Chapter 23: Luna is just a title

-Clara-

I was still very much embarrassed about last night.

Regardless, Blanche introduced me to Leon today. Something important to mention about him is that he is a lycan.

I have never seen one before, and now I have seen more than I thought I could ever see of one of them. My eyes still burn!

Leon made us breakfast, and I am so glad because he served us bacon, scrambled eggs, and pancakes while Blanche made us coffee and orange juice.

Before him, I was a human in training to become a witch, still working on my skills. Hopefully, he did not ask more questions.

Leon lives between Lycan territory and Saint Isabella town. Blanche told me he will come more often since she agreed to start a relationship with him.

He looks very much controlled! Nothing like I was told at school. I can sense a strong aura coming from him, still nothing of what I was told ever.

Lycans are believed to be volatile and very dangerous. My Luna would have never allowed me to be near one.

The species is related to werewolves, but we are not the same.

Werewolves are shapeshifters. We transform into wolves at eighteen, while their change is different. Lycans keep some of their human traces when shifting but mixing them with those of the wolf... Elongated snouts with big sharp teeth, broad torsos with strong muscular arms, long claws, and paws instead of hands and feet.

We walk in four as wolves do, gigantic wolves, while Lycans walk erect like humans, fur covering their large bodies. It is like their transformation did not reach our stage of shifting into our wolves. Added treat, they are very much attractive to the eye in their human form.

Regarding the wolf's creation, legend says that a dying human begged for his life to the Moon Goddess since his soul was already leaving his body. Moon Goddess took pity on him, granting him the soul of one of her precious werewolves, extending his lifetime. In exchange, the wolf could use his body to walk on earth.

Lycans have a different legend, where the beast begs to the Moon Goddess, in similar circumstances; some might even consider that story romantic while others were tragic.

In summary, we have in common that we both are children of the Moon Goddess and that our first transformation occurs at eighteen. However, they need to wait for the first full moon after their birthday. We do not.

I grew up thinking Lycans were dangerous. I should at least feel odd, but after everything that has happened... it does not matter anymore. Not everything I was told once was true so far. Since I do not fear him neither feel intimidated by him, it is correct to say he might become a good new friend.

Blanche and I started our training with meditation and breathing techniques. The complexity and difficulty of the exercises will increase over time based on my progress with Ianthe. I guess over time, I will get better at it. I might even find my gift while doing so.

Apparently, Moonlight descendants have special skills or gifts, but they need to train to develop them. I really hope I have one... it does not matter if it is not as cool as Luna Aerin's gift.

Angel will practice with the Luna of Sunlight since she thinks their gifts are similar. She said she felt an affinity with Angel.

Luna Aerin can influence werewolves by sharing her emotions with them, as long they are in the same room with her. Somehow you feel what she is feeling... or what she wants you to feel. Very, very useful for any Luna.

The Simmons said they do not have a gift. However, Blanche thinks it is related to healing others since they both excel in their careers. She says that it is just so natural on them both that they do not even realize it.

Blanche met my mother, Luna Margaret, Luna Michelle, at school in Royal territory a long while ago. That is why they all knew each other, but her friendship was deeper with The Simmons and my mother.

I miss Angel but cannot contact her yet. We have some work to do and must wait until it is safer to do that. I cannot call Luna Michelle either. I was told she is well but has not woke up after the attack of the rouges, and today will be Mason's mating ceremony with Marissa.

“I thought it would be better for you to know... He is going to marry that Marissa girl and will become the new Alpha of his pack."

I needed to know that he was not looking for me...

Mason will achieve his dreams with his chosen mate, and despite my bitterness and resentment towards him, I guess we both are where we should be right now.

“Yes, I may look sad... But it is better to know. It is really over now.”

I cannot deny that a part of me would have loved to hear that he is looking for me desperately, that he would come begging for forgiveness so we can start a new chapter where he would earn my love back.

However, I am not sure if those are my feelings or Ianthe's.

My puppy love finally died when I found out about his mockery towards me. Maybe, it was just the mate bond that clouded my mind and thoughts after realizing he was my mate that I wanted to be with him, despite being angry. The pull of the mate bond is hard to resist... yet he did it successfully. He is a strong Alpha, after all.

“Mason is in the past, and since you are free -because that is how you should see yourself now- you can choose your lover!"

Blanche had a bright smile on her face. We call them to mate, but I guess witches have a different way to name their mates.

"I guess you are right, but I am not ready for any of that, neither is Ianthe, and this feeling might last for a while."

It is true, I am free now from the mate bond towards Mason, but I am still sored from that big mess. "Maybe someday," I said.

“The right one will show up one day, without expecting him or even looking… Right now, we need to focus now on healing, growing, and developing your skills as Luna.”

The phrase rings in my head, "the right one"... Mason was supposed to be the one, at least for me. The other part of my soul, according to Moon Goddess wishes. How is it that he was not the right one for me? If Moon Goddess made a mistake then, how would I do a better job at it? I felt Ianthe whimper at this thought. She connects with me. I sense her pain whenever Mason's name is mentioned…

Did Blanche say "Luna" referring to... me?

“Blanche did you…” I was about to finish my question when the mirrors in the house started to vibrate, surprising us. Our witch's alarm system.

“There are werewolves in the proximities, but they do not have evil intentions because the mirrors did not turn red. I can manage! Go hide in your room!”

The alarms at the house gave us enough time before anything happens, so when someone knocked on our door, we would be prepared.

I run to my room and lock it. I added more perfume to smell like a human.

Then I remember what happened at the beach with Celest and Jonathan. Those pups and the bullies and how someone from their pack might or might have followed me here. I forgot the bully incident due to the butt incident when I arrived yesterday!

Blanche knocked on my door. She knew the story... or part of it.

“Is there something you were supposed to tell me yesterday… because two werewolves are waiting in our living room to meet you?"

“Yes…” So, I quickly told her everything, being careful because those wolves might hear us, and I am still in my role as a human trying to become a witch.

I know it is my fault. I got involved, and I am most definitely in trouble now. All due to some irresponsible one who did not pick up the dog's poop from the beach. I hide my scent, but the poop!

I had to throw out my shoes! In my defense of the waste, my sense of smell is very delicate. I could not remove the bad smell from one of them.

Despite my dormant Ianthe, I am a werewolf. My senses are getting sharper after the attack.

Oh... And I am rogue now because I no longer belong to a pack, so my scent will change, right? I should ask Blanche when my eyes will turn red, how much time I have before that happens, or if there is a way to prevent it. Maybe the contact lenses can cover red eyes… she is a witch and can come with a magic potion or a spell, I suppose.

“Earth to Clara… Claire!” She cleared her throat. We need to practice more about my name. Or we can say that I prefer to be called Clara… Bad idea!

Dear Moon Goddess, this is a mess. I am not good at lying at this level.

“Yes, sorry. I got distracted, Witch Mother.” I was careful this time.

“They are from Blue-Ribbon Pack, and they came to hand us over an invitation. Their Alpha and Luna want to have dinner with both of us this Friday… So, come to the living room as they personally want to do that.” I know, werewolves are supposed to do exactly as the Alpha or Luna commanded them to do.

They followed me, they found out my name… they are good trackers, but I made things way too easy by being clumsy.

When they left, we both breathed in relief since everything worked well with those two.

I wonder why they are so tall, even for average werewolves.

Blanche is concerned, and we fear something might go wrong. I cannot reject the invitation, or I will be disrespectful. And I do not need the attention of a full angry pack of werewolves close to where I live now.

"You are not going to like it, but we must keep Ianthe dormant during the meeting. A strong emotion might trigger her, and we need to be careful. We do not know if there are FDL members in that pack."

"That pack is not in the rankings, but you are right. They might have some members there.”

Every time I think about those fanatics, I get the chills. It scares me that it can be anyone, yet I do not want to live in fear. I need to conquer those fears with intelligence. Fighting!

"I can cast a spell on you to make you very sick! You will be genuinely sick if they come!"

“Tempting, but no… It would be worst." I know my kind. "They need to repay anything considered as an act of kindness towards the Alpha family according to our traditions. And to pay back, they could even send healers... It would only make things worse. It would be wiser just go and get over with it at once." They will forget about me after it.

Blanche nodded at me.

"I just wonder why those kids did not mind-linked others from their pack?" Blanche knows a lot about werewolves.

"Yes, I wonder the same. We can mind-link since we are six years old, late bloomers at seven, but they looked like they were around ten or eleven..." Anyways...

I found a job at the ice cream stand, not many hours, but I would earn enough to help with some bills and buy a new pair of shoes.

Since it is hot, I got used to wearing shorts and tank tops. At first, I was uncomfortable... But everyone wears short dresses, shorts, and thin clothes due to the weather.

My whole persona is changing in this new environment, although it is still weird to see a green eye blond in the mirror.

Working at the ice cream stand allowed me to see many species and their interactions with each other... From anxious children waiting for their favorite ice cream, teenagers on their first date, to even old couples sharing one cone sometimes. Parents, couples, children, elderly... all just enjoying a cone of ice cream, walking together under the sun.

As days passed, I am felt more comfortable here. It was very entertaining to serve everyone and see their smiles.

Humans, werewolves, lycans, and witches, very less often some warlock or a fairy. The sunny hours are more. Maybe that is why I have not seen vampires yet.

Different species and they all loved ice cream. I realize that we are so different from each other but so much alike as well.

When Friday arrived, Blanche and I wore our best dresses for the event... even my clothes now are charmed to enhance my appearance and scent of a human. Besides, I should go to the bathroom to add more perfume and check Ianthe's condition every thirty minutes. After formal greetings of conclusion, we would leave immediately in an hour or so.

Blue-Ribbon wolves arrived in an SUV to pick us up from Blanche's place. They were different wolves from those who came with the invitation. Very tall as well. The ride to the pack was pleasant, and we did not have to wait when passing the controls into their territories.

Since we are not considered high-rank wolves, the leaders were not expecting us at the entrance of the packhouse. A couple of omegas received us and accepted the wine that Blanche brought as a gift.

Witches never arrived empty-handed at a house they are visiting; they bring their own wine, at least. A witch tradition to repay hospitality and "secure for themselves a good drink" Blanche's words. Then we were led into the living room where the Alpha and his Luna were expecting us.

It is not totally unheard of the mating of lycans with werewolves. I was told that at school, but I did not know a female lycan can be Luna. This world is so big!

Luna Antonella was an incredibly beautiful female lycan who was also taller than her Alpha mate. It must be Moon Goddess's decision, mating them. Because an Alpha would never choose a mate taller than him, it would hurt their pride. Anyways, what do I know? A lot of things I assumed were not true.

Open your mind, Clara! Do not judge without knowing!

In general, there is so much I had no idea of! I am marveled. I must keep my eyes open and especially my mind to appreciate what is out there. Blanche's teachings are sticking to me.

They were very nice to us. Jonathan and Celest showed up no long after we finished our greetings. Celest ran to me to hug me by the waist and, raising her face to me, thanked me again for helping them.

“No need…”

"I will say it, again! I was about to kick them!" Jonathan had his arms crossed over his little chest, wearing the same annoyed expression of that day at the beach.

"That is absolutely true! I am witch, I can tell." I winked at him, and he blushed. They both are so cute! Something is endearing about them despite their age. Or I just like these pups.

Celest did not want to release my waist until her mother asks her to do so.

Pouting, Celest went to her father. He picked her up as if she weighed nothing, but more importantly... as if she was a younger pup. Jonathan sat on her mother's lap... At eleven, we are more independent, and they are acting like maybe half their age.

“As you can see, Jonathan is mama's boy while Celest is daddy's little princess." Alpha Logan said, making Celest giggle, rocking her a little.

“We wanted to personally meet our pups' savior; we owe you for your help at a time of need.” The Luna smiled politely at me.

“We were impressed that a female human would jump in to help a pair of pups. Those kids could have hurt you if you were not wise enough to manage the situation." It was Alpha Logan talking this time.

I have some experience with bullies, and the idea of how to manage them came out of the blue, from desperation, not exactly intelligence. I just knew I must stop them before it got worse.

"Do not worry! Anyone would have done the same. Besides, someone from your pack reached them on time, too."

They looked at each other.

“We do not think that just anyone would have even tried to help our pups. Please, allow us to show the sincerity of our gratitude because they were in a precarious situation then.”

How so precarious? They just had to mindlink...

"Our pups look older than they actually are. Celest and Jonathan are twins, and they were born less than six years ago. They cannot mind-link yet. They are strong, but five older humans wanted to throw them to the sea…," Luna Antonella was so upset. "My Celest does not know how to swim!"

I would have never believed that they were so young! Beyond that, they were scared when I saw them. Humans scared them... Of course, they are just five-year-olds!

I wonder if that fast-growing is due to the mix of a werewolf with a lycan. Moon Goddes has her ways!

"I was not afraid of the humans neither the water! Only Celest was. She made me weak!" Jonathan yelled, frowning.

"That is not nice!" Luna Antonella was alarmed.

I guess that kind of behavior is just Alpha-like. Mason did not want to be a weakling by hanging out with me when we began to grow up. And then... Alphas will always be Alphas, right?

Little Celest blushed and buried her head on her dad's shoulder, hiding her face.

"Your sister is your equal! Do not ever say those things about her or any female. Apologize to your sister!" The Alpha said in a deep voice but without commanding him.

I was not expecting that affirmation from the Alpha of the pack. I am definitely not at home.

The boy got red up to his ears.

“Baby, it is alright. We all make mistakes, and we can learn from them, but we need to acknowledge them as mistakes first to make amendments, or we would never learn. We do not want to leave any heartache behind us, right?” Luna rubbed her son's back, encouraging him to do the right thing, cheering him after his father's scolding.

The family interacted without minding us... a pair of strangers that accidentally were there.

Probably Blanche is not aware of how different this is. High-rank wolves do not act this way, and especially not in front of strangers.

Jonathan began to sob and opened his arms to her mother. Celest jumped out from her father's arm and reached her brother. Soon, they were crying, one in the arms of the other while Jonathan told her how sorry he was for hurting her feelings, that he was scared to lose her.

The Luna and Alpha apologized to us for the scene. They believed that they had to correct on the spot sometimes since they wanted their children to grow up to be the better leaders their pack can have.

Jonathan was told that it was alright to cry and show his emotions.

The Alpha said... what? It blew my mind!

Then I remembered Josh. A cute, nice pup, who played with dolls and joined a tea party with me.

I thought that he was a different kind of Alpha. I assumed that he was born that way. And maybe it is true in part, but it is also true that Luna Margaret thinks differently, too. She made him carry bags, and she wanted him to understand his own behavior and the privileges he enjoyed when they visited Blood Moon.

Alphas are indulged too much just because they are alphas. Can they learn to be different? Or can they decide to be different?

Josh, Alpha Dean, and Alpha Logan are different, by decision or nature?

Because if they decided... Then Mason could have chosen to be different. He just did not want to, and no one ever directed him to be any different from his father. Luna Michelle always said that it was because Mason was Alpha. Again, a justification for anything he did.

I was told what my rank is and what is expected of me because of that. How I should be and act... my place in the pack, my low position in the pack... that is why I constantly doubted and even disliked myself.

All omegas do...

Angel used to tell me that I needed to work on my self-esteem but was it really it? Or was the system all omegas grew up in that made us believe it.

We place ourselves at the end of the food chain because others sit us there... However, we are just as intelligent as any other rank. We just do things differently from others.

Always following the same pattern while growing up, internalizing some behaviors as normal ones... or as if they are normal, but I have gotten to see some exceptions.

Oh! Dear Moon Goddess! Are they exceptions or evidence that one can choose? Too much to think!

By the end of the evening, we relaxed a bit. Blanche told them many stories and jokes from her days of traveling before getting to Saint Isabella town.

The Alpha and Luna enjoyed Blanche's wine. I have not tried it yet, and better to give it a try any other day.

We left them in their happy lives.

Jonathan was a kind pup too. He hugged me before I left, following Celest's example. They both might look older and strong, but their minds and hearts are so very young. I will keep an eye on them if they pass by the ice cream stand.

We received a free pass to Blue Ribbon territory. I was six months away from getting it. So close! I wish I could ask them to join their school to get my diploma...

"I know what you are thinking… and the answer is no."

I raised an eyebrow to Blanche. We were already at home.

“And what am I thinking?” I asked her.

“You want to join their pack, go to school, become a nurse, find a job, a new mate, a new life with them… because they seem different.” I was thinking about school, but those other things sounded nice too.

"It sure sounds nice, but it is dangerous to our plan. Maybe, later...” I said, I just do not know when that could happen. “I can do online courses and get an equivalent diploma.” It breaks my heart to do it that way, but it is the best I can do with what I have right now.

"Good idea, Clara. Besides, you can no longer join a pack. But rest assured, we will support you very well, and others will come as well… when the day comes.”

“When the day comes? What are you talking about?”

“The day you are ready to become Luna.”

"I am about to become rogue with red eyes, and I do not have an Alpha mate anymore… how would I ever become Luna?" I found her statement ridiculous.

“f**k! We did not tell you… well… you did not ask either… Although, when we were talking about Moonlight, you might have not understood everything, and we did not explain fully, either. Besides, we are not entirely sure about some things. Also, you were not alright at the beginning… And..."

I am totally lost, and she keeps talking without making sense to me. Sweet Moon Goddess! What else is that I do not know?

“Blanche, I am lost. Please, explain. I can take it.” I think I do.

“Somehow, you have a blessed royal wolf… Remember?” I nodded. Yes, the white fur on my forehead has the shape of a diamond, and they consider it is a signal of some sort of royalty.

“You are THE omega. One who does not fear other wolf's ranks, neither follow commands, your aura is different, Clara… " She swallowed saliva. There was more to say... But she stopped!

"Please, I am dying here!" Why does she enjoy the suspense? I would prefer to know it all at once! "Tell me everything."

"Well, it means you do not have to fear to become rogue!" Good news, finally!

“It also means you can form your own pack without an Alpha with the name you prefer… or you can choose to rebuilt the Moonlight pack if that is what you want to do.”

"But I am an omega! I am no Alpha. I do not understand! Why do you release information by bits? I want to know! Even if you are not sure, I really want to know! Now!" I will apologize later for screaming.

“We think your mother was the last descendant of Moonlight's Alpha's bloodline. And… we are not sure who your father might be or why your mother wanted to hide it. But most definitely, you have Alpha blood… a powerful one for what matters."

"My father? I thought maybe a wolf from the royal pack... not actually a royal wolf… but you say an Alpha? How can that be? Who would be that Alpha be? Alphas are very rare! And how would that mean I can rebuild Moonlight? I am female! Omega!” I have so many questions rights now.

“Young one, Moonlight was led sometimes by a Luna because Luna was just a title they gave to the female leader. The equal to the Alpha. The rank you know as omega was not important to them, the power to be an anchor for a pack is not based only on physical strength or who the scariest is. Anyone can be aggressive, territorial, anyone can hit or punch, but that is not what defines a leader… And your aura says it, even crippled and underdeveloped as it is now… you are Luna!”

"How can that be? Ianthe is not even awake, and I do not have the education to be a leader. I was trained to serve, not to lead! How could I be a pack's anchor?" How can I be their center? Only strong Alphas can do that, and even so, they need a Luna… as their own anchor… All that she says…

Oh, dear Moon Goddess! I am getting crazy. She hugged me since I began to shake, not sure what to believe anymore.

“When your wolf fully awakes. Once you are ready to embrace yourself for who you are, you will be able to summon your wolves, bond them to each other, with or without a mate, because you are THE omega of the Moonlight pack. Their leader.”