

Chapter 43: A slap

-Clara-

"I do not want him anywhere near you..." Said Alastair.

"I will never be alone with Mason..." I told him, trying to not get angry at him.

I shared the information we had about the love potion developed by FDL. Blanche said that it would be possible to find the maker despite the incantation to block the tracking; however, it will be necessary to use a specialized lab in witch's territory and if possible, more potion to run all the tests. That is quite important because a powerful witch or warlock has been helping them for years.

Besides, yesterday we received five werewolves that needed our help. Dark River might be planning something to harm them, and to prevent it, we have a security system in place to avoid surprises that will be reinforced once his other twenty guards arrive. However, out of everything I told him. He is still obsessed about Mason helping us.

Josh should trust me and my judgement. We are equals as mates, and we both are responsible of

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our werewolves.

"He is just jealous. Alphas are possessive. It is in his nature..." Ianthe is irritated but keeps making excuses for him. Yet it feels wrong to keep explaining myself to him, as if I have to ask his permission to do things even when I consider them as the right thing to do. I am my own werewolf and there are things more important currently.

"Furthermore, I have already accepted those twenty guards you sent... of which I only knew and agreed to ten... and now even those extra twenty that will arrive tomorrow night..." Since it is about my safety, and of those who I cared about, I will try harder to be more understanding about twenty-four-seven vigilance on my every move.

Once again, it feels wrong... I am his... but he is not my owner. I do not want to report every step I take to him. I will suffocate.

"Al... Josh, I know what I am doing. Please, trust me." It bothers me to keep asking him to trust me.

"I trust you! I just do not trust Mason..." Josh is smart. However, he does not want to understand why it was wrong to do something without telling me, disregarding my wishes about the number of

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guards and my request for them to keep a low profile. They were so evident! And they did not listen to me to act less... protective. I cannot deny it was a good idea in the end, but I should have been informed before.

"I can defend myself from Mason or anyone in a one-on-one fight... why you do not believe in me?" I have more than one skill that I can practice on Mason if he dares to lay a finger on me without my consent. I can electrocute him if I want to! I told Josh about it! Maybe, I should have shown those skills to him.

"Josh, I was trained personally by a Luna Warrior for years!" I probably should have not revealed that secret, but it has been so long, and he is my mate. There should be no secrets between us. Luna Michelle trained me and others disregarding her mate's order at Blood Moon.

He stayed silent for a couple of minutes; I was getting mad at him again. I love this male and I trust him. Why is he treating me like a weak damsel that can be easily taken away from him? Does not see me like his equal?

"Clara, I do not like it."

"Josh, I will not be alone with him... ever... I have

already told you this. I do not want him close to me, either. It is only that we need as much help as possible... Once you are here, we can think together what comes next."

"I am sorry if I am being a little too much..." His voice changed. There is my Josh. He begins to understand, I can feel it.

"Possessive...? Like a big bad possessive Alpha?" I asked him, teasing him a little. He laughed. He is a different kind of Alpha. My Alpha, my mate... I can reach to him despite all.

"Overprotective... jealous maybe..." He said over the phone. I smiled. I knew it was that above all, but I needed to hear it from him. Despite being mates, we have to talk and trust in each other.

"I can understand that... I am still glad Paige is not interested in you..." He laughed heartfully. I like the sound of his laughs.

I can imagine the corners of his mouth forming a smile, and the soft wrinkles that form around his eyes when laughing. I like every sound that comes from his lips, and the way his gaze heats my skin. I can imagine him right next to me. His anger does not frighten me, he would never hurt me. I am safe with him. Even before being mates, I could be

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myself with him.

"Clara, I miss you so much that it hurts..."

"I miss you too." I miss everything about him.

"But you are making me feel as if I am not your equal..." I told him. I should be honest too about

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what is really bothering me. "You are going to monitor my every move... it does not feel right."

"My love, I know you can take care of yourself... I just want to protect you... We have not marked each other, and I guess..." I see. He is not being rational because of that.

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"I love you, Joshua Duncan. I understand the measures for my safety, but please talk to me and do not decide things about me without even telling me. Trust in my decisions, I will include you as well next time... Mason was just there, he gave us the potion and wanted to talk to Blanche. His offer was handy... It does not have any other meaning for me."

"I was wrong Clara. I... It is so hard to be away from you, while he is there. I try to play cool, but I am anxious..."

"We both overreacted about this. And you do not have to pretend to be fine with anything. If you are anxious, tell me."

"I should not be this way... it is just these emotions make me act without thinking... I want to be there for you and fix everything around you... I want you to be safe and happy, with me." Josh is the sweetest.

"I could have done it better too. I feel the same about you... I promise you, that if I need your help to fix something for me, I will tell you..."

"Or even if it is something I cannot fix, just tell me..." This werewolf sounds more like my Josh. I am the one laughing this time.

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"Besides, all of this is temporary... you will come to me, right?" I ask him. I have my own insecurities, my own fears about his safety.

"Soon Clara. Soon... things are happening." He does not share more; I know it is part of his job. Fortunately, it is the last job. He will be soon next to me.

"This was our first fight..." I told him.

"It was just a disagreement... not a fight." He answered me, not getting the vibe I was sending him.

"Really? Because I have heard that reconciliations are hot." I heard his growl by the phone, and I giggled.

"It was definitely the worst fight ever; Clara, we should do something about it..." His change of attitude was so cute. I could not hold a laugh.

"Clara, you have no idea what you do me and Al..." Oh dear Josh, if you only knew what your voice does my body, you would be here in a second even disregarding the King's order.

"I am wearing one of your t-shirts now... and nothing more." I can imagine him blushing, I wish I can caress his bushy jaw.

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"Can I...? And you...? Are we...?" He asked, he always asks. That is one of the things I love the most about him.

"Oh yes!" I answered him eagerly laying in bed with my phone in one hand, and no panties.

The following day, I woke up feeling better and relaxed. I dreamed about him while wrapped on his t-shirt and his scent. My dream of him was so real, I could almost feel his touch at night. Probably it was a mix between his scent and my wolf's memory, but it was a very nice dream.

One day away from Brady's mating ceremony. I am glad Carter is paying the expenses since they asked to use a big five stars hotel as more relatives from his side will come. Our number is not big, and I wish I could see Luna Michelle, but she will not attend.

I found Blanche at the dining room eating alone, the scent of Leon was gone. I am guessing he left very early. Things were still tense between them. Her expression was sad but changed once she saw me. I wanted to talk about what was happening with her, but she did not, so I just let go the matter.

After breakfast, we went together to the Clinic to

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visit our new friends and check on Amelie. Lorraine was there, without Dominique, which surprised me. I think since yesterday, he was acting differently. I am not sure if I should intervene without being asked... Life is getting more complicated these days for everyone.

Mason showed up at the Clinic as well according to our plan with Carter; Sophie and Marcus were there as well. I guess, Blanche and I were the last pair to show up.

Since Mason is Sole Alpha of Blood Moon, he can accept immediately Lorraine, Amelie and the other five werewolves, former members of Dark River pack. I am not supposed to be able to accept them in Moonlight, so I cannot accept them without raising suspicious on that pack.

Marcus neither Sophie are instated in their positions as second in command of Silver Rain pack, until Josh also ascends to Alpha, they do not have the authority to accept them either.

Therefore, Mason was helping us a lot assuming this part to protect them, they understood and agreed. They immediately sworn allegiance to his wolf and pack. Mason covered their medical fees.

The only exception was Lorraine and Amelie,

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since Josh is coming soon, they preferred to wait so they could join Silver Rain pack. I agreed, no body can be forced to join a pack unless they want to. Probably, Lorraine did not want to leave Dominique, which I found understandable, and Amelie is underage. She will follow her sister anywhere.

Our new werewolves were doing better, it is a great relieve that they will improve faster than Amelie despite their condition. They were dehydrated and malnourished, but their wolves would help them heal quickly. I was not given more information, I did not need to, tough. I could recognize signs of abuse in them when meeting them yesterday.

They all were just happy to leave behind Dark River pack, yet they were worried about the other omegas in Dark River territory. I think the King will have to be informed about it, to do something. How is that so much abuse is allowed under his nose? This is the third biggest and strongest pack in the kingdom we are talking about!

I was surprised by Mason's understanding and support to them, he was even kind towards the omegas. Just Lorraine was hostile, since Amelie was in a private room, Mason was not invited to

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see her. I guess it was out of solidarity with Dominique and Monique.

"I think we need to invest on a third floor for our Moon House. If more are to come here, we will the space." I told Blanche on our way to Moon House, Marcus and Sophie walked close but with some

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distance from us. Mason was behind them. I do not understand why he still has that guilty expression on his face.

"Do you still want me as your partner?" Blanche has already invested a lot in Moon House, the business was blooming not long ago. I paid on

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time the loans but capitalized what I could not pay her. She was my investment partner.

"Of course! Why would you even ask that?"

"You are filthy rich now."

"No, I am not..."

"Well, your mate is... so, it is the same."

"If you do not want to invest, it is alright... I know customer numbers dropped recently but I will find a way to recover and even keep growing our business."

"Young one, I love doing business with you... you are smart and very responsible. You pay on time..."
She smiled, but not with her eyes.

"Then, what is going on?"

"Your mate might not like you to work anymore, and you will not need money... he might want pups right away..."

"Josh and I have not talked about it in detail, but I want to be independent financially. You know I had to give up my dream to become a nurse already, I could not even finish high school like others... I am proud of myself for getting my diploma despite all, but it is not on my name... I gave up to so many things in the past, I do not want to give up Moon

House too."

Pups... I like the idea, but it is not the right time, and we need more time to improve our communication. Although, when would it be the right time for us since FDL is after me? That is something we need to discuss.

"Your mate might not like it."

"You are so much like your mother..." She said granting me a big smile. I am happy every time she says that I look or sound like my mother. Silvia Gray was a great shewolf.

"Josh is my soulmate, not my owner. I decide what I want to do. I will consider my mate's opinion, but Moon House is my decision and I want to keep my business for as long as possible."

"I think I will have to ask again after you guys mark each other. I know a pair of females who changed a lot after that..."

"You know them, well... you grew up under the care of one." Is she talking about Luna Michelle?

"This female is so smart, and strong. Someone so advanced for her time, and an example for others ... More than twenty years ago, she wanted omegas to be treated fairly, to have access to the

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same kind of job as deltas and other high ranks and eliminate the abuse towards omegas... she used to write for a newspaper" That is definitely Luna Michelle.

"Yes, I think I know who you are talking about..." I said smiling. Luna Michelle told me that she used to write a column for a small newspaper at the Royal Pack, and that it caused her problems she did not want to repeat.

"Are you talking about my mother?" Mason got closer to us, he did not need to because he was not that far not to listen our conversation. However, we are talking about his mother and a part of her life that he most likely did not know about.

"The column she used to write was really inspiring for a lot of omegas... and even humans..."

"Humans? My mother was interested in humans?" Mason... always Mason. Maybe Blanche can help him to get his head out of his... well. He might learn something from her.

"Misha, the fiercest female I have ever meet. She wanted to be a journalist. She investigated a lot and helped me with my research. Michelle has a sharp mind, and so many talents, a powerful

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fighter... Yet, things began to change..." I imagine that it happened after her mating with Alpha James Van Ryan.

"After her last investigation for that newspaper... she caught her friend Gilbert doing something horrible. It was quite a scandal by then..." I think Mason and I are pleading her to tell us more.

I have already known that Luna Michelle was and still is amazing, but this young version of her fascinates me. I would like to know more... Gilbert ... I think I recall that name from somewhere.

"There are small communities of humans living in werewolf's territories because they need protection from other predators, such as vampires. But did you know that a lot of humans disappear every year without any trace?"

"Who would notice that in the werewolf kingdom?"
Asked Mason. I almost rolled my eyes.

"Your mother did. She noticed. She cared, not only about omegas but also humans. This Gilbert was someone nice, a friend from school, a high rank wolf from a prestigious family... Nobody would have believed he would do something like that for money."

"What did he do?" I asked intrigued.

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"He tricked humans in different ways to kidnap them... selling them later to vampires." Of dear Moon Goddess.

"My mother did something so dangerous?"

"She followed him for weeks, for her there was something odd about him. By then, I was so into my personal life, I only gave her a spell for tracking him... she did the rest, she got a Royal Inquisitor to help her once she got the evidence against Gilbert." That name still rings in my head. Where did I hear it before...?

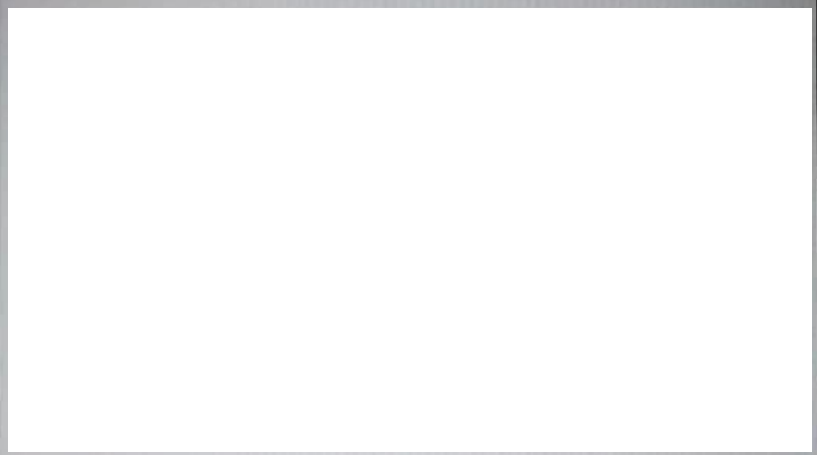
"And you would believe that she was rewarded for her action and make public something like that, especially since she warned humans and even omegas to be careful about the methods for choosing victims! But no! Gilbert's family harassed her, his sisters even tried to hit her, and more than once she was attacked... But of course, Michelle being Michelle was very brave. She testified against him on his trial despite the threats. They considered that she was helping the wrong side."

"That is amazing... my mother never told me about it."

"I only knew that she used to write... and that she loved to read to understand the true nature of

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things. She used to say to me that there is more beneath the eye." The same way she used to say that I was special, that I should pursue my dreams to become a nurse, doctor, teacher, anything... my choice.



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Luna Michelle taught me to cook and clean, not to server others but to be independent and take care of myself. And she trained me to be strong enough to protect myself, because the world can be a scary place sometimes. I so happy that I will be related to her somehow since Josh is her nephew, so I will be able to hug her again one day.

"Not much longer after that, she met her mate... your father Mason..." So, Luna Michelle dropped everything because of her mate?

"He was quite handful, a player with bad manners and incredible strong... he was known as the Beast of Blood Moon. Killing on the spot was his most merciful act, because it was said that he enjoyed torturing others."

"Everybody knows my father's previous reputation ... but my mother is the world to him. He changed a lot for her."

"She did the same... for him. Michelle was going to open a newspaper in Blood Moon and improve the lives of the werewolves and humans living there... add more content to the history classes, in general improve the educational system there. But she dropped it... time passed. She changed, she never contacted me again."

"I think she did some progress on that, but it was really hard to beat the Council of Elders. I do not remember all... Our pack was attacked by vampire rebels and then..."

"You said Gilbert, right? The guy who was trafficking humans..." I interrupted Mason because that name...

"Yes, Gilbert Redstone..."

"What happened to him?" I think I remember it... when I heard that name.

"He was sent to prison for life... which was merciful. I remember it."

"No... he was part of the group of rouges that attacked me in Blood Moon."

"How do you know? What do you remember?"
Asked Mason.

"I do not remember clearly. I think he was the leader of that group of rouges and she recognized him, calling him by his Gilbert... I am sure. Yes, she said his name."

"Clara, Beatrice Johnson as high FDL member ordered those rouges to attack you, those were FDL members as well. Iris told us about it."

"I assume it is right, but they changed their minds, or someone told them. They wanted to kill me at first but then they wanted to capture me alive."

"That bullet on your stomach was to kill you, young one."

"You were shot?" Asked Mason. Marcus and Sophie got closer.

"That happened long time ago. That is not important... what is important here is that vampires, or some vampires are also helping FDL ... and somehow someone who is supposed to be in a prison in Royal pack territory is a rouge. Not just any kind of rouge... those FDL rouges are not feral, they have red eyes, but they are very much like anyone of us... completely functional and rational about what they do..."

"I would prefer to stay here, but I think I would be more helpful if I go back home and get some more information from my mother. I will come on time for Carter and Brady's ceremony if I leave right now."

"It is alright Mason. We will be alright... Sophie and I have it all under control." Said Marcus.

"Still, my twenty guards stay here. Please, coordinate everything you need with Carter."

"All good." I said, it is better if Mason leaves to find more information about this Gilbert.

According to the interspecies agreement, vampires can only drink from willing human donors, or synthetic blood made by witches, but like in any place, there are always bad apples... those who we know as vampire rebels.

FDL is a wicked organization willing to have alliances with evil witches and even rebel vampires. It is a very dangerous group to mess up with. I can only pray to Moon Goddess to get more information useful for the King, so we all together can defeat FDL once and for all.

"I would like to come clean about something... before leaving." Said Mason taking me out of my thoughts.

"What is it?"

"Can I tell you... like just you?" He wanted to tell me something at my ear. I just wondered about the secrecy but agreed. It might be important, so I agreed nodding my head. Marcus was unhappy about it and looked at Mason warning him to behave. Come one I can take care of myself.

"I did something wrong... and I am not sure of the consequences I will have to face, but I think it is better to come clean now instead of later."

"Alright, just tell me." I told him and he leaned closer to whisper at my ear something that made my blood boil in my veins immediately.

I could not hold it and slapped his sorry face for the very first time in my life, and probably it was the first one in his life too.