SECOND CHANCE LUNA

Chapter 21

"000, how about this!" Lucille said, pulling out a short black dress with a lacepatterned bodice.

"...Um...I don't think so," Phoebe shook her head. She had never worn anything so revealing and was rather self-conscious about her body.

"Oh for Goddess's sake, Lucy," Norah sighed, "stop picking out things for yourself. We're shopping for Phoebe."

"Well, it would help if you told us about your style."

"I really don't have one," Phoebe said. "Cheap?"

They had already shopped for Blake and Emma, who were all too happy to grab whatever they liked. Norah insisted on not only buying

them clothes, but toys and games as well. Now, it was Bridget and Phoebe's turn and it was slow-going. Both were hampered by their

previous experiences of watching expenses.

"You'll look pretty in this one, mommy!" Emma declared, tugging at a pretty yellow sundress. She was all too happy to call Phoebe mommy

and was quickly warming up to their new adoptive family.

"Oh yes, she definitely will," Norah agreed, taking out the size she believed would fit Phoebe best.

It was a pretty dress that wouldnt be too revealing as it reached as far as her knees. Norah handed it to the clerk to take to the fitting

rooms as they continued to peruse. Once they had a decent pile, they had Phoebe and Bridget model before making final selections.

Bridget found this particularly embarrassing with Noah among the security team, while Phoebe was simply self-conscious.

This process continued from one store to the next, but they were making progress. Phoebe cringed at the totals rung up, but neither Norah

nor Lucille batted an eye as they swiped their black cards through and continued on. Around noon, they took a break and ate at the food

court, where the pups marveled at the sheer variety available. Phoebe remained pensive.

"Phoebe dear, don't worry about it," Norah insisted.

"But the money..."

"It's all right. As Luna, you receive an annual stipend," Norah said. "All authority members of the pack do, even Lucille, who technically only

holds Gamma rank. You can hardly expect to receive less."

Phoebe frowned.

"So how exactly does it work?" Bridget asked. "At our old pack we had our own accounts. Our pay was added automatically at the end of

every month."

"The same," Norah nodded. "You'll be added to the pack's accounts and given a card. The card you'll be issued will be determined by

status, which also determines its limit. Non-professional pack members receive a blue card, professional pack members like doctors and the

like have gold cards and pack authority members have black cards. Black cards have no limits. Bridget, you'll be issued a gold card with a

limit approaching that of a black card, considering the patent. You'll receive full credit as its creator and a share of the profits."

"Really?"

"Of course," Norah said. "Blue Moon is very fair in that sort of thing."

"And you are sure this trip won't strain finances?" Phoebe asked.

"Believe me, Blue Moon could fund a hundred of these shopping sprees and not worry about it. It's fine," Norah patted her hand. "It's a

matter of pride for a pack to care for their Luna. Don't insult them by refusing."

"Right," Phoebe sighed, still hesitant.

"Now eat. Jason will throw a fit if we don't make sure you eat. You are too thin."

Phoebe blushed, but focused on her cannoli. She certainly didn't want any of them in trouble and she was hungry. More importantly, she

Follow on NovelEnglish.net didn't want to be wasteful in front of the children.

After lunch, they proceeded to more stores, these catering to evening gowns and formal wear. Luna Ceremonies were the pride of every

pack, in some cases even more important than the Alpha Succession Ceremony. Norah was certain this one would be even more highly

anticipated given how long the pack had waited for their Luna. She wanted it to be perfect for Jason, Phoebe and the pack.

Traditionally, lunas wore white or silver. As it was almost like a human marriage ceremony, some lunas wore a wedding dress. This was a new

era for Blue Moon. Norah wanted it to be extra special.

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"000, Grandma Norah, how about this one!" Emma said.

Emma's pick was a shimmering, silver gown with a cowl-style neckline that would lie beautifully across Phoebe's neck and chest. Norah

smiled at the pup, "This is the one. Let's get her to try it on."

"Yeah!"

Emma dragged Phoebe to the fitting room where Norah waited. She shoved the escorts away, insisting no one could see Phoebe in her

gown before the ceremony. Ushering Phoebe into the room, Norah, Lucille, Bridget and the pups waited, holding their breaths as Phoebe

finally stepped out, blushing.

"Wow!" Lucille said. "You look fine, girl!"

Phoebe's blush deepened.

"This is the one," Norah decided. "This is the dress."

"Jace is going to lose it," Lucille giggled, picturing the stunned look that was sure to grace her brothers face.

Norah took charge of the dress, paying for it and carrying it herself insisting no one else touch it. Luckily, it was the last of their purchases

and the group was ready to head home. They were almost to the door when Lucille suddenly grabbed Phoebe and Bridget, pulling them

into one last store.

"Lucy!" Norah admonished.

"We'll catch up!"

"Come on, pups," Norah shook her head, herding the pups onward and forcing their escort to split.

"Gamma, are we not following?" Noah asked as Ben took a stand by the door.

"One thing I've learned about mates...never bother them when they shop for underwear

"What?" Noah blinked before looking up at the sign above the door: Victoria's Secret. A deep blush colored his cheeks and he looked to

see the other warriors snickering. "Hey, turn around. Backs to the store!"

"Here we are! Ooo, this one's good. How about it, Phoebe?" Lucille asked, holding up a red négligée.

Phoebe's cheeks turned the same color as the lingerie.

"Or not?"

"I c-can't wear that!" Phoebe shook her head. She turned to see Bridget holding up a black teddy with a thoughtful expression. "Bridget?"

"I just thought it might be fun."

"That's the attitude," Lucille insisted. "Sometimes you need to spice it up."

Phoebe's blush persisted.

"Look, you don't need to tell me what you and my brother do behind closed doors. I sooo don't need to know that. But at what stage are

you with him? You have kissed, right?"

Phoebe nodded.

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"Nibbling? A little heavy petting, maybe?"

Phoebe hid her face.

"Fair enough. Well, my advice, trust your instincts."

"My instincts?"

"Yeah. We have incredible s*x drives, but it's tempered by our wolves' desire for their mates. As much as they complain if we don't wait for

our fated mate, I don't know anyone more obsessed with s****| pleasure than my wolf, so pay attention to yours."

Phoebe didn't answer, but it was food for thought. Mani had been getting more active since they found their second chance mate and

making all sorts of suggestions she wouldn't dare repeat.

"Now let's find something that will give my brother a heart attack."

Jason stared at the paperwork in front of him, not really seeing it. He had patrolled the area of the breach, checked the territorial markings

and conferred with the patrols. Satisfied with the countermeasures Ben implemented, he returned to his office to review any pending

requests, but his mind kept drifting.

"Earth to Jason? Hey! Jace!"

Jason snapped to attention, glancing at Luke who had been at his side catching up, "Sorry."

"Nah, it's fine," Luke sat in one of the chairs across from him. "It's to be expected. I took two weeks off after met Mona, remember?"

Jason nodded. It was bad enough he missed several weeks due to the security tour. He couldn't afford to fall behind in his paperwork

anymore, no matter how much he wanted to curl up in bed with Phoebe and stay there.

Lobo whined in agreement.

"Well that was fun," Ben announced as he entered without knocking. He joined them, slumping in the other chair. "Lucy was in fine form."

"She does like to shop," Luke chuckled.

Mona had declined the offer to join them, preferring to stay busy with her own work. Prior to joining Blue Moon, she had gone to school for

psychology and was currently leading a study on rogues, why they went feral and what motivated them to attack. Given the rise in attacks, it

was important work.

"I think they got everything though. Your mother found Phoebe's Luna dress and wouldn't let anyone else near it. Lucy decided at the last

minute to peruse Victoria's Secret. Don't know what they bought, but they all came out with a couple bags each."

"Really?" Jason raised an eyebrow.

Luke chuckled at Jason's piqued interest. He had to admit, any time Mona brought home such bags he was eager for her to reveal what she

bought after dinner.

"There you are!" Lucille entered without knocking. She sat in Ben's lap and smiled at her brother warily eying her.

"This is my office, not a lounge."

"Yes sir, Mister Big Tuff Alpha," Lucille rolled her eyes. "just thought you'd like to know your Luna is back safe and sound and as innocent

as ever despite my attempts to corrupt her."

Jason growled.

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"Oh would you relax!" Lucille laughed. "I'm happy for you Jace! Phoebe is wonderful! She's kind, smart, charming and has a wicked sense of

humor. You should have seen her with the pups today. It was so sweet. It took them all of two seconds to call her mommy."

Jason's eyes, which had been swirling amber, darkened as he smiled at the image of Phoebe with the pups.

"Well, it's to be expected. She's been taking care of those pups for a couple of years now. Blake's old enough to have some memories of

their parents, but I doubt Emma has any," Luke said.

"Why didn't Phoebe adopt them before now?" Lucille asked. "During the whole shopping trip she was concerned about money. If she

adopted the pups, her old pack would have offered assistance in raising them."

"She tried. Rimrock's Alpha denied her application," Luke said.

"Why would he do that?" Lucille scoffed.

Luke glanced as Jason before answering, "Well, he was her first mate."

"The one who rejected her?" Lucille asked, earning another growl from Jason.

"Easy man," Luke said. "There's no sense in keeping it from her."

"Damn. Mated twice, alphas both. That's got to be a record."

Jason glared at her.

"Okay sorry. 'm done," Lucille threw up her hands. "But why would he deny the adoption application because of that?"

"Best guess...either he wanted to make sure Phoebe was miserable and alone, or he was jealous of the pups getting all her attention and

love," Luke shrugged.

"So he's a narcissist," Lucille rolled her eyes. "Poor Phoebe. So what's going to happen with Rimrock now?"

"Who knows? It's not really our problem," Luke said. "Now that Phoebe has her second chance mate and left, hopefully Rimrock's Alpha will

focus on his pack."

Jason remained silent, but pensive. That was the best case scenario, but he didn't expect it to be easy given how many years Rimrock's

Alpha neglected his duties. Regardless of what happened, Phoebe was safe at Blue Moon. He would ensure her health and happiness from

now on.

"Yes, Mate stay with us!"

"Oh, mom wanted me to tell you," Lucille said, "we'll be having a welcome party tonight for Phoebe, Bridget and the pups so they can meet

the pack and officially join it."

"That's a little soon," Luke frowned. "Do we really have to rush?"

"Well, the next full moon is only a couple of weeks away and it's a blue moon. It's the perfect setting for her Luna Ceremony, so mom wants

everything done before that. This is going to be an important night for the entire pack."

Jason nodded. They had waited so long for their Luna. His mother wanted to make sure it was special. Luna Ceremonies always happened

on nights of a full moon so that the pairing could be blessed by the Moon Goddess, but a blue moon would be considered a special

blessing from the Goddess.

"You know what officially joining the pack means," Luke warned.

Jason frowned. Since none of the new pack members had a blood relative among the Blue Moon members, it meant a blood oath, which

meant their blood had to mix with his own. It wasn't going to be pleasant for them, especially the pups. No doubt his mother was already

preparing them as best as she could.

Chapter 22

Phoebe sighed as she looked at the closet. Her side was still quite thin compared to Jason's, but it was more than she ever imagined. By the

time they returned, the omegas had already unpacked her luggage. They also helped to carry in and put away her purchases from today's

shopping trip. There was only one bag she wouldn't let them touch, and that was the Q Victoria's. Secret bag still in her hand.

Biting her lip, she tucked it beside the dresser where it was out of the way and hopefully out of sight. Stepping out of the closet, she

suddenly found herself enveloped in an embrace. The scent of dogwood and campfire surrounded her as he leaned down to nibble her ear.

"Jason."

"Did you have a good time, angel?"

"Yes. I love your mother and sister."

Lo . Sitting with his back against the headboard, he held her in his lap as he nuzzled

her, kissing the nape of her neck and inhaling her earthy scent.

"Jason."

"Sorry angel, but Lobo needs this." Jason continued to tease and kiss her.

"Lobo?"

Jason suddenly pulled away at the mention of his wolf's name. Phoebe looked at him curiously. Finally, he said, "My wolf."

Her eyes widened and shimmered silver, "Oh, your wolf's name is Lobo... Mine is Mani."

Lobo immediately chanted his mate's name. Jason smiled, playing with her hair, "Mani. Beautiful. Just like you."

Phoebe shivered when he said her wolf's name and in her mind Mani rolled belly up in sheer pleasure of hearing her name pronounced in

his deep baritone voice. In many ways, sharing the name of one's wolf was the ultimate form of intimacy. Almost Q Jike.a dragon or a fairy

sharing its true name. Though sharing their wolf's name didn't have quite the same power as that, it was still a deep sign of trust.

He kissed her, deepening it when she offered no resistance. Hungrily, he trailed kisses down her neck, finding her marking spot and sucking

hard on the sensitive area. Phoebe moaned as shocks of pleasure went through her and her core tightened unexpectedly.

When his teeth grazed the sensitive area, she let out a startled gasp as pleasure pierced her, causing her core to contract. Her vision turned

white as her body convulsed and pure bliss flooded her.

Jason suddenly pulled away, leaving her panting, "s**t. 'm sorry, Phoebe. I'm so sorry, angel. I didn't mean to scare you."

Phoebe slowly caught her breath, looking at him curiously. Why was he apologizing?

"Oh, he's so cute," Mani chuckled. 'He thinks we're afraid. Do be a dear and let him know we enjoyed it."

"How?*

Follow on NovelEnglish.net "Just do to him what he was doing to us." "I don't think I can," Phoebe felt her face warm.

"Sure you can. I'll help."

Phoebe hesitated, recalling her conversation with Lucille. Is this what she meant by trusting her instincts? 'All right.'

Phoebe felt Mani pressing forward, synchronizing with her as she calmed Phoebe's anxiety and encouraged her. Taking Jason's face in her

hands, she pressed her lips to his, kissing him and silenced his panicked apology. She kissed along his jaw and down his neck, eliciting deep

groans as he relaxed, enjoying the electric charges her touch caused.

"Right there," Mani instructed, 'where his neck meets his shoulder. That's the marking spot and it'll drive him crazy.'

Phoebe hesitated before lowering her mouth over the spot, following Méni's instruction. She ran her tongue along the skin, sucking hard

and felt Jason suddenly tense with a moan. He shuddered as her teeth grazed the spot. She nuzzled him, nipping his ear before slowly

easing away.

His eyes swirled as he stared into her silver-gray ones.

"Did you like what 1 just did?" Phoebe asked.

He swallowed hard, not trusting his voice, but managed a nod.

"Good. Because I liked it too."

He blinked and realized what she was saying. A smile made his eyes sparkle with amusement, "So...that's the wicked humor my sister talked

about."

"Wicked?"

He rolled them so she was lying under him before capturing her mouth in a passionate kiss. Her fingers curled themselves in his hair,

sending sparks directly to his brain. He caressed her thigh, tugging her close and grinding their hips together. She moaned as her scent took

on a spicy note, driving him crazy with hunger and his pants became uncomfortably tight. He wanted nothing more than to rip away the

barriers between them.

Jason pulled away, forcing a deep breath and trying to marshal his control before he truly went too far. She was just too irresistible. Under

him, Phoebe struggled to catch her own breath.

"You play a dangerous game, angel."

"Do I?" she asked innocently.

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He growled. His eyes swirled. Hers shimmered in response. Jason kissed her nose and she snorted a laugh. Jason chuckled and nibbled her

ear.

"My mom's planning a party tonight to welcome you, the pups and Bridget to the pack. I'll make you all members. You'll also join the pack

link, s0 you will be able to mindlink anyone you need to talk to. I'm sure they will be clamoring to meet you once I officially introduce you

as my Luna."

"That sounds nice." Though she was still hesitant to be Luna, Phoebe liked the thought of being part of a pack link again. Jason hesitated, "Since none of you have blood relatives in Blue Moon, you'll have to take a blood oath."

"Blood oath?"

"You have to swear loyalty to the pack and me as Alpha, and we seal the oath with blood," Jason said.

He traced a line down her palm, watching her reaction. Blood oaths were no longer common. Most packs made do with simple loyalty oaths

and opened the pack link to new members psychically. The bond was not quite the same and relied on the mate bond to tether it. Older

packs like Blue Moon required a more substantial bond to join pack members.

"The pups too?"

"Yeah. It II only take a moment and we'll have bandages and salve on hand," Jason explained. "But it will also seal my connection and bond

to them, so it might be beneficial in the long run."

Phoebe was pensive. She didn't want the pups to suffer any pain, but it seemed Jason was already making preparations to ensure their

comfort as much as possible. Given Blue Moon's long lineage and bloodline, it was not surprising it employed blood oaths.

"All right," Phoebe nodded.

"Thank you, angel," Jason nuzzled her.

They lay together for some time, enjoying each other's nearness and lingering kisses. Jason didn't seem to be in any hurry to get back to

his work, but Phoebe didn't mind. Every kiss and caress caused her body to tremble with pleasure she had never experienced before and

she wanted more. In truth, Jason was under strict orders to keep Phoebe occupied while the final preparations for the party were completed.

He and his wolf had no objections to this arrangement, but eventually the time to join everyone approached. Reluctantly, he retreated to the

bathroom for a quick shower before relinquishing it to Phoebe. When she emerged wrapped in a towel, he was already dressed in a black

silk button-up and trousers.

Phoebe stared at her new wardrobe, asking, "What do you think I should wear? I mean, is it formal?"

"Casual is fine," Jason chuckled, hugging her from behind. He bowed his head to kiss her neck and nibble her ear to ensure his scent

wrapped around her again. Phoebe moaned softly, leaning against him, and he was tempted to take her back to bed, but this party was

Follow on Novel-Online.com important for the pack.

With a sigh, he looked over her side of the closet. Even after today's shopping spree it was barely a third full, but there was plenty of time to

spoil her.

"Anything will be fine...especially if you wear something from that."

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"From what?" Phoebe asked before noticing his attention was on the Victoria's Secret bag. She blushed deep red.

"Is that a no?" he asked, not bothering to hide his disappointment.

"Jason..."

He kissed her with a chuckle and said, "It gets cold after dark...so make sure to pick something warm."

"All right."

Phoebe eventually settled for black, thermal-lined leggings and a gray turtleneck. She stepped out of the closet and looked at her reflection

self-consciously. Jason embraced her again, kissing her temple and admiring her modest yet tantalizing look. In truth, she could wear

anything and be just as tempting.

Leaving their suite, they quietly made their way downstairs. Phoebe made it to the first landing before she hesitated at the pain of the

stitches. Without a word, Jason scooped her up and carried her.

"Jason! I can walk."

"know. It's better this way."

Phoebe laughed, wrapping her arms around his neck and nuzzling him. Jason growled with pleasure.

Reaching the first floor, he carefully set her on her feet and led her to the patio hand-in-hand. Phoebe hesitated at the sliding doors looking

out into the evening where over five hundred pack members were gathered. More would arrive as the evening progressed. No doubt

attendees were deliberately spacing their arrivals so she wouldn't be overwhelmed, but Blue Moon was such a large pack. She wasn't sure

she could do this.

Jason hugged her, "They'll love you, angel. Promise."

Phoebe leaned into his comforting embrace.

"If you feel uncomfortable, we can just go...so be sure to tell me. Okay?"

"Okay."

"Good. Deep breath."

Phoebe sighed.

"...And here we go."

Chapter 23

Jason slid the door open and stepped out. The pack fell silent as their Alpha made his appearance. They sensed an immediate change in

him. He had always been tense, disciplined and logical. At times, he was cold, but now there was a new relaxed feeling about him. His smile

was genuine, and for once it reached his eyes. Their Alpha was happy, truly happy. in a way only one's fated mate could make them.

"Everyone, we're here tonight to welcome four new pack members. I'm sure you've heard rumors and snuck glances whenever you could,

but let me introduce them properly. First and foremost: my mate and Luna, Phoebe."

~

Jason reached into the doorway and drew Phoebe to his side. She blushed at his introduction. It was clear she was nervous. Even so, there

was a gentle aura around her, but also something else. Her bewitching silvergray eyes captivated them and they could just sense the

strength that belied her gentleness. There were layers to their Luna and they were all eager to know more.

Jason wrapped his arms around her waist and kissed her temple. Though she wasn't officially marked, there was no denying his devotion

and claim. She was his Luna, and theirs. Anvone who doubted it would regret it.

"I'd also like to introduce Bridget Johansen," Jason announced, nodding to where she stood in Noahs arms. The warrior bowed his head, kissing her and making it clear she was already claimed. "She will be joining our nursing staff and I can assure you her skills are second-to-

none. And finally, Blake and Emma."

Seated at a nearby table, the siblings froze mid-bite as all eyes suddenly shifted to them. The pair wore their new a_ clothes: matching

striped sweaters, Blake wore trousers and Emma a skirt with tights.

"Come here, you two," Jason gently beckoned.

They hesitated, but at Norah's encouragement, they stood and slowly made their way to their new Alpha. Giving Phoebe a final kiss, Jason

stepped down, crouching so he was at eye-level with the siblings. He fondly tussled Blake's hair as Luke approached with a dagger.

Emma whimpered at the sight of the gleaming blade. Jason hugged the nervous pup. He knew his mother had explained the proceedings,

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but it was one thing to be told what was going to happen and quite another for it to actually happen.

"Shh, little one," he whispered. "I promise it'll only be a little prick. Then it will be over. Everything will be okay."

Emma nodded, but still looked nervous.

"We'll have your brother go first, okay?" Jason gave her one more squeeze before accepting the blade and looking to Blake. "Ready?"

Blake was nervous, but nodded. He was the older brother and determined to be brave. Jason held out his hand, wishing there was another

way, but he had no other choice.

Blake placed his hand into Jason's much larger palm. Brandishing the blade, Jason pressed it gently into the pup's palm until it broke the

skin and a small cut appeared. Without a word, Jason turned the blade on himself, cutting his palm rather deep to ensure it would not heal

before he was finished, and pressed their wounds together.

"1, Jason Aiman, Alpha of the Blue Moon Pack, accept Blake Aiman as your Alpha...and father," he smiled as the pup's eyes widened.

«...1, Blake... Aiman, swear loyalty to the Blue Moon Pack and accept you, Jason Aiman, as my Alpha...and father."

Jason's smile broadened, ignoring the subtle gasps of surprise at the addition to the traditional oath. In all his time as Alpha, Jason had only

a passing interest in pups. They were his pack's future, so he ensured their security, but he never got personally involved with them. Now, he

was declaring these young orphans were his own.

Bridget and Norah stepped forward. They lathered healing salve over the cut before bandaging it. Norah hugged Blake, whispering good

job to him. She had been worried about the pups" initiation, but that went much smoother than she hoped, even more so since Jason

added the last clause.

"Your turn, sweetie," Jason smiled at the waiting Emma.

She still looked nervous, but seeing her brother's reaction gave her courage. Nodding, she gave him her hand. As gently as he could, he

repeated the procedure and pressed their palms together.

"1, Jason Aiman, Alpha of the Blue Moon Pack, accept you, Emma Aiman, as your Alpha and father."

She hesitated and seemed to forget what she was supposed to say. Her panicked gaze fell on Norah, who quietly mouthed the oath. Her

eyes lit up in remembrance and she stated, "I, Emma Aiman, swear loyalty to the Blue Moon Pack and accept you as my Alpha and daddy." Emma gave a squeak as her soul knit into the greater web of the pack. It would be several years before she or her brother would be able to

access it properly. For now, it was a protective blanket. Bridget and Norah quickly cleaned and bandaged her hand just as they had done for

her brother. Since the pups' wolves had not yet emerged, their healing abilities were repressed. The balm would help the wounds heal faster.

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Jason stood, looking at his own hand to see it was already beginning to heal. He had to finish quickly or else he would have to cut himself

again. Nodding to Bridget, she stepped forward. She offered her hand and winced as he cut it. Behind her, Noah growled and struggled not

to come to her aid.

"Bridget Johansen, I, Jason Aiman, accept you into the Blue Moon Pack as your Alpha."

"1, Bridget Johansen, swear loyalty to the Blue Moon Pack and accept you, Jason Aiman, as my Alpha."

She breathed deep as the pack link opened up to her and she received the others' welcome. Noah immediately came to her side and held

her close, nuzzling her as Norah bandaged her hand. It had taken everything he had not to rush forward when the blade was turned on her.

He felt her pain through their mate bond and his wolf demanded they protect her despite knowing she was not in any danger.

Smirking at his warrior's possessiveness, Jason returned to Phoebe, wishing there was any other way to complete this ritual. In the end, he

couldn't turn the blade on his own mate and Luke had to step forward. He cut her palm while Jason struggled to keep Lobo from ripping his Beta to shreds. Pressing their palms together, Jason pulled her close, pressing his forehead to hers.

"1, Jason Aiman, Alpha of the Blue Moon Pack, accept you, Phoebe Luan, as your Alpha, your mate and as my Luna."

Phoebe shivered, taking a deep breath, "1, Phoebe Luan-Aiman, swear loyalty to the Blue Moon Pack and accept you, Jason Aman, as my

Alpha...my mate and as your Luna."

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smiling, he kissed her forehead, savoring her words and feeling her soul knit into the packs collective link. She was one step closer to being

completely his. Bridget and Norah cautiously approached, quickly bandaging her hand and his though his wound was nearly healed.

"Mommy," Emma approached, "does this mean we are a real family now?"

Phoebe smiled, scooping up the pup and rubbing her nose, "Yes. Yes it does."

"Yeah!" Emma squealed, throwing her arms around Phoebe.

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Phoebe hugged her close, fighting back tears. After her rejection, she had resigned herself to never having pups of her own, so it had been

easy to devote herself to the other pups and, in particular, caring for the orphaned siblings. Second-chance mates were never guaranteed,

50 she hadn't considered the possibility and others warned her males didn't like caring for pups that weren't their own.

"Does that mean you're our new daddy?" Emma looked at Jason.

Jason's expression softened as he took both of them into his arms, "That's right."

Without hesitation, she reached for him and hugged him as he held them both close. The pack watched, holding its collective breath. This

was a new side of their Alpha they had not seen before. Already their Luna's presence was being felt as she softened their stern Alpha.

"Blake! We have a mommy and daddy again!" Emma announced, looking at her brother who stood nearby, hesitating to approach.

Jason beckoned the anxious pup to his side, picking up the young one and hugging him close. He felt Blake tremble in his arms, overcome

with emotion. For the pup who had always struggled to be the big brother, it was probably overwhelming. But he no longer had to be

strong on his own.

"You have much more than just a mom and dad," Norah corrected. "You have a grandma and an aunt and uncle too."

Emma bounced in Phoebe's arms, clapping her hands as Ben and Lucille hovered nearby. In fact, they had more than just one aunt and

uncle. Though Luke and Mona were not related, as the Beta pair as well as Jason's childhood friend, they would treat the pups as their niece

and nephew. Once the pups were comfortable again, they returned to their table to eat under Norah's watchful eye.

"You didn't have to do that," Phoebe quietly said as they watched the pups.

"I told you, angel," Jason held her close. "What's precious to you is precious to me."

Chapter 24

Jason chatted amicably with his pack members. Many asked him about his travels and what other packs were like, as well as the rise in

rogue attacks. He answered their questions and eased their concerns. Though there had been some incursions in their own territory, their warriors stopped them well before they caused any major damage. Jason patrolled their borders himself and assured them the rogues had

been driven out.

Several congratulated him on finding his Luna. Though he accepted their congratulations, he couldn't help but notice most did not

approach Phoebe. His gaze continually sought her out, watching as she conversed and laughed, but the only wolves who approached her

were ones she already knew: his mother, sister, Mona and Bridget. It worried him the pack was not integrating her. Phoebe had been so

isolated in her previous pack he didn't want that for her here.

The servers, however, seemed to be paying particular attention to their new Luna. Not only did several omegas approach her to thank her

for her care for Shannon, but they were also concerned she enjoyed her meal and that her needs were met. Their actions gave him hope she

would be fully accepted by the pack.

"Don't look so serious," Luke nudged him. "It's a party."

"I'm aware."

"What's the matter?" Luke asked. He followed Jason's gaze to Phoebe. She was laughing and blushing at something Lucille said. He could

only imagine what racy comment had just been made. "She looks happy. Is there a problem?"

"It's been an hour, no one else has tried to approach her," Jason muttered.

"Well you can hardly blame them," Luke chuckled. "She's surrounded by the Former Luna as well as the Beta and Gamma females. Not

many would approach so many high-ranking members at once."

Jason sipped his beer. Was that all there was to it? His brow furrowed in thought.

"Relax. The night's still young," Luke patted his shoulder. "So...you adopted two pups today."

Jason cleared his throat, "Well, they are living on the alpha floor and Phoebe and my mother adore them."

Luke chuckled, "Theres more to it than that. I saw you with them after the initiation. You looked like a proud papa."

Luke gave him a knowing smile. Jason had always been a good Alpha, but there had been distance and disconnect between him and the

other pack members. Part of it stemmed from the lack of a Luna as well as an uncertain future with no prospect of heirs. The pack trusted in

his strength and leadership, but they lacked true connection.

While alphas were often intense and difficult to approach, lunas were generally gentler and welcoming. Pack members often brought their

concerns to her first. Without a Luna, they sometimes sought Luke or Ben or, more rarely, Mona, Lucille and Norah. Now that Jason had

found his Luna, the disconnection he felt with his pack should naturally resolve itself.

While the adults conversed, the pups darted around them playing various games or stealing bits of food. The pack pups were naturally

curious about the newly initiated pair and welcomed them into their games. It seemed making friends was easier for younger pack

members than their elders.

As the pups chased each other, a young she-wolf tripped and fell, skinning her knee. Before anyone else could react, Phoebe scooped her

up and cuddled her. Carrying the pup to a table, she sat down cooing softly.

"Shh. Shh. It's okay sweetie."

Whether through the packlink or simply motherly instinct, an omega brought a damp washcloth. Phoebe accepted it with a smile.

"This might sting a little," she warned the pup before gently cleaning the injury.

The pup whimpered, but didn't cry out as it leaned into her, soothed by her gentle aura. Bridget still had the balm and extra bandages, so

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treating the skinned knee was a simple task. Phoebe cooed to the pup the entire time the nurse applied the salve and wrapped the knee.

"You are such a brave girl. There, all done. It doesn't hurt anymore, does it? Good. A brave little one like you deserves a reward."

Before Phoebe could mind link the servers, an omega brought a cookie for the pup, who seemed quite content with all the attention. They

shared a knowing smile while the pup enjoyed her treat.

"Lexi," a she-wolf emerged from the crowd, summoned by someone who recognized the pup. "What happened?"

"Mommy," the pup smiled with a mouth full of cookie, "look what Luna gave me for being brave."

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Phoebe smiled at the nervous mother, "We just took a little tumble, but she was very brave."

Standing, she handed the pup to the worried mother, who apologized, "I'm so sorry she bothered you, Luna."

"She was no bother at all," Phoebe shook her head, tickling the pup. "She's adorable and such a sweetheart."

"I think you're sweet too, Luna," Lexi declared.

"Thank you," Phoebe poked her nose.

The pup giggled.

Across the quad, Jason watched as his mate tenderly cared for, comforted and entertained the pup. She had not hesitated a moment to

scoop her up just as she had not hesitated to take in Blake and Emma. His chest swelled with pride.

"Mate is amazing!" Loho howled in his mind.

Jason couldn't agree more. He watched as Phoebe spoke with the mother, gleaning who knew what information. Phoebe had a comforting

presence that drew others in and they relaxed as they opened up to her.

Eventually, the pup fell asleep and the mother excused herself. After that, it was like a dam broke. Other pack members began to approach,

mostly other mothers. Some doubted the rumors swirling around since breakfast, but they couldn't deny what they witnessed with their

own eyes.

Jason watched, finally content as more pack members introduced themselves. Phoebe gave each of them attention as they asked about her

former pack and answered her questions about Blue Moon. Despite the growing number of admirers eager to converse with her, she didn't

seem overwhelmed or uncomfortable.

"See," Luke slapped his shoulder, "I told you."

Jason nodded. There was no denying Phoebe's natural charm. How her previous pack was able to ignore her was beyond his

comprehension. She was not a wolf meant to live anonymously or, as she put it: a nameless cog.

His gaze settled on his mate. Though her clothing choice was modest, it did nothing to hide her form, the soft swell of her breasts, the

gentle shape of her curves. His gaze traveled down her shapely legs as her musical laughter reached his ears.

"Do you mind not mentally undressing your mate in public?" Luke nudged him, startling him from his thoughts. "I can practically smell your

arousal."

Jason felt his face warm. He tried to marshal his wayward thoughts while his Beta chuckled at his discomfort.

"What's so funny?" Ben asked, joining them. As Gamma, he was generally more approachable than Alpha or Beta, though with a Luna now

in attendance, he would probably lose his edge.

"Our Alpha mentally stripping his Luna in public," Luke answered.

"Is that all?" Ben chuckled.

"Stop it." Jason warned, earning more snickers. He growled, but there wasn't much threat to it.

"Relax Jace," Luke tried to suppress his laughter. "It's completely natural."

Ben nodded agreement. The mate bond was not something one could fight, especially between fated mates. If the initial attraction was not

overwhelming enough on its own, the longer they were together the stronger the connection and urge to mark them became.

Jason was playing a dangerous game by holding himself back. Yet, they knew why he did. Phoebe had been rejected once. Because of that,

she did not trust the bond. He wanted to earn her trust rather than forcing the bond.

It was a stance Ben respected, but it also meant Jason was putting added pressure on himself to control his wolf and their natural urges. But

Jason would not force Phoebe to do anything she wasn't ready for.

Ben's gaze slid toward their Luna, watching her sip from the drink she had been given as she conversed with other pack members. Unmated

males were keeping their distance, less their actions were construed as a challenge to their Alpha's claim, but several she-wolves did

introduce their mates.

"Ah Jace, is Phoebe much of a drinker?" Ben asked.

"Phoebe? No, I don't think so. At least she didn't have anything in her cottage."

"Uh-oh."

"What?"

"Do you think anyone told her that is Aconite Beer?"

Jason jerked to attention and looked again at Phoebe, focusing on the container in her hand. A grow! burst from him, "Who the hell gave

her that?"

"Easy, easy," Luke patted his shoulder, hoping they wouldn't have to actually physically retrain him. "Take it easy."

"The aconite is less than a half percent," Ben reminded.

The aconite in the beer wouldn't cause any lasting damage. At most, it would quiet Phoebe's wolf, but it wouldn't fully suppress it.

Alcoholism itself was rare as their wolf spirits constrained self-destructive behaviors, which was the true danger of aconite beer as it

weakened the connection to their spirit. But Ben doubted that would be an issue for Phoebe. The only real danger was how she would react

to the alcohol itself. If she wasn't much of a drinker she probably had a low tolerance for its effects.

Jason's fur bristled as he fought Lobo for control. Someone had given their mate poison and he was ready to tear the pack apart to find out

who. Luke and Ben's words slowly reached him and Jason was able to maintain control. They breathed sighs of relief as he calmed. This

night was important for the pack to bond with their Luna and it wouldn't do any good for their Alpha to go on a rampage.

Phoebe moaned. Her head felt fuzzy. She felt weighed down, but at the same time it was as if she was floating. Strong arms supported her,

lifted her and carried her. A pleasant smell invaded her nose, making her entire body relax. Groggily, she opened her eyes to see a firm chin

softened by dark stubble. Raising her head, she saw the face near hers.

"Jason?"

"Feeling all right, angel?" he asked, looking at her with concern.

"Hmm. What time is it? What happened?"

"Late. You had a bit too much to drink."

"Did I?"

He clenched his jaw. Jason had counted at least five cans in her hand throughout the night. He hadn't interfered, not wanting to discourage

the pack from interacting with their Luna. What was more, she looked so happy. The entire night, Phoebe conversed and laughed with the

pack, something she never did with her former pack. Given her anxiety, it was good to see her unwind and relax.

He let it go too far when it became clear she was a little drunk. When she turned, seeking a chair, she stumbled. Jason was at her side

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immediately, picking her up. Though she had maintained well up to the point, she instantaneously fell asleep in his arms. The pack members

were concerned, but he assured them she simply had too much to drink. Now, he carried her up the stairs to their floor.

Her head fell back to his shoulder. Her arms curled around him, her face close to his neck. Softly, she muttered, "You smell good."

Jason shuddered with pleasure at her touch and blushed. Lobo pranced in his mind, exceptionally pleased. She nuzzled his neck and her

embrace tightened. Jason groaned as his skin almost felt electrified at her touch.

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Reaching the alpha floor, he quickly ensconced her into their private suite, wanting to avoid his mother who he knew was still up after

sending the pups to bed. Laying Phoebe down in their bed, Jason carefully took off her shoes then hesitated. She should really change into

pajamas so she could sleep comfortably.

"Phoebe," he smoothed her hair away from her face. "Phoebe angel, I need you to get up. Angel?"

She stirred, "I really like it when you call me that."

"You like it when I call you angel?"

"It makes me feel special."

Jason leaned close, kissing her forehead, "You are special, angel. won't let you forget it. Can you wake up and get ready for bed?"

She moaned, but fell back to sleep. Jason hesitated, not sure what he should do. He wanted her to rest comfortably, but he also didn't want

to undress her without permission. With a sigh, he eased back, but she suddenly reached for him and pulled him back. Surprised and

caught off balance, he nearly toppled on top of her. Jason caught himself, propping himself up on his elbows.

"Don't leave." Phoebe muttered a slight pleading tone in her voice.

"Shh. Jason nuzzled her. "I won't ever leave. I promise, angel."

She fell back to sleep, seemingly comforted. Slowly, he eased back and pushed himself off the bed. He stepped back, trying to get a hold of

himself. Her scent was intoxicating. Forcing himself away, he retreated to the bathroom and into the shower. He leaned his forehead against

the tile as the cold water fell on his heated skin. Lobo whimpered, pacing in his mind.

"Get back to Mate!"

Jason shook his head.

"Get back to Mate now! She needs us!"

"Not until we're in control," Jason insisted.

Lobo growled.

"I refuse to do anything without her consent and she's not in any condition to give it. Do you want her to hate us?"

Lobo whimpered and finally retreated.

Jason sighed, looking down at his stiff member. Groaning, he gripped it. His mind filled with images of Phoebe laughing and smiling. Her

scent was still thick in his nose as he increased his pace. It didn't take long to bring himself to his release. Jason groaned as he ejaculated

and let it wash down the drain before finally stepping out of the shower.

Drying himself, he pulled on a pair of sweats before returning to the bedroom. Phoebe had turned in her sleep, hugging his pillow where his scent was strongest. He smiled, recalling her confession on the stairs.

slipping into the bed, he eased himself next to her and pulled her into his embrace. Phoebe snuggled against him, breathing deep and

relaxing. Jason chuckled, gently caressing her. Lobo finally settled now that she was in their arms.

"Soon," Jason promised his wolf. 'We'll claim her soon."

"Yes! Mate ours!'

But he wouldn't until she was ready. He told her that her word was his law. An Alpha bowed to no wolf, but his Luna.

Chapter 25

Phoebe stirred, snuggling into the warm body beside her. The woodsie scent she loved surrounded her. Her fingers trailed through a mini

forest of soft hair, peppering a firm chest. The campfire scent became more pungent and was accompanied by the smell of roasted

marshmallows. It made her mouth water.

"Angel, unless we plan to finish...it is best to stop now," a husky voice intruded her half-wakeful state.

She blinked to find herself pressed against Jason's muscular torso. Her nose was inches from his neck where his scent was strongest. Face

turning red, she looked up to see Jason watching, his dark eyes swirling. He smiled, leaning toward her and kissed her longingly. Phoebe

moaned as he drew out the kiss, nipping her lip before invading her mouth.

Mani stirred, encouraging the waking urges. Jason groaned, breaking the kiss and catching his breath. Her scent took on the spicy note,

signaling her arousal. It made his mouth water and he hungered for more.

"Goddess angel, you smell so good," he said. "But if you're not ready, we definitely need to stop."

"...L..don't know."

"Shh. Shh." He ran his fingers through her hair, sensing her anxiety. "It's okay. We won't if you're not ready."

"Why are you so patient with me?"

"Because I love you, angel. And I want you to be happy and comfortable and safe." He rubbed noses with her as they both slowly came

down from their aroused states. When he felt her relax, he kissed her forehead. "I'll shower first. You rest."

She nodded and watched him retreat to the bathroom. Phoebe knew the distance was for their own good, but she longed to be near him.

What was going on with her?

"It's the bond," Mani said. 'It's natural to be attracted to your Mate."

"Yes, but..."

"He is the first male to ever show you consideration, so it's not any wonder you wouldn't recognize what it feels like to be aroused by

someone."

¢...Is that what it was?"

"Hmm. And he was definitely interested. His arousal scent is yummy."

"Do you mean that marshmallow smell?"

"Mhmm.'

Phoebe buried her face into the pillow, breathing deep. The dogwood and campfire scent was strong. She was just able to detect the

roasted marshmallow scent again. She wondered if her scent changed too. Everything was moving so fast.

"Actually you're moving pretty slow,' Mani said. 'Most males can't wait to mate, especially an Alpha. He must have some major self-control.

"Maybe he's not interested."

"Don't you dare think that!" Mani growled. 'It's because he cares that he's waiting. He doesn't want you to have any regrets.'

Phoebe chewed her lip.

"He's trying to romance you, so let him romance you."

"How will I know when I'm ready? I don't want to make him wait forever."

"When you're ready, you'll know. I dare say you're almost ready now."

"But how will I even know what to do?"

"Trust your instincts. That's why I'm here and trust our Mate."

Phoebe blushed. Mani had never expressed interest in carnal desires before. Now, she was suddenly talking about it so casually. Wolf spirits

seldom showed any interest in sx unless it was with their mate, so that wasn't unusual.

"Just go with it and don't think about it too much."

Jason stared at his email, but his mind was elsewhere. He was happy her nickname made her feel special. Her previous mate hadn't spent a

single minute with her before rejecting her out of hand and apparently no one else had taken interest in her either. While he didn't like the

thought of any male spending time with her, it did upset him that no one saw her perfection.

"Well, you're deep in thought," Luke said, "want to share with the class?"

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Jason blinked, looking at his Beta who he had ignored for the past several minutes. Luke sat at his own desk off to the side with a curious

look in his gaze.

"Did something happen last night? Something good?"

"No. At least, not what you are thinking," Jason said. "It almost happened this morning though."

Luke jerked to attention. "Almost?"

Jason folded his hands and rested his chin on them. His mood was pensive as he pondered his own thoughts.

"...50 what happened?"

"Last night she said she liked my scent and that I make her feel special."

"That's good. So what's got you concerned?"

"This morning we kissed."

"Okay."

"Ismelled her arousal."

"Oh?"

"It's not the first time, but it was definitely stronger this morning than it was before," Jason said. "She seemed uncomfortable with it."

"Uncomfortable?"

"I think it's the first time she's ever felt it, if that makes sense."

It was one thing if no one had pursued her as a partner before, but even Jason had explored other means of release. Self-gratification was a

far cry from being with one's mate, but it helped take the edge off...usually. He certainly had never heard of one being unprepared for their

natural urges.

"So what happened after that?"

"I calmed her down."

"But?"

«...She smelled fantastic," Jason sighed, rubbing his face.

Luke chuckled. That wasn't surprising. The scent of one's mate always seemed tailored to attract them, making them hunger for them. Luke

had a sweet tooth so he hadn't been surprised his mate had a caramel note to her scent.

"Well, she probably thought you smelled just as good."

Jason grunted.

Luke gave his friend a sympathetic look. At first, he thought Jason's problem was solved as soon as he scented his mate, but now Luke

realized it was only the beginning. Jason was determined to move at Phoebe's pace. Luke only hoped his friend could take the slow pace

when everything in him urged him to complete the bond.

"Alpha."

Jason grunted as the border guards opened a link to him, "I'm here."

"Alpha Thomas is at the main gate. He says he wants to talk to you."

"Thomas?" Jason gave Luke a questioning look.

The Beta shrugged. Alpha Thomas was a close ally. A visit wasn't unusual; however, he usually planned his appearance well in advance.

Neither of them could remember a time he showed up unexpectedly.

"Does he say why?"

"No. But he's here with his normal escort and...daughter."

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"send him through."

Jason waited for their affirmative before closing the link.

"Here with his daughter," Luke repeated.

They shared a look, thinking about the incident at breakfast.

"Where is Phoebe?"

"At the daycare, last I checked."

Jason nodded. Unlike her old pack, here the young ones were minded by a collective of mothers and some unmated she-wolves each taking

turns watching and entertaining them for the day. Naturally, the daycare had been a topic of discussion throughout the course of last

night's party and he wasn't surprised when Phoebe showed interest in it. As an education professional, she had several ideas about how to

improve and organize it.

"Have Ben find her and stick close."

"Expecting trouble?"

"Maybe."

There were consequences for assaulting an alpha's offspring. Phoebe may be his mate, but she wasn't marked yet. Until then, her position

as Luna was unofficial. As far as he was concerned, those were just formalities. Thomas was usually a reasonable wolf, but very defensive

when it came to his daughter. However, if he insisted on retribution, he would find Jason was equally protective of his mate.

"What do you think?" Jason asked.

"This pack will defend its Luna to the death."

Jason nodded. If Thomas or Katrina intended a fight, it would be one they couldn't win, though he hoped it wouldn't come to that. Their

packs had been allies since Jason's great-grandfather's time. He hoped they could maintain amicable relations.

After several minutes of waiting, there was a knock on his door. Luke stood to answer it, bowing to the alpha and announcing the new

arrivals, "Alpha Thomas and Katrina."

Jason nodded, closed his laptop and stood. Ignoring Katrina, he greeted Thomas with a handshake, "Welcome. Can I offer you a drink?"

"No, that's quite all right," Thomas answered, surprised by Jason's cordial greeting and relaxed demeanor.

Jason gestured to one of the couches for them to sit while he sat in a chair. Katrina hesitated, expecting him to ask her to join him, but Jason

didn't spare her a glance. Luke and Thomas's escort remained at the door, waiting for their respective Alpha's command.

"To what do I owe this pleasure?" Jason asked, feigning ignorance.

Thomas cleared his throat, glancing at his daughter to Jason and back again. Jason merely maintained an enigmatic smile and waited.

"As you know, my daughter was visiting your pack. She suddenly returned yesterday very upset. It seems one of your pack members

assaulted her."

"Did she also tell you that the alleged assault was in retaliation for her assaulting one of my pack members?"

Thomas glanced at his daughter, brows furrowed. Jason knew it was unlikely she explained the entire situation. Katrina always cast herself as

the victim.

"It wasn't my fault!" Katrina whined. "I was only defending myself."

"My Beta, Gamma, my sister and myself witnessed the entire incident. Would you like to hear our testimonies?" Jason asked, eyeing her with

a frown.

Katrina fell silent.

"Then there are witnesses to what your pack member did to my daughter," Thomas said, satisfied. "What do you intend for their

punishment?"

Jason shifted his gaze back to the other alpha. It seemed nothing changed. When it came to Katrina, Thomas was blind and deaf. Ever since

he lost his mate, Thomas doted on his daughter. Jason had no issue with that, but spoiling her did her no favors.

"Nothing," Jason simply said. "I don't punish my pack members for defending themselves or each other."

"This is unacceptable!" Thomas stood. "I demand satisfaction!"

"You would do well to remember whose office you are in," Jason remained seated. His gaze swirled, waiting for the other alpha to calm

down or else complete the challenge.

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Thomas hesitated before clearing his throat and sitting down. It wasn't like him to lose his temper or make needless demonstrations. Yet,

Jason's outward calm unnerved him. Thomas had known Jason since he was a pup. Ever since Jason's father passed away, Thomas thought

of himself as an advisor and Jason usually acquiesced to him as an elder. But now there was a new dominating aura surrounding the young

Alpha and he showed no sign of standing down.

"Jason, I respectfully request you hand over the pack member who assaulted my daughter for proper punishment."

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"If she wishes to go with you, won't stop her," Jason said, glancing at Luke. "But I will be by her side at all times."

With a nod, Luke stepped out. Thomas looked from one to the other, still unnerved by Jason's piercing gaze. Though he had not yet

summoned his alpha aura, there was something dangerous in Jason's eyes. It was as if Jason's wolf was pacing around, sizing up Thomas's

wolf like he was a meal. Try as he might, Thomas couldn't shake the intimidation he felt as Jason's calm gaze bore into him.

A knock at the door mercifully broke the standoff. Luke stepped in, holding the door for a petite, pretty she-wolf. He bowed to her as she

entered. Jason was on his feet in an instant, beckoning her to his side.

Phoebe gave them both curious looks, but went to Jason. Luke managed a brief explanation, so she was not surprised to see Katrina or the

other Alpha. Taking her hand, Jason kissed it before pulling her close and kissing her temple. Both were familiar gestures so she only

blushed slightly in front of their guests.

"Phoebe, you remember Katrina. Let me introduce her father, Alpha Thomas of the Blood Moon Pack," Jason said. "Thomas, this is my mate

and Luna, Phoebe."

Jason watched as Thomas and Katrina's mouths dropped. He wasn't surprised. Many knew he had been searching for his mate for a long

time, but few outside his pack knew she had been found. Phoebe didn't seem the least bit perturbed.

Inclining her head, she calmly greeted, "It's nice to meet you Alpha Thomas. I understand our packs are close allies so you are always

welcome."

sitting down, Jason gently pulled Phoebe into his lap. One hand remained at her back while the other naturally rested on her thigh. Phoebe

raised a brow at this position, but thinking it rude to mindlink in front of their guests, refrained from questions.

She leaned against him, her near arm resting on his shoulder and allowing her hand to rest along his neck. Her fingers curled through the

hair on the back of his head and sent tingles through him like electric shocks. Bewildered, Thomas and Katrina slowly returned to their seats.

"To what do we owe the honor of this visit?" Phoebe asked.

"Alpha Thomas is here because of yesterday...the incident at breakfast," Jason said as delicately as possible.

"Of course," Phoebe nodded, ignoring Katrina and looking at Thomas. "Is this going to be a formal apology to us and the pack or do you

prefer to make a personal one to the she-wolf that was attacked. Either is acceptable."

Jason fought a smile at Phoebe's matter-of-fact tone. Returning to his position at the door, Luke bit his lip to keep from laughing. Neither

expected such a quick response from Phoebe.

"I'm sorry?" Thomas asked. "I'm afraid I don't follow."

Phoebe inclined her head as if sharing his confusion before saying, "Your daughter attacked and maimed a she-wolf yesterday. I think an

apology is the very least we should expect."

"Y-yes...well...that she-wolf insulted my daughter first."

Phoebe's gaze narrowed as she frowned, "I take it then you approve of your daughter's action and you also believe attacking a pack

member, slashing their face with silver-laced claws, is an appropriate response when the wolf in question has forgotten to add pepper to

your omelet."

Phoebe enunciated every word carefully and gauged his response. Katrina didn't strike her as a particularly truthful wolf. She was not

surprised Thomas was not properly informed.

"Then please tell me, Alpha Thomas, what is the appropriate punishment for your maid when she forgets to fluff your pillow: a week in

prison, I suppose?"

Jason struggled to contain his mirth as Thomas's face reddened. But Phoebe wasn't done. From the start, the incident left a bad taste in her

mouth and Mani pushed her to speak her mind.

"Alpha Thomas, having a face scarred by silver claw marks may not seem like a great hurdle for you and your warriors, but for a young,

unmated she-wolf the prospect is quite devastating."

"W-well...L..um..."

"Sh-shut up!" Katrina suddenly leaped to her feet. "You b***h1"

Jason growled, but Phoebe barely acknowledged her. She had ignored the she-wolf's presence, but suddenly turned her gaze on Katrina,

her gray eyes shimmering silver as Mani pressed close.

"If you intend to act like a child you should expect to be treated as one. Since you can't handle a simple conflict without involving your

daddy, I suggest you sit down and be quiet. The adults are talking."

Katrina's face burned beet red as Jason and Luke fought to keep their laughter contained. Phoebe was so calm it was hard to believe she

was the same, shy she-wolf they met in Washington. Even Thomas's escort was having a difficult time maintaining his composure.

"Y-you...You're nothing! A nobody," Katrina declared. "I'm supposed to be Luna!"

"Now we both know that isn't true...or else you would be in my seat."