

Chapter 28: Really?

-Clara-

Mason Van Ryan? What is he doing here? And Carter?

Mason has recognized me, obviously. He keeps staring at me. However, I am Claire Bond here, and I plan to stay as much as possible in this town. I cannot blow my cover or risk everything we have worked so hard for.

I guess I should have accepted him to pay for the ice cream for everyone celebrating Brady and Carter being mates. He has a lot of money! Nonetheless, my pride was too much to allow him to do that, I do not want anything from him.

I will have to ask some money borrowed from Blanche this month. Thank Moon Goddess, she is a rich witch.

Since I am paying for Lorraine and Amelie's hospital bills, I am short in cash which got worse with my "treatment" at the Clinic. On top of that, I was need for disturbance by the town's mayor. I will have to appeal that one, he hates me. I know I am annoying about everything he does, but this time, he just went too far.

Those wolves started the ght and one of them even stabbed me. I might have kicked their butts, but they attacked me rst. I just electrocuted one! Ridiculous Mayor. If that ne is not removed, I am sure Blanche would be happy to cause him a bad diarrhea... I would not do so, but it is fun to think I would ask Blanche to do something like that. She would enjoy it for sure.

Regarding this event with Mason, it is advisable to act as if I do not know him, neither Carter. Despite all, they are new in town. If they say something, I will have to stick to my story and say that they are wrong, that they got the wrong "person". I am human... in appearance, at least.

"My name is Claire Bond, and I am the owner of Moon House. Brady works here and since we are like a family, The house pays this time." I faked a smile on my face. My hands are trembling, and I am glad the pups are close, so I hugged them back to cover it.

I not shacking out of anxiety, I am angry. Nor Dark River pack threats neither Mason Van Ryan's presence are going to make me leave this town, I still need to take care of my wolves, including Amelie. I cannot let him ruin things for me.

"Nice to meet you Claire. I am Mason Van Ryan..." The jerk offered me his hand in front of granny Ruby and the pups. I do not want to touch him. So, I held tighter on the twins, who fortunately are hugging me by the waist, one at the right and the other one on my left. I smiled apologetically at him. I was actually satstised to leave his hand hanging. He had to retract it.

It is such a bad luck, the worst coincidence in the world. How was I supposed to know that granny Ruby would be Carter's grandmother? She is omega like me! And turns out that Brady is Carter's fated mate.

Dear Moon Goddess, you made my pack member Carter's mate. What is your plan?

"Congratulations Brady, we all are so happy for you!" I said to her. She is our ghter and someone very special for our group, no wonder why she would be second in command of a big pack like Blood Moon with Carter.

"Thank you, boss!" She said while holding hands with Carter, who looked at her totally lost in love. She has a strong temper. I fear Carter might not know how to treat her. I guess they will have to gure it out somehow. Moon Goddess wishes after all... they are perfect for each other.

"Well, please feel welcomed to Moon House and enjoy, our people will be serving the ice cream now." I wanted to leave but the pups did not let go of me.

"Claire! Are you really really really... alright?" Asked Celest. The puppy is worried about me and kept asking about my wellbeing. Before I could answer her, Jonathan interrupted, as always.

"Do you want me to kill them? I can do it!" Jonathan said, trying to imitate his father's Alpha voice, but poorly. He says that they both twins are my protectors when they started their training to be leaders of their pack.

Both are a couple of sweethearts; overtime I have come to be close to them. My idea to open an ice cream parlor came from them. They used to complain a lot about the lack of variety in favors in ice creams, which was totally inexcusable considering this place is a center of commerce for many species. After my time working for the ice cream stand by the beach, I realize this would be a good niche for business, and I was right. My new pack need resources, and this was a hit.

Celest and Jonathan were my rst and best clients. They brought a lot of customers and even created "publicly" in Blue-Ribbon pack for Moon House by annoying everyone to come here, and now unfortunately they also brought me Mason Van Ryan and Carter Williams along with granny Ruby.

"I am ne! I am good as new..." I tell them smiling at one and then to the other "And no need to kill them... I have already taken care of them by myself! Thank you very much for your offer, my Alpha." I think I heard a growl from Mason after listening me calling Jonathan "my Alpha". I overlooked it to focus on the pups.

"Be my Luna, Claire! I will protect you forever and from anyone." I smiled at Jonathan offer. He is eight years old already but despite looking way older and taller than that, he is still a pup.

"My Alpha, you know I am a mere human. How can I be your Luna?" He pouted his lips which remind me of Josh a couple of years ago, acting childish despite his age just for a piece of cake. I giggled at Jonathan and the memory of Josh. "Besides, your wonderful mate is somewhere, and just like Brady you will not that special one for you... okay?"

"Is there a mate for me too?" Asked Celest. She is a little more mature than Jonathan but enjoys being babied by her closest and that includes me.

"Of course, my Luna." I call them both as "my Luna" and "my Alpha". She smiled. Both twins are adorable. It might be their lycan blood that makes so endearing for everyone. I do not know for sure, or that I like puppies. Regardless, I am very fond of them.

"Come to visit tomorrow Claire!" Said Celest. But I cannot do, besides Mason might be around. I had to reject the invitation and the pups whined, like they always do. Since they have training tomorrow, they would not insist.

"You believe in mates then, despite being a witch... sorry, a human." Even his voice irks me. Why is Mason asking me? No, why is he even talking to me. I would prefer if he just plainly ignore me like in the past. No, I would prefer to never see this ugly face again.

"Monique, please come to attend this table, I need to leave." I mind-linked Monique, while I kept a smile on my face. "Sure, boss! That werewolf is hot!" Monique has even worse taste in males, than me. Alright, he looks good. After all, he always trains and has a handsome face. That is important until you realized there is no kindness behind it.

"I respect all faiths, sir... If you excuse me, I have some work in the back ooe." Finally, Celest and Jonathan released me as the ice cream was served to them. Monique as the great gal she is, entertained the pups and smiled widely to Mason.

I could feel Mason's eyes on my back on my way to my ooe. Why is he here? I asked to lanthe. She was still dizzy from all the sedatives I had to take at the Clinic and the potions Blanche made me drink. The knife was made of silver and bathed in wolfsbane, which is poisonous for us werewolves, none of the medicine I received there was effective. So, I had to put up with the pain until my friend arrived. Yet, I had to pay. I have an insurance, but it is a basic plan!

Lucky me, Blanche took care of everything fast. Wolfsbane would have killed me. Those Dark River wolves play dirty. Nevertheless, I learned my lesson. I left my guard down on my left side, at least now I know. I need to cover my back when ghting.

"Jax was trying to reach me... I think he wants us back." I frowned and probably she frowned too. That is crazy.

Fortunately, I did not make a bet against Blanche. She said bastards are like boomerangs. Yeah, Mason is a boomerang indeed. I sent her a message with the news about Brady and then I added "Boomerang at Moon House!" I wonder if she would remember that joke.

Blanche called me immediately, and I picked it up in a hurry. She did remember.

"Really?" She was laughing.

"Yes, really!" I joined her laughing too. This is a very ridiculous situation.

"When I am right, I am damn right!" As always Blanche was right, about being right.

"He might be here out of coincidence. Moon Goddess works in mysterious ways..." I said it but even I am not buying it. Carter being mates with Brady is a coincidence, but Mason here...

"Don't come, he can't try to fool you, but you should not fool yourself." I had to admit it. This place is at the other extreme of where his pack is located and has no strategic value for him.

I know it... Blanche told me, and I did not believe it back then, but how is that he has the nerve to look for me. Considering everything he did; I would only want to see him while being fried in hot oil.

I doubt it is related to Luna Michelle. I have heard from the Simmons that she woke up. The bad part is that I cannot contact her, but at least I know she is doing better. It is better this way, until everything is solved.

lanthe thinks Mason wants up back because Jax was trying to reconnect with her using the man bond. But it was severed, so it is over between us. It is like trying to hold on air. I guess she did not accept the rejection, and we felt his intention. Well, that is on his side. Not mine.

"Alright! Again, you are right! But it is idiotic to think I could ever... anyways. I came to wish administrative work and I will be ready in two more hours. Would you want to pick me up? My back still hurts. Therefore, I need my witch nanny until I am better.

Dark River wolves threatened to come back. Better to be prepared. I understand now that I need to take care of myself rst, and stop being reckless, or all my efforts to protect my wolves and get back Moonlight on its feet will be in vain.

"Please, do not get mad with what I am about to do!" I just wonder what she is planning. Probably something I will complain about later.

Once I nished with the orders for supplies, and all that boring part of the business, I stretched on my sit. Then, I grabbed the golden necklace with a locket that I am wearing under my shirt. The locket is still empty. I wear it every day because it is pretty.

It is the gift I received from Josh years ago, everyone got me clothes, while he thought about giving me a pretty thing. Since I do not own much jewelry, I guess it is alright to keep this memento of those happy, carefree days around my neck. He is a very sweet memory of my happy teen self.

Angel got it for me before leaving Blood Moon, it feels like a gift that was given twice for good friends.

Maybe this necklace is the reason why lanthe called Josh when I got stabbed the other day. We had his name on our head or something. Still, she just called his name, neither of us understand why she did that, or why we felt a sudden strength invading our body to endure the pain. Would it have something to do with it or not? Never mind...

I heard a honk from outside. The back ooe has its own door outside that leads to an alley, to facilitate my escape from Moon House in case Mason is still around.

"Hi babe!" Luca Barone... a lycan, friend of Leon and his group came to pick me up on his motorcycle. I cannot deny that he is hot. He is wearing a white t-shirt and blue jeans tting his built body. Did I mention he is hot?

"Do not call me babe!" I scowled him. I am so going to kill Blanche.

Luca and I are friends now, but he tried to date me. I accepted only one date, and only one kiss. There were no sparks, unfortunately.

"Alright, cutie pie!" I do not like that nickname either.

"Cut it or I will not leave with you!" I tell him placing my hands at his hips, trying to look imposing.

"My princess, I am your faithful servant. Order that your wishes are my will..." I playfully slapped his shoulder giggling. He acted as if I hurt him rubbing it and making a funny face.

"Please, no physical violence! I am still a fragile lycan in his early twenties." I could not hold it anymore and I laughed louder. He used his affected voice.

"Who is this one?" Growled Mason while his eyes began to icker black. I guess lanthe is right. Mason came to look for problems and annoy me to death.

"Mr. Mason Van Ryan, this is my good friend Luca Barone..." Luca measured his hand to Mason in his motorcycle. He took it and they locked gazes measuring each other.

Since it was taking a while for them to release each other's hand, I took the extra helmet from the back of the motorcycle.

"Goodbye, Mr. Van Ryan." I said and jumped on the back on Luca's bike. It was not easy, due to my height, but I managed it. I am sure I look cool on it.

"Clara... I mean, Claire... would I see you tomorrow?" He asked. How dares he to ask me? He has no right to ask me anything.

"Why would we? Bye!" Luca helped me to secure the helmet and jump in to we run his bike to Leon's apartment.

"Thank you!" I said smiling to him and giving him back his extra helmet.

"Ex?" He said accepting it. I was thanking the ride but, I guess it is applicable to that too.

"Something like that." It is hard to explain because Mason is more than an ex. He was supposed to be my soulmate, but decided he knew better and pushed me away in the worst possible way. Besides, I am supposed to be a human learning magic.

"When you are ready to talk, you can call me princess... Besides, I can be around if you let me. I doubt he is going to quit trying anytime soon." He always calls me princess. It feels odd.

"Thank you, but I think I will have to face that situation as an adult and do not hide behind a friend." I wish I would feel something especial for him, he is nice.

I can sense that Luca might be like Leon and would decide to choose me as his mate if I give it the chance. It is just that I like him as a friend, nothing else.

"I can be more than that if you let me. Why you don't give me a chance?" He seems serious suddenly.

After his kiss on our rst and only date, I realized that as much handsome that he was. Something was missing. He asked me how long I would have this locket with me without a photo inside.

I grabbed the locket of my necklace without looking at Luca, the locket called my attention somehow. Luca is right... how long I am going to keep this locket empty? I have been alone for two years, but it is just not him. Not Luca.

"You know that..."

"Okay, okay... I am not ready for a full total rejection yet. Just let me know if you want me to get rid of him for you." Mason deserves a punch, but not from any of my friends. I should have the pleasure to kick his ass if he tries something.

Blanche laughed when I told her about everything that happened at Moon House. I was not mad at her for sending Luca to pick me up from Moon House. I am just not happy with Luca being used for something like that. Even if he is aware of my feelings and what he was needed for when picking me up.

"You should give yourself a second chance young one... males like Luca are very rare." Sometimes we see the straw in someone's eye but not the log in your own.

"Leon is one of a kind too..."

"Yes... I know, that is why I am scared." I guess is time to talk now.

"Blanche! You are so sure of yourself, what scares you? He loves you!"

"I was so sure it was love in the past... So many times.... Young one, I have so many years and attempts to nd the right one, that I have my doubts..."

"If something is too good to be true..." it might not be.

"Exactly, I do not know if I can trust in my heart anymore... Besides, I want to help you rst. Last time, I got distracted by my own love life and we lost your mother."

"It was not your fault Blanche... those vampires wanted to kill Luna Michelle, and mom was just in the way. No protection spell would have safe her despite your efforts." A lump in my throat stops me from keep talking.

"I feel responsible for everything. To start, I was the one who helped your mother to go to Moonlight's territory to search for her ancestors... if only..."

"I know the story, it is alright." She has done what she could when it was needed, no one can ask more from her. It is my father's fault after all. "I guess if ever get to see my father, lanthe will be able to recognize him...or I might never want to acknowledge who he is..."

"Clara... I..."

"Let's leave that conversation! You are helping me! You saved my life from rejection, took care of me, invested on my business... in fact you have saved my life more than once! You are doing everything to help me, but it does not mean to put your own life on hold for me. You are great and deserve your own happiness... remember, you are the heroine of your own story!"

When I started to live with Blanche, I was heart broken and depressed. Her support and especially her words helped me all this time. I wish I can do something for her too.

"You are going to make me cry! Just shut up, I am very emotional now that a storm is coming!"

"I hope you are wrong, a storm would be bad for business." She giggled and we nished dinner. Leon was out of town due to his work, something that Blanche nds odd and annoys her about him would be his job.

In my room, I remembered everything that happened with Mason. He will think I am a witch and will just forget about me after seeing me with Luca. He always assumed the worst about me.

"I feel bad for Jax." Said lanthe. Yeah, he was innocent. He did love and accepted lanthe. Yet, he let Mason to drag me thru blocks and throw me in a cell at the place I feared the most.

Neither lanthe or I reacted then, we were young and so astonished that he would do something like that. I would have never expected that.

I guess I am not even mad at his rejection because he rejected me more than once before I ocially rejected him on that trial. He pushed me away for years before those horrible words came out of his mouth, but those are the ones that hurts the most.

"I only know that Marissa is my chosen mate. Marissa is my dream of a mate and no other..." he said.

"You better know this and forget your stupid dream to become Luna. You are not my mate. I will not be f****g witch who did this. I will kill her with my own hands... and if you say something to anyone. If you open your damn mouth to claim yourself as my mate, I will kill you too... I am going to x this shit." He did x it. I might have rejected him, but he is the one who broke our bond rst. How shameless of him to even talk to me now!

I saved my pride at the end, but I am still mad at myself about how I managed it. I hate that I did not punch him or at least yell at him when he was hurting me. Why I did not ght back? Or at least, said something then? I just took it all and cried like a pup in a corner.

When I touched my face, I had tears rolling my cheeks. I guess I had some tears left in me about something that is part of the past. I have given more than enough thoughts to someone who does not deserve none of my tears and probably never did.

I am sure that tomorrow, he will be gone from this town and everything will be back to normal. I felt sleep and I had a nice dream where this wolf of Auburn color chased me in an open eld, we had fun running. I woke up smiling after that dream.

To my dismay, the following day I received twenty-four doze of roses at Leon's apartment with a card saying: "Please, forgive me." No name, like I need a witch to tell me who send them. Well, I do have a witch, but I do not need to ask her. She was rolling on the oor laughing. It was like someone spitted on my morning coffee.

I went to the Clinic to check on Amelie, Lorraine was with her. She is doing better fortunately but needs at least three more days to be released.

Brady mind-linked me that she wanted to stay in our Moon House because she had a huge argument with Carter. She does not want to take Carter's last name, which ended with her telling him that she was not going to move to Blood Moon. She is like the second in command here, she takes over my role whenever is necessary and protect us all as well, being the strongest ghter.

Monique and Veronica are great too, maybe Brady's absence would force them to work harder on their own skills. I just hope Brady is not ghting with Carter over her alliance with our little pack. She should decide by and for herself, not anyone else, not even Carter. I guess I will have to talk to her about this.

When I arrived at Moon House, the place was lled with roses of every color. This time, not a single card, Monique told me that the delivery only said it was all for Claire Bond.

This is getting way too ridicule. Mason came back to annoy me to death!

He does not even know, well... he never knew me neither wanted to know me in the past.

It is not only that I do not like roses, I am allergic to owers!