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"Did he just say mate?" I ask Selene, trying to keep my composure while we ensure that what they ordered is sent to the correct table, making sure there's no mistake.

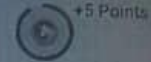
She shrugged her shoulders but didn't say anything else. She seemed to be in another world after that outburst from the customer who had taken the girl outside for a quick 'chat,' and I hope he won't tell her about us. I could smell the werewolf in him, but it wasn't that strong, which means he tried masking it too.

Wow. How many of us are out there in the human world? Was he here solely to look for his mate because it seems so? With the way his shoulders sagged, the way he impatiently talked to her like he was on the brink of dying. I shake my head and turn to the coffee before me.

After we made sure Imogen's group got their orders, we went back behind the counter while I tried my best to make Selene talk to me. Why is she showing me that she is a werewolf? If I hadn't known before, I definitely would have placed the missing piece and dubbed her the werewolf she is. So transparent.

She won't last long in the cruel world out there,

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and no wonder she decided to come to the human world instead of joining any other pack out there. They will devour her whole before she has any chance to open her mouth. Her former pack has broken the strength in her, and I want something different for her.

I have seen the fierce protectiveness she has over Imogen and Miranda and knew she would do anything for them. That is a weakness anyone daring enough would explore to get her to do their bidding. Thank the Moon Goddess no one knows much about her to make her a target to get to Crew. The Lycan king.

Those alphas he has removed from their positions would have hunted her down ages ago and taken her for their position or just killed her and the baby just to get back at Crew. A shiver went down my spine at the thought. They wouldn't, right? But then I know how cruel the world can be.

"Are you a werewolf, Luna?" Selene asked, and that startled me.

How the heck am I supposed to answer her? What does she mean by that question? Was she also studying him while I was doing the same to her?

Selene's question lingered, demanding an answer that I wasn't entirely ready to unveil. The uncertainty crept into my thoughts, weaving a delicate dance between the truth and the guarded

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secrets I held. I grappled with the decision to reveal my werewolf nature or maintain the mystique that shrouded me.

My eyes, usually filled with confidence, now reflected the inner conflict I experienced. A fleeting vulnerability touched my expression, the

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weight of the unspoken pulling at the edges of my composure. The choice to disclose or remain in the shadows lay before me, and I navigated the delicate balance between revelation and mystery.

But I don't want the secrets to be too much for Selene when she finally finds out why I was here with her. I can't stop her from feeling betrayed, but

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+5 Points

at least I could do something to make that betrayal feel a bit smaller than it is. This is so hard to do, damn.

I didn't think things entirely when I decided to become her friend. Now she would think I never liked her and I was here to guard my mate's baby inside of her. I close my eyes angrily at myself. Why did I make such a decision without sitting it through with Crew?

Turning to Selene, who is keenly staring at me, I let my eyes flash with my wolf, Cora. Selene's eyes widened but she didn't stagger back, only stared with her mouth wide open. She blinked, then straightened, swallowing, but I saw the surprise and shock in her eyes before she could close it.

"Wow," she breathed, then flattened her hands on the apron to keep from saying anything before she adds, "I-I don't know what to say." She stuttered.

Since she's put me on the spot, I will do the same to her too. The truth only goes both ways. If she won't tell me hers, then I know what to do to make sure she doesn't get into trouble – malnutrition while pregnant – ever again. Crew is going to be mad as it is, but before then, this is me and Selene.

I observed Selene's discomfort with a subtle yet keen attentiveness. The air around us seemed to thicken with the unspoken tension, and my eyes

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traced the subtle shifts in Selene's body language. A flicker of uncertainty danced across her features, and I couldn't help but notice the way she subtly shifted her weight or glanced away, avoiding direct eye contact.

Uh-huh. That was what I felt. Now, you either offer the truth, or we tackle this whole mess my way.

The hesitancy in her movements painted an unspoken canvas of emotions. It was a delicate dance of discomfort, and I continued to watch with a mixture of understanding and curiosity. The unspoken questions lingered in the air, creating a palpable atmosphere that only deepened the intrigue between us.

Before she could answer, someone tapped on the counter beside us, and we jolted. I stared down at the guy immediately because something about him set me off. The vibe he gives makes a shiver of disgust crawl up my arms, but Selene smiled at him.

"Hey, Jodie. What's up?" She asks with her usual professional smile while tucking a strand of red hair behind her ear. He licked his lips. The damn pig!

"Just the usual, Selene. I'll be at the end there." He pointed to a place where Luna cannot see from the counter, which made her grit her teeth. p*****t.

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+5 Points

"Sure." Selene only smiled and started making his coffee as though she's done it for ages while Jodie whistled away, eyeing some of Imogen's friends.

"I'll take that to him." I took the tray from her and walked out before she could protest. I need to keep him in his place.

When he saw me coming, he checked me out, but the disappointment at not seeing Selene was there. I pasted a fake smile on my face and dropped the tray with more force than necessary so he knew I was there for business and he should stop staring at my boobs.

"Back off." That was all I told him with my threatening scowl then turned around to go back, but he called back with.

"And if I don't?"

I slowly return back to the table and lean down close to his face. "Then I am going to rip you the hell apart. I don't make empty threats."

He grinned at me. "I like them feisty."

I didn't say anything, only smiled at him and let my fangs elongate a little then walked away. I know perverts like him, and I won't let him get away with it. He is trying to scare me too, but what the heck would he do with a pregnant defenseless girl? I shake my head. Some people just do not make

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sense to me.

"What did you say to him?" Selene asked, her brows scrunching above her eyelashes.

"Just had a little chit-chat with the jerk." I am breathing hard, and it is not a good thing. If I don't get a hold of myself right now, I will change into my wolf form, and that would be disastrous.

"Gen said he was scary and we should be as friendly as possible with him to avoid being on his bad side. I hope you didn't throw that out the window?" Selene narrowed her eyes like an older sister, making me chuckle despite myself.

Throw it out of the window? Hell yes! Friendly? That jerk would take advantage of them in a heartbeat, and I won't have that. Especially Selene, who would think about her baby's health before she takes any irrational move. She won't be friendly with the jerk.

"I didn't throw that out the window for you, but you two should be careful. Being friendly won't stop someone like him from doing what he wants." I shake my head, desperate to keep my control at bay.

Selene bit her lower lip, eying me, then nodded.

"Sure. Don't chase away Miranda's customers either; she won't like that."

I roll my eyes at that. "Miranda wouldn't want you

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guys in any situation because of some jerk customer."

Crew started making his way through my mind link, and I throw down the shield to let him in. If I don't hear his voice right now, I am going to go crazy and go tear that jerk into pieces. I don't know where the sudden protectiveness came from. Is it because I consider her my friend, or because she has Crew's heir in her? This is messed up.

"How's it going?" Crew asks, his voice strained, and I knew he hadn't been sleeping or even eating well without me there and not knowing where his baby mama is.

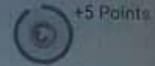
"Great, great. A little more trail for me to find her. A day or two is all." I try to explain, massaging my forehead with all the secrets piling up on me.

How am I going to convince Selene to come with me to the Kingdom? I know there is a reason she ran away, but she won't tell me. She isn't even ready to tell me she was a werewolf. I have lots of crap I need to do for that to happen.

"Are you sure? You can always come back home, and I'll take over." He sounded concerned, worried even, but I can't just sit idly and do nothing.

"Crew...don't worry, I've got it. I won't come back without Selene, so calm down and trust me to do this at my leisure." I say in the most soothing voice

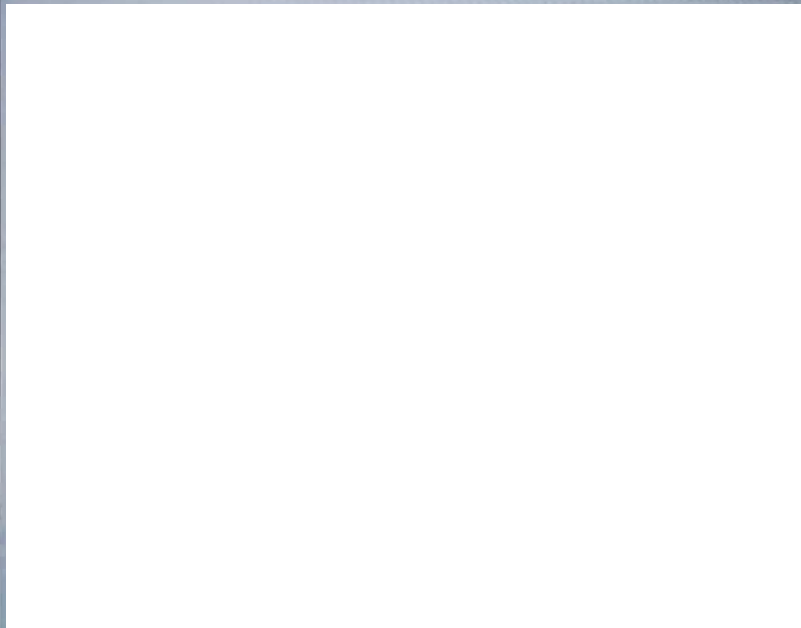
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I could use. He is such a baby.

"Alright. I miss you." I heard the longing in both his wolf and him, which made me relax completely, and the image of me tearing that jerk Jodie dissipated.

"Yeah? I miss you more. This human world sucks. I

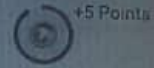


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could hardly run all the time, though they've got this amazing steak you should totally try out..." We talk for another minute before I block him out after our mini byes.

"You just mind-linked." Selene, who has been watching me, said in a quiet voice, and I shrug,

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forgetting she was there for a second.

If she won't tell me, I would. That is the least I could do for her.



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