Marco’s gaze bares down with no ounce of softness. He silently lowers my daughter to the ground before facing me. But there’s no recognition in his eyes, they are clouded by unfamiliarity, it is as if I am a stranger to him. “You’re Tanya, aren’t you?”

My brows crinkle. “Um, yes?”

“You’re that winner from the perfume contest?” he says coldly.

Confusion strikes me immediately. “Is that how you know me?” my words come out slowly as I exchange a look with Caspian. He too mirrors my puzzled expression towards Marco’s statement.

“Yes, I saw your picture from the contest,” he explains. “The worsening conditioning of my curse put me in a deep coma for a long time, they told me what you did,” I don’t know how to respond, confusion littering my thoughts as try and understand what is going on, but Marco doesn’t give me a chance to reply.

“I found out after I woke up that you took that opportunity to poison my fated mate Lily, making her lose her sense of smell,” Marco says bluntly. “I see you still haven’t changed for the better. Still forcing customers to buy your products.”

“What?” I’m completely and utterly perplexed by the accusation. “Marco, wait, don’t you remember me?”

He only appears to grow more agitated by my confusion. “Why should I remember you? Shouldn’t you be dead already?”

With only a frown, Marco swivels round and brashly leaves my store.

After he leaves, both me and Caspian with mirrored astonished glances, I’m completely surprised by Marco’s loss of memory. I don’t know how to feel. Whether to be upset that he’s lost all our memories together, and now he believes me to be some vicious woman. Or feel at ease that Marco’s alive and glad he doesn’t remember how I heartlessly abandoned him when he was about to die.

And yet, if he still had his memory, would he hate me even more?

Despite not wanting to leave me so unsettled, Caspian must excuse himself for the afternoon, needing to deal with pack matters, leaving my daughter Claire at my side. After which Lisa, one of the pack residents, an endearing young girl, enters. Her mischievous smile tells me all I need to know.

“Not again Lisa…” I say with a chuckle.

“You bet! Got another rich fool to rent out my place,” Lisa often tried to rent out her long-vacant decrepit house, which was falling apart at the seams. Course she never expressed that to any of her possible tenants.

“Did you tell him you needed money for a tombstone for your recently deceased father?” her excited nod has me chuckle once more as I turn to put perfumes back on the shelves. “Oh Lisa,

this will be the seventh time this month that your father has died. He won't be happy when he returns home," I tease, before laughing.

Lisa's nose wrinkles in an adorable display. "You know how hard it is to do business nowadays, I'm just being smart in my methods of attaining customers," she states with a giggle. "But I'm here because I need your help. The house I'm renting out is right next to yours. And you know how angry those tenants get once they find out all the broken facilities within the house. If you could... you know, maybe alleviate some of the frustration and anger of the new tenant when he starts seeing all the problems. Help me out a little, ya know?"

"Lisa..."

I turn round to see her blinking at me innocently, pleading with her hands. "Oh, please Tanya, pretty please! You're the nicest person I know! And the house is right next door to yours! It's only a small ask, please."

I sigh, shaking my head with a smile, recalling how Lisa has pulled the same trick on me and now I am living in one of her houses. Nevertheless, I don't mind, finally nodding my head. "Alright alright. I'll help."

The girl twirls with joy, thanking me before skipping off and out the door. I chuckle, before closing up the shop for the evening.

Me and my daughter head home, and as we make it to the door, my eyes can't help but flicker to the house beside us. The curtains haven't been closed yet, and with the light on in one of the rooms, I can see Marco unpacking his things. My eyes widen in realization. And just as I notice him, Marco looks through the window and notices me. He only glares, before returning back to unpacking his things.

Lisa failed to tell me that her new tenant was Marco!