

-Clara-

Carter bought six chocolate puddings, Mason only one. Therefore, seven werewolves had the freaking dessert, which I no longer crave for at all. Stupid Mason, now I do not want to eat my favorite dessert ever again.

One out of seven that ate the chocolate pudding had ingested five drops of love potion. I do not have any of the symptoms described by Mason. Although, we do not know what effects those drops of potion would have on someone... There are so many "what ifs" in my head that I am about to have a panic attack.

"Breath... it might not be that bad." Said Blanche. I did not realize that I was holding my breath. I obliged. I need to breathe.

When I calmed down, I recalled that Josh told me that the potion will not affect those who have already meet their fated mates. Also, Blanche and Mason came to that conclusion based on our experience from the past.

"I hope you are right. Someone might have eaten



"It is not poison... To be honest I wish I could taste it myself. What would it do to me? Would it give diarrhea to someone who is not a werewolf? What if it is tailor-made to work only on Mason, or males? Humans do not have wolves, what would happen in that case? Would it be neutralized or something? It is all so interesting... so many things to find out."

"Blanche, you seem excited about this."

"Well, aside the fact that it would trigger a war between Alphas... it is quite exciting to find out how it works... and even entertaining!" Blanche is having fun while I am eating my nails.

"Blanche, you are not taking this seriously."

"It will be alright, young one. You fear not! Blanche is on your side... go shopping and have fun with the girls... I will use my magic, besides of the camaras' recordings to find out who ate the problematic dessert." Thank Goddess Blanche convinced me to buy camaras for our safety.

"I have already promised it to Monique and Lorraine; otherwise, I would stay here to help you review the tapes." Magic and technology help each other according to Blanche. A witch is a

daughter of nature. And Blanche says that nature speaks science while technology is science's first born, so they help each other.

Blanche has funny ways to explain things. In short, she loves science and technology. I still remember her explaining that she enjoyed more "dessert".

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"Come on! It will be alright. I just do not like to leave your side... those Dark River bitches might be around. At least I am at ease that there so many guards checking on you, besides of that scary beta." Sophie is not the typical beta female who are usually calmed and collected.



"I will be more helpful if I manage this little crisis here. Neither of us want a war between those two... To feel better, I will place a tracking spell on you, which is always a fun thing to do, you know... to link my magic to my technology devices..." She means her cellphone. "If I finish fast, I might be able to join your happy group."

"Please, keep me informed! I am worried about the side effect that poison might have on others..."

"Not poison! A potion... anyways, if we keep this new tradition of no kisses to save all the sweetness for the new couple, and no one chants the spell... everyone will be alright."

"Yet, you cannot be careful enough."

"Talking about being careful. You better tell the guys that they should not enter your office without your permission and even less took something yours to share with others."

My pack members call me boss instead of Luna, but beyond that we are friends, almost family. I do not want to command or order them around.

"It was just food. We always share food... who would have thought that stupid Mason was going to do something like that." I remember I asked Josh to be careful with Paige, and here I am in this



kind of problem due to a freaking dessert. It feels like I brought it on myself.

"Freaking Mason!" lanthe has the best remarks.
Why should I blame myself or the poor dessert?
Mason is the one who tried to trick me despite of asking forgiveness. I did not fully trust him, but I would have ever guessed this kind of lame attempt.

"Young one... things are changing. You are Luna not only of Moonlight pack in the hiding, but also Silver Rain, which is a larger pack with their own traditions and even enemies. You need to be more careful about everything including who you allow to enter your office." I knew it already but now that she says it that way, it gets more real.

My life will change a lot after my mating ceremony with Josh, probably even sooner than that.

Before leaving to the mall with Monique, Lorraine, and Sophie, I had to remind everyone about our new tradition. No kisses until a mating ceremony for good luck. It sounds so ridiculous even to my ears! And what is even more ridiculous is that I would have to ask the same for my ceremony with Josh. Just to be coherent, right?



"No mating in my office!" I left one last warning for Brady and Carter. I am a werewolf; I cannot be fooled about scents even if they use Miss witchy products. The best brand of cleaning products made by witches. Brady blushed but Carter grinned... Males!

Shopping is something I do not enjoy in general.

Regardless, my friends are having fun the time out looking at stores.

Sophie wanted a dress while acting as my undercover guard at the mall. Marcus stayed at Moon House as per her nice request for our dress hunt.

There also guards watching from the distance over our every step wherever we go, well wherever I go. It feels wrong. I agreed to it, and I know it is to be safe, but I do not like it. A lot of eyes on my back.

"Luna! Look this dress it is so pretty. You would look great on it!" Sophie pointed at the window of a store of a famous fashion designer where a red dress was in exhibition. I should insist on her to not call me Luna, but my name.

"I do not think so... Not my style." Without disregarding the hard work and effort of the



designer and tailor, I am not crazy enough about any dress here to expend my well-earned money.

In this kind of store, their cheapest dress would easily cost one month of salary.

Sophie is wealthy enough to buy more than one of these dresses. It is understandable considering she is the future second in command of a pack that has the first place in the ranking of werewolves' packs.

"Let's check inside, there might be something nice for us." Said Sophie excited about the store and the new things for this season. We followed her inside.

Lorraine and Monique already have their dresses.

And I am so glad that Monique who is in love with shining things has hers; otherwise, she might take my poor credit card to its limit.

Beautiful expensive dresses and accessories everywhere and for every kind of high rank event, I just did not feel any of them would be something I would wear.

They got entertained trying different outfits and accessories and even received "mimosas", which is a drink of champagne with orange juice. They were enjoying themselves helping Sophie to



choose, modelling as well. The saleswoman assigned to our group was happy with Sophie's purchases, and kept her entertained with new accessories and clothes.

I was offered a mimosa too but since a new crisis came from a silly dessert that I should not have even accepted in the first place; I cannot accept this beverage even if I want to. Stupid Mason!

Every time I remember what he did, I want to slap him again.

My phone ringed, it was Blanche. Since the girls are close and they are werewolves with excellent hearing skills, I decided to take the call somewhere else. So, I left my jacket on a changing room and then masked my scent and sneak out of the store.

There are guards watching me from the shadows, I am not breaking any promise. I am safe.

I answered Blanche while walking away from the store to prevent one of them to hear me.

"Blanche! Please, give me good news."

"There are good news and potential bad news.

About good news... I found out four guards had chocolate pudding, besides of Sophie, you, and Tank."



"Well, that means good news because everyone except Tank is mated. We can monitor Tank, and everything will be fine."

"About the bad news. Checking the camaras...

Tank ate cheesecake, she had the chocolate

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pudding in her hands one moment but then what she ate was another thing. I kept track of her since I thought that maybe she saved it for later, but she might have given it to someone else because I could not see anything more in the video... so I asked her directly... I am sorry but I just did."

Blanche!



"Blanche, the suspense is killing me... who had it?"

"Lorraine... Tank says that she saved it for Lorraine.
"Said Blanche. Good, I am with Lorraine. She does not look any different. It is more likely that we all are safe. Yet, we need to focus mostly on Lorraine.

"So far, she is not anxious, there is no evident symptom of anxiety considering what Mason told us about his experience. Besides, we are less than twenty-four hours away for the effects to expire." I told Blanche.

"I am on my way to the mall to keep an eye on her. See you in a bit."

I feel better now. Lorraine looks fine, Dominique might be her mate so that even if she ate the dessert with the love potion, things would go well without much effort. Besides, she is with Sophie and Monique now trying dresses, they will be fine... Maybe those five drops mean nothing at the end. I can breathe in some peace.

Since I kept walking during my call with Blanche, I found myself away from the store where the girls are. I was standing in front of at a small boutique where the mannequins were in weird positions that were catchy to the eye. Is it a mannequin party? It was interesting. Above all, the clothes

Chapter 45: Freaking dessert looked nice.



Those dresses were more of my taste. Nice cut, simple, yet elegant and very much more my style. I am not tall, my breast is small, and I have wide hips... not the perfect shewolf body to any extend. Thus, I value more a design that favors me over a brand.

Again, I felt eyes on my back that made me feel uncomfortable. A cold unpleasant shiver run down my spine. I do not like being watched. Probably, those are just the guards moving since I left Sophie and the others more than a couple of stores behind.

A young female came out of the store inviting me inside her boutique. While debating with lanthe about her invitation, her demeanor changed to a big sudden smile and before I could turn two large hands covered my eyes from behind me.

I recognized him by the smell, but I had to play dumb. I am supposed to be a human, humans do not have this kind of skill.

"Who is this?" I asked. Even tough, I knew already.

He could not answer. I was pulled by Sophie away from him. He was so surprised that allowed three werewolves to throw him to the floor and pin him



"What da fu..." He was about to say.

"No! Dear Moon Goddess! I know him! He is my friend, please release him." I yelled.

Luca is a lycan, and three gamma guards would not harm him. However, this is not right, he did nothing wrong.

"Are you sure Luna?" Asked Sophie who tried to shield me from Luca. The lycan was still laying on the floor, unamused by the situation.

"Yes, he is Luca! My friend. Let go of him!"

Everyone moved at my command, including

Sophie. I offered Luca my hand to stand up, which
he took still unsure of what just happened.

"Princess, since when do you have bodyguards?"
He asked looking at the werewolves surrounding
him with a frown in their faces.

"She is not 'Princess'. Claire is our Luna.... Silver Rain's pack future Luna." Said Sophie wary about the lycan in front of her. I had to move from behind her to talk to Luca. She is taller than me. Most werewolves are taller than me, she is just trying to protect me. I am not mad at her.

"Is it true, Claire? You are a werewolf's mate?" He

Chapter 45: Freaking dessert asked in disbelieve.



"Yes... I found out a few days ago. I have not even told the Blue-Ribbon pups yet. A lot happened recently." He knows how close to my heart are those pups.

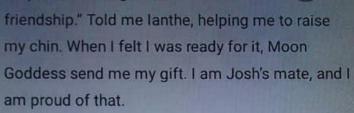
"I just left for a short trip outside town and I come to find out my princess has a mate... Damn, am I not unlucky?" Luca then lowered his gaze to my hand where the engagement ring was shining for everyone's view.

"Luca..." I should not feel bad for him, still I do. It is like I am hurting him somehow. We are friends, and we only had one date, one kiss and that was all... He knows it.

Probably, he realized that there was nothing to be upset neither to be sad about, because he smiled at me without any other remark. Yet, it was a smile that did not reach his eyes.

I think I am blushing; I should not blush, but Luca helped me with Mason's situation when that stupid arrived at this town. I was wrong when I accepted his help to take me home just to annoy Mason. I should have been clearer about my feelings, that way I would feel less "guilty."

"You never lie neither offer him anything else but



"I saw you walking around stores and I just wanted to surprise you...." He told me cleaning the dust from his clothes. "Turns out, I am the one who ended up surprised."

"I am sorry my guys kind of attacked you here."
There were others staring at us and gossiping.
Probably someone might even report us to the security guards.

"Sorry guys, I did not mean to disrespect your pack or your Alpha... Claire here is just my friend." He said to the guards and Sophie who was still suspicious about him.

"I should have called you. I am sorry... but we will see each other around, right? I will see you tomorrow at Brady's ceremony, right?"

"Yes, of course. We all were friends before your mate found you. Joshua Duncan, young Alpha of Silver Rain pack is your mate, right?" Silver Rain is kind of famous.

"Yes. Josh is my soulmate." I told him. It might be weird, but the mention of his name made me

Chapter 45: Freaking dessert happier.



"Princess, he'd better take good care of you.

Otherwise, many of us would beat his ass if he does not." I smiled at him sensing the humor in his voice.

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"Specially me. Werewolf or not, I can do that by myself." Luca laughed at my response.

"Well, princess. I hope you save one dance for me at the party after the ceremony."

"That is not possible... you cannot touch our Luna." Said Sophie again, and the guards changed their



stance to look intimidating. Werewolf customs.

"You guys have committed a felony in neutral territory, attacking a resident... me... and all I ask as compensation for this, it is just one dance with my friend. Come on!"

"Stop teasing them Luca. It is alright to dance with you... Just one dance and nothing slow because you suck at dancing." I joked with him. He laughed like he usually does.

Monique arrived and greeted him happily, Lorraine is not close to him like the rest of the group, but she knows him, too. He is our friend, not just mine.

Blanche showed up then. She greeted everyone and gave me the impression that she wanted to ask something to Luca. Maybe, related to Leon. Yet, she did not. He just left promising to save a dance for each one of us.

"Do not inform Josh about this incident. I will tell him myself... Thank you." I said and turned to enter the store which window I was admiring before the scene with Luca and the guards. The others followed me this time.

"Dear client, welcome to our boutique." A young woman approached me inviting me in. She was human, so I agreed. I do not understand why but I



sensed the shadows moving, probably my guards.
This time they waited outside.

"Hi! I am looking for a dress... I will attend a mating ceremony, a werewolf mating ceremony.

Do you have something for me?"

"Oh yes! We are a group of young designers of different species! I would love to show you our babies!" The young woman was nice. This was a start-up where you could bring back the clothes purchased when they got old and receive a discount in a new purchase. They reuse the fabric!

Blanche and I bought our dresses. Sophie offered to pay on behalf of Josh, which I refuse. She frowned. I am not doing anything right in her book.

Sophie was unhappy about how I managed the situation with Luca, and her mate probably will not be either. I know I am not marked yet, but Luca is just a friend. He would not harm me, ever. And I can take care of myself.

"We were wrong about Mason. He lied to us, he wanted to trick us." lanthe and I have internal conversations like this.

"Yes... but it will be just one dance with Lucan. He is someone better than Mason."



"I do not want to dance with him. I want my mate." She whined. Josh... I would like to dance with him instead of anyone else, too.

"I know! I miss Josh too... However, Luca is a better option that Mason. Remember that he is Carter's best man. We will be asked to dance with him, at least once as per tradition. This mating ceremony will follow more protocols and traditions than Angel's."

"You are right. But I can use the chance to hit Mason's jewels with a knee." lanthe's plan sounds nice, he will not expect it and then, bump... the loss of a generation.

"Wait, no! It also means that he would get to touch me to dance. So, no... think on something else. I cannot stand him." However, we are obliged to comply with social interactions as pack leaders. The higher the rank, the tighter and contradictory their protocols become.

I guess this is my life from now on. Guards around me watching my every move. Besides of being careful about werewolves' protocols to manage different situations and comply with the etiquette that high rank wolves must follow... Everything feels so restrictive now.



During my time living under the protection of Luna Michelle, she trained me about laws for packs, etiquette, protocols, pack house management and training to defend myself developing my insipient skills. And I enjoyed the structure of it, it did not feel restraining. Yet, after my time here... it does.

I really need some time to adjust to this new life that I will start with Josh. I love him and I am aware of my responsibilities and privileges as his mate and future Luna of the famous and powerful Silver Rain pack, but there are such a joy living a simple life that only a few would understand and appreciate. Including myself in those few, I will miss my time here.

My phone rang taking me out of my thoughts, we were heading back to Moon House. I did not know the number.

"May I speak with Miss Claire Bond?" Asked a female by the phone.

"Yes, Claire speaking."

"I am Marie, and I am calling from Clinic Vesparo.

You are registered as legal guardian of Amelie..."

"What? What happened with my sister?" Lorraine jumped from her seat trying to hear what I was told, but instead kept me from hearing what Marie



was saying with her screams. Monique had to held her.

"Amelie's condition is getting worse by the hour; she is having anxiety attacks. We need your confirmation to administer her sedatives." Dear Moon Goddess, please it cannot be true.

"No! Do not let them do that, I have to check her first..." Said Blanche and Sophie changed the road abruptly to take us to the Clinic. Amelie is very special; she is not exactly human neither can be considered as werewolf despite her birth.

"I am on my way with her sister, please hold it until we arrive... We should be there in ten or less."

"Please, hurry up."

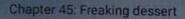
"Lorraine, did you give your sister something unusual recently..." I asked her when the call ended. Lorraine was sobbing, blaming herself.

"She was feeling better and about to be released from the Clinic..."

"What did you give her?" I asked again.

"My poor Amelie... she was tired of food at the Clinic..."

"Lorraine, what did you give her!? We need to know!" Yelled Blanche at Lorraine.



"She was fine when I left her..." Said Lorraine between tears. Sophie sped up without considering red lights. I am so grateful to her right now.

"Tell us. We are going to help her but tell us." I asked once again. Although, I think we already know. Blanche was already looking for something inside of her big purse.

"Chocolate pudding..."



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