Chapter 60

It was just like I last saw it all those weeks ago.

The moonlight glistened against the water, and the cool breeze swept my hair around my eyes. Unlike all the other times when the moon goddess brought me here, I was wearing my own clothes instead of the white gown I always found myself in. And this time, I didn't feel drawn to the sun either.

Perhaps this was because I came here on my own accord, instead of being drawn from my sleep into the realm of the sun and moon. I was more conscious of myself.

My toes sank in the soft, cold sand as I walked along the shore of the ocean. The short waves splash against my ankle as the moon dances on its crystal-like surface.

I faced it completely. It seemed even bigger than the last time I was here as if jeering me. But the moon goddess was nowhere in sight.

"I know you're here, and I know you can hear me," I shouted. "I need to talk to you."

The only response I received was yet another splash of water to the shore as the waves broke, followed by complete and utter silence.

I sighed. "Look, I know we aren't on good terms right now, and I know I made a promise and failed to commit. But I need you, okay? Please!"

Still, nothing.

Sighing, I sat on the sand with my knees pulled to my chest. I knew this was a long shot, but I wanted to give it a try. The worst part was I didn't even know how to get back. I could try and get lost in my sleep, like Lukas said.

My eyes burnt with tears, yet I didn't regret my decision. I wanted to do everything in my power, and since dreaming is actually my power, why not use it?

"So you've summoned me."

I stiffened. It was her.

I jumped to my feet and swerved around so that I was face-to-face with the goddess herself. I thought she'd look mad, upset or even annoyed. But instead, she seemed impressed.

"I'm sorry," I said. "But I had to."

She circled me slowly, taking in my funeral attire before meeting my eyes again. "And what is it that you need so urgently, that you've made such a dangerous trip? After you allowed your oracle to cut me off, I never thought I'd see you this soon. Tell me, Melissa. Why did you do it?"

So she was upset. She simply had a good way of hiding it.

I shrugged, trying to find the best excuse for abandoning her and my mission without telling her the truth.

"There were some things that were unclear to me, and I needed time and space to figure them out."

She nodded. "I see, and me pulling you here all the time wasn't allowing you to do that?"

I shook my head.

"Well," she hummed. "It must be urgent if you found me all the way up here on your own then."

"Lukas," I said. "He's dead."

"Ah, Lukas." She smiled as he raised her hand to the ocean, and a small ball of water rose from it and floated towards us. "His soul returned to me a few days ago." I gasped. This made so much sense. The ocean-the thing that I thought was the ocean was more of a sea of werewolves' souls-probably unborn and dead.

I reached out to touch what was left of Lukas, but the moon goddess shifted him out of my reach.

"Is . . . Is he okay?" I asked softly.

"He is. He returned to me peaceful and hopeful, hoping that he'd be reunited with his mate."

I frowned. "And he wasn't? Why not? Are you punishing him for what he did? He died because of it. Can't you see that?"

I had gotten away far too many times by talking to the moon goddess rudely, but thankfully, she was calm.

"I didn't keep Lukas from his mate. She's not here."

My eyes felt like they were about to pop from their sockets.

"Wait, are you saying that Lukas's mate is still alive?"

"What do you really want, Melissa? Why did you risk your life to come here?" she asked. I was aware that she avoided my question. But what good will Lukas's mate be to him if he remains dead?

"I want you to bring him back." I blurted out. "You have to." I winced at how demanded I sounded as if I was asking her to do something simple.

She raised her eyebrows. "That is a lot you are asking of me, Melissa. A dead soul is hard to-"

"So it's possible then?" I cut her off. All I needed was a possibility. "Please, my mate will not ever be truly happy if you don't bring him back."

"You're his mate. You are his happiness, Melissa. Perhaps it will take a year or two, but Maxim will be himself again."

I shook my head stubbornly. "I'm sure you know how things ended between them. We all know that death happens, and I'm sure that if they parted on better terms, he'd be able to live past this. But I know my mate. I saw that a part of him died with Lukas. And... and I hate that."

She was silent for a while, but I could tell she was thinking. "Bringing back someone will take a huge sacrifice, Melissa. One that you are probably not ready for."

"Name it." I was determined.

Her blue eyes regarded me thoughtfully. "You will have to give up your memories of Lukas. All of them."

My breath stopped.

"W-w-what? Why would I have to do that?"

Instead of answering, she turned to the ocean, and I followed suit. She raised her hand, and a part of the sea rose above its usual level so that there was a significant difference in the water's height.

"You see, Melissa. Just like the ocean, bringing back someone would shift the natural balance of things. Memories would have to be changed. Events in history would have to be shifted. It would have to be that Lukas never left that night, which meant he never spoke to his friend from New Mexico to arrange the trip. As you can see, Melissa, that is a lot of memories to be changed."

"And mine?"

She re-balanced the water with just a little, but it was still unlevelled. "It would be your memories for theirs. It might not make sense, but it will balance the laws of nature. It would be like you are giving up each fragment of a memory of Lukas to fill the gaps in time for others. If not, you can imagine the chaos of the pack when they see Lukas suddenly living again. Everyone with passed loved ones would try to do the same."

I nodded. "I understand." It's a big thing, and I couldn't imagine myself not knowing who Lukas was. But since I'd be living with him, I'd get to know him again, right? And we can start fresh. The most crucial part, Maxim will still have his brother.

"But make no mistake, Melissa." She pointed to the ocean again. "As you can see, the water is still not balanced. That is because things can never fully go back to how they were. Lukas, most of all, will know that something has happened. Other pack members and those who heard of Lukas's death will feel like they forgot something, but in a day or two, they will let it go. As for those in the Alpha house, they might not fully understand the void in their minds, as if something had happened because they were closer to Lukas than anyone in the pack ever was. Erasing their grief will not be easy. They might still remember the pain they felt, but they wouldn't understand why because Lukas's death would've never happened."

"You say 'they' and not 'you all'. Why don't you include me in this?"

She smiled, but just like before, she didn't answer my question. "Think about it, Melissa. If you still want to do this, you can come back to me."

"I want to!" I had no second thoughts or anything to think about. "I need to."

"Very well then. But you must know that giving up your memories of Lukas means-"

"I know what it means," I mumbled. "Just do it. I'll deal with the consequences."

"Okay." She held Lukas's soul in her hand and closed her eyes. I had thought I would've seen some explosion or something, but instead, the soul simply glowed and then poof- it was gone.

"Just like that? It's that easy?" I gaped.

She laughed. "Easy for me, of course. But remember, Melissa, you are returning with no memories of Lukas. None whatsoever." She placed a lot of emphasis on 'none'. "And a lot has changed at home so that the space-time continuum could make sense. I did nothing but send Lukas back. Time and nature did all the work of restoring balance, so whatever instances in history have changed has nothing to do with me."

I could almost hug her. I knew she wasn't an evil being, which was why I was so conflicted with what Toya revealed to me. But I needed to understand why she was the way she was.

"Why did you do this for me anyway?"

She brushed my hair away from my face with a motherly smile. "You betrayed me by shutting me out, but I still need you to get that moon shard to me. With Lukas's death and Maxim's grief, your focus was shifted."

I felt myself drifting as she gave me a Cheshire Cat grin. "Besides, it wasn't Lukas's time yet. There is still much for him to do."

And just like that, I was falling again. This time, I fell longer until I was suddenly writhing in bedsheets. Completely unaware of what I was even doing.

I blinked my eyes open. Suddenly confused and jumping out of a dark, black dream.

I felt like I had been somewhere-like I had been talking to someone, but who could I have been talking to in my sleep?

As my mind cleared, I noticed that I didn't know where the hell I was. I wasn't in my room, that was for sure. It was a large, grey-coloured space with a magnificent scent lingering everywhere, even in the sheets.

I glanced down at my body. I wore a black dress-much like one would wear to a funeral.

Was I kidnapped and rugged then forced to wear this horrid dress? I would never wear black to bed unless it was underwear.

I also had a pounding headache, and I was a bit dizzy as if I had just fallen from a skyscraper.

I gripped my head as I tried to move, but it was deemed impossible as my head pounded again. I instantly stiffened as the doorknob jiggled. I was now scared out of my mind, not knowing what to expect.

As it opened, a man around my age walked in with a huge smile on his face. My stomach instantly erupted in butterflies at the sight of him as he crossed the room towards me.

"Hey, you're finally awake," he said as he kissed my cheek. "You look like you've seen a ghost." He chuckled.

I gazed at him, scared out of my mind but oddly calm. "You're my mate," I said, trying to make sense of everything.

How on earth did this happen?

He chuckled. "Yes, the last time I checked. I, Maxim Dalton, was your mate."

"Maxim?" I asked in confusion.

"Yes . . ." He paused for a while as he eyed me weirdly a bit before his face broke out in a grin again. "So, Lukas is finally back," he laughed as his eyes swept over my body. His gaze made me shiver in delight. "Wait, when did you get so dressed up? Like five minutes ago, I came up here, and you were naked."

"Naked?" I gasped. What the hell happened here? And who the hell is Lukas?

"Yes. . ." He looked worried now. "You look a bit pale. Are you sick?"

"No," I shuffled away from him. My mind was blank, but something was nudging at my brain that I knew more than I thought.

"Good, because you're the only one I can't talk to about Lukas. So, after two weeks of being a rogue, he finally decided to come back. And you were right, Melissa. It's time for me to

forgive him for what he did to you. I think spending two weeks as a rogue just to punish himself was a bit extreme. The dragons could've got him."

"Dragons," I mumbled as a quick image of dragons chasing me somewhere in the woods flashed to memory. However, I had no recollection of how I was even in that situation or where I was.

"Yes... Dragons. Well, he's back, and I am relieved. You know, I act all tough and shit, but I was worried sick. A lot could've happened to him. Leo is coming around. They're in the kitchen now talking, and Lukas kept asking for you." He narrowed his eyes. "He had that same look on his face as you do now like you've both seen ghosts."

I refocused my gaze on him and brought my hands to his face. "I know... I know you're my mate," I said, avoiding all the gibberish he spoke of people I didn't know. I had to take this one person at a time. "I... I can feel our bond."

His face suddenly fell even more stern as he jumped to his feet.

"I'm taking you to the pack doctor," he said. But I ignored him.

"But... But I don't know you." I mumbled, and his face fell.

"What?"

"I don't know where I am." I searched the room again, but it still didn't look familiar. "I don't know you."

"Melissa, what are you talking about? Of course you know me. You knew me quite well last night."

I shook my head, staring him dead in his eyes as I said, "I don't know who you are, Maxim. And I want to go home."

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