

SECOND CHANCE LUNA

Chapter 61

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Chapter Sixty-One o Chapter Sixty-One

Phoebe woke with a start still in her wolf form. Raising her head she yawned and looked down at the young woman huddled in her fur

Shannon had returned to her human form but a pleasant smile indicated she was having a good dream

~ “Mani?” “Yes?” Mani’s voice seemed oddly distant

“Was that a dream?” ‘More like three dreams. Ours, hers and his.’ ‘His?’ ‘Shannon’s Mate.’ ‘So that wolf was real?’ ‘Of course he’s real. 1

can’t make a wolf appear out of thin air

“Rutt whe ic ha? Whara ic ha?” ‘dan’ Lnew Tua naver cmaled him before and I didn’t feela

link so it’s safe to assume he’s not from our pack. But he is close. Maybe

he’s from a neighboring pack?” ‘But how do we find him?’ ‘We don’t,’ Mani said

“But Shannon.”

“Is strong. And now that she feels the connection to her second chance Mate she’ll be able to let go of her old bond much easier,” Mani said

“It is not for us to interfere in the natural order.”

Phoebe was silent, *..Still, / didn’t know we could enter another’s

Chapter Sixty-One LY dream like that.

“Neither did I and I’m pretty sure this was a special case because of Shannon’s rejection.”

“That does make sense,” — Phoebe agreed as they nuzzled the sleeping girl.
*/ wish we could take away all her pain.’

“Pain helps us grow.”

“wish growing wasn’t so hard.”

“Ditto. We should let her rest now. I think she’ll sleep the rest of the night.”

They carefully extracted themselves from the omega. Shaking away any lingering cramps she shifted back to her human form and quickly

dressed. Staying so long in her wolf form wasn’t easy given how little she shifted over the years. But if Mani was now willing to shift in front

of others perhaps they could do it more often. It would be nice to go for a run and explore the pack territory, preferably with Jason. She

desperately wanted their wolves to meet

With a sigh she looked at Shannon curled up on the floor, naked and asleep. They couldn’t leave her like this. She’d catch a chill for certain

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Approaching the bed Phoebe pulled back the covers before turning to the task of how to get the sleeping omega into bed

Kneeling Phoebe slung one of Shannon’s arms over her shoulder and slowly stood. The young omega was petite but dead weight in her

arms as she dragged her to bed. Phoebe nearly ended up in bed with her but eventually got her safely under the covers. As she tucked in

the sleeping woman she couldn’t help but be grateful the omega was as petite as she was

“You should also be grateful for the strength training our Mate has

been making you do.”

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Phoebe took a final look at Shannon. Her face was peaceful indicating her dream must be good. At least it seemed she wouldn't suffer from the insomnia Phoebe endured after her rejection but time would tell. Quietly letting herself out of the room she opened a link to the head of the kitchen, “Myra?”

“Yes, Luna,” came the immediate answer. Phoebe thought the link felt active but it was strange she didn't detect any signs of drowsiness

through it

“Are you still awake?”

“I've been worried about Shannon and I figured you would want to talk.”

Phoebe smiled. It seemed the pack was getting used to her ways rather quickly, “Shannon is asleep. I don't think she'll have nightmares

tonight. I'd like to give her a couple days off but working might give her something else to focus on.”

“I see what you mean. Yes. If Shannon wants to keep working I will make sure to give her some light duty so she doesn't overdo it and I'll let

her sleep late tomorrow too.”

“Sounds good. Thank you,” Phoebe sighed making her way to the omega's elevator rather than try to make her way through the dining

hall. “If anything happens contact me immediately.”

“Of course, good night, Luna.”

“Good night.”

“And Luna..thank you.”

“You don’t have to thank me for this. This is why! am here.”

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Riding the elevator up Phoebe exited near the landing leading to the Alpha floor. It was a handy short cut

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“Halt. Oh, sorry, Luna.”

Phoebe paused smiling at the guard. Since the Luna Ceremony the staff elevator proved too good of a short cut and now it was monitored

much more closely to prevent any repeats of the previous incident

“That's all right. Thank you for keeping watch. Everyone else already turnin?”

“Yes. It's quite late, Luna. Sleep well.”

“Thank you.” Phoebe nodded and headed up the last flight of stairs

Making her way down the hall she paused to peek in on Emma and Blake. The pups were sound asleep and dreaming peacefully. When they

first arrived at Blue Moon the pups always needed her to tuck them in

Gradually they became more comfortable and trusting of their adoptive family. Now even Jason could tuck them in without issue

Blake didn’t stir in the slightest and she moved on to his sister

Phoebe sniffed Emma’s blanket catching Jason's telltale scent and wondered how many bedtime stories the pup cajoled him into telling.

She smiled giving Emma a kiss before departing. Phoebe made her way to her bedroom to find Jason sprawled on the bed. Unlike the pups

his sleep seemed restless no doubt because she wasn't with him

Phoebe headed to the bathroom for her nightly preparation. Brushing her teeth and twisting her hair to tame it before bed. Shedding her

clothes she pulled on a pair of silk pajamas smirking at the thought that it was the same pajamas she wore when Jason first spent a night

with her

After her rejection Phoebe hadn't bought many things for herself and it wasn't just about saving money for the pups. Her own mate

thought she was worthless so was there any point in dressing up? It was Bridget who finally convinced her that it was okay to treat herself

now and again. With

Chapter Sixty-One LY that thought in mind Phoebe purchased silky pajamas instead of flannel

They were light, cool and incredibly comfortable even with a werewolf's higher body temperature

Since arriving at Blue Moon she still enjoyed the feeling of silk against her skin, not that she had much chance to wear them given Jason's

insatiable hunger. Even thinking about it made her blush but given the way she responded to him she could hardly claim any better. With a

sigh she returned to the bedroom and made her way to the bed

There she found Jason lying on his back. His brow was furrowed by a troubled dream. Phoebe sat beside him studying his pensive

expression. In all the time she had been there she never knew him to have bad dreams

Was it because he had gone to bed without her?

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Phoebe couldn't help but think so. She noticed she slept much more soundly when he was with her so perhaps it was the same for him.

Leaning forward she smoothed his hair from his forehead and kissed him. He responded almost instantly. His lips worked against hers

slowly dominating them, his eyes opened and his arms pulled her close

"Phoebe," Jason sighed, nuzzling her. "How's Shannon?"

"Sleeping," Phoebe answered resting her head on his shoulder and letting his scent sooth her. "I don't think she'll have nightmares

tonight."

"That's a thing?"

"After a rejection? Yes."

"Did you?"

"I mostly had insomnia. I went days without sleeping and when I finally did I was usually too exhausted to dream."

His embrace tightened and he kissed her head

Chapter Sixty-One Lf

"It's hard to describe just how much a rejection plays with your mind."

Jason growled pulling her into bed. Phoebe let out a startled shout as he quickly tucked her under the covers and held her close. Nuzzling

her, his chest rumbled with a growl that was almost like a purr, soothing her to sleep

".. Jason."

"Sleep Phoebe," Jason urged. "Tonight just sleep. You've done enough."

Phoebe chuckled but she didn't argue. His warmth seeped into her soothing sore muscles and aches while his aura settled her mind and

lulled it to sleep. She sighed reveling in the feeling of being safe and loved

"I love you, Jason," she muttered

"I love you," he answered kissing her forehead. "Now sleep."

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"Why do I have to do this?" Erick scowled as Luke led him to the gym

There, several warriors were stretching and beginning their warm-up

as exercises. Today's training focused on grappling and close-quarter techniques so it paid to be limber

"You came to train," Luke said. "So you'll train. You seem to have plenty of energy to make an annoyance of yourself so you should have

plenty for this too."

Frit mrmulad "Vai rant fall tn ma lila that Veicrs ict 2 Beta,"

ne to try to take my place though I'll warn you challenges are to the death."

"Why would I want to be a beta when I'm an alpha?"

"If you'd rather challenge Jason that's up to you," Luke shrugged

"Where is he anyway?" Erick demanded. "He should be the one escorting me."

"Well, as an Alpha you should know all about handing off undesirable tasks to others."

Erick scowled. Luke was not intimidated in the slightest. It was clear the young wolf placed far too much stock in titles. Not all alphas were

equal and neither were betas. In fact there were quite a few betas capable of holding their own against alphas..and he was one of them

"If you want to complain, Jason is right over there," Luke nodded

Erick's gaze followed the gesture to see Jason in the corner on a sparring mat. But it was his opponent that shocked the young alpha

Chapter Sixty-Two Y speechless. Jason wore only shorts as he slowly circled Phoebe who was in workout pants and a sports bra. Embracing

her from behind Jason gripped her wrists as he instructed her how to break the hold and escape

"What is he doing?" Erick scoffed

"In her former pack our Luna was too low ranked to warrant training but when she came here she asked for some defensive training."

"Low rank? She was an omega?"

"No, just one of the many unranked members that make up the majority of packs," Luke said. "Our Alpha's lucky to have her for his Luna."

"Lucky?" Erick snorted. "How is that lucky?"

"Because finding a caring, intelligent Luna is not as easy as you think it should be," Luke said. "Our Luna isn't afraid to admit her

weaknesses and is always eager to learn new things. She inspires others. We've had several she-wolves from all ranks express the desire for

training so we've started special self-defense and strength training courses for them. They all want to follow our Luna's example."

Erick frowned, his gaze drifting back to the alpha pair. He watched as Jason stole a kiss, nipping her neck and making her laugh. Despite the

distraction she managed to break the hold. Turning she shook her head at her mate's audacity even as he pulled her back into his embrace.

Jason kissed her letting his hands caress her before they moved on to the next hold. Both seemed to be thoroughly enjoying themselves

Erick looked at the warriors expecting them to be disgusted their Alpha was distracted. However they seemed quite happy, stealing glances

at the pair and trading smiles. None of them was upset their Luna came from a low rank even though their pack held such a long history.

How could Blue Moon be satisfied with such a Luna?

Chapter Sixty-Two wa Then again.

He shuddered with the memory of the weight of her aura. How could a low-ranking wolf have such an aura? Even his mother who was beta-

born didn't have that kind of influence. Just who was this she-wolf?

wae

"Luna."

Phoebe paused, turning as the head of the housekeeping staff approached. She had only just returned from her training session, her hair

still damp from her shower but it was important for the pack to get back into its routine after yesterday's emergency

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"Gloria?" Phoebe prompted the middle-age she-wolf who had started as a maid herself before rising up the staff ranks

"About Alpha Erick's room. Janet peeked into it and it's a disaster. He tore the bedspread to shreds and broken just about everything not

nailed down.”

Phoebe sighed. It probably shouldn't be a surprise given recent events. She hadn't spared him much thought since she concerned herself

with helping Shannon. No doubt Erick and his wolf were suffering from a huge disconnection after rejecting their mate. The fact his wolf

desperately wanted its mate no doubt fueling his rage

“If he wants to live in a pig-sty there is not much we can do,” Phoebe shook her head

“But.”

“know. It's difficult to leave it but he must either clean it up himself or apologize for how he's treated all of you. I won't compromise just

because it's easier.”

“Yes Luna.”

Chapter Sixty-Two YY

“Don't worry. None of you will be held accountable. I've already spoken to Jason and he agrees.”

Gloria nodded feeling relieved. It wouldn't be the first time a visiting alpha made outrageous demands and claims. Knowing their Alpha and

Luna supported the pack members gave them all comfort and confidence

It was also why the pack had such deep abiding loyalty

“Leave his room as is for now. We'll see if training helps cool him down.”

“Yes Luna,’ Gloria bowed before departing

Phoebe hoped the assurance there would be no punishment for neglecting their duties would ease the staff's worries. There really was

nothing else they could do

“Luna, we are nearly there.”

“I'll meet you at the door.”

With a sigh Phoebe headed to the front door to meet their next arrival

She only hoped this alpha was easier to handle. Just as she reached the foyer the warrior escort led in a young man. He was slim in build

indicating his youth. Once he matured and his frame filled out he would come close to rivaling Ben and Luke in stature, maybe even Jason.

His auburn hair was curly softening his face and heightening his youthful appearance. He had only one bag, a duffle he carried over his

shoulder

“Here you are, alpha,” the warrior gave a courteous nod

“Thanks,” he returned the gesture and reached out to shake hands before the warrior departed

It was already clear to Phoebe this young alpha was cut from a different cloth as she stepped forward, “Greetings. You must be Gideon

Welcome to Blue Moon. I am Luna Phoebe.”

Chapter Sixty-Two wa He turned to her his eyes wide in surprise before nodding respectfully, “Oh wow. Hi. My dad said Alpha Jason met his

mate. It's nice to meet

you

“It's good to meet you,” Phoebe smiled. “Would you like to see your room or would you like a tour first?”

“Could the tour start with the kitchen?” Gideon sheepishly asked. * The airline food was kind of terrible.”

Phoebe chuckled, “It's a little early for lunch but let's see what we can scrounge from the kitchen. Mable, can you take our guest's bags to

his room?”

A young omega dusting nearby immediately stepped forward, “Of course. Your room is on the third floor, to the left. Second door, alpha.”

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“Thank you,” he smiled earning a blush from her

He followed Phoebe to the kitchen where Myra and the other staff was busy preparing the lunch dishes. Feeling their Luna’s presence

brought the staff to a halt, curious about their guest

“Luna.” “I know it’s a little early but our recent arrival could use a little

something to tide him over,” Phoebe explained. “Myra, young alpha Gideon. Gideon, Myra is the head of the kitchen staff.”

“Nice to meet you,” Gideon shook her hand much to Myra’s surprise

“So what can we get you?” Myra asked giving the young male a fond smile

“Anything is fine,” Gideon said. “Even a sandwich.”

“Now don’t you worry,” Myra chuckled, pleased with his politeness. * We have plenty and no one goes hungry in my kitchen. Just wait a

€ Chapter Sixty-Two omy moment.”

“Here are the potatoes,” Shannon announced stepping into the kitchen from the pantry before dropping the crate she was carrying

The crash caused everyone to look at her. She was pale and Phoebe had been told she was subdued from her normally bubbly personality,

which was to be expected. However the look on her face was not merely surprise, but actual terror

Beside Phoebe, Gideon stiffened. His mouth fell open as he stared at the omega. A tantalizing smell filled his flared nostrils, "Mate."

Phoebe jerked to attention and even Mani perked up, 'Well, that's unexpected."

"Did you know?' Phoebe asked

"said he was close," Mani huffed

Phoebe couldn't believe it. She never heard of a wolf meeting their second chance mate so soon. She had gone five years and Lily over two

But there had to be a reason the Goddess meant this for Shannon. Looking again at the young omega she saw Shannon's face was still

contorted in fear and confusion

Gideon reached for her and hesitated as she backed away. It was clear he was confused by her fear. There was a pained, longing look in his

gaze

Phoebe recognized that look. It was the same one Jason gave her when she asked if he was going to reject her. Phoebe moved forward

slipping an arm around Shannon before she could bolt and held her steady

"Luna, I can't. I can't be rejected again," I Shannon whimpered in her mind

"Shh. You don't know that about him," Phoebe replied before looking at their guest. "You'll have to pardon us, Gideon. She was rejected by

her

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“Shh. You don’t know that about him,” Phoebe replied before looking at their guest. “You’ll have to pardon us, Gideon. She was rejected by

her first mate. He didn’t want her because she was an omega and she thinks

Chapter Sixty-Two \ J you’ll do the same.”

“I’m her second chance?” he asked

Phoebe nodded as Shannon shuddered, coming close to hyperventilating. Gideon suddenly closed the distance no doubt spurred by his

Wolf. His arms encircled Shannon taking over for Phoebe’s support as he held her close

“Breathe,” he whispered gently stroking her hair. “Breathe...ah...”

“Shannon,” Phoebe said stepping back as he took over comforting her

“Shannon,” Gideon sighed savoring the name. “Breathe, Shannon

Breathe.”

Her breathe slowly evened out the bond soothing her as much as his words. Gideon bowed his head brushing his lips against her forehead

“I don’t know who you’re first mate is, but he’s an idiot.”

“..But I’m just..I’m not...”

“Not what? The most beautiful wolf I’ve ever seen?”

She blushed at his praise before saying, “I’m just an omega. I can’t be Luna.”

“Who says?” Gideon snorted cupping her chin and brushing away her tears with his thumb. “My mother was an omega before she met my

father.”

“..She was?”

Gideon nodded smiling, “She’s going to love you. They both will.”

She hesitantly smiled. He dipped his head to peck a kiss on her lips

They had known each other no more than two minutes and yet he felt an unbreakable connection that sent sparks through him wherever

their skin touched. When his parents told him about the mate bond he hadn't

Chapter Sixty-Two S

believed it. There simply wasn't any way for such an immediate connection to be made but it was true. All of what they said was absolutely

true

Phoebe cleared her throat, "Perhaps you two would like to sit and talk before the lunch crowd arrives? Myra can bring you out something."

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Chapter Sixty-Three J Chapter Sixty-Three

Jason sighed making his way to the dining hall finding it more crowded than usual. Ever since the border breach the pack had been

lingering over their meals and gatherings despite the fact everything had returned to its usual routine. Jason understood these moments

were necessary for them to feel safe

~ "Daddy!" Emma happily squealed

Jason chuckled kissing each pup on the head before pulling Phoebe to her feet only to sit and plant her in his lap. Phoebe rolled her eyes

but didn't protest his need to hold her. Intellectually he knew he and his wolf should be settled by now. Yet he continued to cling to her

needing to hold her

Even Lobo couldn't explain why they needed to keep her close but he felt they should keep her within sight at all times. It made Jason

EE Alii bili. could do was hold her

"So how was the tour?" Jason asked. He hadn't wanted to make her meet their second young guest after the last one but meeting Mona to

discuss the rogues took longer than he thought

"Actually, we haven't gone on one yet."

"Is he late?" Jason frowned. He was certain the border patrol said their guest had arrived

"No. He arrived on time," Phoebe nodded to a small table in the corner where Gideon sat with his arm around Shannon quietly talking with

her. They hadn't moved in over two hours and it seemed he was slowly

Chapter Sixty-Three 2 gaining her trust. Shannon smiled as he leaned close to nuzzle her

"Isn't that...Shannon?" Jason asked

Phoebe nodded, "Gideon is her second chance mate."

Jason's brow shot upward, "What are the chances of that?"

Phoebe shook her head. She couldn't begin to calculate that and even Mani was at a loss to explain. The fact Shannon would be mated to

one of the young alphas was remarkable but the fact the other would be her second chance made it astronomical. Phoebe had linked Mona

to ask her but she had been too busy with Jason and Luke at the time

"It seems this one is much nicer," Jason said looking at the young couple

"Yes." Phoebe nodded, smiling. "It's strange for her to meet her second chance so soon, but I'm glad she didn't have to wait as long as I

did

His embrace tightened and he nuzzled her. Phoebe stroked his cheek savoring the tingles that traveled up her arm. Her eyes shimmered

silver as she smiled

“I’m so happy you found me when you did. I just wish it had been sooner.”

“Me too,” Jason smiled with a note of regret. All that time wasted when she was waiting for him. He rubbed noses with her knowing he

would never let another moment pass

“WHAT THE HELL IS THIS?!”

The dining hall suddenly fell silent as all eyes turned to the door where Erick stood. He still wore his workout a_ clothing and was covered in

a layer of sweat. His hunger had driven him to the dining hall without showering. Though all eyes were on him his were only on one

Chapter Sixty-Three \ J

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tek

“You w**el” He growled rushing toward where Shannon sat. She whimpered trying to shrink down even as Gideon stood and moved to

shield her

“Back off, Erick,” he snarled. “And don’t you ever address my mate like that again.”

“Your mate!” Erick growled. “She’s mine!”

“Was,” Phoebe corrected approaching them. “You rejected her, remember?”

“He’s the one who rejected Shannon?” Gideon scoffed. “I should have known.”

“What's that supposed to mean?” Erick growled

“Only that you never understood the value of anything. It's always bigger, better, faster with you. All you care about is flaunting your title.

You never bothered with anything that was actually genuine.”

“Genuine? What about you and Harper?”

“Itold you there was nothing between us. We were never mates and I never touched her!”

“You calling my sister a liar?”

“Yes, that is exactly what I'm calling her.”

“Oh really? Well let's settle this right now, shall we?”

“NO! You will not,” Phoebe snapped her aura washing over them snapping both of them to attention. “You will not tear apart this dining

hall or packhouse. If you want to test each other's testosterone you will do so in the gym.”

“You can’t tell me what to do,” Erick snarled struggling against the weight of her aura and clearly surprised by her authority

He raised his hand to lash out only to have it gripped tightly as

Chapter Sixty-Three w@Z another aura crushed down on his shoulders. Startled Erick looked to see Jason standing over him growling

warning. Not even his father’s aura hit him so hard

“I know you weren't just threatening my Luna, pup.”

Erick shivered

"I will remind you, you are a guest. You have no authority and I have zero patience for childish antics," Jason warned before yanking the

young alpha and forcing him to sit at another table. "You will sit. You will be quiet

And you will eat last.

His command rolled over the young man causing Erick to stiffen but he couldn't fight it. Jason waited to see if he would manage to defy

him

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When he didn't he turned away and returned to his seat

"Gideon," Phoebe stirred the other from his stupor. "Your mate need you

Gideon blinked then looked to Shannon who had gone deathly pale and was fighting sobs as she shook uncontrollably. He sat down beside

her quickly pulling her close. Gideon stroked her hair whispering endearments and begging for her to calm down. Phoebe watched them a

moment before returning to her seat

"That was...dramatic," Jason sighed

"And it's not over," Phoebe leaned against him

"What do you mean?"

"What do you think is going to happen when Gideon claims Shannon and completes the bond?"

Jason grunted glancing at Erick who despite the alpha command keeping him in his seat kept trying to glare at the young couple. Finally he

asked, "You think he'll go feral? He didn't even want Shannon."

Chapter Sixty-Three wo "Graham didn't want me," Phoebe reminded and yet after five years he still came to hunt her down

Jason growled softly but he saw her point. His gaze slid back to the young alpha. If there was going to be trouble he would have to increase

the packhouse guards. He looked over at the young couple. There was no doubt in his mind they would complete the mating bond and

soon

wae

"So... guess you need to talk to the Alpha," Shannon said as they lingered over their empty plates. Lunch had wrapped up some time ago

and most of the pack left to return to their duties yet they continued to sit

Mercifully even Erick had wandered off finally

"Hmm..." Gideon softly hummed nuzzling her and sniffing as he held her against his chest

His fingers trailed tingles down her arm. Despite reminding him he had duties to attend to he continued to hold and caress her. Her wolf

certainly wasn't helping. Sif remained practically comatose in their mate's arms

"Pardon me."

shannon jolted upright looking up at Phoebe who stood beside the table with an amused expression. Beside her Gideon huffed with

annoyance that they had been interrupted

"Y-yes Luna."

"I was hoping you could do something for me."

"Of course, yes. Anything you need," Shannon blushed as Gideon growled

"Well, haven't taken our guest on a tour of the packhouse yet and I just remembered I need to speak to Mona this afternoon so I hoped

you

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Chapter Sixty-Three J would be willing to show him around in my place," Phoebe said watching the young alpha's reaction as he realized he

would spend the entire afternoon with his mate

"R-really? But 'm..Is that really okay?" Shannon asked. She was just an omega and leading an alpha around seemed an important task

"You've lived here your whole life. You probably know more about it than I do," Phoebe smiled. "And as long as our guest doesn't mind..."

"I don't," Gideon assured her startling Shannon with his eagerness. "I mean, that sounds good to me."

"Okay, good. Then it's settled. I'll catch up with you at dinner," Phoebe nodded giving him a wink. "Thank you, Shannon. It'll be a big help."

"S-sure," Shannon blushed under Phoebe's knowing gaze. It wasn't that she didn't want to spend time with Gideon. She was anxious. What

did an omega say to an alpha? "So..um...Alpha..."

"Gideon," he cut her off. "With you it's just Gideon."

"But 'm...An omega can't call an alpha by his name."

"You're my mate," he leaned close kissing her. "You can call me anything you want. But let's start with my name, eh?"

She blushed but nodded, "Okay. Um.. Gideon?"

He flashed a dazzling grin

"So, um, let's start on the first floor," Shannon stood and he quickly followed suit entwining his fingers with hers. Hand-in-hand she led him

out of the dining hall and towards the rec rooms

Phoebe watched them with a smile before opening a link, "Mona? Are you busy?"

"For you Luna, never," Mona chuckled. * /am in the middle of something in the lab if you don't mind coming to me."

Chapter Sixty-Three a "Not at all. I'll be there soon."

Phoebe headed out through the kitchen and stepped outside. She hadn't gone more than two steps before a member of her personal

guard fell in line behind her. As long as she stayed in the packhouse she hardly ever spotted them but as soon as she stepped outside she

had a shadow. It never failed

She walked along a well-worn trail leading her toward the pack hospital. Passing it she continued down a slightly lesser used path. It split,

one trail heading toward the prison and the other leading her to a different facility. This one had much higher security and was off-limits to

most of the pack. Luckily as Luna she had access. Entering a code and placing a hand on a palm reader she waited until the door clicked and

allowed her access

Her body guard followed her down the hall on the other side. She nodded to the personnel manning the front desk but didn't stop.

Reaching the next door Phoebe paused at the lock: this one a retinal scanner. She hated this one as did Mani who had to withdraw. If her

eyes shined silver at all they would fail and cause a lockdown. The door opened and Phoebe stepped inside

This time her guard didn't follow. Instead he headed to where she assumed the security rooms were located. She was now in the most

secured area of the building. If there was a breach the facility would lockdown around her

Chapter 64

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Chapter Sixty-Four 2 Chapter Sixty-Four

Phoebe walked down the hallway passing various labs before reaching the one she wanted. There she found Mona at the desk preparing

samples of some sort for the sequencing machine. Phoebe didn't know what any of the equipment was for and didn't bother asking

"Hello Luna," Mona greeted

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"Hello," Phoebe sighed sinking into a seat

"So what can I do you for?"

"What are you doing?" Phoebe asked, her curiosity getting the best of her
e rogues

"I'm trying to isolate where they came from."

"Any results?"

"For this batch, no," Mona sighed. "But if it follows the pattern of

previous attacks..then most of these wolves probably started off some fifteen hundred miles from here.”

“Really?” Phoebe asked looking at the map Mona had on the Q computar.saresn

It was filled with small red dots. Each dot represented a wolf whose full origins might always be a mystery. What they knew about the

rogues relied mostly on the results of Mona's tests

“Yep. Rogues don’t usually travel that far.”

“They don’t?”

“No. From our previous study using radio collars we know most rogues tend to stick to a territory about fifty to a hundred miles in

Chapter Sixty-Four 7 diameter. They very rarely leave.”

“Why did these ones travel so far?”

“Good question. Unfortunately I don't have a definite answer,” Mona sighed. “Most rogues set up their territories bordering a pack territory.

How or why we don’t know. They usually stay in the same area unless driven out either by pack wolves chasing them off, fire or some other

natural disaster.

“Why do they set up a territory at all?”

“A question for the ages,” Mona sighed. “Personally I think they are following their instincts. Wolves usually set up a home territory after all

But as for why they set one up close to packs..maybe it’s a homing instinct? The need to be in a pack, safety in numbers?”

“Maybe a homing instinct?” Phoebe added

“Like they are trying to return home?” Mona asked. “Maybe. Until we have a more conclusive DNA database for werewolves we probably

won't know for sure.”

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There were many questions about rogues and hardly any answers. As far as she knew the studies they conducted on rogues were the only

ones being done. With rogues on the rise it was important to understand just what drove them to go feral. However by the time that

happened they were already too far gone to ask

Phoebe stared at the map deep in thought

“Something catch your attention, Luna?” Mona asked

“It's just.it seems a lot of rogues came from near Rimrock.”

“You're old pack?” Mona asked looking at the map. “Interesting.”

“But I don't” recall our alpha ever banishing someone,” Phoebe frowned. Banishing was a last resort as the chances of such wolves going

Chapter Sixty-Four Ly feral and becoming problem rogues was too great

“Well, fur samples can only tell us where they were recently,” Mona said. “They might have traveled even further”

“But why come here? Blue Moon hasn't banished anyone, have they?”

“No. Never. Not for the last three or four alphas certainly. Blue Moon is very good at keeping records and I have yet to see anything about

banishments, though it's a long history.”

“Then why?”

“don't know. It's almost like...”

“Like what?”

“Like they are being drawn in.”

Phoebe gave her a confused look

“Jason is a powerful alpha and Blue Moon is a large pack,” Mona

shrugged. “We have applications to join almost daily. Sort of like how she-wolves cling to alphas.”

Mona smirked as Phoebe gave her a waning look

“It's a female's instinct to seek out the strongest male for a mate,” Mona explained. “It's probably a holdover from our Lycan ancestors. I

have a friend who's an archeologist with the New Moon pack. According to her Lycans didn't have fated mates. They could take any for a

mate, even multiple ones. It led to some gruesome infighting. Maybe that's why the Goddess gave us fated mates.”

Though Mona's theory seemed outrageous Phoebe felt Mani nodding in agreement. Perhaps it wasn't off the mark at all

“Then what about rejections?” Phoebe asked

“Well, rejecting our fated mate goes against the Goddess's plan but we

Chapter Sixty-Four we do have free will so the choice is ours.”

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“Then how do you explain two alphas being mated to the same she-wolf?”

“Are you talking about our guests?”

Phoebe nodded. Since this morning the pack's link had been buzzing as the members discussed Shannon's strange fortunes. It didn't seem

to have reached the young omega yet

Turning the computer Mona called up a different database, "What packs were they from again?"

"Cedar Creek and Fall Leaf" Phoebe said

"The alpha who rejected her is from Cedar Creek, right?" Mona asked for confirmation. "According to my research his parents are chosen

mates

The other one, his parents are fated mates."

"What does that mean?"

"Well, it's consistent with a theory I've been working on," Mona said. My theory is that rejections weaken the pack bond. Alphas are

stronger with a mate, everyone knows that and Lunas make pack bonds stronger

My theory is fated Lunas make them stronger than chosen ones and those bonds continue through the generations."

"Meaning if the alpha keeps his fated mate then his offspring are more likely to keep their fated mates?"

"Right. And each generation that maintains the pattern strengthens the pack bonds. That's why the ancient packs have so much influence

They have centuries of fated pairings that keep their bonds strong. If newer packs truly want to grow their influence then they should always

keep their fated mates. Of course the reverse is also true. Pups born of chosen mates may have a weaker link to their fated bond making it

more likely they will reject them."

Chapter Sixty-Four 2 Phoebe frowned. Compared to her theory about Lycans this one

seemed more outlandish. Did it really work like that?

“Alpha Jason and Alpha Reed both had parents who were fated mates

“What about Katrina?” Phoebe asked. “Weren't her parents fated?

“Actually, no. Alpha Thomas lost his fated mate to a rogue attack. He was so despondent he couldn't bear waiting for a possible second

chance and took another as a chosen mate, Katrina's mother. And she died in childbirth.”

“But Graham's parents,” Phoebe hesitated thinking back to her previous alpha

Actually, she didn't remember if they had been fated or not. Come to think of it..it might have been an arranged match for a pack alliance.

She recalled walking in on a conversation her parents were having and they clammed up quick when they noticed her. Phoebe couldn't

recall the conversation now but she did remember it had something to with the alpha

“So...it's all connected,” Phoebe said after a moment. “Fated and chosen mates, rejections, pack bonds. It all leads back to each other.

“That's my theory,” Mona nodded. “That isn't to say the pattern can't be broken. Accepting one's fated mate can set a pack on course in

only a couple generations, just as taking a chosen mate can derail it. That's why we were so anxious about Jason. He waited so long to find

you..many alphas wouldn't.”

Phoebe blushed

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"I suppose that's why Luke was so insistent we waited."

"Waited for what?"

Chapter Sixty-Four \ J "Pups," Mona sighed

Phoebe blinked and waited for her to continue

"We've been mated over five years," Mona said, "I'm sure you've noticed our lack of progeny."

"I did," Phoebe nodded. "I didn't think it was my place to ask."

"Well, don't tell Jason because I'm sure he'd feel guilty, but when Luke and I were preparing to complete the bond he had a request," Mona

said. He wanted to wait for pups. It seems he and Ben had an agreement. They would hold off on having pups until Jason had one."

"Really?"

"They were worried about him considering the trouble he was having finding his mate. They thought if they started having families it would

push Jason over the edge. Lucille didn't mind waiting but...it was not an easy thing for me to agree to."

"I had no idea," Phoebe shook her head

"No one does. It's just between Ben and Lucille and me and Luke. Like I said, don't tell Jason," Mona said

Phoebe nodded, "But how have you handled your heat cycles?"

"We took a page out of the human's text book. Condoms," Mona chuckled

Phoebe echoed her laughter. Pups were considered a blessing from the Moon Goddess so forms of contraception were generally unheard

of among werewolves. She-wolves were only fertile during their heat cycles so it was largely unnecessary anyway

Phoebe suddenly frowned, that was one thing she was nervous about

Until a she-wolf was mated and marked their heat cycles were short, barely lasting a day, and only mildly uncomfortable. After they were

mated

Chapter Sixty-Four Lf and, especially after she was marked, it would last three or more days. She would be consumed with pain and hot

flashes. The symptoms would only ease with her mate's presence and touch, not to mention intercourse

Phoebe was already blushing at the mere thought. How was she going to actually handle it?

Mona chuckled, "Don't worry. Once your heat starts thinking will be the last thing you're going to worry about. Now that Jason has found

you.

Luke and I can finally start planning for ours."

She blushed lightly. It was clear Mona was looking forward to pups of her own. Phoebe was sorry she waited so long but grateful they had

been considerate of Jason. But Mona was right. He would feel guilty if he knew his Beta and Gamma waited to have pups until he found

his mate. He didn't know how lucky he was to have such good friends...or maybe he did

Chapter 65

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Chapter Sixty-Five . J Chapter Sixty-Five

"So, um, what is going on with you and Alpha Erick?" Shannon hesitantly asked glancing at the table where the other young alpha sat

scowling at them

Gideon growled looking at his rival before taking her hand and kissing it. Erick sneered at the gesture but Gideon didn't care. Shannon was

his mate and Erick had no claim over her anymore. With a sigh he said, * Believe it or not, we used to be friends, best friends, practically

brothers."

"And you're not now?"

Gideon shook his head

"What happened?"

"A bunch of stuff. Stupid stuff. And one big one."

"What?"

"His sister," Gideon snarled in disgust. "She was friends with mine. I guess she was sweet on me, I don't know. I certainly never had any

feelings for her. She cornered me at a party our packs were throwing and said we should be mates. She wanted me to mark her right there. I

refused."

"You did?"

"Well yeah. My parents were fated mates and...that's all I ever wanted

Ididn't want anyone else."

Shannon blushed

"Anyway, I refused and all of a sudden she screamed and doubled over as if in pain. And when everyone was gathered around she said I

tried to force her to accept my rejection. That's when it all blew up. Erick tried to

Chapter Sixty-Five WwW punch me out for rejecting his sister even though I told them it was all a lie, * Gideon sighed. "Our packs used to

be really close and suddenly battle lines were drawn. Her parents wanted me banished or force me to take her for a mate even though I

kept telling them she wasn't my fated mated."

Shannon squeezed his hand in comfort

"My parents refused but, I could tell even they didn't believe me. Once I tell them I found you though they'll have to believe me."

"And they won't be disappointed?"

"No. I told you my mother was an omega. They won't mind at all."

Shannon nervously fidgeted as he drew her closer, nuzzling her. She blushed embarrassed by the attention but happy too. Her wolf was

practically swooning. They lingered over dinner as they had over lunch and the hall was mostly empty when they finally stirred

"So, um... suppose you should head to bed. Um, you probably have alpha things to do tomorrow," Shannon finally said

Gideon sighed. That was right he had come here to learn how to be a good alpha from one of the most influential Alphas in the world. He

had been excited about it even after he learned Erick was doing the same. But now..now he could only think about his mate

"I can show you to your room," Shannon said

"Actually, I'd like to see yours," Gideon said after a moment

"Mine?"

"My mom...her pack didn't treat her well. They made her sleep in a

closet. She said it was like a jail..but you..Blue Moon wouldn't treat you like that right? They didn't, you weren't..."

"Oh, no!" Shannon shook her head. "Of course not."

"I, just want to be sure."

Chapter Sixty-Five Lf

"Well, okay. I guess that is all right," Shannon hesitated. She supposed there was no harm in showing him

She never brought a male to her room before so Shannon was hesitant to lead him down the hall to the omega dorms. Stepping inside she

turned on the light and gestured to the small room beyond. Gideon stepped in after her and his presence filled the space making it seemed

even smaller

The room was about as large as a college dorm room, perhaps a little bigger with a full-sized bed, end table, desk and @ chair dominating

it. A television was perched in the corner and there was a decent-size closet and plenty of shelving

"What about a bath?" he asked seeing as there was no en suite

"Oh, that's down the hall," Shannon indicated. "It has bathroom and shower stalls and even a bathtub."

He nodded. It was consistent with what his pack offered in amenities for omegas. Gideon breathed a relieved sigh. Blue Moon certainly lived

up to its reputation and he was glad it treated even its lower-ranking members with consideration. After hearing his mother's stories he

knew that wasn't always the case

"So...um. I suppose I should show you to your room," Shannon said feeling awkward the longer they lingered in her small space

"Actually," Gideon turned pulling her into his embrace. "I'd rather stay here with you."

"With me?"

“Or you can stay in my room with me,” Gideon shrugged

“But.I can’t. You're.”

“We're mates. Mates usually stay together.”

Chapter Sixty-Five Lf

“But,” Shannon hesitated

Her wolf was whimpering wanting their mate to stay and Shannon had to admit she wanted him too. She only got through her first night

With the Luna's help and she doubted she could get through this night alone

“Do you want me to go?” Gideon asked

“No! I— don’t. I just.. don’t..” Shannon was at a lost to explain her experience

She never thought of herself as particularly pretty and no one took much notice of her. The only male who spoke to her was her first mate

and that was to reject her. What was she even supposed to do?

Gideon's arm came around her and he held her close. Shannon relaxed slowly enjoying his gentle caresses and scent. Her fears melted away

when he was close. It just felt right being in his arms

“We don’t have to do anything,” Gideon whispered. “If you're willing we can take it one step at a time and see where it leads.”

“One step at a time?” Shannon asked

“Hmm. And this is step one,” Gideon tilted her chin up capturing her mouth in a long, lingering kiss that had her body buzzing for more

Jason stirred from blissful slumber. Beside him Phoebe remained asleep, her warm body pressed against his. He sighed nuzzling her

wondering what had awakened him. In all the time she had been at Blue Moon he never had a restless night. And yet something pulled him

from sleep

"Is something wrong?" Jason lazily wondered

"Trouble," Lobo instantly replied

Chapter Sixty-Five ww 'Where?' Jason tensed but he didn't sense any danger nearby

"Alpha."

"Yes? What is it?" "We have an issue on the third floor. You should probably get down here."

Jason sighed, "I'm on my way."

He extricated himself from Phoebe careful not to disturb her. He thought he succeeded until she stirred, "Jason?"

"Shh," Jason leaned over her nuzzling her. "Sleep Phoebe. Everything is all right."

She sighed snuggling into her pillow. Jason smiled savoring how

comfortable she looked. He wanted nothing more than to curl up beside her but he had a duty to perform. With a sigh he rolled away and

out of the bed. He went to the bathroom to splash water on his face before locating a pair of sweatpants and pulling them on. Glancing

once more at the bed he saw Phoebe had turned to snuggle into his pillow and smiled as he slipped out of the room

Reaching the third floor Lobo suddenly came alert with a warning growl. It didn't take long to find the trouble as five of his warriors

surrounded a mottled gray wolf. One of them had tackled the wolf in the hallway and held it down as it snapped and snarled at them

"Who do we have here?" Jason demanded as he approached

"We think he came from there," one of the warriors nodded to a door hanging off its hinges

Jason glanced into the room beyond to see everything was torn to shreds. Curtains, bedspread, even the rug were strewn about while the furniture was splintered into little pieces and barely recognizable

Chapter Sixty-Five 2

"Do we know whose room?" Jason sniffed the air. It definitely wasn't a pack wolf, which meant..

"We're pretty sure it's our visitor from Kansas," Chaz said. "This is his room."

Jason sighed. It was just as Phoebe warned, "Check the other guest room. What about our other visitor?"

"I checked. It's empty," Chaz said. "As far as I can tell he's never been in there. Should I organize a search?"

"No. I have a good idea where he is," Jason said. It was no secret the other young alpha found his mate. If he wasn't in his room he was in

hers, which was the problem. "If he's claimed his mate it explains why this one has gone feral."

Chaz nodded. The pack was practically buzzing with the soap opera drama unfolding among them. Jason rubbed his temple. He could do

without any of it

"Doc?"

"Yes, Alpha?" Doctor Helen answered more quickly than he anticipated. Perhaps she was working a night shift

"We are going to need tranquilizers on the third floor."

"How much?" "The patient is an alpha so it'll have to be pretty big." "On it."

“Kind of a mess, isn’t it?” Chaz asked as Jason frowned at their guest trying to free itself from the warrior holding it down

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“Very. I'm pretty sure this is not what their fathers had in mind when they sent their sons here,” Jason answered

The doctor arrived a few minutes later carrying a dart gun and a small

Chapter Sixty-Five ww bag. Seeing the situation she didn’t say a word, kneeling and taking out a prepared dart. She loaded it into the gun

and approached carefully before taking aim and shooting the feral wolf in its haunches. Helen stepped back waiting for it to take effect

“Is one going to be enough?” Chaz asked

Helen nodded, “Should do. It's laced with wolfsbane so once it takes effect...”

She fell silent as the feral wolf quieted. It let out a whimper before suddenly succumbing. His fur receded and his body morphed back to his

human form in the slowest transformation they ever witnessed. They all breathed a sigh of relief when the young alpha finally lay in front of

them

“That was—interesting,” Chaz remarked. “How long will he be out?”

“I'm not sure,” Helen sighed. “It depends. If I shot our Alpha with this concoction he would only be out for an hour, if that.”

Jason raised an eyebrow at her candor, “Really?”

“Yes, but then you come from an ancient bloodline and you are mated to your Goddess-given Luna,” Helen nodded. “Our guest here is

young and he rejected his fated mate so I'd estimate he'll be out for several hours

Now whether he wakes up before his wolf is another matter.

"You mean to say his wolf could wake up first and go on another rampage?" Chaz asked

"Yes. It is possible since it's already gone feral, though you should ask Mona. She's the one who's studying this."

"Right," Jason said. "All right take him to the prison and put him in one of the holding cells."

Chapter Sixty-Five ww

"The prison? Really?" Chaz asked. "Not the hospital?"

"We don't have much choice. Those are the only secure rooms we have," Jason shook his head. "And we can't risk him getting loose and going on a rampage."

There were two cells in the minimum security wing that were set up like hospital rooms. They would allow the young alpha to rest

comfortably even if he was restrained. And if he broke his restraints the silver bars would prevent his escape and keep him from

endangering the rest of the pack

"Right," Chaz agreed and nodded to two of the warriors who slung their guest between them

"Doc, keep him sedated," Jason said. "Let's keep him comfortable and calm until his parents get here."

"You're going to call them in?" Chaz asked

"No choice. He's their heir and future pack leader," Jason shook his head. "He's rejected his mate so his family is the strongest bond he has

There is a lot more going on with these packs than they let on.”

The doctor and warrior nodded in agreement. They certainly didn’t envy their Alpha the conversations he was going to have

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Chapter 66

Chapter Sixty-Six Lo) Chapter Sixty-Six

Henry Anderson stepped out of the vehicle with a disgruntled sigh. His daughter climbed out after him. She was a pretty she-wolf with new

highlights and curls in her brunette hair. She was probably the only one excited for this trip. In the vehicle behind them Conri Sullivan

emerged

“Conri.”

“Henry.”

The alphas nodded to each other. Their packs had been long-time allies but recent events had strained the relationship. Everything was

conducted in purely business fashion and they no longer associated with each other

“Where's Ava?” Harper asked looking for her long-time best friend

She had not been able to meet with the other she-wolf since their packs dissolved their alliance

“She stayed home with her mother,” Conri said. “to help with the pup

Henry nodded. That was right. Conri and Aine had recently welcomed a new addition to their pack. In the past they would have all celebrated

together but they weren't on friendly terms anymore

"Right this way," their escorts directed them inside and to the Alpha's office

They entered expecting to see their sons in trouble for some infringement but surprisingly only Jason and his Beta were present to greet

them

"Have a seat," Jason nodded to them finishing some paperwork

Chapter Sixty-Six Y

They each took one of the chairs in front of the desk leaving Harper standing behind her father. She coyly smiled at Jason and Luke but

neither paid her mind. The silence persisted making the visiting alphas more anxious to learn what their sons had done. Jason had been

rather terse. He

said there was an issue needing their immediate attention. Since he refused to say more over the phone they had no choice but to comply

with the summons

Aknoek announced the arrival of another and they stiffened

However, the petite she-wolf with gray eyes certainly wasn't what they expected. She gave them a nod before circling the desk to join Jason.

He smiled welcoming her kiss before turning his attention to their guests

"Mona is one her way," Phoebe informed

"Thank you, angel," Jason sighed. "I want answers, gentlemen. I have a feeling you left out quite a bit in your applications to have your sons

study here. So..out with it."

"I'm not..." Henry hesitated

Conri shifted uncomfortably in his seat

“Neither of you wants to explain how your sons ended up with the same fated mate?”

Both jerked to attention sharing perplexed looks before Henry spoke, “That's impossible. His son already rejected his fated mate!”

Jason raised a brow glancing at Phoebe who gave a small shake of her head. She sensed no prior connections in either of the young alphas.

Not to mention, if Gideon rejected his mate he wouldn't have been given another

“And just who is the alleged mate he rejected?” Phoebe asked earning a growl from Henry

Jason's aura suddenly slammed down on him, “Threatening my Luna

Chapter Sixty-Six Y is not wise. You only get one warning.”

“your Luna?” Henry stuttered looking at Phoebe again

Her gray eyes shimmered as his wolf tucked its tail between its legs. A knock interrupted and Luke let Mona in to join them

“You haven't answered my question,” Phoebe said

“My daughter!” Henry suddenly growled out. “He dared reject my beautiful, little girl! And this one did nothing!”

“I'm just as disappointed as you,” Conri said, “but he's my son! I can't just banish him!”

“Your daughter,” Phoebe repeated turning her attention to the young she-wolf who nervously stood behind her father. “Is that so? So how

many nights did you and your mate have to stay up with her because she couldn't sleep? How many meals did you force feed her because

she wouldn't eat? How long before you coaxed her wolf out again? Night terrors? Restlessness? Listlessness? Insomnia?"

"Excuse me? What are you talking about?" Henry asked

"I'm talking about the long term side-effects that all rejected wolves endure," Phoebe said. "It can be months, even years, before they

recover

But your daughter didn't suffer at all, did she?"

"What are you implying?" Henry asked

"I'm not implying," Phoebe said. "It's obvious she's a liar.

"You dare call my daughter a liar!" Henry shouted

Jason's growl ripped through the room as his aura engulfed them and forced the other alpha into his seat, "You were warned."

"Wolves recognize our own," Phoebe calmly said. "My first mate rejected me so I recognize others who were rejected. But your daughter

wasn't, were you?"

Chapter Sixty-Six YS

"Y-y,....n0," she whimpered under the weight of Jason's aura. "I

The other alphas stared at her in surprise

"Why would you make that up?" Mona admonished staring at the she-wolf in disapproval. "Such a serious manner should never be taken

lightly."

"Ava and I thought it would be so cool if we were mated to each other's brothers. They would be brother alphas and we would be sister

lunas."

“So when you turned eighteen and you weren't Gideon's fated mate you tried to get him to take you for one anyway,” Phoebe said. “When

he refused you decided to make it seem like he rejected you. It was all an

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Harper hesitated tears welling up in her eyes

“And what did you think would happen after that?” Phoebe asked. “ That your fathers would force him to take you for a mate? Instead they

called off their whole alliance. What if your pack was attacked without the strength of that alliance? How many would have been killed or

wounded? Is that the kind of decision a Luna makes?”

“Now hold on,” Henry stood. “My daughter is young. She just made a little mistake.”

“A mistake that cost you over a hundred years of trust and brotherhood,” Phoebe reminded. “Will either of your packs ever be able to enjoy

that kind of solidarity again? A lie that made Conri doubt his own son and might have destroyed their family bonds. How do you plan to

mend that?”

Henry fell silent. He had been so enraged by the news his daughter was rejected he hadn't thought about the consequences but they were

Chapter Sixty-Six =

already suffering from them. Relations between their packs were strained and their alliance in tatters

“My son..My son didn't reject his mate?” Conri asked. “He was telling the truth this entire time?”

“And you didn’t believe him,” Phoebe nodded. “He’s found his mate now and he’s very devoted and sweet to her..a good thing since he is

her second chance mate.”

“Second chance?”

“Yes. Erick was her first mate but he rejected her the moment he saw her: “My son would never do that!” Henry snarled

“He did it right in front of me,” Phoebe said. “You would call me a liar?

Jason growled warning

“Apparently your children need a better education,” Phoebe continued. “Neither of them know anything about the risks of rejections

And your son is suffering from it now.”

“Where is my son?” Henry demanded

“Follow me,” Jason said, standing. “All of you.”

Without a word the visitors fell in step behind him as he escorted Phoebe out of the office. Luke and Mona trailed the small group as they

left the packhouse and walked to the prison. The guards let them through without a word to the minimum security cell that had been

transformed into a secure hospital room

“What is this!” Henry demanded seeing his son behind silver bars still under heavy sedation as the nurse checked his vitals

“A necessary precaution,” Jason said. “When his mate was claimed by

Chapter Sixty-Six W@W another his wolf went feral. I couldn't very well have him endangering my entire pack.”

“Is he..is he going to be okay?” Harper stared at her brother

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“We don’t know,” Mona answered. “Once a wolf goes feral it’s almost impossible to keep them from going rogue. That’s why we called you

We’re hoping family bonds will bring him back.”

The nurse looked up sensing Jason’s aura. He gave her a silent gesture. With a nod she turned down the sedation drip and backed away

The guard opened the gate and allowed them to enter. Henry and Harper hurried to the young alpha’s side

“,. What about my son?” Conri asked

“He’s still at lunch, I believe,” Phoebe said. “Follow me.”

Jason gave a subtle nod. He much preferred Phoebe away from this experiment anyway. Conri followed her back to the packhouse and into

the

dining hall where there was still quite a few lingering over their meals including Gideon and Shannon who had slept in rather late

Conri sucked in a breath watching his son lovingly nuzzle and hold the young she-wolf as if the world would stop if he didn’t. It was a scene

he never thought he’d see but now realized he should have known better

Gideon had grown up watching his parents’ love story unfold. There was simply no way the young alpha would reject his Goddess-given

mate

Hesitantly Conri approached the table waiting for his son to notice his presence. When Gideon looked up he gave a start and was suddenly

on his feet shielding Shannon. Conri winced but supposed his son had every right to be wary

"?'m—I'm sorry, son," Conri said. "We should have believed you. We should have known you'd never reject your mate."

Gideon hesitated glancing at Phoebe as some sort of mediator. She

Chapter Sixty-Six Y nodded and smiled encouragement

"Dad, this is Shannon," Gideon finally introduced. "Shannon, this is my father and current Alpha, Conri."

Nervously she stood, "H-hello, Alpha."

"Please, Conri is fine," Conri said tears welling up in his eyes. "Or even dad. I'm—I'm so glad my son found you."

Shannon hesitated before stepping around Gideon and offering her father-in-law a napkin. Conri accepted the offering before gently

cupping her face and earned a soft, protective growl from his son

"My mate is going to love you," Conri smiled dropping his hand. "And Ava has some explaining to do. If she knew Harper was planning to

try to ruin your reputation she has some questions to answer.

Gideon grimaced but it was nice to hear his father speak on his behalf again. Phoebe smiled as the trio sat down together. There was a lot

for them to discuss and bridges to mend

"Lunal We need you back here!" Mona suddenly called

"I'm on my way."

Chapter 67

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Chapter Sixty-Seven a Chapter Sixty-Seven

Phoebe left their guests quietly talking in the cafeteria. She knew the kitchen staff would keep an eye on them and alert her for any trouble

Shannon was one of their own after all and they were all impressed by Gideon's immediate desire to claim her

a Returning to the cells x found Erick had woken up. His eyes practically glowed red as he thrashed trying to break the leather straps that

held down his limbs as fur bristled along his arms and back. Harper cowered from her brother weeping in terror as their father watched in

horror as the young alpha partially shifted. The guard was loading a tranquilizer dart and preparing for the moment Jason gave him the go-

ahead

Jason grabbed Phoebe as she approached and held her protectively as he eyed the young alpha. He would have been happier if she

tunate event

"Phoebe," Mona said as her own mate held her tight. "I think you should talk to him."

"Me?"

"Why?" Jason growled

"Because she's the only one of us who knows what it is like to be rejected...and she has a calming aura. I think he'll listen to you."

"She's right," Mani agreed. "We are probably the only ones who can reach him."

Are you sure?'

"if not he'll have to be put down like any other rogue.'

Chapter Sixty-Seven Alright. Let's try." "Phoebe," Jason's embrace tightened when she tried to enter the cell

"Don't.." "I have to try," Phoebe said. "Or else he'll be put down. I won't get too close. I promise."

Jason gritted his teeth at war with himself. Finally he gave the barest of nods and allowed her to enter. Phoebe approached the bed as near

as she dared

“What do we do?”

“Give me control,” Mani said. “It would be easier if we knew his name.”

“You mean Erick?”

“mean his wolf’s name,” Mani huffed as if it should be obvious. “That’s who I need to speak with.”

Phoebe grimaced

“It would be better if the moon wasn’t waning too.”

Phoebe bit her lip. That was right. Werewolves were always strongest on the full moon and weakest during the new moon. While it was true

of all wolves Phoebe noticed it was even more pronounced in Mani

“Will you be okay?” Phoebe asked

“Yes. Mate is here. We’ll be fine.”

Allright.”

Phoebe relinquished control allowing her wolf to surge forward

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Remarkably they didn’t shift and she wasn’t sure why. Mani hadn’t hesitated to show herself to Shannon. Yet, even without shifting, their

aura spilled out filling the room like a thick fog. Even time seemed to stand still as everyone froze under the spell of their calming presence

Chapter Sixty-Seven Y ‘Calm yourself, pup,” Mani spoke through her. = */s
this any way for an Alpha to act?’ ‘M-mate,” Erick’s wolf howled

in pain

“She has already been claimed by another.’

“No! Mine!”

“Where was this resistance when you rejected her? Why didn’t you come forward then? Answer me, pup! Where were you when your sister

lied and ruined your friendship? Well? Answer!’

Erick whimpered

“What is done is done. You cannot change the past. You can only learn from it and move forward.”

‘But..Mate!’

“Is lost to you. That void is something you will have to live with.’

‘But.’

“You will have to find the strength. You may yet find a partner, but she will never be able to fill that void. You must teach your pups to be

better than you. Teach them not to reject the gift they are given. Teach them not to make your mistakes. You can do that, can’t you?’

“What if can’t?”

“Then your line ends with you. They will have no choice but to put you down. Do you choose life? Or oblivion?”

oe

Phoebe sighed as Mani receded into the back of her mind. She wobbled and suddenly Jason's arms were around her. His scent filled her

nostrils and she leaned on him welcoming his warmth and support

Mani?’

Chapter Sixty-Seven Ww 1'm here. Just tired. That took more out of me than expected.” Are you all right?” “Yes. Jjust need to rest.” All right.

Rest.’

“Phoebe, are you all right?” Jason nuzzled her, his voice harsh with concern

“Ill be fine. I just need some rest,” she smiled at him

He kissed her forehead and tightened his embrace. Watching from the sidelines had been the most difficult moment of his life. But when

her aura spilled out he was in awe. He had no idea it was so strong or how she had ever been able to hide it. Even Lobo was moved to

silence

Phoebe looked to the bed to see the young alpha lay in a cold sweat

However he was no longer fighting his wolf for control. Groggily he opened his eyes as tears streamed down his face

“Dad?”

“Erick?” Henry stepped forward. “Are you...How do you feel?”

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exclusively available on our site. Happy reading!

“It hurts so bad and 1.1 can’t feel my wolf. I think he’s gone!” Erick choked out

“Not gone,” Phoebe corrected earning their attention. “He’s in mourning. You rejected your fated mate and you will not be given another

There will always be a void within that you won't be able to fill. You, and your wolf, will have to find a way to live with that.”

Erick whimpered as more tears seeped from his eyes. He never imagined this kind of pain. Was this the pain his sister went through? Why

was he punished while Gideon was still given a mate?

"I'm so sorry," Henry shook his head. "I—I should have told you two
Chapter Sixty-Seven SS along time ago about your mother."

"W-what about mom?" Harper asked

"That we weren't fated mates," Henry sighed

"Dad, we already knew that," Harper shook her head

"But maybe if you knew the whole story you wouldn't have tried to entrap
Gideon and your brother wouldn't have.. This is all my fault,"

Henry shook his head. "I—I was too impatient. I didn't want to wait for my
fated mate and your grandfather wouldn't step down until I had

my Luna. Your mother was one of my best friends so..we thought our bond
was just as good. We chose each other. It was fine...but there

was an emptiness inside I couldn't shake. I knew it was because I had given
up my fated mate. I tried to ignore it but..."

Erick and Harper stared at their father waiting for him to continue

"When Conri found his mate..The moment I saw her I felt an ache and

I knew she was meant to be mine," Henry shook his head. "If I had been a little
more patient..If I had gone looking...But it was too late. The

Goddess gave her to Conri. And it was clear she felt no connection to me. I
had broken our bond without ever meeting her. She would never

know it was supposed to be me."

Erick and Harper blinked slowly processing what their father said

They had known their parents were chosen mates but they hadn't thought
much about it. But to think their father's mate was meant to be

Aine. She had been so close, only a pack away and he hadn't bothered to look for her. Even now he still felt the pain of losing her

Now that they thought about it their father had always been a bit reserved when their pack and Conri's converged. And there was often a

pained look in his gaze. Was it because he was thinking about what might have been? Did he wonder what it would be like if he had taken

Aine as his

Chapter Sixty-Seven 2 own?

"So, what's going to happen now?" Harper asked

"First we'll move your brother to the pack hospital," Phoebe announced.

"When he's recovered enough for travel, he can go home. But he's

rejected his fated mate and he'll not be given another. However, he can still take a chosen mate, one that can help him and be a good Luna

though...it will not be the same. And you will have to apologize."

Harper bit her lip

"Gideon was not your fated mate as much as you wanted him to be and because of your actions the alliance between your packs had been

broken."

"Gideon wasn't your fated mate?" Erick asked looking at his sister

Blushing she shook her head. Erick let out an uneasy breath. So, that was why.

Phoebe nodded to the nurse and guard. Together they released Erick from his restraints before moving the bed out of the cell. Henry and

Harper followed each lost in their own thoughts

“Unbelievable,” Mona muttered shaking her head. “To think the fathers and not just the sons were given the same mate. That's one for the

books. And Phoebe what you did...it almost seemed like you were talking to him. What did you say?”

“Honestly, I gave my wolf control so I don't remember most of it,” Phoebe said

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exclusively available on our site. Happy reading!

When Mani took over Phoebe remained in the background and though she had some idea of what was going on she hadn't caught

everything

Wolves didn't communicate with each other like their human counterparts so some things were always lost in translation

Chapter Sixty-Seven YY

“That makes sense,” Mona nodded. “Still..it was amazing. I never heard of a rogue being brought back once it goes feral. Maybe it was

because it was caught early, but still... Wow!”

She suddenly got a thoughtful expression

“Maybe there is more to rogues. I always thought it was strange they set up territories so close to packs but maybe it's not about going

home so much as it was about them being drawn to their mates. That would explain

why some travel such great distances too. But how to test the theory.

Mona muttered to herself heading to the exit. No doubt she would go directly back to her lab to research this new information. Luke

watched her

with a pained expression

"I hope you realize she'll never come out of that lab again," he complained

Jason smirked

"Maybe...but her lab does have a hideaway bed," Phoebe pointed out

"You could always bring her dinner and coax her away from her computer."

Luke's gaze suddenly lit up at her suggestion. Now that was an idea

"I'll even help you make a special meal for two to surprise her."

"Excuse me?" Jason interrupted

"Yes!" Luke exclaimed before he could protest. "Thank you, Luna!

Jason fought back a growl. He supposed he could allow it this time

After all, Luke deserved some private time with his mate. Jason knew his Beta and Q__Gamma had been holding back on starting families out

of

Chapter Sixty-Seven concern for him. But that was over. There was no need for any of them to hold back any longer

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Chapter Sixty-Eight we Chapter Sixty-Eight

Phoebe breathed deep as Jason helped her out of the limo. Despite his assurances she couldn't shake her anxiety. She was about to meet

the royal family. Never in her wildest dreams had she ever entertained that thought. Even if she had become Rimrock's Luna there was

almost no chance that she would stand in front of royalty. Phoebe anxious but Mani was unimpressed

~ For the past week her wolf had been restless and easily annoyed especially whenever talk about the royal family dominated the

conversation which had been quiet often. Norah had painstakingly instructed Phoebe in how to properly meet and greet them. Though the

royal family needed to be respected as Blue Moon's Luna Phoebe didn't need to pander to them. She should be dignified and friendly but

not overly accommodating

'Why?' Mani huffed. 'We owe them nothing.'

"Everything all right?" Jason asked

"Just nervous."

"You have no reason to be, angel."

"Damn straight," Mani seconded. They're the ones who should be nervous."

"You okay?" Lucille asked as she and Ben joined them

Chapter Sixty-Eight Lf

"Yeah, my wolf is restless," Phoebe said

They stood outside an impressive mansion. It was the royal's seat of power though it was more like an embassy than a capitol. In Europe the

royal family possessed an actual castle though even Jason hadn't seen it

It had been home to the royal family for centuries. In contrast the mansion in front of them was much more recent. After Blue Moon,

Harvest Moon and Blood Moon immigrated to the Americas the royals' authority waned considerably. They relocated as well but their

presence here was lukewarm at best. Summoning important pack alphas to attend events such as this one was about the extent of their

power though they were desperate to hide it

A few days ago Jason, Phoebe and their escort had flown in to prepare for the upcoming party. It was clear Jason had very little actual

desire to be there. Though they were welcome to stay in the royal mansion they couldn't bring in their security detail a fact that certainly

irritated Jason whose primary concern was always his Luna's safety. Instead Blue Moon maintained a small estate nearby staffed by their

pack members

Phoebe thought it was a little overboard until Ben informed her that most packs did the same thing. No alpha willingly relinquished their

authority to the King. Mani agreed wholeheartedly

since Jason couldn't bring an escort he insisted on Lucille and Ben accompanying them much to his sister's annoyance. All week she

complained about playing nice with the princess referring to her as the royal pain. Phoebe made the mistake of asking her why she didn't

like her only once

"She's a stuck-up, whiny b***h," Lucille practically snarled when asked. "And she had the most irritating voice. Lucy why don't you speak to

Chapter Sixty-Eight ww your brother? / know you can convince him to take me for his mate. Yeah right! As if I would ever want to be family

with hert

So the Princess was yet another she-wolf with eyes on her mate. The knowledge didn't really faze Phoebe in the slightest. Between Kristie,

Katrina, Camilla, even young Tracy the list seemed never-ending but fending off the princess sounded like a greater challenge

"She lays one finger on our Mate we will rip her hand off" Mani growled

Phoebe took a deep breath threading her arm through Jason's as they headed to the door. A guard stood there to greet them with a list of packs invited

"Names?"

"Alpha Jason, Blue Moon," Jason replied. "My sister Lucille and her mate Gamma Ben and, of course, my Luna, Phoebe."

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The guard looked bored as he checked them off the list until Jason announced his Luna. His head shot up to stare at Phoebe like she was

Chicken Little and just declared the sky was falling. Her gaze shimmered silver at the guard's obvious shock

"He ain't seen nothing yet!" Mani chuckled

"G-go right in," the guard finally nodded

"Well if that is the look at the door I can't wait until we get inside," Lucille chuckled

Jason stifled a growl

"Oh, come on brother. We should have some fun with this! I can't wait for that snob to meet Phoebe. It's going to be a show!"

Jason's grip tightened protectively making Phoebe chuckle. Maybe it came with being an alpha but he always assumed the worst. It would

Chapter Sixty-Eight wa certainly be easier if these she-wolves would leave her mate alone

Walking down hall they ignored the royal guards they passed and made their way to the center of the mansion where it opened into a wide

courtyard. They stepped outside the doors and down steps into an area open to the night sky. As with any werewolf function this birthday

was held

under the moon and stars. Phoebe looked up with a frown. The night was rather overcast and she hoped it wouldn't rain

She glanced around to see quite a few guests had arrived before them and were mingling in the absence of their hosts. Phoebe didn't know

why but it seemed strange to her. Even if the royal family intended to make formal introductions later shouldn't at least one of them be

there to greet their guests?

"If you are wondering where the royal family is, don't," Lucille shook her head. "They'll make their grand entrance a little before midnight

when all the guests have arrived. Until then we can do whatever."

Phoebe nodded. A server met them offering champagne and earned a snarl from Jason. Baring his neck the server quickly departed

"Jason."

"A little advice," Ben said before Phoebe could protest. "They only serve drinks with aconite and strong ones at that. I don't advise

accepting any."

Phoebe frowned. She knew werewolves had come up with their own alcoholic beverages utilizing aconite. The more aconite mixed into it

the more potent the effects but why would the royal family serve it on such a special occasion? It seemed an invitation for trouble as

drunken werewolves were just as unpredictable as drunken humans

"Don't forget it also weakens our connection," Mani reminded

"So the royal family wants us weak?"

Chapter Sixty-Eight WS

“Depending on the strength of the wolf drinking too much would impair their aura and make it impossible to shift. It gives the royal family

an edge especially considering we couldn't bring our own guards. No wonder our Mate is on edge.”

Phoebe mulled over her wolf's warning and gave Jason's arm a comforting squeeze. This was certainly shaping up to be an interesting

night and it had only begun. Just what was the royal family planning?

“That is the question,” Mani agreed

Phoebe remained on edge as they joined the others. Some were enjoying the champagne without a care but most were abstaining. Even if

they took a glass from the servers it was clear it was only for show as they never sipped from it

“So, if our hosts aren't here, what are we supposed to do?” Phoebe asked

“We just mingle, chat and enjoy the buffet,” Lucille said. “It's actually quite enjoyable.”

“Alpha Jason.”

They turned toward the voice to see a familiar, lanky Alpha with a pretty Luna at his side. Though Phoebe hadn't met her she knew instantly

knew who she was

“Alpha Reed,” Phoebe greeted, “and you must be Luna Chloe.”

Reed smiled glancing at his Luna who found it difficult to contain her excitement for this meeting. She had been eager to meet Phoebe in

person ever since her mate came home from Blue Moon's Luna Ceremony

“You must be Luna Phoebe,” Chloe immediately embraced her. “I heard so much about you! Thank you so much for what you did for Lily

We've been so worried about her after...everything.”

Chapter Sixty-Eight wY

“It was my pleasure. Lily is so sweet and I know how difficult it must have been for her,” Phoebe nodded. There were just some things that

were hard to describe if one never experienced them

“wish we could have done more,” Chloe shook her head

“You did everything right,” Phoebe assured her. “You were there for her and made her eat. The rest really depends on time. And you gave

her that too.”

“Thank you,” Chloe wiped a tear away. “Thank you so much.”

Phoebe gave her a squeeze. It was clear Chloe cared a great deal about her sister-in-law. She was grateful Lily had such a support network.

A

rejection was difficult to overcome but even more so alone. Not for the first time Phoebe wished she confided in her parents. Even if she

didn't tell them who her mate was at the very least they would have supported her through it

Jason and Reed shared a look. It seemed their Lunas were fast friends

Both of them were certain if they ever had a disagreement their Lunas would take them to task for being too stubborn

“Have you seen Lily?” Chloe asked

“Not since her Luna Ceremony,” Phoebe shook her head

Lily's ceremony had taken place a month after Phoebe's on the next full moon though she and William claimed one another long before

then

Attending it had been Phoebe's first official duty as Blue Moon's Luna and she was so happy watching the pair take their vows and lead

their pack on the moonlit run, something Phoebe had missed with her own pack due to Graham's sudden appearance

Unfortunately Reed and Chloe hadn't been able to attend since the latter was recovering from the birth of their pup. Their eldest son,

Kaede, attended in his parents' place and whole heartedly congratulated his aunt

Chapter Sixty-Eight ww Though Lily was still underweight it was clear she was thriving under William's watchful eye. Her complexion was

much healthier and a sheen returned to her hair. Her eyes were bright and a shy smile graced her face

And it wasn't just William who was smitten by his Luna. Though she had only been amongst them a very short time it was clear Winter

Moon adored her. The omega servers, warriors and ranked members treated her with respect and even relief. Phoebe wondered how long

the pack had been on edge wondering if their alpha would take a chosen mate and subject them to Camilla's demanding, arrogant

personality

"Oh, she looks so good!" Chloe gushed. "They came to visit for Aarons naming ceremony."

similar to a pack initiation Naming Ceremonies welcomed pups born into the pack. For lower-ranked pups a family ceremony was often

held but for ranked members, especially the Alpha and Luna's pups, they were thrown a much larger party for all the pack to celebrate

which often included close allies as well

Naturally William and Lily received an invitation as they were the pup's aunt and uncle. Jason and Phoebe were also invited but another

rogue attack prevented them from attending. Phoebe had been devastated they missed it but she was happy to hear Lily made it and was

doing well

"Oh, speak of the devil!" Lucille said catching their attention as William and Lily entered the courtyard

It took all of a few seconds for Lily to spy her family and practically dragged William over to join them. Phoebe was happy to note Lily

appeared healthy as ever. The dark rings around her eyes had disappeared and she gained quite a bit of weight. She was still as tall and slim

as her

Chapter Sixty-Eight Ww brother but now with subtle, feminine curves and healthy muscle tone

Beside her looking as proud as a peacock was William his arm around her waist and a new possessive aura warding off any who dared

threaten what was his

Lily eagerly hugged Chloe and Phoebe in turn and drawing quite a bit of attention their way. No doubt it was an odd sight to see three

lunas acting like sisters. Alliances were one thing but to treat one another as family quite another

"Lily, you look fabulous!" Phoebe said unable to hide her delight

Blushing profusely Lily looked down at her simple black gown with a deep v-neck. On many wolves it would be revealing but with her

slender frame it was elegant. Even so, Phoebe had a suspicion William picked it out

"Thank you. L.thank you," Lily nervously answered still harboring insecurities when it came to her looks

"I'd say we are just about the luckiest alphas in the world," William announced. "With the most beautiful lunas at our sides."

"Agreed," Jason seconded pulling Phoebe close and kissing her temple

Phoebe blushed, glancing toward Chloe to see Reed was also giving her similar attention. Though the Harvest Moon Alpha seemed

reserved when she first met him it was clear he didn't have any reservations toward his mate

"Oh, Jason. I am glad you're here," Reed said clearing his throat. "Last month we sent out samples of the balm to various packs and all of

them have been pre-ordering it by the case. We will start production within the week thanks to Atticus's supplies."

"Good to hear," Jason nodded. With Bridget a part of Blue Moon his

Chapter Sixty-Eight ww pack could make all they needed for their own purposes but Harvest Moon could distribute it worldwide

"still can't believe two she-wolves cooked it up in their kitchen," William shook his head

"And just what is that supposed to mean?" Phoebe playfully challenged. "Is it more believable if two males did it?"

"Well, no... didn't say that."

"But it's what you were implying, yes?" Phoebe teased earning chuckles from the others

"No, I just meant..."

"Will," Lily gently admonished, "just be quiet. Your mouth tends to get you into trouble."

"That's not what you said last night," William scoffed

“Never mind,” Lily blushed at the others tried to contain their

mirth

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Chapter Sixty-Nine YS Chapter Sixty-Nine

Phoebe leaned against Jason letting herself relax and enjoy their present company. If this was how the evening would go she wouldn't mind

it at all. So focused on their group she didn't notice the arrival of the royal family until the King stepped forward raising a hand to call

everyone to attention

“Friends, allies, alphas and unas, it pleases me to see so many gathered here for my dear daughter's birthday,” the King announced

He stood on the edge of the courtyard where the ledge gave him a natural height advantage. Beside him Queen Leah maintained a severe

expression looking uncomfortable as all eyes turned toward them. Next to her stood a younger she-wolf, clearly the princess they were

gathered to honor while on the king's far right were two males, the princes. The king, queen and princes wore purple signifying their place

as members of the royal family while the princess set herself apart in light blue and crowned with a sparkling diamond tiara

The family did make a striking group as they stood together. All bore similar facial features: dark eyes, long, narrow noses and tanned skin

However, the king, first prince and princess were blonde while the queen and second prince had dark, brown hair. Despite their attempt to

appear as family Phoebe couldn't help but sense tension among them. Though the king commended his daughter's beauty he never once

looked at her

“Would all the unmated males please step forward? One of you will be the lucky one chosen to escort my daughter for the night.”

The unmated males followed his request to stand before the royal family. Some were eager wanting to make a good impression. Others

were

Chapter Sixty-Nine Ww reluctant hoping they were passed over once again. It seemed not everyone thought escorting the princess was a

lucky task. Several glanced at the others now standing in front of the king and noticed a prominent figure had not joined them

Looking to the princess it was clear she also noticed the missing figure. She looked down on her perspective escorts with a frown while her

father waited for her to make her choice so they could get on with the night. Her gaze drifted to the rest of the gathering wondering if he

arrived late and eventually found him talking to several alphas and lunas in a small group

A confident smile returned and she descended into the courtyard marching past her would-be suitors to the one Alpha she coveted. All

eyes followed her as she crossed the distance separating them. Reaching her goal she tapped him on the shoulder

“Jason, you silly goose, you missed father’s announcement,” Selena smiled offering her hand expecting him to take it

He eyed her coldly though that never bothered her. Jason had always been aloof toward everyone. But surprisingly a smile suddenly graced

his face, “Not at all, your Highness. Your father asked for the unmated males.”

Jason turned revealing the petite she-wolf in his arms. His broad frame had hidden her completely from view. She wore a delicate salmon-

pink gown. Her hair was tamed in a half-up style. Despite its rich, dark color she was rather pale and plain looking compared to other she-

wolves. Her most remarkable feature was her gray eyes which shimmered silver in the moonlight

“Allow me to introduce my mate and Luna, Phoebe,” Jason smiled. * Phoebe, angel. This is her highness, Princess Selena.”

Chapter Sixty-Nine

“Hello, your Highness,” Phoebe smiled. “It’s very nice to meet you

Selena stared in disbelief. Did Jason, a wolf who claimed he would have no other but his fated Luna, just..who was this she-wolf? Jason

bowed his head nuzzling Phoebe and nipping her ear

“Jason,” Phoebe chuckled

Jason growled, smiling and enjoying her against him. For a wolf that had always been cold toward others it was strange to see him so warm

and openly loving. It was clear his actions were not only a surprise to the princess but the other wolves around them

Phoebe shot him a glance in clear warning to mind his manners before looking again to the waiting princess, “Congratulations and happy

birthday.”

«..Th-thank you,” Selena’s mouth twitched as she muttered her reply

She watched in jealousy as Jason cuddled his Luna, showering her with love and attention. In all the years she knew him Jason was always

cold and distant. He virtually sneered at any she-wolf begging for his attention, even her. However, as an unmated male he could never

deny her on her birthday and she always chose him as her escort. Even so he maintained his distance and acted as if her touch revolted him

And yet there was no sign of that now toward the petite she-wolf in his arms. He treated her so tenderly. There was no doubting his desire if

the heaviness of the musk in his scent was any indication. Phoebe kept elbowing him and shot him warning glances but her smile made it

clear she delighted in his attention. Just who was this she-wolf? How was she able to get his attention and love?

“Ah!” Jason suddenly looked up, “Phoebe, there's someone I wanted

Chapter Sixty-Nine Ww to introduce you to. Shall we?”

“Alright,” Phoebe cast a final glance at Selena before allowing him to lead her away. “Have a wonderful night, your Highness.”

Jason excused them from their group and headed to the buffet table where a pair of males was perusing the offerings. Not surprisingly the

royal family served only the most expensive hors d'oeuvres

“Zain.”

One turned at the sound of his name to see Jason and broke out in a smile, “Jason! Glad to see you! Oh, and who is this lovely creature?”

“This is Phoebe, my mate and Luna. Phoebe this is Alpha Zain of Strawberry Moon and his Luna.”

“Hello,” Phoebe smiled. “I've heard so much about you and your pack

“That is the highest compliment but it's not my doing,” Zain chuckled kissing her hand. “It's all due to my Luna, Chandler.”

The other male eagerly took her hand, “It's so good to meet you finally. I was so disappointed when we missed your Luna Ceremony. It was

unfortunate it was so short notice. Men! Am I right? Can't trust them to plan anything.”

Phoebe laughed as both Jason and Zain shook their heads, “Yes,

males are impossible.”

“Excuse me?” Jason scoffed. “My mother planned it so it’s all her fault

Zain snorted, “Issues much?”

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exclusively available on our site. Happy reading!

Jason growled but there was no hostility behind it. Their packs shared strong ties and originally he planned to end his security tour at

Strawberry Moon as he seldom was able to visit

Chapter Sixty-Nine Ww

“Phoebe,” Chandler mused, “why does that name sound so familiar?”

“It was on the invitation they sent us,” Zain reminded

“No, not that. There was something else...oh yes! A transfer request,” Chandler said. “A few years ago, you remember, we had a young male,

a rogue, arrived on our borders. He wanted to join and said he had a friend he left behind in his old pack. I sent a transfer through but it

was rejected

What was his name?”

“Dash,” Phoebe said

“Yes! That's it! Dash.”

“Am I missing something?” Jason asked

“Dash was a member of Rimrock,” Phoebe explained. “We went to school together. He was one of my few friends. He had a hard time when

it came out he was bi-s****1. The warriors in particular were pretty brutal. He finally had enough. T helped him purchase an old beater, he cut

ties and went rogue. He later contacted me saying he had joined Strawberry Moon and offered to have them put in a transfer for me to join

as well. By that time [was already taking care of Blake and Emma so I couldn't just leave and I couldn't let the pups go rogue either. I didn't

know he actually did put the request through.”

“I'm guessing it never made it passed our alpha's desk,” Chandler sighed. “I warned him it was a long shot but he felt bad about leaving

you behind especially knowing you had been rejected by your mate. But Luna? That's interesting.”

He looked to Jason who stood behind her with a pensive expression at this new revelation. It was almost a fluke he visited Rimrock and

found her. If she had transferred to Strawberry Moon Phoebe would have been even further away and given his mother's call made him cut

his security

Chapter Sixty-Nine YY tour short he probably never would have visited Strawberry Moon especially knowing their pack security was

excellent

“Perhaps it was best it didn't work out,” Chandler said coming to the same conclusion. “Dash will be happy to know you are doing well.”

“How is he?”

“He's one of the best trackers and warriors we have,” Zain announced

“Oh, good,” Phoebe sighed. She was glad to hear he was doing well after all the difficulty he endured. Jason's embrace tightened in

comfort

She leaned against him enjoying his warmth. Yes, they were all in a much better place

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Selena watched Jason walk away with his Luna still in disbelief. For years she pursued him confident he would eventually choose her for his

mate. She was a princess after all, who could be better? Despite the fact he claimed to be waiting for his mate she knew he had to be

getting impatient. No male could hold back his urges forever and she was determined to be there when he finally succumbed but he never

did

And now he found his mate. The warmth in his gaze was no illusion but it was reserved only for Phoebe. He held her, nuzzled her, devoted

all his attention to her. Selena never imagined he could be so loving or attentive. But why that she-wolf?

Phoebe was pretty enough, Selena supposed, in a plain sort of way

The gown she wore showed off her gentle curves but it was nothing compared to Selena's endowments. She knew just how appealing she

was to other wolves. What was more she had ample experience pleasuring males so she knew she could easily win anyone's heart

Yet Jason refused to touch her. Any time she tried to entice or seduce

Chapter Sixty-Nine wY him she was met with a firm rejection. He never even spent a single night in the royal palace though she offered him

a bed many times. Every birthday he escaped as soon as propriety allowed with hardly a good-bye

Selena thought he was just being shy given his inexperience. But now ...she watched him with his Luna, the way his hands caressed her, his

arms embraced her, his mouth hungered for her. It was clear there was no shyness in him. He devoted everything to her

It couldn't just be the mating bond. Her father assured her the mating bond was nothing special. They had the freedom to choose their

most suitable partner. That was why she rejected her fated mate. She deserved better than a mere royal guard. She hadn't expected the

pain that cut through to her very soul when the bond severed. But after a dose of wolfsbane the pain went away and it had the added

bonus of silencing her whining wolf for a time

If she rejected her mate with such ease there was no reason Jason couldn't especially as he hadn't met her yet. He was free to take any she-

Wolf for his mate. So why then did he have no interest in her? She was the only princess and possessed a royal lineage. So why?

Why did he look at her with disdain when he had only love for such a plain little she-wolf? It didn't make sense

"Something the matter, princess?"

Selena jerked from her thoughts to see Lucille eyeing her. The she-wolf had always irritated her but since Lucille was Jason's sister Selena

had no choice but to tolerate her. It just wasn't right. Selena was from the

royal family yet Lucille never showed an ounce of reverence. Ancient bloodlines or not how could Lucille dare think herself better than a

princess? Because she had a mate? He was only a gamma!

Chapter Sixty-Nine wa With a growl Selena spun on her heels and returned to her waiting family and unmated males longing to be her

escort. She would show Jason

exactly what he was missing

Lucille snorted back a laugh watching her retreat. She was actually glad she had been dragged along after all

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“You and your brother play a dangerous game,” Reed commented after the princess left them

“What can she possibly do to us?” Lucille shrugged

as “Power or not, she is still of royal lineage,” Reed reminded

“Maybe they should reconsider.”

“Lucille!” Chloe gasped. “I don’t think you should say that so freely. It could be considered treason.”

1d his Luna what 1 just said is the least of their worries,” Lucille warned. “They are

Reed frowned but on the whole he agreed. In fact he found it rather disturbing the princess spent so many years trying to seduce Jason

when it

was clear he was not her mate. The royal family was meant to be examples of werewolf kind and as such they should have more loyalty and

reverence toward the Moon Goddess than anyone else. And yet..

There were many rather disturbing rumors. The King and Queen were chosen mates and it was rumored that not only did the King reject his

fated

mate he might have had her beheaded to ensure she never found a second chance. The first Prince was said to not only be deviant in his

desire for multiple mates but that his sadistic pleasure usually killed his bed partners. It was rare for them to survive one night let alone two

The only one who seemed to be decent enough was the second Prince. He had yet to take a mate but he avoided needless trysts and

entanglements

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Though the royal family had very little power they flaunted their influence as if they were untouchable. Reed didn't know of a single alpha

that held them with any particular respect. It was all lip service done to ensure the royal family didn't interfere with their pack. And yet he

wasn't sure what would happen if Jason truly challenged them

He watched the princess return to her suitors selecting a tall alpha with dark hair. Reed couldn't help but see the similarities between that

unfortunate male and Jason. He was a little leaner and lacked Jason's maturity with almost boyish good looks. Even so it was clear the

princess was trying to set an example

After selecting her partner it was tradition for the princess and her escort to celebrate with a dance. It was something Jason begrudgingly

participated in keeping Selena at arm's length despite her attempts to get closer. With a more willing partner she sashayed into the middle

of the courtyard using every opportunity to rub and grind against the young male during their dance. She cast furtive glances toward Jason

at every turn hoping to see him watching in envy

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If Jason noticed he gave no indication as he and Phoebe continued to greet alphas and lunas he had close ties to. Moving from the

Strawberry Moon pair they next met with Alpha Hymen and Luna Kleio of the New Moon pack. Like Harvest Moon, New Moon was a pack

of intellectuals and prided themselves on preserving the history of their kind as well as their predecessors, the Lycans. Even from a glance it

was clear Phoebe and Kleio were getting along famously with no sign of awkwardness. Though surprising at first glance, Reed realized it

shouldn't be given Phoebe's formal education

It was clear Jason had lost the train of the conversation as the lunas chatted amicably. While he remained silent he smiled and marveled at

Chapter Seventy YL Phoebe's ease and grace as she held her own with such learned wolves. His embrace tightened and he continually

nuzzled her, reveling in her intellectual prowess. The attention earned him the occasional elbow. Not once did he spare a single glance to

the couple on the dance floor

As Selena's partner spun her Phoebe's laughter rang out from Jason's amorous advances. Burning with rage the princess couldn't take it

anymore. She twirled away from her partner and stormed toward the happy couple. Neither took notice of her even as she neared them and

declared, "I challenge for the position of Luna!"

Phoebe blinked finally noted Selena who stood pointing at her. Jason growled glaring at her audacity. All around them, conversation and

festivities ceased. Not in anyone's lifetime had they witnessed such an event before and certainly not with a Luna who was already mated

and marked by her Goddess-given mate

Phoebe frowned, "Is that even a thing?"

"Well," Alpha Hyman explained, "since Lycans didn't have fated mates they freely challenged each other for titles, land, honor, mates,

whatever and since most of our original laws were copied from theirs challenges are still technically legal. Though, I've never heard of a

Luna being challenged after she's been marked."

"Princess Selena," Jason somehow maintained an even voice, "have you lost the last of your senses?"

"She doesn't deserve to stand beside you!" Selena raised her voice to almost a shriek. "She doesn't deserve you at all! You should be

mine!"

Jason snarled his embrace around Phoebe tightening at the thought of any other wolf in his arms. Phoebe coolly eyed her would-be rival

and almost seemed bored by the drama in front of her as far as the other guests could tell. They thought she should show a little more

concern. After all, if

Chapter Seventy WY she lost she would either be killed or forcibly demoted to Jason's mistress while Selena was named Luna since a wolf

couldn't reject a marked

mate

"Are there rules?" Phoebe asked glancing at Hyman and Kleio

"Oh, um...yes," Kleio nodded. "As the challenged party you can decide when, where and in what form the challenge shall take place. The

challenge ends when one submits to the other, is too injured to carry on or . dies.”

“Form?”

“You can choose to fight in human or wolf form. If the former neither party can shift, not even a partial shift although you can rely on your

wolves for speed and strength.”

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Phoebe nodded turning to her wolf, ‘What do you think?/ don’t think! can take her. I've only had defensive training.”

“Let me at her. I'll tear her apart,” Mani snarled

Are you sure? Everyone will see you.” “It’s fine. Our Mate is here. We have nothing to fear” Allright.” Phoebe moved to step forward only for

Jason to tighten his embrace

“Phoebe, no.”

She turned to see him staring at her, his eyes practically glowing

Phoebe didn’t need their bond to feel his apprehension and fear considering she had no sort of combat training. If not for her wolf's

confidence Phoebe wouldn't have even trusted her voice

smiling she gently pulled his face to hers capturing his lips and pouring her love and reassurance into their bond. With a sigh she slowly

pulled away. Her eyes shimmered silver as she smiled at him

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“It will be all right, Jason,” Phoebe whispered. “Promise.”

Jason growled still not wanting to release her, "If it looks like you're going to be hurt I'm going to put an end to it."

Phoebe patted his cheek. Yes. He would never allow her to come to harm. She turned back to the princess. This time he didn't stop her but

she still felt his concern buzzing through their bond

"Take care of Mate. I'll handle this b***h," Mani snarled pressing forward and taking control. "Are you sure you want to do this, pup?"

Though her focus was on the princess everyone in attendance felt her aura and fought the urge to bare their necks. Phoebe's normally soft

voice took on a huskier tone. Even Jason was surprised and would have worried if not for Phoebe's soothing presence humming in their

bond. Lobo was fighting for control wanting to protect their mate but quieted as Phoebe's voice whispered in their mind, "Don't worry.

Mani knows what she is doing

Jason frowned. Did Phoebe mean her wolf was in control? It was rare for their wolves to seize control when they were still in human form

Watching as Phoebe approached there was no awkwardness in her gate which was the usual sign a wolf was trying to manipulate a body

they weren't familiar with. Yet considering how in sync Phoebe was with her wolf perhaps it wasn't a surprise they could switch so easily

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"You are nothing but an omega," Selena sneered. "I'm the Princess and a white wolf"

"Oh, pup. Someone has been filling your head with nonsense. White wolves are nothing special. They just get dirty faster."

Selena scoffed nearly choking on her outrage. Ever since her first shift her mother had been praising her beauty and rarity. White wolves

were seldom seen so their appearance was always celebrated. How dare this

Chapter Seventy she-wolf claim different!

“Do you accept the challenge or not?” Selena demanded

“Accept, of course,” Phoebe’s silver gaze shimmered with amusement

“Here and now will be fine. Our wolves will settle the score. No proxies

You will fight your own battle this time.”

Selena sucked in a breath, twitching. It was a little known rule that royalty could rely on a proxy to fight their duels to prevent injury to

themselves unless stipulated before the start. She had been planning to send in a warrior. If she tried to now she would be forfeiting the

fight

The gathered crowd murmured amongst themselves. Rumors traveled fast and many heard Phoebe hadn't even shifted for the traditional

moonlit run. Many took it as a sign she was indeed wolfless. But now she accepted a challenge and wished to fight in their wolf forms. Was

she not wolfless? And no proxies? What if the princess was injured?

And yet..

There was no denying the aura that swirled around Phoebe engulfing them all. There was a weight to it that was hard to resist. They not

only wanted to bare their necks but also take a knee in reverence

“Remember pup, you wanted this. Don’t hesitate now.”