

His Sunshine Baby Chapter 101 - Tips

"I can't decide if it's a crazy idea, a genius idea or the sh!ttest one ever."

I take a deep sigh. We have been debating Iris' suggestion for a while now, and this isn't getting any better. We're back at Clark's house, with everyone, including Isabella and Orpheus. Daniel came back from work too, but Chris stayed behind with his sister to talk after Levis and I left.

"I'm positive the pack will be mad at Clark for keeping this whole thing quiet," says Orpheus. "It's too big."

"Agreed, but I think they have every right to be," announces Isabella, who has been glaring at Clark non-stop since we told her everything. "Really, Clark, what were you thinking?"

"It was my choice," I explain. "Back then, I was perturbed a lot, Isa. Losing my... unborn child threw me into depression, and I was convicted, too. I begged Clark and my parents to not tell the pack what had happened. I didn't want to hear about it anymore, and I thought if I was gone for a while, and Diego too, I would... be forgotten."

Thinking back, it was also probably the only way for me to truly end my abusive relationship with him, by pretending nothing happened. I didn't care that I was convicted for attempted murder, compared to the loss I had suffered. As long as Diego was out of sight and far from me, I knew I'd be able to recover someday.

Isabella takes a deep sigh.

"I understand, Elena, but it was Clark's responsibility. Now, if we explain this to our people, they will accuse him of wronging you and admitting Diego back. Having him banished for good should have been the lightest punishment possible, but he was gone for only five years. People won't accept it, and they won't listen to his words to trust the Blood Moon after that."

"...But they will listen to Elena."

We turn to Orpheus, who stands up.

"I know I would."

“Orpheus, no one will listen to me,” I reply, surprised he would even suggest that. “I’m the girl who had a child with one of the Black brothers and left the pack who adopted her. Trust me, I’m not high on the most trusted people list right now.”

“I don’t think that’s necessarily true, Elena,” says Levi. “Most of our people are fine with the idea of mating with people from other packs, now, even the Blood Moon. Since the Luna abolished the borders, it has become more and more common.”

“No one will blame you for having Estelle, especially after what you went through,” adds Bonnie.

“A lot of the fighters now are people you trained, too! I bet they’d be happy to see you back!”

I chuckle at Ben’s enthusiasm. The twins’ words are very comforting to me, but I can’t tell how realistic they are.

“I think it’s worth trying... We need to ally with the Blood Moon, officially, and no one will agree to it without a proper explanation,” I admit.

I turn to Isabella and Clark. They are the ones to decide, as I know Orpheus is already agreeing with me. Isabella sighs.

“Will they believe you, though? It comes out years later at such a time...” asks Bonnie.

“We have tons of proofs if needed,” replies Danny. “It went to court, plus we kept Elena’s hospital bills and all.”

“Clark?” I call him.

He hasn’t said a word for a while... Is he worried about the position this will put him in? He might lose all respect as the Alpha... My godfather suddenly stands out.

“It’s fine, Elena. I would rather get it off my conscience. I was never comfortable with how things turned out, it’s high time I repair my mistakes and repay my debt to you. Isa is right. This pack had a duty to protect you, and we failed. I won’t allow it twice.”

I'm touched by his words. Back then, it did feel as if I was alone with my pain... It was convenient for everyone else to forget it all. He smiles at me and ruffles my hair.

"I knew you'd grow up to be a fine woman... Don't worry, I will handle this."

"I want to be there, to do it with you," I immediately insist.

"If you want."

After a few minutes, Clark calls most of the Pack's adults over to the nearby park, the only place big enough to have all the werewolves attend comfortably. I wonder how fast the word got spread about my return because absolutely no one seems surprised to see me next to Clark and Orpheus.

As we discussed, Isabella and Clark do all the talking, and it's a short one anyway. About how the full cooperation with the Blood Moon will be needed, and why Diego died. Everyone stays silent while the Alpha talks, but I can read shock and anger on a lot of faces...

"...We need to come to an agreement now," concludes Isabella.

"Clark, why didn't you tell us back then! We never liked Diego, but you should have told us the full story!" Yells someone from the back.

"That's right! A r****t and a pup murderer? Clark, he could have attacked our other kids!" Growl a woman.

"This was between him and me," I explain. "It was personal, I don't think Diego would have..."

"You can't say that for sure! A sociopath, a murderer! And the Alpha allowed him back!"

A lot of people start growling along but Clark doesn't flinch. He expected this, after Isabella's warning.

"Elena left because of you!"

"No, I had different reasons to leave!" I interrupt, annoyed. "Listen, we are not having Clark's trial now! He is your Alpha, and whatever he decided back then is between him and I!"

Some of them won't listen and keep yelling. It's frankly annoying to be facing such an undisciplined crowd. Werewolves are so damn stubborn.

"Stop it!" I yell, releasing all of my Alpha aura.

Everyone shuts up as if a wave had hit them. I don't think I've ever used so much of my aura before, but there we are.

"This Pack has enough issues as it is. Remember just what happened four years ago. All those that we lost. Do you want to avoid more deaths next time? Then stop acting so stubborn and listen, for once!"

A long silence follows my words. Some exchange glances and frowns, as if they were trying to reach a common ground. I take a deep breath and look sideways at Clark. My godfather smiles and nods.

"We will lose more people if we don't work as one with the Blood Moon Clan," I explain.

"We are already on good terms with them, Elena!"

"I don't mean an alliance. I mean we need to... fusion the White Moon pack with the Blood Moon Pack."

I'm hit by a wave of protests. Some people are just speechless or hesitant, but some of them are completely against the idea.

"No fvcking*g way! We are the White Moon Clan! We won't become someone else's property!"

"Elena, what the hell! Is it Black's idea?"

"Shut up and listen!" I growl again. "It is my idea. Not Clark or anyone else's. This isn't just about our turfs or our pack anymore. We have an army coming. An army of vampires, and a Witch guiding them. The same one that attacked us before!"

I undo my shirt, showing them my injury, still fresh.

"See that? I can't stand against her! We can't, okay? We are just lucky enough to have a Witch on our side. Do you think we won the previous fight? Well, hear this, we didn't! Sylviana, the Witch of Silver City, saved our asses! Otherwise, what do you think would have happened?"

I catch my breath, looking at the crowd. I've managed to make them doubt. People are reminiscing, I know they can't have possibly forgotten. Not with the number of wounded people we had, or the ones we buried.

Next to me, Orpheus nods.

"Just try to remember the hell it was," he adds. "The water attacking us. Even with the Blood Moon helping us, it was a fvcking*g nightmare!"

"Everyone lost a friend or a family member back then," says Isabella.

I know everyone in the pack thinks about her son, Eric, who was among the victims. This is what we need to focus on. How many people we can actually save, what will be left after the fight, and what we could lose. I see a lot of them finally stop protesting, glancing at each other with worry.

"This won't be our regular fight," I declare. "There will be deaths. It's the sad truth, I won't lie to you. We will lose people. All I want is for us is to lose as few as possible. I want the best outcome, I want us to win this fight. We can't afford to lose, because if we do lose, it will be the end. Not only of our pack but of everything we know and love. I don't care anymore about the packs, the borders. We are Werewolves. We are the Werewolves of Silver City, one large pack. I know I won't be scared of a witch, no matter how many vampires she brings, if I can stand with my people. My family, my friends, all of my kind, as one."

I let a bit of silence float after my words, hoping it will reach them.

"If... If we fusion with the Blood Moon Clan, we will truly become one pack. Altogether, hundreds of wolves, able to mind-link as one body. The strongest Clan this City has ever seen."

"...What about the other packs?" Asks someone. "How do we know they will allow that too?"

"You know how loved and popular the Luna is," says Levi. "She's a Royal, people will rally to her. The Sapphire Moon and Jade Moon Clan are already completely loyal to her. Most packs will follow her lead. We can follow Elena's."

Wow, wait. When did I say anything about following me? I glare at Levi, wondering what the hell he is thinking, but I see him exchange glances with Clark and Danny instead. What are they planning?

“Clark will be leading,” I warn them.

“No Elena, you will,” suddenly declares Clark, turning to me. “For this fight, we need you to act as the Alpha.”

What the hell! I just decided I won't be an Alpha! I'm fine not being anyone's Alpha, why are they fvcking*g doing this to me now?

“You said it yourself, Elena, all the werewolves will act as one. We will need the Alphas to act together to lead them. And no one is more capable than you of doing that.”

I growl at Orpheus, annoyed that he is part of this freaking trap too.

“I am not fit to lead anyone!”

“You're a fighter, Elena, it's in your bl00d,” says Daniel. “Your father was a Royal Warrior, wasn't he? There is nothing more powerful than that.”

I see the crowd start to whisper between themselves, surprised to hear about my parentage.

“Seriously, Daniel? Now?” I yell at him, furious.

“Don't blame him, Elena, we already discussed this.”

“I am not going to fvcking*g lead anyone! This is not...”

“Elena, you're an Alpha and half a Royal. You're the best fighter of your generation, or any generation this pack has seen! And your mind-linking ability is way better than anyone else's, too!”

This is a nightmare. How can they do this to me, in front of the whole damn pack! I never agreed to any of that sh!t! Would it have been too much to at least warn me? Did they do it on purpose, thinking I wouldn't be able to refuse?

“Elena is half Royal?” Asks someone from the crowd.

“Who freaking cares!” I yell. “Clark, I was gone from this pack for four years, who the hell do you think I am? I can’t show up and start ordering people around! I am no Alpha material! I hate making decisions for others!”

My godfather turns to me, looking dead serious. I almost step back, feeling his aura all out, but before I do, my wolf is growling right back at him, her instincts taking over.

“Elena, I’m ready to abandon my Alpha position right here and now for you to take it. You know this is what I’ve always wanted for you, and what you deserve.”

“Clark, no. I’ve made my share of sh!tty choices, haven’t I? You really think I would be able to...”

“You’re good at protecting others, Elena. You make the decisions you make because you know when to attack, when to fight back and when to retreat.”

“This is insane...” I mutter.

“This whole situation is insane, Elena,” he continues. “But we have a war coming, and it’s just as you said, we need the best chances. You’re one of those chances. You came up with this idea, and I wholly support it. I don’t mind if you run away and live your life any way you want without us after that. But now, you need to go to the end of things, and do what needs to be done.”

“You fvcking*g exile me for four years, and now you expect me to come back and save you all just because of my lineage?”

“Not just your lineage, Elena,” replies Isabella. “Everyone here knows your sk!!ls. Despite what happened four years ago, everyone welcomed you back, didn’t they? You trained our warriors. You fought alongside them. These are still your people, your pack. If we took back a j.erk like Diego, what kind of pack are we if we don’t take you back?”

“I never said I wanted to come back, Isa!” I growl. “I’m fine. I have my daughter, everything I need is not...”

I interrupt my sentence, realizing I can’t end it. Shit... I’m wrong. The White Moon is, or was, my pack. I remember the feeling I had when I walked back in. The people I had missed. My friends, my family. I growl, frustrated as hell.

“You’re the one we need, Elena,” sighs Clark.

“I’m not... I don’t know how to lead a pack. Even if I agreed to this... whole sh!tty idea, I’m not in shape, I haven’t fought in years and...”

“If I remember correctly, you killed dozens of vampires without even shifting into your wolf form,” notes Orpheus.

“And while being pregnant...” Whispers Danny, avoiding my glare.

“You have time to get back in shape,” says Clark. “What we need is for you to agree. If you do, everyone here will follow you into this fusion with the Blood Moon Clan, Elena.”

I glare at the little group, furious. I hate the whole damn idea, really. Especially since I’m well aware they would make me feel fvcking*g guilty of abandoning them if I don’t agree.

“Elena,” whispers Isabella, “I know how crazy, and selfish we may sound right now. But trust me, we talked it over. We truly believe this is the best shot we’ve got, and it’s with you, honey. Maybe things should have gone differently for you, you should have gotten the Alpha position in a more normal and fair way, but here we are. We only have one chance, Elena. And I truly think it’s you.”

His Sunshine Baby Chapter 102 - Tips

“So, you agreed?”

“Heck no, Nate! They threw this at me, I was not prepared! I just... I said I’d think about it.”

He’s watching me walk in circles inside his apartment, while he’s carrying Estelle who fell asleep in his arms. I just can’t calm down since I left the gathering. First, I’m still mad at Clark and the Lewis siblings for tricking me into this. Secondly, I’m still completely amazed that they even dared to come up with such an idea. And I thought I was the crazy one for suggesting a fusion between the Clans! Lastly, I’m supposed to be a pariah in that pack, and now I’m some sort of last-minute savior?

“..It’s a good idea, I think.”

I immediately turn to him with a glare.

“Not you too!”

“Well, it does make sense,” he continues. “Elena, you’re not someone who can stand on the sidelines.”

“Yes, but I was expecting to fight like any other wolf, not be some damn headlight for my former pack!”

He chuckles, walking to the sofa to sit down.

“As if you’d listen to anyone’s orders, my Sunshine. Your Alpha... I mean, Clark is right. You can certainly do this, and you should.”

I shake my head. No, no. Not when I had just found who I am, who I want to be. This is madness. The whole point of putting the events with Diego into the light was to have the Pack see the Blood Moon differently, not have Clark step down of his position to push it over to me!

I go to sit next to Nate on the sofa, suddenly tired from all that mess. He puts a hand on my knee, gently caressing me.

“Don’t think too much for now. You don’t have to answer them now, Elena. You just came back to your former pack, it’s enough for today. We need to talk to Damian and Nora about your idea, too.”

I nod, feeling a bit comforted by his words. He’s right... I should take some time to consider it, see if I think I can shoulder this... I don’t doubt Nora will agree to it, though. She’s always been keen on making any differences between the packs, and she respects my opinion. I am not worried about my cousin-in-law, either, almost everything Nora says he’ll agree with anyway. And Nate agreed it’s a good idea too.

“...We should make plans,” he suddenly says.

I look at him, a bit surprised. What is he talking about? Nathaniel smiles and kisses Estelle’s temple, laying her on the couch next to him before turning to me and taking my hand.

“You, Estelle and I. I want us to have plans, for when this whole mess is over.”

“Nate, I’m not sure this is...”

“I don’t want to live as if we were going to die, Elena. I want to have something to look forward to.”

“I am not marrying you,” I assert with a growl.

He laughs it off, but I know he’s still holding on to that stupid idea. Well, he can forget about it. I don’t want to get married, and certainly not with him. That jerk is not reliable at all. Moreover, he already got more than he was supposed to from me. I am not indulging him again. Not before a few years. As Danny said, he should thrive a bit for all the sh!t I went through.

“I’m talking about something else, Elena,” he explains. “Like a trip, for example.”

“A trip?”

That’s probably the last thing I would have thought about at such a time, but Nate seems serious about it.

“We could go on a holiday, once this is all over. The three of us, somewhere far from Silver City. I want to see where Estelle was born and grew up in, too.”

It does sound good... Something we should look forward to. I want to imagine us, after all this madness, having fun together, somewhere safe and warm. And visiting our old house again... If there’s anything left of it. That damn witch probably found it...

“To be honest, I miss the house a bit,” I admit.

“How was it?”

I can’t help but chuckle.

“When Sylviana took me there, it was just an old, abandoned house... But I liked it. It was all made of wood. It took us a while to clean it. Sylviana used her powers to sweep away all the dead leaves, replace the rotten wood and repel the plants that had started growing in or on it. I’m glad witches are so good at cleaning, but still, just the dust and dirt took ages to get rid of, since it was fvcking*g big. But it was worth it. The kind of old family house that has its

own charms you uncover little by little... With large windows, a terrace, a big kitchen, a big bathroom... Ah, I really miss that place.”

I can't help but smile, just thinking about it. Those four years there were really peaceful, just me and my daughter. Every day going by slowly, taking care of the house, hunting our food and even growing vegetables in the little garden Sylviana made for us. There was a human village a few miles away, but we only made the trip once in a while. Whether they knew or their instincts sensed that we were werewolves, we were not welcome there. I just bought the groceries and went back as soon as I was done.

Just my daughter and I. Estelle played with me, or the pets she befriended, like the little rabbits she found and adopted, her bunnies. Maybe she can get to school in September... It would be good if she made some human friends.

Will we still be there in September? It's only a few weeks away, but it feels so far away. I turn to Nate.

“So, a trip?”

He nods.

“Yeah, wherever you want. Just the three of us. We could even search for it... You know, the Blue Moon Clan.”

I stay speechless for a while. I had never thought about it. Going back to my roots, finding more about wherever Nora and I came from if there's anything left. Nathaniel is right, with the Witch gone, we would be free to go and look for clues about our parents. We know so little about them... It feels like I never had time to stop and think about it, but it did cross my mind a few times. I could ask Nora about it, and even our long-lost cousin William...

“Maybe,” I sigh. “Did Nora ever mention it?”

“Yes,” he nods. “To Damian, at least. She's very curious about her mother... About Queen Diane too.”

Nora is probably more at a loss than I am. After all, I was brought up by Reagan and adopted soon after by loving parents. My attachment to the White Moon is legitimate, as they retain so much of my childhood.

Nora is different. Her parents disappeared when she was a child, and though she was taken in by another pack, she never really felt any family love from them or even from her half-brother... Even if she had a family of her own now, she's probably the most curious one.

"I see," I simply reply.

Nathaniel smiles and leans in to give me a long kiss. It's a bit unexpected but it's nice, as always... Well, not just nice. He caresses my arm too, in a gentle way. Though, with Stella next to us, we can't push it too far. We play nice and simply exchange a long, hot kiss, warming up our lips and chuckling like teenagers in love.

After a while, we part, each a smile on our lips.

"You have no idea how much I missed you," he whispers with a sigh.

I push him away with my feet. You damn idiot.

A few hours later, our baby girl woke up, and we are at Nora's place, talking about my plan to fusion all the Clans after a nice dinner. No one is really interested in the desserts, they are all ears wide open and chocked by my words. All three Black brothers are there, plus Boyan and his siblings, as well as Isaac and Danny. Neal's wife is watching all the kids in the playroom next door. Only Sylviana refused to come, apparently, she's busy, but this is the werewolf matters anyway.

"So, the White Moon would agree to a fusion with the Blood Moon?" Asks Tonia, doubtful.

"I convinced them."

"What Elena doesn't say is that they want her to lead them," adds Nathaniel.

I roll my eyes. He didn't need to mention that part yet, but whatever. Nora's eyes are already full of excitement.

"Elena, this is awesome!" She exclaims.

"Really? I just told you they want to follow me into this crazy war, Nora. Me, of all people. I didn't think..."

But I stop talking as, around the table, none of them seems very surprised. Really? Nora glances at her husband, who starts talking.

“Actually, we have been in close... talks with the Sapphire Moon and a few others, recently,” says Damian. “Elena, if the White Moon Clan agrees to it too... We could have almost all of the werewolves Clans of Silver City in.”

I’m speechless. Already? How long have they been preparing for this? Nora blushes a bit, seeing my reaction.

“We actually had the same idea as you, so we started talking to the other alphas those past few weeks, but it’s nothing new, Elena. William insisted that I got registered under the Sapphire Moon, and as of now, he has made me his successor... since Damian and I are mates, the two packs are already... aligned.”

“I thought William Blue had a daughter?” I ask, confused.

“He does, but he doesn’t want her to take over the Sapphire Moon Clan. Rose will be the Luna for the Pearl Moon Clan, her mother’s pack.”

All the maths between the Sapphire, Pearl and Black Moon relationships are way too complicated for me. However, I understand that Nora can basically become the Sapphire Moon’s Luna anytime now, and through Damian, she is already the Blood Moon’s Luna. The two biggest packs of Silver City and the next biggest and wealthiest one is the White Moon.

“What about the others? The Violet Moon, the Sea Moon wolves?”

This time, it’s with Tonia that Nora exchanges a look. Right, now Boyan’s sister is going out with the Violet Moon Alpha, Lyssandra Jones. It probably helped...

“Lissandra and Arthur are still reticent,” she says, “but I’m pretty sure we can have them agree to a temporary fusion. After the war, they want their packs back, but they are fine with submitting to Damian and me until it’s over. Same thing for the Red Moon.”

Or whatever’s left of them... Black should have banished those traitors four years ago when they turned on us for the Gold Moon Clan. I’m trying to count, but those are all the main Clans of Silver City. If the deal is done, Damian and

Nora will be Alpha and Luna of ninety-percent of the Silver City werewolf population. This is insane...

I'm getting the chills. This is really to be an all-out fvcking*g war.

"Our only missing piece was the White Moon Clan, Elena," says Damian. "We couldn't talk to them until now, but if you agree to their terms..."

"I'll be a bridge between Nora and them. You want me to be the bridge between you and the White Moon, I get it," I sigh. "So it all comes to this."

"I wasn't sure you could convince them, and I wasn't sure they would listen to you, so I was afraid it was too soon to tell you," admits Nora, a bit fidgety.

"Well, for once I was faster, I guess."

I stand up, pacing out again to think. Nate grabs my hand to stop me, pulling me to him.

"Elena, you can think about it a bit longer. It all happened today, but Sylviana said we have weeks."

I gently smile to my man and bow down for a quick peck on his lips. I turn to Nora, feeling a bit braver.

"Nora, there's something I have been thinking about for a while. With your power, do you think we could... officialize our relationship. When I talk to my pack, most of them were doubtful about my origins. If we had a way to make it official."

"If this is about you having a bond with the Blood Moon Clan, my Sunshine, I'm pretty sure marrying me would..."

"Nathaniel Black, the answer is still no. And Nora is the one I need a bond with."

"Hey! Nate would be a bad husband, but I would make an awesome brother in law, Elena" says Liam with a cheeky smile.

"Thanks for the support, Liam..." Growls Nate.

Everyone laughs, breaking a bit of the heavy atmosphere that was floating around until just a moment ago. Nathaniel rolls his eyes and pulls me onto his lap. Nora smiles across the table.

“What did you have in mind, then?”

“You know... Just putting our family tree into the City records, things like that. And I want to take my real name, too.”

She opens her mouth a bit, surprised.

“Elena Blue Moon?”

“No... I don’t want to completely omit the White Moon part in me. From now on, I want to be Selena Whitewood, with my relationship to you known. I think this is how I will find a middle between my two identities. I... I think this is what I would like better.”

Nora nods, looking a bit emotional.

“I did almost the same,” she says. “I registered as Eleanora Bluemoon, though everyone still knows me as Nora...”

“Reagan is the one who saved Selena. She held on to my name for years, I think it’s time I take it back.”

“Damn, now you sound like a Royal,” says Liam.

“I don’t hear a Royal, I hear a warrior. You know what, Selena, I have been hearing about you being the best fighter for a while now, I want to see that.”

I turn to Tonia, surprised. But then, I remember, that woman is the one who trained Nora and Boyan’s sister. Moreover, she is the number two in the Violet Moon Clan, known for its fierce fighters. She is already standing up, with a grin and a bit of a fire in her eyes, excited.

“Tonia...” Says Nate with a frown, but I stop him, turning to her.

“Is this a challenge?” I ask.

Let’s be honest, Tonia managed to wake up the wolf in me. Seeing a challenger, she just wants to go. Easy girl, we are just done healing a few hours ago...

His Sunshine Baby Chapter 103 - Tips

“Mommy! You were so cool!”

Estelle runs to me, her little eyes sparkling. I smile and open up my arms, satisfied.

“Are you okay, Tonia?” I ask while standing up with my baby girl in my arms.

She’s still laying on the floor with a sour expression.

“Don’t ask...” She growls.

Truth be told, I can’t really blame her. After she insisted on a fifth fight, I couldn’t go easy on her and went all out. Tonia is a very, very good fighter, I cannot lie about that. But she relies a bit too much on her strength and is stubborn. Once I analyzed her strengths and weaknesses properly, it found the key to beat her. She has great adaptability, though, and also gave me quite a challenge. I’m sweating and a bit out of breath.

Our small audience is amazed. We picked one of the Dojos near the Blood Moon’s Headquarters, but after the first three days of watching Tonia and I fight for hours, only Liam, Nate and Estelle are still here to watch, and some young ones from the Blood Moon and Purple Moon packs.

Damian is concerned about Nora’s health, as she’s been tired lately. The Luna is resting at her house, but it seems that, since we officially entered my new name into the City’s registry, yesterday, I’ve inherited a new nickname I didn’t expect.

“White Luna! Can you show us how you did that move? The one with your leg and bam!”

I sigh at the sight of half a dozen young werewolves crowding around me with her eyes filled with expectations. That’s right, they have been calling me the White Luna, while Nora somehow became the Black or Blood Luna. I’m still can’t say how I feel about that...

“You little punks! Why don’t you ask me!” Growls Tonia while getting back up.

Seeing her come our way, the kids run away laughing. I can’t help but chuckle too.

“They’re cheeky, aren’t they?”

“Tell me about it,” she sighs. “The ones from the Violet Clan are the worst, I swear. They are not afraid to tackle the older ones and have been groomed for fighting since they were pups. I often fight with Lysandra because they are too excited. They think this damn war is going to be fun. Fun, for Moon Goddess’ sake!”

I understand her concerns. It’s hard to explain to the children what’s at stake... And that they might be the first ones to die. I kiss my daughter’s forehead and stare in the direction they left, Nate joining my side.

“Do you think we will be ready?” I ask.

“In all honesty, I don’t know,” replies Tonia. “If I knew how many vampires are coming or what kind of witch we will be dealing with, I could, but no. It’s just as bad as it looks, Elena. I am glad your plan and Nora’s working fine it’s a really good one, awesome even, but... It really might not be enough.”

Sadly, I know Tonia’s pessimism is justified. We could really be wiped off in a few weeks’ time...

I take a deep breath. I’ve trained enough. No matter how I look at it, I am in shape and ready. My injury’s completely healed, thank Moon Goddess, even my fights with Tonia didn’t cause any issue with my scar. It’s ugly and it will remain, but it’s healed. That’s all I ask, and luckily, Nate doesn’t seem to give a sh!t about it. I turn to him.

“You okay?” He asks.

“Sure,” I say with a nod. “Nate, I want to change at your place and then go.”

He seems a bit surprised, but he knows what I mean, and nods with a determined expression. I chat with Tonia a bit longer before we part, and Estelle bids her a shy goodbye too. It’s funny she bonded with her more easily than with Boyan, whom all kids seem to love. Maybe she reminds her of Reagan?

I take a quick shower at Nate’s place and get dressed up again, in dark pants, tank top, and a white leather jacket. I put my hair in a ponytail, almost ready for a fight. It’s a different kind of fight that awaits me, though...

Nate drives us to the White Moon territory, and I'm nervous all the way there, despite chatting with Estelle. My daughter is excited to finally see the pack I grew up in, but I can't shake off that nervous feeling inside me. For some reason, I've always been so careful to keep her and Nate away from my Clan, now that we're actually going there as a family, it's very strange and nerve-wracking.

As previously planned, Nate carefully parks close to Clark's house, right after sunset, and we walk up to the Clan's gathering point.

Everyone's here. A lot of people are glaring at Nathaniel, wary of the Black brother walking on our territory. He is a stranger and a damn strong Alpha. A lot of our people have shape-shifted already, either out of fear or just to feel safer. Maybe some want to show they won't trust him or his brothers, too. However, since he's holding Estelle's hand, the most adorable little girl in the world with her floral white dress and cute ponytails, I can also see a lot of smiles and amazed eyes. Yeah, that's my baby, looks just like me. I walk up to my godfather, who gives me a h.u.g before checking Nathaniel out. He sighs.

"If they had told me I would one day welcome one of the Black brothers on my territory..."

Nathaniel can't repress his smirks.

"Don't worry. I don't bite."

They both chuckled, and after a few seconds, they finally shake hands, making everyone around relax a bit. As soon as they are done, Clark's eyes go down on Estelle.

"Hello, pretty lady!"

"Good evening mister Clark!"

"You know who I am?" He asks, surprised.

My daughter nods and blushes, a bit shy.

"Yes... Mommy explained to me that you are the White Moon Clan Alpha and you are my mommy's godfather."

Clark's face brightens, visibly overjoyed with one sentence from one four-years-old. Damn, he should really get a wife and make some kids. He goes down on one knee and rubs her head with a big smile.

"How did you make such a pretty girl! Even you were not as cute as that!"

"Thanks," I reply, unsure if that's a compliment or not.

On the side, Nathaniel laughs, and so do Orpheus and Isabella behind the Alpha.

"Well, I do have memories of you running around, dirtying your rompers and calling out the boys for fights..."

"Danny!"

My best friend just stepped out from the crowd, his mom, dad, and siblings right behind him. While I quickly hug Danny, I notice Abigail is wiping some tears behind him. Ben sighs.

"Really, mom?"

"I can't help it... Seeing our Elena where she is... after... you know, everything... It's making me so emotional..."

"Wipe your tears, honey, it's a joyous occasion," says Joseph behind her.

"Of course, I know, but... I can't help but see Elena like my own daughter, and... and..."

Abigail's words get lost in her handkerchief, and the twins take over to talk to her and try to have her control her emotions a little. While I'm so grateful for her kind words and thoughts, I do feel this is a bit... somewhere between embarrassing and awkward. Joseph chuckles and takes this opportunity to step closer to me, giving me a big hug and whispering a few words in my ear.

"Selena Whitewood, you're the strongest, bravest she-wolf I have been given to meet in my life. You deserve all of this. You have the blood, the heart and the guts of an Alpha. Never, ever forget that. We trust you, just like Ivy and Samuel believed in you. We really do."

I didn't expect to hear my parents' names after such a long time. I can't help but tear up a bit, and I'm glad I can hide it in his shoulder. Moon Goddess

knows how much I miss them both... Joseph was close to my dad, and hearing the same words holds more value than if anyone else had said it.

We separate, and after a brief moment with each of their family members, I go back to where Clark stands. It's a bit weird, to be back to talk to my pack so soon, with Nathaniel and Estelle with me, too. I take a deep breath, turning to the crowd. I thought Clark would say a few words to the crowd, but everyone remains silent. I guess I'm up...

For a few seconds, I stare at the entire audience. I look at those people I've known almost all my life, and I wonder, what right do I have to stand there? What do I tell them now? Can I stay anything? Can I convey my feelings properly? Or will I just fail, lose their faith and have them regret picking me to lead them?

I take another deep breath. No. I am not, and I won't be someone who backs off. Never. I am Selena Whitewood. I am a survivor and a fighter. I'm someone's mother, someone's sunshine. I am a werewolf, I am just like them. Those are my people.

"I... I was born in a place far from here," I declare. "A place I can't even remember. My first memories are with Reagan, right at the border of the White Moon Clan. I remember my first meeting with you all. With Clark, with my parents, with my friends, with all of you. I was young, so I struggled with my identity. I grew up with parents who didn't look like me. With friends from a different background. I felt like I could never fit in, so I fought harder, because I thought a strong werewolf was the only part of me you'd accept. I hated the word "adopted", because it reminded me of something I didn't have. I wished my parents were my birth parents many, many times. I often wished I was more like the other kids. I wished I knew where I came from, though I'd never say it."

I take a deep breath, glancing at Nathaniel. He's gently smiling to me, his hands on Estelle's shoulders. I take a deep breath and turn to the crowd again.

"When... you're a child, you don't know how to cope with your insecurities. I struggled with my identity. I made bad choices, because I was desperate to fit in, and rejected people who rejected me twice more. I couldn't see what I had, only what I was missing. I met... the wrong people, and lost sight of the ones I should have held close. I made poor choices."

I don't want to go on too long about Diego, not in front of my daughter, so I don't say his name. They will read between the lines.

"By doing that, I... I was hurting myself indirectly. It is sometimes easier to rebel against people who wish you good than to leave people who are intoxicating you. It's sad, but it was my way of... punishing myself. No matter how many times my parents and the few friends I had left warned me, I... I didn't listen."

I hold back my tears, look for my wolf for all the strength I need and solemnly put a hand on my tummy. I need them to understand because I won't say it. I find Daniel's eyes in the crowd and look at this pair of blue eyes to give myself some strength.

"I lost... a lot. I'll never have it back. I... I shut down, and I lost my family, a second time. You all know what kind of place I went to. I don't know what you think I had done wrong for that, but the truth is, if I injured anyone, it was myself. Because I reacted too late and put myself in danger. I lost... What no girl or woman should ever lose. I lost my Angel."

I feel the tears slowly run down my cheek as I confess about that truth. I take a moment and hear the audience's shock. Some women cover their mouths, some men are stuck between confusion and anger as they slowly come to understand.

I can feel the anger from behind me, too. Nate's wolf is exulting a scary aura, but I ignore him and Clark's.

"When... When I came back to the pack, I was at the lowest point in my life. I had lost my family, a second time, a third time even. If it wasn't for Clark, and the Lewis family who helped me, I might have never come back from that darkness."

I manage to gather a smile for them, for Danny, and wake my wolf to finish.

"I got back on my feet, and I worked harder. I felt like I needed to prove myself, even harder than I used to. I was part of the White Moon Clan. I truly accepted that when you didn't toss me aside despite my parents being gone, despite everything I had done and said. I really... I realized it then. Because the young ones were still looking up to me. Because the ones my age would still talk to me and count me in. Because the adults would invite me over, salute me or just acknowledge me. Because anyone in this pack was fine with

me being just me. Not Ivy and Samuel's daughter, not Clark's goddaughter. I was just Elena, your Elena from the White Moon Clan."

A lot of people are nodding, some are even smiling to me with a tender look in their eyes. I can't help but smile back, a bittersweet smile.

"Just when... when I started getting used to that idea, things changed again. I... I fell in love with someone I wasn't supposed to. I met Nora Bluemoon, who was suddenly closer to me than anyone had ever been. Die... My ex came back. And the situation became a lot more complicated. I was conflicted again, between my identities, between my past and my future, between what I thought I owed to the White Moon and what I truly wanted."

I turn around and hold my hand to Estelle, who takes it with a smile, walking a couple of steps to join me.

"If... I have disappointed people, I will apologize," I say. "But I won't apologize for making a new family of my own. I won't apologize for the beautiful baby I had, the man I loved or even for getting close to another pack. I love Nathaniel Black, but it doesn't make me less of a White Moon daughter. Eleanora Bluemoon is my blood cousin, but that doesn't make me less of a Whitewood. I am just building up my identity. Truthfully, that warrior part of me, the part I inherited from my father, is the only thing, perhaps, I have always felt confident in. I even don't really realize what it means to be half-human yet. I am gathering the pieces and constructing myself, piece by piece."

I take another deep breath, waiting a few seconds before breaking that solemn silence, with my mind voice this time, taking them all by surprise.

"I am Selena Whitewood, and I want to keep that name. I don't want to forget the Clan that raised me. No matter which pack my blood belongs to, what I know is that my heart sprouted right here, and you are the people my wolf's voice can reach out to. You are my pack, my people. I love... every one of you. Even that b***h cousin of mine, yes. That's why I want to protect everyone here. I really do. But it won't be possible unless you all trust me, a hundred percent. I..."

I turn to Clark, resolute.

"I, Selena Whitewood, claim the Alpha title of the White Moon Pack, here and now."

After a long silence, all eyes are on Clark. My heart is beating like crazy in my chest, and my cheeks are burning. My godfather smiles, and finally, puts both knees down.

“I, Clark Hamilton, fully acknowledge you, Selena Whitewood, as the sole rightful Alpha of the White Moon Pack!”

A sudden wave of cheers, applauds and howls bursts all around us.

His Sunshine Baby Chapter 104 - Tips

“Elena... Elena, are you okay?”

I growl, a bit annoyed. Why does he have to ask so much.... And my head hurts, too. Like, a lot. I frown and struggle to find my left and right. I hear him chuckling.

“Elena...” He calls me, almost singing it to my ear.

I can feel his beard in my back, and his breath right against my skin.

“Stop it,” I grumble.

I kind of feel weird, but that feeling is familiar. Like, not the kind of nice familiar. fvcking*g hangover, and that headache that goes with it... I struggle, open my eyes and sit up. I don't recognize this place. Where the hell is this? The bed is too fancy to my taste, and there's too much yellow. I'm not fond of yellow.

“Where are we?” I growl.

“I took us a room at a nearby hotel. You felt sick while I was trying to get us back to my place and kept asking me to stop the car...”

“Oh, Moon Goddess...” I sigh, feeling some blurry memories come back. “I drank, didn't I?”

“Oh, yes,” he laughs.

It's not funny! I haven't drunk or gotten wasted to that extent in years, what was I thinking? I vaguely remember everyone trying to party with me after I

became an Alpha, to celebrate, but I can't even count all the places I was taken to...

"Shit..."

"It's not your fault, Elena, you really tried to stop," he says while getting off the bed. "Even Danny and Levi asked people to stop giving you drinks. You looked fine until you suddenly growled at them and asked me to go home."

From the looks of it, I bet I didn't ask nicely. More like I probably whined or bossed him into it. Damn it, I feel really bad now. Did I trouble anyone besides Nate? He pours me a big glass of orange juice and brings it to me with a pill. I take it gratefully. Moon Goddess, that feels good. I take a few seconds to enjoy that and silently apologize to my liver.

"Where's Estelle?"

"She slept at the Lewis'. Your friend Bonnie and her mother said they would take over to watch her when people started dragging you around. She's fine, Daniel actually texted me a few minutes ago to let me know she's still sleeping."

I grab my phone, only to see I got the same text from him.

"I'm such a bad mother..." I whine. "I can't believe I didn't even look after her."

He chuckles, sitting facing me on the mattress.

"You've been taking care of her for four years, Sunshine. You can take a break for once."

I nod half-heartedly and drink some more juice. Truth is, I need to avoid his gaze.

What right does this i***t have to be so handsome so early? And half-n.aked again, of course. Not that I am going to complain, though, that view is probably the best way to make me damn sober. Seriously, how could I drink so much...

"So? The man you love, huh?"

I almost spit out the damn juice. That idiot...! I'm red as a beet, looking elsewhere, dead embarrassed. And it's too late to act like I didn't remember. I

clumsily wipe off the juice from my chin. Crap... Why did I have to profess my love for him in front of the whole damn clan for, anyway?

"Elena," he calls me with that naughty smile.

"Oh, shut up..." I growl to hide my shame.

"My Sunshine..."

Why does he have to stir me up on purpose! He takes the glass off my hand, crawling closer to me on the bed. Oh, crap, I'm in real trouble...

"Elena, you said you love me."

"So w... what if I did..." I mumble.

He chuckles again and goes down to k!ss my th!ghs. Holy crap, how can he cheat like that. I gasp and look away, trying not to give in. Crap, where the heck is he k!ssing... His l!ps go higher and higher, and I blush uncontrollably. That's... He...

Nathaniel keeps torturing me with that devilish mouth of his, and I bit my l!p and close my eyes, unable to push him away. Moon Goddess, I forgot how good he can be at that too. I breathe louder and caress his hair, letting him play between my legs.

"Nate... Stop it..." I gr0an.

As if he'd listen. I take deep breaths until he gets where he wants, and I can't help but cry louder. A fire burns underneath, where he's toying with me, and I lose all rational thought. It's just so good... Nathaniel intensifies his tongue movements, going faster, deeper, s.ucking a bit harder and making me m0an for real. I grip his hair, my legs trembling, and gasp and m0an until I can't take it anymore. It bursts, exploding like fireworks and blowing my mind away.

All my extremities are tingling, while I catch my breath. Damn it... I rest back on the cushions, and he leans over me with that annoying satisfied smile. sh!t, why does he look happy like he's the one who just went to heaven and back?

"Marry me," he suddenly blurts out.

I roll my eyes.

“Nathaniel Black, are you thinking you can fvcking*g buy me with a fvcking*g org*asm?”

“...I could give you one any time you want,” he says with a smile. “If we were married...”

“You don’t need to put a ring on me to do that!”

“We can skip the rings part if you want.”

Moon Goddess, I am talking to a wall. I push him away, and stumble to the bathroom, hearing him laugh behind me. I let the cold water flush on me, trying to get out of the post-coit daze. Damn it, he’s really, really good. So annoying. I take deep breaths, staying under the water for a long time.

What a crazy time to live... I just became the White Moon’s Alpha, for real, and got myself drunk over it. Is this okay, for an Alpha? I do remember seeing Clark drinking like everyone else...

I’m trying to figure out which bottle is the shampoo when I hear him sneak behind me.

“This shower is busy, M. Black.”

“It has enough space for two, apparently.”

“Are you going to always have something smart and annoying to reply to everything I say?”

“...Maybe. Or I can keep telling you I love you, if you’d rather.”

Grr, he’s so annoying. I ignore him and turn away, but he’s faster than me at grabbing the other bottle. He pours a bit of it in his hand, and gently, starts washing my hair for me. Mh... I could definitely get used to that.

“Let’s let Estelle with the Lewis, today. We can stay, just the two of us, all day,” he whispers.

“You’re already tired of your daughter?”

“Never. But I would like a bit of alone time with her mom... With the woman I love.”

I blush, and just when I want to hide it, he has me turn around and puts his arms around me, cornering me right there. His blue eyes are closer than I can bear, making me even redder. I... I really have no more defense against him.

Nathaniel smiles and softly kisses my lips. I miss a heartbeat and, slowly, answer to him. I really need to work on my self-restraint with him... With the water still pouring over us, he keeps kissing me, leading this dance between our lips. It's a wet kiss, and somewhat exciting. I remember now, our... second time was in the shower too. Maybe it's from memory, but my body heats even faster, and soon, I am the one craving for more. Our naked bodies against each other, our hands caressing the wet skin, his skillful fingers teasing me... It gets so hot, so humid in here. I need to hold on to his shoulder, and the shower wall, because my legs are going numb as fast as I'm getting more and more aroused...

A couple of hours later, we are back on the bed, sweating, naked and exhausted. Damn it... It's like we are back to the old days, having sex over and over again like animals. My body is so exhausted, I just decide to keep lying there. Nate pulls something over me, a bathrobe I think. I sigh.

"I hate you and your damn stamina."

"We can always work on improving yours," he chuckles, giving me a kiss.

Thanks for reminding me how I didn't train like him while raising our daughter. He is so fit, it's almost too much to bear. And I probably took some weight on, too.

"I hate you..." I grumble.

"Still no marriage?"

"No!"

"It's fine. I can wait until after the war, at least. Estelle will be so pretty in her little dress..."

Why is he imagining it already! I give him a kick.

"You're still not forgiven and not near being forgiven enough, you jerk. I should have you on abstinence instead!"

For four years! That should teach him!

He frowns.

“I don’t think I can resist you for more than a week, Elena. Fine, I promise I’ll wait a bit longer for the wedding.”

“You don’t have a choice,” I remind him.

He sighs, laying next to me after grabbing the other bathrobe.

For a long while, neither of us talks again. We just lay still on the bed, a bit sleepy, me resting and Nathaniel gently caressing my shoulder. He looks lost in his thoughts. The room is so quiet... It feels like the calm before the storm. And I don’t want the storm to come any time soon.

Truth is, it might be our last weeks together. I’m scared. I’m scared I’ll lose him, I’ll lose Estelle and everyone I love. I don’t want to imagine, after the battle, all the corpses, and the silence. Even if I survive, who will I lose? Nathaniel will be in the front lines with me. Both of us might be among the first ones to die. Damian, too, or Liam or Sylviana. Even Danny, Levi, Boyan... If we fall, Nora and the children will be next... Slowly, I recall all the faces of the people I love. So many faces, coming to my mind, haunting me. I buried my mother and father already. Eric, and Reagan, too. I don’t want to lose anyone else...

A shiver crawls my skin, and the fear and sadness bring me on the verge of tears. I turn to Nathaniel, suddenly snuggling against his torso.

He puts an arm around me, the other in my hair, soothing me calmly. His smell helps me calm down a bit, but my throat is still tight, and I want to cry.

“What is it...?” He whispers.

“I’m just... scared a bit,” I admit.

I hear him sigh shortly after, and he keeps caressing my hair and skin, gently. I try to calm down, letting his smell and skin surround me in a wave of warmth.

“Elena...”

“Hm...?”

“I want you to bite me.”

“Really?” I growl. “Of all times, do you have to be feeling kinky now?”

He laughs.

“No, my Sunshine, I meant... Bite me, as if to mark me.”

What the fvcking*g hell.

I push him and sit away, completely taken by surprise.

“Wha... What did you just say?”

He sighs and sits up, facing me with a very serious expression.

“Elena, I want you to mark me as your mate. Your one, official mate.”

“Nate, I don’t understand...”

“I know you don’t trust me, and it will take a while longer to restore your faith in me, because of how I ended things between us. Because of the mistakes, I made before you came back.”

“You mean all the hoes you slept with.”

“Well, yeah,” he replies, a bit nervously. “I know the fact that I had a fated mate bothers you, too.”

“I hope you’re going somewhere, talking about the other women you slept with and the one b***h that left you.”

I better never cross that one, because I swear I won’t let her out in one piece if I do. Nathaniel nods again.

“Sorry, I’ll... Let’s leave that out. Anyway, what I meant to say is... I love you, Elena... Selena. I love you. Not because you bore my child, or because the se.x together is great, or because of our past together, whatever. I love the woman Selena Whitewood. The strong, independent woman that doesn’t let me get what I want, doesn’t fear anyone and is the most beautiful person I know. I even love how we fight and bicker, how you get grumpy and will pull away from me when you’re upset, how jealous you get. I love how you’re effortlessly se.xy no matter what you do or wear; I love how you’re both so

strong and fragile. I love your fierce side, your caring side. I love your body, your skin, the taste of your lips, your amber eyes, your soft hair. But I love even more the woman inside. I'm crazy in love with you. I'll die if we part again, for whatever reason it is. I have one certainty, Selena. If I live or die in this war, I want it to be with you. With the one woman I chose to be in love with. I want your face to be the last thing I'll see if I die, and the first I'll see once it's over if we win. You're absolutely everything I want and will be satisfied with. I don't care who Moon Goddess said I had to be with. I don't give a damn about fated mates. I want the one woman that I chose myself. My second chance woman, my Sunshine."

I... I'm sobbing already. How can he say such things... Like that, just... taking me by surprise and not letting me prepare my heart ahead?

He takes my hand, my shaking hand, looking at me right into the eyes.

"Selena, I know I want to spend whatever is left of my life with you. I don't want anyone else, I swear. That's why I want us to mate. I know a wedding is not something you'll rely on to trust me. But if you mark me, I'll be yours alone. I won't be able to mate another woman ever. You don't even have to let me bite you, if you want. I don't care, I can wait. What I want, is for you to trust me. I'll do anything for that."

"...Are you sure?" I ask with a trembling voice. "There is no changing your mind, Nate. Even if I grow old and smelly and very wrinkly."

"I know."

"I might be disfigured in the war. Lose a limb, or be disabled. You'll be stuck with me all your life."

"I'm fine with that."

Damn it, why does he have to... To take me by surprise all the time? And with those kinds of big words... I don't even know how to react. Aside from my crying and my heart going crazy. I... I can become his mate? For real? His one, only mate? I had never imagined it... My marking on his neck. He had lost his fated mate. What ever left me to think he'd be alright with mating anyone else? I see so many couples together without ever taking that one, scary step... For werewolves, marking each other is the most binding form of union. A wedding is something that can be ended by divorce. A werewolf's

marking on its partner will never, ever go away no matter what. And he wants me to mark him?

“Selena, please.”

“...Fine,” I stutter. “But I want you to mark me too. I don’t want it one way.”

He can’t hide his surprise or his joy.

“Really? I can... I can really wait. I don’t want to force you.”

“After all those things you said?” I chuckle between my tears. “You think I’d ever find another i***t to love me like that?”

He laughs, and leans to k!ss me.

“...I want to be the only one, very lucky idiot.”

His Sunshine Baby Chapter 105 - Tips

“No, Damian, you need to... No, not that either! Did you get the parmesan...? Yes, exactly! Now you just cut a few pieces and put it on top. Slices, not chunks!”

I can’t repress a laugh. Nate’s been on the phone for over half an hour, trying to guide his brother into making whatever crazy dish Nora is craving again. Apparently, the King’s only weakness is his non-existent cooking sk!lls to satisfy his wife... Though, I have to admit Nora’s cravings are getting crazier every day. Moon Goddess, I wish I’d had that kind of pregnancy! With Estelle, I just felt sleepy all the time and unable to sleep when I was supposed to.

“Mommy? Can I put this one?”

“Try it, baby.”

Estelle has gotten into puzzles lately, so we just bought this new one for her yesterday, but she picked a big one. We had to install it in the living room, and we are both on the floor, trying to make those five hundred pieces work together somehow while chatting about her first weeks of school.

It was a bit of a last-minute, but Nate used his connections to get Estelle into a nearby school right in time for September. So far, she likes it. She even

became friends with a deaf-mute girl one year older, who she “plays” sign language with... Her teacher is a nice old lady, and they even have a little school farm where Estelle can see a rabbit every day.

While she tries to fit another piece of that puzzle, I turn to watch my man, visibly desperate on the phone. Despite his shirt, I can see the marking on Nate’s neck, making me smile every time.

Nathaniel was right about one thing: I feel much closer to him now with that marking on both our necks. They finally went from pink, painful and fresh to a proper scar. Truthfully, I didn’t think I could like a scar so much. It’s like I now have a special connection to him, something I can feel at all times, binding us together.

He feels my stare and turns to me with a smile as he hangs up and comes back to us.

“How are they doing?”

“I’m not sure. I can’t guarantee she will get her almond butter and four kinds of cheese lasagna, but I do hope for my brother he doesn’t burn it. When he hangs up, I think I heard something about Nora trying to stab him with a spoon...”

Estelle and I exchange a look before bursting to laughs. It’s just too funny to imagine the strongest Alpha of Silver City being subjected to his pregnant wife’s crazy whims... It reminds us that Nora’s delivery date is near, though. I’m already glad that we finished the summer without any further incident, but it definitely won’t last.

More and more, the vampires are coming closer. At night, our patrols in the north spot them from afar, and Sylviana, too, says she can sense them trying to break the protections she put in place. They are roaming around, but too afraid to come close. No sign of the Dark Witch though, which is scary. Since she attacked me, that woman hasn’t appeared anywhere...

The good side of it is, we didn’t think we would have so much time left, and got ready as soon as we could. There were several Alpha gatherings, between the few Clans that had not yet fused.

The Sapphire Moon Clan, the White Moon Clan, and the Violet Moon Clan were the three last ones. For a few weeks, Nora, the Black Brothers, the Mura

Siblings and I worked together to convince every pack to rally our cause. Truth is, I was surprised about how quickly my new position was accepted by other packs. The Sea Moon wolves even ended up rallying my pack, unexpectedly. Arthur Seaver wasn't too fond of the Sapphire or Violet Moon, but their pack had a debt to Nora and I since the last battle, almost five years ago. Hence, after further discussions, he finally agreed to submit to me and use his Alpha position to lead his pack into the war.

The Rising Moon, after protesting a lot, wasn't given much choice. Every pack still resented them for their betrayal four years ago, and Damian Black made sure they would regret if their Alpha didn't purely and simply renounced her position. When she was given a choice to fight against him or subdue, she chose the option that would let her live.

Finally, once our cousin William Blue gave Nora the leadership of the Sapphire Moon as promised, only the stubborn Lysandra Jones was left. That was a very different battle, and one we didn't expect to last this long. The Violet Moon is the proudest pack, and despite Tonia being her partner, Lysandra refused to submit to Damian, Nora or me until the very end.

This is the only issue we still have today. After many, many attempts to discuss this, Lysandra sort of agreed that she could potentially submit to Damian, but only when the Dark Witch would attack, not anytime before. This makes the situation more complicated, as we have to prepare a battle plan while continuously arguing with her...

"My Sunshine, my little star, I have to go."

"Daddy? You're going to work?" Asks Estelle, looking disappointed.

He gets on his knees and gives her a kiss on her forehead.

"Sorry, my princess, but your uncle Damian needs to stay home with aunty Nora, so I need to take care of the Company."

"With Uncle Isaac too?"

"Yes, exactly."

"I can't come with you...?" She asks with that cute pout.

Damn, I need to intervene before Nate loses again against our baby girl's ultimate cuteness attack. I chuckle and caress her chubby cheek.

"We're going to see Sylviana and your uncle Liam today, remember? You'll see Daddy tonight, baby."

"Okay, then..."

He smiles and hugs her once more, before giving me a long goodbye kiss.

I watch him leave with a light heart. Moon Goddess... I still can't believe this is my new daily life, with Nate and Estelle, in his penthouse. I wake up by his side, usually with a bit of delightful morning bed action, and let him make breakfast while I wake up our daughter, and all three of us eat together. Estelle goes to school, he goes to work and I study or go to the White Moon for my Alpha duties. I still don't really know how we made it work, but with Nate, everything happens so naturally, it feels like I don't have to worry about anything but the war that's coming at us.

And it is coming. I'm satisfied with each day that we go through without incident, but my first worry in the morning is, will it be today? I have never been patient, but Moon Goddess, this is utter torture.

Once again, I try to chase all of the gloom away while getting ready. My little baby sunshine helps a lot with that, too. She is happy whatever it is we do, and today she is ecstatic about going to see Sylviana and Liam.

We arrive in the large garden, but as usual, I feel like I'm entering some wild, unique tropical forest. There's green absolutely everywhere, and flowers of all colors sprouting randomly here and there. The ivy is covering most of the house, I wouldn't even be able to tell which color are her walls. I can feel the wildlife, too, notably, the butterflies busy living their lives from one flower to another. Estelle immediately runs to play with them, excited. There is something really special about walking into a witch's lair. I can't quite describe it, but my instincts are never fully... trusting. A tingling at the back of my mind that keeps me restless.

"Good Morning."

Sylviana's pretty voice welcomes us, and Estelle runs into her flowery dress.

"Aunty Sylviana, good morning!"

“How are you, little star?”

“I’m fine! Mommy and I made a puzzle today!”

“Did you?” Asks Sylviana, looking at me with a gentle smile.

“She loves it,” I answer. “How are you, Syl?”

“A bit busy, as usual. Have you had breakfast yet? I was making waffles...”

I suspect Liam is the main reason Sylviana always has some delicious food ready whenever we arrive. He comes out of the house behind her, greeting us and immediately playing with his niece. I’m surprised with how good Liam actually is with children, James and Estelle absolutely adore him.

“What’s up, Selena?” He asks with his usual b.ratty att!tude.

“The usual,” I sigh. “You know, training, family time, waiting...”

He nods and lets Estelle follow Sylviana inside her house to talk with me, putting his hands in his pockets.

“I hate that wait too... I am not used to not doing anything.”

“Your brother still makes you patrol at the border?”

“Every day, three or four times a day. He’s as restless as us. Nora can give birth anytime soon, now. It makes everyone crazy. To be honest...”

He sighs a bit, taking a glance at the house. From the kitchen window, we can see Estelle and Sylviana chatting and smiling happily, playing with fruits.

Liam shakes his head, frowning.

“I feel like she doesn’t tell me everything,” he says. “I mean, she never really does, but... About the witch, I feel like she has something she won’t tell me.”

“Sylviana’s always a mystery to everyone, you know. She knew about my link to Nora, about my parents’ death... She’s different from us. Being a witch probably has its perks, but also some issues, I guess.”

I wonder what it feels like, to be the only one of your own kind... I never stopped to really think about it. I’ve always lived surrounded by wolves. Silver

City is this strange, somewhat working cohabitation between humans and werewolves. After all, both kinds have a lot in common. I'm the living proof of how close they can be, actually. My hybrid status never really was an issue but to Sylviana... She doesn't seem to know any other witch. I know she said something about how she learned from her mother, but, apart from her family, how did she grow up without ever interacting with other people her kind? She never mentioned any other witch...

I notice Liam seems to be lost deep in his thoughts, too. I give him a little elbow bump.

"What is it?"

"I... I'm going to propose again after the battle is over," he says.

I can't help but roll my eyes.

"What is it with you guys and weddings? Damian got engaged to a b***h and then to Nora when she was in a coma, Nate is asking every damn day and now you too?"

Liam laughs.

"Hey, for the record, Sylviana and I are together since way before you and Nate, okay? Also, this is my fifth time asking."

"Well," I sigh, "at least you're persistent. What's her excuse for saying no, by the way? I mean, I know I'm also making Nate wait, but..."

"Oh, that i***t brother of mine deserves to wait, I support you fully on that one."

"Thanks. But?"

"But," he says, "Sylviana says I should wait to be sure."

"Be sure of what?" I ask, confused.

"She thinks I'm too young, that I should at least wait after the war. I think she's afraid since she can't see past the war... She says there are too many futures pending."

"It's terrifying. If not even Sylviana can see what will happen in that war..."

Liam nods, scratching his head.

“Yep, tell me about it. Truth is, she’s good about the past, but the future is always some blurry, changing sequence. I mean, that’s what she says; maybe we’re all going to die and she just won’t say it.”

“Thanks, Liam, very heartwarming forecast...”

“You’re welcome. I bet it’s going to be a downpour, too, like in one of those super epic battle movie scenes.”

“Against a water witch. Sounds awesome...”

He realizes what a horrible situation that would be and make a grimace.

“Okay, nevermind that. Anyway, when will I get to call you sister-in-law?”

“No idea. I don’t trust you to shut up, anyway, so I wouldn’t tell you.”

I leave him with his shocked expression and walk inside the house, hearing him shout behind me.

“That is so not nice, Selena! Really, I can’t believe you don’t trust me!”

I’m still laughing when I walk into the house to join my daughter and Sylviana, who are making some flower crowns together. Just like her garden, walking into Sylviana’s house is like walking into an indoor garden. There are random plants in pots in about every furniture available, some even hanging from the ceiling, and, especially for a werewolf, it smells so, so fresh and good, like a forest.

“Is it okay if she plucks out flowers?” I ask with a frown while taking a seat on the couch.

“Of course, I can always make more grow,” replies Sylviana with a smile.

“Right, little princess?”

“Look, mommy! Uncle Liam, can I make you one too?”

“I would love too!”

Half an hour later, Liam's head is covered in flowers, and Sylviana and I are watching him make some hot chocolate for his niece from the couch, laughing.

"I can't believe she is so big already," sighs Sylviana. "I still remembering the day you gave birth to her..."

"You're the first being she saw," I remind her. "No wonder she loves you so much."

"She still secretly call me her fairy godmother," she whispers with a smile.

"Is that a compliment for a witch?"

"Of course! I even taught her a few tricks..."

I can't help but frown a bit. What the heck did she possibly teach my daughter when I wasn't looking? I'll have to ask Estelle later. I love Sylviana, but sometimes she's a bit... scary and unpredictable. I don't want a jungle to sprout in the middle of Estelle's bedroom or a butterfly invasion.

She chuckles, seeing my baffled expression.

"Liam taught me you're making him wait..." I whisper.

"The brothers and their attachment issues," she sighs.

"I know!"

"I love Liam, but he's still too young. And witches aren't exactly popular as housewives..."

"You do know Nora and Liam are the same age, right? And she's on her second pregnancy..."

Sylviana laughs again, though quieter because Liam is definitely listening, thinking we can't see his ears moving a bit or the glances he sends us from time to time.

"Nora matured faster, and she's found her fated mate. Liam and I... It's different. Sometimes, two stars don't align perfectly, but it still works."

“I think I know what you mean, but, my parents were from different species, too. And for the reminder, it saved my life.”

She shakes her head, looking at Liam and Estelle fooling around with that lonely expression of hers.

“We’ll see... after the war, things will be clearer, I hope. Oh, that reminds me, I need to make some more almond b.utter for Nora. Do you want some too?”

“Yeah, I guess!”

So this is where Nora’s crazy infatuation with almond b.utter comes from. I’m about to follow Sylviana in the kitchen when I feel another wolf looking for me.

Selena?

What is it, Levi?

Damn, this new link is kind of weird, I have a hard time getting a hang of it. Anyway, where are you? Is everything okay?

At Sylviana’s house, why?

Oh, the witch? Okay, hem, well something happened here.

I freeze immediately, turning to Sylviana. Now, she should have felt it if something had happened, right?

Levi, what is it? What happened?

It’s Iris... She disappeared.

What the fvck do you mean, she disappeared?

Her cell was open and empty, and we couldn’t find her anywhere. We have two dozens of wolves looking, absolutely nothing.

Fvck... How the hell did she break out of her cell? To go where?

Elena, we know how she got out.

What? How?

I just checked the CCTV... It's Chris. Her brother opened her cell, and... he's missing too.