

His Sunshine Baby Chapter 81 - Tips

“What is wrong with you, Iris? This isn’t you!”

My cousin sighs, putting her purple hair back.

“You don’t know the first thing about me, Elena. Let me guess. You’ve always seen me as the quiet, shy and good girl my daddy raised. Isn’t that it? I was never on the strongest side, like you or Chris. I was barely average for an Alpha. Do you have any idea what it’s like, to grow up in someone’s shadow? In my own sibling’s shadow? In yours?”

I don’t even recognize her voice when she speaks. She sounds like someone else, yet she is still... Iris. An Iris I don’t know. She steps forward again, defying me with her eyes.

“My father was always crazy with his jealousy. His younger brother was stronger, smarter, more appreciated. He always felt like Samuel stripped him from his Alpha title. Even when my Dad finally got it back, it wasn’t enough. Your adoptive father’s shadow was always there.”

What does it have to do with her? Our fathers’ rivalry is nothing new!

“Iris, it has nothing to do with us. Xavier got the Alpha position in the end!”

“Oh, but that was never enough. Actually, he trained us even harder because of that. Or more precisely, he tried to train Chris. Me? I was his smart little girl, cast aside because, why would he consider me when he had a son?”

I’m confused. Didn’t Xavier always treat Iris better? He cherished her like a little princess her whole life, compared to Chris! Her brother always had to train harder, prove himself to their father while Iris could do whatever she wanted.

“To be honest, I wouldn’t have cared that my younger brother took the heir position if it wasn’t for you, Elena. But you? You were always so annoyingly strong and perfect. Father got crazy about Chris being better than you. You can’t be beaten by Samuel’s daughter, by a girl! Guess what? Your existence fueled our father’s jealousy, Elena. And mine! You were supposedly only the Alpha’s niece, but Clark had to make you his goddaughter and put you as a possible heir for the White Moon Clan! Do you know how humiliating that was?”

I'm completely in shock. I never thought Iris gave a sh!t about the Alpha position, in the Opale or White Moon Clan!

"I didn't ask for anything, Iris! Clark and Xavier decided it all on their own!"

She sends me a glare back.

"Oh, shut the hell up, Elena. You've always known you were more cherished. The precious little orphan, so strong, so bright, so loved. After enduring my father's jealousy towards yours, now you were in the competition as well? But guess what, My father never, ever considered me as your rival or an heir a single second!"

"I don't want to be anyone's rival, Iris! I even give Chris the Opale Moon Alpha position!"

Iris laughed, rolling her eyes out.

"You gave it to him? Do you even hear yourself? Even now you think you're so much better than us? Moreover, you're the same as my dad! You don't consider me at all!"

I'm getting tired of that attitude of her. I've had enough emotions for today. I growl, warning her.

"You are who you are, Iris, and that is not a leader. You may be an Alpha, but..."

"What? I don't have the muscles?"

I frown. Does she really think that's all there is? Is that why she's so delusional? And jealous?

"I have the brains, Elena! I may not be strong, but I was always the smarter one!"

"You're doing a great job with our facilities, Iris, I know that. You're an angular piece of the Clan, and so important, but..."

She scoffs.

“Oh, poor Elena,” she sighs. “You really think that’s all, right? Don’t you get it? I’m so good at this game, I am the one who kicked you out of Clark’s heir position as the White Moon Alpha in the first place.”

...What is she talking about? Clark took me out of his potential heirs because of my baby, and Iris has nothing to do with it. She shakes her head, with that annoying smirk of hers.

“I bet you never realized until now, cousin. Gosh, it wasn’t easy, you know?”

She walks around me while talking, making circles and having my wolf wary of her. In the corner of my vision, I see Daniel, Reagan, Levi, Ben, and Bonnie arrive next to us, all the Lewis siblings in their wolf form. Reagan is still human but growling.

“Let’s go back to the start. From when your father had his accident and you were sent to jail because you were stupid enough to get involved with Diego, I thought we would finally get rid of you. What I did not expect, was that you’d be back and forgiven by Clark. Not only that, following Samuel’s coma, he made your position as his goddaughter and possible heir official. You have no idea how furious I was! So I tried to find a way to kick you out without being involved.”

What the hell...?

Behind her, the rest of the Opale Moon Clan is listening as well, visibly as confused as I am.

“Luckily, you gave me an opportunity sooner than I thought when you met Nathaniel Black.”

A lot of faces cannot hide their shock and stare at me in awe. I guess the cat’s out of the bag now, but I couldn’t care less who knows or not. Iris continues her speech, ignoring everyone else, so full of confidence it’s beyond irritating.

“I didn’t think much of it at first, but when I heard about you together at the Club, I thought this might be another opportunity.”

“You saw us...?”

“Oh no Elena, I’m the good girl, remember? I don’t go partying outside. But some kids from our pack were there, remember? One of them saw you, how attracted you were to Black and told me everything.”

I can’t believe it... This goes back to my first meeting with Nate! She chuckles.

“So I made sure you went back again. I know how attracted you are to bad boys, Elena, I knew you’d fall for him.”

“You’re the one who sent that text,” I realize.

I had never understood how the Club had gotten my number to send a private invite, but it turns out it was Iris?

“Bingo!” She says with a smile. “Clever, right? You ran back there and so I knew I had you in Black’s arms. With your character, I thought you’d sleep with him once or twice. But I didn’t expect it would go on and on for weeks!”

“How the hell do you know!”

“I watched you, of course! To be honest, it wasn’t easy. The Blood Moon watch their territory closely, and the Black brothers almost caught me more than once.”

The female that intruded their territory! Moon Goddess, so many things are coming to light now! I can’t believe it... All those little details that had me intrigued earlier, even...

“You’re the one who sent that picture of Levi and I kissing to Nate!”

“I did! Oh, it was fun, to be honest. Having you pretend you had a boyfriend here to keep Diego at bay while hiding your relationship to Black! Not to lie, Elena, I had fun. To be honest, there was a bit of revenge, too.”

“I never did anything to you, Iris, all this jealousy was your own!”

She sighs and shakes her head.

“Oh no, Elena, you never did anything. That’s right. But it didn’t stop Eric from being crazy in love with you.”

“Eric...?”

I didn't expect him to be brought up. Right, her deceased boyfriend used to claim his love for me, but I thought that was ancient history since he got with her! Iris loses her smile while talking about Eric.

"If I ever had one crush, it was Eric. For years, I got prettier and prettier, hoping he'd notice me. Yet, like an i***t, I had to watch him talk about how much he loved you day after day... It was so upsetting! So, when you pretend to go out with Levi, I knew it was my chance. I asked him out, arguing you'd never notice him anyway. Luckily, he agreed. Do you know how useful it is to be with a police officer, Elena? Much more than I thought."

I can't believe her. She even used Eric? Iris chuckled again.

"When Levi was thrown into your love affair, I didn't really expect it. But after that picture, I knew your relationship with Black might collapse at any time. I mean, any male would be jealous, right? Yet, it had already exceeded my expectations in terms of time, so I threw his ex in the mix, just to be sure. With Eric's contacts, it was easy to get his door code, send a little innocent text to his ex-girlfriend and just when I saw you leave the pack again to see him, with the right timing... surprise!"

Cold anger his raging up in my bones. I can't believe her! She was evil enough to plot so much against me and Nathaniel? I've never wanted to slap someone so much!

"What was your point, Iris? Just having me with him, then break up? Why?"

She shrugs.

"I told you, I expected you to sleep with him a few times, not have it go on for weeks and months! Oh, I guess you fought a few times. You have quite a temper, cousin, after all, don't you? Yet, as time passed, you kept getting back together with him, and a thought hit me. I wanted you with Black to piss Clark off and have him get you off his potential heirs for that, but what if? What if things got serious between Black and you? What if you got the Blood Moon's backing eventually? I realized things were more complex than I thought when we went together. I sensed something was going on between you and the King's mate, but I couldn't grasp what."

I remember. Iris caught me out of University, and we went to see Nora's fight...

“I had only meant to bring you out to have you betray my father and Clark’s ban on leaving the Pack, but...”

“You called your father, you said you had permission to...!”

“Oh, yeah, I lied. I pretended to call.”

Holy Moon Goddess, that explains why Xavier was so fvcking*g furious! He really never gave me his permission to go out, yet I thought so and kept arguing! I can’t believe Iris was behind all that from the start!

“Anyway, I had another problem on my hands. You got closer to the Blood Moon, and I couldn’t understand why. Then, the attack... I lost Eric. I was so, so mad, and you... And meanwhile, you went and got fvcking*g pregnant with Black’s child!”

Everyone’s eyes are on me, shocked or angry. If anyone wondered about my baby’s father, I guess things are out in the open now... But I don’t care. I’m angrier about Iris being behind all of this. I just can’t believe her!

“I was furious. I had lost my lover, yet you of all people managed to conceive a child with Black? It was hard to swallow, but at least, Clark knew soon enough, and I knew he would never allow that. I finally had you out of my way. But to be honest, I didn’t feel relieved. I wasn’t enough. So I decided it would be better if you didn’t have this child at all. After all, I worked so hard for you not to become this Pack’s Alpha, I couldn’t let you become another pack’s Luna, right?”

What the hell...? I try to think, but I don’t understand what she could have done. However, Iris’s unhappy face tells me things didn’t turn out her way. She growls softly.

“So I tipped you dear ex, Diego, about your pregnancy. You should have seen it, it was funny how crazy and mad he went. You have a thing for psychos, cousin. Anyway, he started rampaging about how he was going to stab you, make sure your next child was his...”

I get a chill down my back. Holy fvck, that sounds like the crazy Diego I knew once... But Diego is dead, now. I swallow, trying to calm down.

“But he didn’t go your way, Iris, did it? Diego is dead.”

She glares my way, losing her smirk for good.

“Yeah, you got lucky your dear lover got a hold of him. Since Clark had you on lockdown, Diego had to wait for the right moment to get to you. It wasn’t easy since you were never really alone. If it wasn’t for Black protecting you...”

I frown. Black protecting me? Nathaniel never came to the White Moon territory, and I did leave the house a few times unaccompanied or with Daniel only... What is she talking about?

“Moreover, you weren’t my only issue. I needed to do more for dad to consider me as an heir, and I did. To be fair, I’m sorry that my brother lost an arm, but it worked in my favor. I already had control of most of our medical facilities, our pack’s main economy. All I needed was better control of the funds. And guess what? I could do so by an agreement with the Gold Moon Clan.”

I growl. She wants to shift the Clan’s money to the Gold Moon Banks! So far, the only place we had our money stored is under the financial establishments owned by the Sapphire Moon Clan, the main display of our alliance with them! If we shift this money, we will clearly be losing the partnership with them!

“You’re crazy, Iris! You can’t manipulate our money in favor of the Gold Moon!”

“Oh, I will. My father was never good at handling such stuff or making big decisions, so I did. I let my Dad think he could lead the negotiations, but I was the one behind it all. And you fell right for it, cousin...”

I growl.

Damn it, she’s right. I always thought Xavier was the one behind the scheming with the Gold Moon Clan, not her!

“You can’t do that, Iris,” says one of the men behind her. “Chris is the new Alpha, you...”

“I control the Clan’s finances! I am the one in charge! My brother has lost an arm and has nothing, he is not fit to be an Alpha!”

“Chris is still better than you!” I yell back. “He is a brave, strong and good kid! He cares about others, not only his little self like you, Iris!”

“That is not for you to decide, Elena,” she growls back.

I glare at her, furious. Who the hell does she think she is? She’s been deceiving not only me but the whole pack for weeks, and now she wants to claim fvcking*g ownership? Iris has a smirk on.

“They will never accept you, anyway. Not with the little bastard you’re carrying...”

I growl. How dare she insult my daughter! The people around her are confused. I bet they didn’t expect Iris to have done so much. One of them steps forward.

“Iris, we can’t move without the Alpha’s permission...”

“I am the Alpha! Didn’t you listen? I control this pack’s money, and I have the support of the Gold Moon. Chris and Elena have nothing, and my father even stepped down because of her. If you don’t want to be exposed and penniless, you’ll do as I say!”

Everyone hesitates, unwilling to say anymore. I cross my arms, staying right in front of her. She frowns, a bit surprised.

“What the heck are you doing?”

“You’re not going anywhere, Iris. I’m still a fighter of this Clan, while you are not its official Alpha. I say you’re not going. Don’t you dare take one step out.”

“Oh, and you’re going to stop me, perhaps? I know of your medical condition, Elena, you can’t fight or you’ll lose your baby. And you would never risk that.”

This time, it’s my turn to smile.

“I don’t need to shape-shift to fight, Iris. And I can assure you I’m plenty enough in my human form to keep you here, cousin.”

I hear Reagan step forward behind me, handing me a large pole with her gloved hand. It shines immediately, and Iris goes pale.

“You... You can touch silver?”

I chuckle.

“Surprise, surprise, cousin. You’re not the only one with secrets.”

Even if I am not a full Royal like Nora, I guess being a daughter of the Sun too has its perks...

I glare back at my cousin.

“Now Iris, I would advise you use your smartness and think twice before trying to cross me.”

His Sunshine Baby Chapter 82 - Tips

My cousin goes red with anger, probably the first time I ever see her lose control. Her eyes are glaring at me, yet staring at my silver pole with defiance.

Yes, I can touch silver. It injures me like any metal if I’m hit, of course, but unlike most werewolves, I am not that affected by it. I’ve known since the times Reagan trained me, but it had become something irrelevant in a City own half by werewolves and half by humans, both kinds living together in peace. I never thought it would come in handy at a time like this...

“You... Enough, Elena! Stand back and...!”

“I won’t, Iris,” I answer calmly. “Clark gave me one mission, making sure the Opale Moon stays out of the Gathering.”

“The Alpha said that...?” Whispers someone behind Iris.

My cousin immediately turns to him.

“Don’t listen to her! Why would Clark trust her! Didn’t you hear? She is bearing one of the Black brother’s children? He kicked her out for that! I forbid you to listen to her! I am the Alpha and...”

“Chris is the Alpha, Iris! You have nothing!”

She turns to me, going so red I feel like she will explode.

“I have anything I want! I planned all this, Elena, I worked so hard and you are nothing! You’re just an Orphan, a little bastard picked up in the streets! I am the oldest child of my father, his heir! How dare you name Chris and tell me what I can do or not!”

“You are smart but you are not fit for the Alpha position, Iris.”

“Why? I have power, don't I?” She says with a confident smirk. “I have all the Pack's funds under my control. I'm in charge of most of our medical facilities, I rule our economy from one border to another. They can disobey me if they want to go penniless!”

Behind her, people exchange looks, between shock and fear. The White Moon Clan's main income comes from the Clinics, Hospital and Labs we have and indeed, Iris spearheads them all. The is one thing she can't control, however...

“Iris, we are werewolves, not humans. We don't just need money. We need hierarchy, relationships, trusted individuals. We need people strong enough to protect the pack, and some to rule it. We are a pack, a group. But you?”

I chuckle.

“You're just a selfish, self-centered little b!tch.”

“You swine! You...”

I slap her before she can finish her sentence.

I didn't hold back, and she stumbles a couple of steps back, astonished.

“How dare you..”

“You think you are an Alpha? Have your way. Try to walk past me, or touch me. I'll show you how wrong you are!”

She growls furiously, and without thinking, runs at me. It's funny how conscious I am of your difference in strength now. Iris never was a fighter. I only need to take a step on the left to avoid getting hit. She is so mad and keeps coming at me, trying to throw punches.

Too bad for her she didn't pay better attention during training. I have no difficulties to dodge anything she throws at me. For a few minutes, I keep dodging and she keeps attacking. She is using so much strength for nothing, it's pathetic. Having the brains is of no use now. I am the stronger wolf. I keep going, but I make sure to fight back too. Making her trip, hitting her back and using my silver pole as a barrier, I am playing with her.

Iris is getting more and more exhausting while I flawlessly lead this fight where I want it. I don't even break a sweat, but Iris is out of breath in minutes. Behind her, people watch her with nothing left but pity and embarrassment. Such a weak one cannot be an Alpha. No way.

I can tell what they are thinking, but my mind is somewhere else. Where the rest of the pack is, as well and Nora, the King and... Nate.

The gathering should have started by now. I don't even dare to mindlink them, closing my mind to focus on Iris. If anything happens, I don't want them distracted by my mind-link. I'll wait for the good news.

I hope.

"Iris!"

I stop fighting and turn to Chris. My cousin, completely lost, is watching the scene of me humiliating his sister until someone runs to explain things to him. His glare is already directed to his sister.

"What the fvck is wrong with you, Iris? Step back!"

"I won't! You are..."

"I am the Alpha of this pack!" Roars her brother.

Elena.

I turn my head to Clark's mind linking. Shouldn't he be at the gathering by now...?

You were right. The Gold Moon expects the Opal Moon to follow them and betray us. Do whatever you want, but make sure those traitors don't come here...

I glance in Chris's way, but judging by his dark expression, my cousin got the info too. He growls even louder at his sister. Iris looks scared for the first time, stepping back. Did she not expect Chris would take my side and interfere? She looks around, but the Opal Moon people don't really look willing to follow her anymore.

I swing my silver bar in my hand, adding a threat.

“I can do this all day, Iris. You stay here or I’ll really get mean and mad, cousin.”

“Out of my way!”

Her anger isn’t much to handle. She keeps struggling, trying to fight me off, but it’s useless. I give every of her attempts to kick or hit me back, except that I don’t miss my target. I am a fvcking*g fighter, no kidding. She may be smart and manipulate people, but she is no match to face me. I keep fighting her off, and Chris doesn’t intervene. He knows his sister can use a good lesson...

“Elena, what about our money!” Suddenly yells the guy from earlier. “We will never get it back from the Gold Moon Clan!”

“Trust the new Luna. She won’t agree to their terms, and the Blood Moon Clan and the King will cut this off.”

I believe in Nora. Her idea will work...

Suddenly, we hear a huge explosion from afar. Everyone turns heads towards... There’s smoke where the gathering was supposed to happen! What the heck is going on?! I turn to Chris, but he looks as worried and clueless as me. Holy crap!

Clark! Clark are you okay!

Elena, stay where you are! The Gold Moon is attacking the Blood Moon! Make sure to... sh!t!

I lose him, and I’m freaking out. What the heck is going on other there? I don’t dare to mind-link anyone else, what if they are disturbed and take a hit because of me? I’m so powerless and furious! I turn to Iris, grabbing her collar.

“What do you know? Iris, what do you know about this!”

But she just laughs at me, despite her mouth covered in blood from my punches.

“How is it, Elena? Frustrating? Annoying? Well, you should get a taste too!”

I slap her, too pissed to control myself. Chris walks between us, though, raising his arm to take his sister back by the throat.

“Iris, enough! Someone lock her away!”

Two of our men grab Iris and drag her away, Moon Goddess knows where.

“Chris! Chris, you can’t do that to me! I’m your older sister! I did this for us! I...”

“And have her shut the fvck up...” He growls while turning his back on her to walk up to me.

I’m too worried to mind his sister anymore. I keep watching in the distance at the Silver Stadium, scared. Chris puts a hand on my shoulder.

“He said to stay here.”

“Yeah, but...”

Damn, fifty people from our pack are there, Nora is there, Nate is there! Reagan comes next to me, too, frowning.

“The Gold Moon had a trap prepared... Losing the Opal Moon will probably not help. Don’t worry, kid, the Clans are better than that.”

That’s the problem? What if they didn’t manage to have everyone ally? What if every pack is on their own? I take a deep breath and try to feel them. I can feel Clark’s wolf, fighting. I check on our pack, but they are all fighting or fleeing the scene...

Then, Nora. She is panicked, but she is fine... For now. Moon Goddess, please protect her... I already lost my father today, I can’t lose her too!

Suddenly, I realize. I don’t feel Nathaniel’s wolf. It’s like a blank space. He can’t be sleeping at such a time. Holy sh!t, why would he be unconscious? Now?

Elena, the fight’s over! We are going to help evacuate people from her, a lot are injured! The Gold Moon Clan’s dead. Shit... There are bodies. The King is injured too.

What about his Luna? And his brother? Clark!

I’m busy! Meet me at General Hospital!

I swear and turn to Chris, but he's already nodding. He was mind linked and informed too.

"Go, Elena. I'll stay here and make sure everything's alright, okay? Don't worry about the Opal Moon anymore. But judging from the number of victims, they will probably send people to our clinics too, we'll be busy. Don't worry, go."

I nod and start running without second thoughts.

Moon Goddess, please let them be alright! Suddenly, as I'm close to the border, a bike's loud engine catches my attention. Reagan is waiting for me, handing me a helmet.

"Get on, Kid, you'll be there faster."

Reagan rides as fast as possible to the General Hospital in the Blood Moon territory.

When we arrive, it's hell there. Dozens of people are running in and out, bringing more and more injured people. I jump off the bike and try to get a grasp of what's going on. Some people visibly fought other werewolves, others were most likely injured in the explosion... Moon Goddess, how many people died? I run inside, trying to look for a clue, something, someone in this crowd who could tell me how are Nora and Nate doing. Even Boyan! He was there too, I just realize now.

I try to find Clark, but I don't know this place, I get so confused with all those corridors, and they are packed with medical staff or victims! Suddenly, I recognize a familiar silhouette across the crowd.

"Sylviana!"

The Witch turns to me, surprised, while I do my best to get to her.

"Elena! What are you doing here! Are you ok?" She asks.

Who cares if I'm okay, I wasn't even on the scene! I want to ask her about Nathaniel when I recognize the guy right behind her. It's the King's younger brother, isn't it? He looks exhausted and a bit of a mess, but I unconsciously address him.

“Liam... Where is Nate?” I ask, my voice shaking.

“He’s in surgery.”

Oh, Moon Goddess. In surgery? Why? What happened to him! I can’t hold my tears, I start sobbing loudly, panicked. Why is he in surgery! Sylviana tries to calm me down, patting my hand.

“He’s fine, Elena, he will make it.”

“Oh, Moon Goddess, Nate...” I sob. “...What happened?”

The good witch holds my hand a bit tighter, while Liam Black grabs his phone out.

Moon Goddess...

“The Gold Moon Clan attacked despite Nora’s attempts to calm them down. She had won most of the Clans into an alliance when they attacked.”

“We saw an explosion...”

“They planted a bomb ahead of the gathering, it took everyone by surprise. The Clans fought the Gold Moon and Rising Moon Clans, as well as a few others, and I intervened too. We won, but... sadly there are a lot of casualties. The King is greatly injured as well, and... Nora’s gone.”

What the hell, Nora is gone...? Before I can even ask, Liam Black is back, a furious expression that is scarily similar to his brother’s on.

“It’s bad, really bad. The psycho who was after Nora, it’s him. He took her and shot my brothers.”

What...?

“You’ve got to be kidding me?” I yell.

Some sicko took Nora? And Nate and the King were shot? What the fvck happened there! And I couldn’t even help!

“I’m not,” he replies, annoyed. “We have to find Nora, fast!”

I focus on my wolf, trying to feel my cousin. sh!t, it's usually so easy, but now...

"I can't! She must be unconscious, I can't reach her at all!"

"...Maybe I can help."

Some shady guy just appeared behind Liam. He looks like some junkie... And about to collapse at any time. Liam and he start talking with low voices, and Sylviana turns to me again.

"Elena, look at me. Liam and I will find Nora. Go find Nathaniel. He's injured, and I believe he needs you by his side. His surgery is almost over, but you should stay with him while Liam and I are gone, alright? Don't worry, we'll find Nora, okay?"

I nod, unable to say anything to that. I can't believe it... I tried to calm down, but I keep crying mindlessly. Sylviana and Liam get busy about finding Nora, while I rush to the nurse's office I saw earlier.

"Excuse me! I'm looking for Nathaniel Black?" I ask the first nurse I see.

"Black? He's still in surgery..."

But another woman behind her, a werewolf actually, shakes her head.

"Not that one. The King is still in surgery, honey, but Nathaniel Black just came out. He's in room 238, second floor, blondie. But you can't go in like that!"

Hell if I can't! I'm already gone, running to the second floor. In front of his room, among a little group of people, I only recognize Isaac, his best friend, frowning.

"You... What are you doing here?"

"How's he?" I ask, ignoring his question.

He nods.

"He's doing fine, for someone who took two bullets. One in the arm and the other in the stomach, but his healing ability is doing fine. He's still unconscious, though."

“Can I... go in?”

He seems to hesitate, then nods.

Of course, they gave him one of the best rooms. It's spacious, but not too much. Just enough for him to be alone and have room for visitors. Well, it's just me actually. I choke up when I see him, lying in the bed. Moon Goddess... He has a lot of bandages, and a scar on the left side of his head, they had to shave his head to stltch him. I want to cry again when I see him like that. I stumble to the stool next to him and grabs his hand, mine shaking.

“Moon Goddess, Nate...”

What happened to him? Who did this? fvck, I can't believe I wasn't there. I start crying without thinking, though I try not to make much noise. My father died, the man I love is lying in a hospital bed and Nora is missing! What else could go wrong! I keep crying silently, tears have been holding back since earlier, and holding his hand.

If something had happened to him...

I wake up a bit later, completely confused. Oh, right the Hospital... Where is Nate? The bed is empty, but as I turn, I realize Daniel's with me.

“Danny?”

“Hey, Babe. Are you okay? Damn your eyes are so...”

“Where's he? Nate? Where did he...”

“He's fine. He woke up an hour ago, but he asked me not to wake you. He went to check on his brother... The King is in really bad shape, Elena. We don't know if he's going to make it.”

Oh, Moon Goddess, no, no...

“What about Nora?” I ask him, suddenly stressed out. “She was missing! They said...”

“She's back. Liam Black and Sylviana found her, but she had surgery. She was shot in the leg, but apparently, she's okay. She's... changed a bit, but...”

She changed? I get up and leave the room, Daniel behind me. We ask for the King's room, I know Nora will be there. On my way there, I almost run into some guy who is leaving the room.

“Ex...”

He looks strangely at me, before shaking his head and leaving. I turn to Daniel.

“What was that?”

“Elena, I think that was William Blue, your... other cousin.”

I didn't even realize. Now that I think about it, he did have dark hair and blue eyes like her! I can't stop to think about that, though. I almost run into the room, only to find Nora, alone with her mate. She's there, lying on the bed next to him. Something feels different about her. Her hair is... white?

It's so silent in this room, I can barely breathe. They are both unconscious. Nora and the King, the fated pair next to each other. I feel myself choking up.

Moon Goddess...

His Sunshine Baby Chapter 83 - Tips

It's been a rough six days... Nora just woke up yesterday, but her mate is still in the coma, and this morning, I buried my dad. And we lost so many werewolves in this battle, and the damages... The stadium and its surroundings are still ravaged, like a gaping wound in the city. Silver City is sad those days. The sky is dark, and we get rain from time to time. With the King in the Hospital and Nora in a coma, all the Alphas are helping each other with the aftermath of the Battle.

I know Nathaniel is replacing his brother Damian as the head of their pack, but I haven't seen him since. I've come to realize this is no coincidence, but I'm still unsure why he would be avoiding me at such a time. Is he afraid I'll distract him? Or...

When I show up at the offices of Black Corporation that evening, the secretary behind the welcome desk looks unsure and tired.

“Excuse me,” she says, “M. Black is busy...”

“Is he upstairs?” I ask.

“Yes, but he’s...”

“Fine.”

“Miss Whitewood! You can’t...!”

But I ignore her and walk to the elevators, hitting the button to go all the way up to his brother’s office. Since the King is still in a desperate coma, I bet Nate will have directly taken over... When I walk into their office, I do notice he’s busy, but with Isaac and Tonia. They both look surprised to see me.

“Hey, blondie,” says Isaac. “It’s been a while.”

“Hello, Isaac, Tonia. Mind if I talk to Nathaniel for a few minutes?”

“We’re busy, Elena.”

I send him a glare. Too busy to see the woman carrying your child? Tonia and I exchange a look, and within a few silent seconds, she understands and walks out. Isaac sighs and follows her out, too.

Nathaniel crosses his arms.

“Great. I never meant to replace my brother, but now I really can see I don’t have his authority...”

“So you still have some humor. Now I know you do resemble Liam a bit...”

He shakes his head, looking annoyed.

“Why are you here, Elena? I don’t mean to be rude, but with both Damian and Nora in the hospital, I have a lot to deal with, and no one is being easy to deal with these days. Including but not limited to your Alpha, who hates me.”

I am not going to be sorry for him. Clark is still my godfather, and dealing on the daily with the jerk who got me pregnant is probably testing his patience...

“You’ve been avoiding me.”

He takes a deep breath in, not hiding his fool mood.

“No, I’ve been busy, and…”

“Don’t give me that, Nate. Being busy never held you back before. So what is it? I went to see you at the hospital, but when I woke up you were gone.”

“I was needed elsewhere.”

“I get that, but it’s been a few days now. Even Clark found time to come back to our pack. You’re avoiding me.”

He sighs. Does he think I haven’t noticed? He’s looking anywhere but my direction!

“Nathaniel.”

This time, I’m growling and using my Alpha voice. He won’t avoid me like that.

But to my surprise, he growls back. I think this is the first time Nate’s ever growled back at me.

“Enough with your insolence, Elena,” he says. “If you have something to tell me, say it now, or be gone. Despite what you think I really have other priorities than you.”

I’m speechless. What does he mean? Nathaniel has never talked to me like that before or sent me away. He’s always been the one to hold me back! What is this?

“Nate, what…”

“Tell me again, Elena. The truth this time. Who is the baby’s father?”

“It’s you! Of course it’s you, for the hundredth time, I…”

He turns around and suddenly, throws some file on his desk, looking angry, and… hurt.

“I don’t understand how you can keep lying with a straight face like that, Elena. You knew you’d get caught sooner or later. I mean, maybe you didn’t want to believe it wasn’t mine at first, but when I told you the truth about my condition, you could have just apologized and said the truth!”

What the heck...? I take a few steps to his desk, grabbing those papers. They are from the White Moon Clinic, it's the paternity test from our samples that Daniel had sent. I check it out. Moon Goddess, the results...

How can it be negative? Nathaniel is the father! I check and recheck again, but it doesn't change a thing. According to those, Nathaniel is not the biological father of my baby.

I'm in such shock, it takes me a couple of seconds to understand.

Iris.

It has to be my cousin. As of today she's pending trial for her betrayal, and because we are so short-handed, still runs all our facilities. Iris knew I was running a paternity test to prove Nate's the father, I bet she did this to punish me. Fvck...

I look at Nathaniel, and his eyes, full of anger and sadness. He thinks I betrayed him. That I slept with someone else, probably Levi or Diego, and lied to him. That I'm bearing someone else's child. This is so pathetic... I start crying silently, but it's only adding to his anger.

"Don't you cry, Elena! You're the one who lied! I gave you so many chances to say the truth, but now you're feeling sorry? Won't you even apologize?"

"Those papers are lying, Nate. You're the father. My cousin Iris did this, she..."

"No, no, enough with the excuses, Elena. I already gave you the benefit of the doubt when Daniel asked me to re-test my disease by giving you my samples for a paternity test. Now I'm done listening to your lies."

"Nate, I swear, on the Moon Goddess, this baby is..."

"ELENA, ENOUGH!"

I have no choice but take a couple of steps back, shocked by his Alpha aura thrown at me. I've never seen him so angry, and I've never been so scared of him. His wolf is so like the King's... All dark, growling and glaring at me.

He really thinks I cheated on him, that I lied. I keep crying, tears rolling down my cheeks. I can't think of any words to say. He's too mad and too hurt to

listen. I'm not going to convince him like this. I sob painfully, but that irritates him.

"Elena, we're done. I don't want to see you if you don't want to apologize and say the truth."

"I never said anything but the truth, Nathaniel."

He looks at me, shocked, but when he's about to burst at me again, I turn my heels and leave this place.

I burst out and cry loudly in the elevator, so loud it echoes in my ears. Why, why, why? It wasn't supposed to end like this! I thought the test would prove he's the dad, he'd be happy, and we could be happy together...

Moon Goddess, my baby. What am I going to do with her? Her father won't believe she's his, and my pack will reject her! I keep crying as I leave the building, and with no idea where to go. I don't want Nora to see me in that state. I don't even feel like seeing Daniel, he's helping at the hospital, there is so much work to do. I don't have the heart to call and tell him. He will be so devastated when I tell him Iris actually messed up the paternity test...

I slowly walk back to the White Moon Clan, to our flat. I feel like a ghost, walking in silence, by myself, a step away from the real world. I can barely breathe. All I can keep thinking is, what will I do from now on? I could ask Nora, but she's already overwhelmed by the King's state...

It's already late and dark when I go to my room, feeling like a stranger in my own place. It's like I can't recognize the smells, the pictures on the walls, anything that was so familiar. Everything that used to make me feel better is gone. I try to wipe the tears off my face, trying to think straight. I've reached the lowest levels of sadness, like my heart is getting swallowed by ice. I want to cry again, but I'm too tired for that.

"Elena?"

I turn around. To my surprise, Sylviana and Daniel are there, coming out from his room. My best friend's eyes are red. I frown, a bit lost. He runs up to me, however, and hugs me without a word. I don't understand...

"I already explained it to him," says Sylviana.

So she knew? That the results had come out negative... I can't hold back new tears as I keep looking at the witch.

"He's the father," I repeat uncontrollably. "Nathaniel is..."

"I know, Elena," she whispers, walking up to me to caress my hair. "But he won't accept it now. I'm really sorry, Elena."

"It's okay, babe. I'm here."

Daniel's words comfort me a little, but it can't fill that void in my heart. I'm too sad, too worried, too disappointed. When he lets go of me, I realize I won't be able to go on like this. Just when I'm about to talk first, Sylviana takes my hand.

"Nora went into a coma again."

I frown.

"What? Why? I saw her yesterday, she was fine!"

"She couldn't take it anymore, Elena. I can't explain it to you, but... She went back into coma, and the King woke up."

Damian Black woke up? I heard the medical staff said he was not going to make it.... What did Nora do? How did she do that? I have a feeling her fated mate's condition is because of Nora, but I don't understand.

"Elena... Nora is in a deep coma. Her power will go... dormant."

I frown. Dormant? Meaning the dark witch won't be able to feel it anymore. Then... I put a hand on my tummy.

"She will be able to feel my baby?"

"Her aura, yes. For now, she is still concealed in your belly, but..."

"When will Nora wake up?" I ask, realizing that's all this is about.

If my cousin wakes up before my baby is born, it could be fine, but if she doesn't... To my surprise, Sylviana shakes her head.

“I can’t tell, Elena. But... No matter how many times I try to see, Nora, she... She won’t be back before your baby’s birth.”

I take a few seconds to handle the shock. It means Nora will stay in the coma at least five or six more months...

Piece by piece, everything adds up, doing the math I’ve been too blind to realize. My cousin in a coma, my baby will be more in danger than ever... and with no one but me to protect her. I chuckle nervously.

“It’s just like when Reagan saved me.”

Daniel shakes his head, confused.

“What are you talking about, Babe?”

“Danny... I have to leave.”

“What? But aside from the White Moon, the packs...”

“I’m not leaving the White Moon Clan, Danny, I’m leaving Silver City.”

My best friend stares at me, speechless. I take a deep breath. It’s like I’m feeling better now that I’ve come to that conclusion.

“Danny, it’s the only way. The White Moon Pack won’t accept my child, and Nathaniel isn’t going to help me. With Nora in a coma, I can’t do anything but leave. As soon as she’s born, this baby will become a target. I don’t want that.”

“But...”

He stumbles on his words, unable to come up with something. I exchange a glance with Sylviana over his shoulder. I don’t know how far ahead the witch had planned, but I know she saw it coming. She knew it would come to this.

I put my hair back, trying to get my ideas in order. I need to stop crying and think rationally. The truth hurts, but it’s in front of me.

I have to leave.

I turn to Sylviana, holding Daniel’s hand.

“I just want to see Nora before I go.”

“Wait! Elena, you want to leave now?” Asks Danny, shocked.

“Daniel, every second I stay in the same City as Nathaniel, I’m feeling bad. My father isn’t here anymore, too. With Nora in a coma, you’re the only one I have left here...”

“...But! What about Clark, and Chris, and Boyan...”

“I’m so sorry, Noro,” I whisper. “I wish you were here... I wish I could tell you goodbye in person.”

“...But! What about Clark, and Chris, and Boyan...”

I smile and hug him once more.

“It’s okay, Danny. Clark is just making up excuses not to banish me yet, those days, and I know Chris will understand. You can explain to Boyan and your family, too.”

“How will you do! If you leave alone, you...”

“She won’t be alone,” says Sylviana. “I will go with her, at least until I’m sure the baby is born safely. Elena will need my help and protection to settle somewhere the dark witch won’t find her, too.”

I nod. I feel a bit better knowing our witch will help me. I need to ask Reagan, too, but I’m pretty sure my mentor will follow me anyway. I go to my room and grab a backpack. Daniel is crying, but he helps me gather a few clothes and necessities.

“I can’t believe it. This is so unfair, this is...”

He keeps mumbling and sobbing, but I don’t have the heart to answer him. It only takes a few minutes for me to get all my things. I leave a lot here, but I have no idea when I’ll be back, honestly. It may only be a few months, but it could be... years. I take a deep breath.

I watch our flat one last time before Daniel closes the door, and that’s it.

This is so crazy, yet I'm feeling a lot better as we walk through the City, leaving the White Moon Clan's borders to head to the Black General Hospital. It's the middle of the night, and I doubt Nate will be there.

Sylviana and Daniel wait for me outside. I silently walk up to Nora's room.

Just as I'm about to walk in, a shadow suddenly comes out. I hold my breath. Damian Black. The King looks at me, his eyes even darker than usual. Damn, he looks healthy but so sad... We exchange looks, and I'm very uneasy. Should I say something? I didn't think he'd be here at night too... But without a word, he steps aside and walks away. Is this okay...?

Something strange happened there... Her bed is surrounded by roses, and I suspect Sylviana is no stranger to this eerie setting. My cousin looks like the modern version of Sleeping Beauty, lying in her hospital bed surrounded by roses as white as her new, strange hair. A huge brown wolf is sleeping under her bed, and Liam Black is snoring in the chair across the room.

I sit next to her on the bed and take her hand to caress it softly.

"I'm so sorry, Nora," I whisper. "I wish you were here... I wish I could tell you goodbye in person. I... I hope you'll be back soon. They all miss you. I'll miss you the most. Do you know how much you're loved, Nora? He is coming every day to see you... Liam and Bobo too. Everyone loves you. They are all waiting for you... I hope you will be back soon. I'm so sorry we have to part this way. I hope you'll understand, Nora. We will see each other again, I promise. ...Forgive me."

I feel like crying again, but this is only a goodbye. Not a farewell. I know I'll see her again. I know they will take good care of her. I stay a bit longer, holding her hand, until I'm calmed down. If only I could borrow a bit of your strength, Nora...

I give a long kiss on her forehead, taking one last good look at her. Next time I'll see her, she'll be awake, bright and happy. I really pray for it.

When I leave the room, still teary, I meet Damian Black again outside. But this time, he stands in front of me in the corridor.

"I... I'm sorry, I have to go, hem..." I stutter.

"Take this."

To my surprise, he hands me a thick bundle of bills. Just by the number on the first one, I can tell there is a lot! What is this? I glance at him, surprised. Why would the King give me money? Did he hear me talking to Nora?

“I don’t...”

“You’ll need it. Nora thinks of you as a sister... and you’re carrying my niece.”

I frown. How did he...?

“Sylviana, Liam and I talked... a lot when I woke up,” he explains.

So he knows about my baby? Why would Sylviana tell him? I hesitate, but take the money. If he knows, he probably already made up his mind about this...

“Thanks...”

I wonder what to add, but before I do, he’s already walking back into Nora’s room. I guess that’s it... I put the money in my jacket, and leave the Hospital.

Sylviana and Daniel are still waiting outside, and I mind-link Reagan so she can join me at the border. We walk there in silence, only Daniel sobbing softly.

When we finally reach it, I turn around and take my best friend into a big h.ug.

“Be careful outside, okay? Don’t drink, don’t get sick. Sleep a lot, okay? And... I anything happens...”

“Don’t worry, Danny. I’ll keep my phone just in case. I’ll text you where I am when I can, okay? Please explain everything to your family. I’m sorry I can’t stay longer, but I won’t have the courage to leave if I don’t do it tonight.”

He nods but cries again. Oh, poor Danny. I take his hand.

“Daniel, you’re my best, best friend in the whole world. I love you, babe.”

“I love you too, babe...” he sobs.

“See you soon, okay?” I say with the bit of a smile I can gather.

“It better be soon. I want to see my goddaughter... She’ll be so pretty...”

“I’ll do my best. Take care, babe. Don’t fight too much with Bobo, and eat properly.”

He’s about to say something, but he’s crying too much to make sense.

I hug him long and tight.

“See you, Babe.”

“See ya...”

I part with him and start walking away.

Away from Daniel, from my pack, away from Silver City. I’m crying hard and ugly. It’s so hard to go this way... Sylviana takes my hand, and Reagan is by my side too.

It will be okay.

I’ll be okay...

His Sunshine Baby Chapter 84 - Tips

Another day.

Another one where I miss you. I wake up, in a cold bed, next to a woman that isn’t you no matter how many billion times I wish for it. Why? Why do I look for your smell in her arms? I sit on the side of the bed and put my head in my hands.

I feel like sh!t. Sober or drunk. Any minute gone is another one I regret, one where I need to pretend I’m ok. I’ll say I’m fine, but hell, I’m not.

Why do I still feel chained? It’s been 3 fvcking*g years! Yet, I remember it all. Memories, lingering, too vivid on my mind. Your golden hair on the pillow. The smell of oranges and sunshine. The feel of your skin under my fingers. Your amber eyes and your smile, your laugh...

Get out of my mind.

Get out of my mind.

His Sunshine Baby Chapter 85 - Tips

I double-check the recipe from the book, but it should be ok... A couple more minutes and I can add the veggies. I turn back, dancing around to the little jazz music coming from the old radio. It's sunny outside, just like I love it. I sit down to check my texts when I hear running steps. I did tell her a billion times not to run...

Suddenly, two small hands cover my eyes.

"Guess who!"

I smile immediately. I start patting the little hands as if I was wondering.

"Mh...Who could it be... Two smalls paws, a wild berries smell... Is it a baby bear?"

I hear the cutest baby giggling.

"No! Guess again!"

"Really? Let's see... Tiny fingers and small nails... Is it a baby monkey?"

"Hihi, you're wrong! try again!"

"Oh! I know that little laugh... It's my baby star?"

"Yes!"

She laughs and I grab her, sitting her into my lap to tickle her. She tries to evade me, but she is way too tiny to escape me! My daughter is the cutest thing in the world, of course. When I finally stop torturing her, she is still laughing, pushing her honey blonde hair back. She looks up at me, with her father's sky-blue eyes.

"Mommy, I'm hungry. What are you making?"

"Your favorite bolognese pasta, with auntie Nora's secret ingredient," I answer while pulling her hair into two little ponytails.

She turns her head to the stove, but then, I see her frown.

“Carrots? But I hate carrots!”

“Baby, you need to eat your vegetables. And I’m just putting tiny bits.”

She frowns, but her eyes are observing the carrots with suspicion, thinking it over.

“You will make them super tiny?” She asks me

“Super, super tiny, I promise. So tiny you won’t see them.”

“...Okay then.”

She is still pouting a bit. Moon Goddess, she is so cute I want to eat all of her instead of the pasta! I k!ss her chubby cheek, making her chuckle again, and she immediately wraps her tiny arms around my neck to k!ss me back.

“What did you do this morning, my little star?”

“I draw bunnies! Wait here, mommy, I will show you!”

And off she is again, jumping off my knees, running to grab her drawing from wherever she left it. She probably played in the garden too, seeing how the bottom of her denim jumper is all dirty. When she comes back, she proudly shows me her drawing and starts explaining to me the names she gave each of her colored bunnies.

“Stella, baby, you remember how to say Bunny with your hands?”

“Yes!”

She puts two fingers of each hand up her head, mimicking a bunny’s ears. I clap and do it too.

“That’s right, baby!”

“Mommy, I’m better than you at talking with my hands!” She says, looking all proud. “Look, I can do a lot of animals too!”

We start having a little contest, but indeed, she is even better than I am at sign language now. When she gets tired of it, she runs off again to grab her coloring pencils. Dad told me that I was a little energy pill when I was young too, so I guess she gets that from me... But Estelle is a really disciplined kid.

She very rarely throws tantrums, and she doesn't really argue when I ask her something, even if she dislikes it.

The only thing I'm worried about is her insecurity issues. Sometimes, she asks for hugs all of a sudden and asks if I will leave her. I have no idea where she gets that from. Is it because she doesn't have a father? She asks about him, sometimes. She has a photo of Nathaniel, one she loved from my phone, so I had it print out for her to keep. I didn't want to lie to her and tell her she doesn't have a dad.

"Mommy! Is it ready? I'm really, really hungry now!"

"Yes, yes. Go wash your hands and we can eat!"

"Okay!" She says, running off to the bathroom

While I'm busy dressing up our plates, my phone rings. Before I can even move, Estelle is running again to grab it. She is too young to read, but she recognizes the picture.

"It's Dada! Hi, Dada?"

She starts happily chatting with her godfather, telling him all about her day. She has never met him physically yet, but they talk so often it doesn't really make any difference. Daniel is crazy about the little star. Every time he calls, he asks when I am coming back to Silver City with Estelle.

I don't know if I'm ready yet. I miss Daniel, a lot, and all my friends too. I miss Silver City, the Artsy District, the Latino neighborhood. I know Nora woke up two years after I was gone, but... I wasn't ready to come back. Going back would mean seeing Estelle's father again, and I don't know if I can handle it. She looks so much like him, I guess he'll finally believe me once they meet...

I watch my little star, still on the phone. I wonder how would my life be without her... Estelle is so well-behaved, sometimes I wonder if I really raised her alone. Well, Reagan did come often, too. My mentor never stays around, but she's never too far either. She drops by when she feels like it, or lives her omega life as a wolf most of the time.

We live in a large forest, miles away from Silver City. I can't remember how long we walked until we got here. Sylviana knew about this old abandoned

house, and within a few days of work between the three of us, it became perfectly fine for us to live in. It's even a bit too big for a woman and child...

"Mommy, it smells bad again..."

Holy sh!t! I turn around and jump on the ca.sserole. Damn it, I let it burn again... How come I can never get even the simplest ones right? Estelle walks up to me and frowns, looking at my half-burned bolognaise.

"Sorry, baby. Don't worry, mommy will eat the burned parts."

"It's okay, mommy, I like the crunchy parts!"

Moon Goddess I love this child of mine. She even loves my overcooked pasta. She sits down to eat, grabbing her fork and eagerly waiting. Like any werewolf kid, she's an energy pill and a big eater. I fill her plate, but everything's gone in a few minutes, and she smiles, satisfied, l****g the leftovers of tomato sauce on her l!ps.

"Mommy, can I get a magic cake for dessert? The one with pink sprinkles!"

I smile. The only thing I never fail at, her favorite magic cake.

"Okay, baby but you..."

I stop talking, uneasy.

I have an odd feeling. My wolf is unsettled too, looking around for a threat.

"Mommy?"

After a few seconds of complete silence, the b.ranches from the trees on the terrace all begin crackling at once. Holy crap!

"Estelle, come!"

I grab my daughter and run across the house, grabbing her little backpack from her room and mine.

"Mommy, what is it? Mommy!"

I don't have time to explain. We need to leave this place and run.

It's Sylviana's signal. She said the trees would do this if the bad witch was near! I didn't think she would really find us! Estelle is scared and struggles to keep up with me, but I keep running until we're out of the house, a few meters away, and get on one knee in front of her, to help her put her backpack on.

"Stella, listen to mommy, very carefully. We need to leave the house and run, baby. We are going to run very, very fast to the east, okay? We don't make noise, and we keep running until mommy says stop."

"Mommy, why are we running? Why are we leaving home? Mommy, I'm scared..."

Seeing the tears in my daughter's scared eyes breaks my heart, but I really don't have time to explain! Every second matters now. I shake my head.

"Estelle, don't cry baby, okay? Just trust mommy, you will be okay. You run very, very fast, like we did with Reagan, okay?"

She nods, a bit distraught, and I encourage her with a little smile.

"Alright, let's go, baby."

I start running, and Estelle does her best to run after me. She's fast, for a four-years-old, but after a while, I have no choice but to carry her to keep the speed up. I hear her cry silently in my neck. My poor baby... I can't stop and comfort her, though. I know we don't have much time, and we absolutely can't stop if I want to outrun the dark witch, or at least reach Silver City in time...

I can feel her. It's like a dark shadow, some evil presence behind us. A cold wind chasing me every step. As I keep running across the trees, I also hear a water stream nearby. I need to avoid sources of water while keeping my way to the east.

My wolf wants to shape-shift, but if I do, I won't be able to carry Estelle! I keep running, thinking of what to do, how to get out of there. I still can't see Silver City, how far are we? I feel like I've been running for hours!

I try to focus and reach out to Nora, my cousin. She should be the first one I can reach out to, as soon as I'm close enough... Back then, she could mind-link people from miles away. I really hope it works backward too. I keep calling her with my wolf, while holding on tightly to Estelle, running and watching out for nearby water sources.

Elena!

Finally! She heard me. We are close enough.

Right when I think things are getting better, I feel a sudden rumbling on my left. Crap, crap... The Witch is catching up on us! If only Sylviana was there, or at least Reagan so I could give her my daughter! Where is she at a time like this...? I stop, looking around.

“Mommy?”

I finally find it.

A little opening in a large tree, just big enough for Estelle to hide. I take her there and have her sit inside the trunk. She is terrified, but I take her hand. We don't have much time...

“Estelle, listen to mommy very carefully. You stay here, and you stay hidden, baby, okay?”

“W...Why?”

“Mommy has to go a different way, but don't worry, I won't leave you alone, okay? I will be back. Estelle, you remember how you talk with your wolf, right baby?”

She nods, her eyes still teary. Thank Moon Goddess, she's already able to mind-link, since a couple of months ago. Maybe it's her royal blood, but she's a precocious one. I see her frown a bit, and I finally feel her inner wolf, like it's waking up.

Yes, mommy.

Good girl. Now I want you to not talk, Estelle, not at all. Just use your wolf's voice, like mommy, and call auntie Nora.

Auntie Nora?

That's right, baby. You call auntie Nora with all your heart, okay?

Can I call Dada too?

I shake my head, desperate. Estelle doesn't belong to the White Moon Clan, she doesn't belong to any Clan! I don't think she can mind-link other Alphas or wolves like Nora and I do, she can only call her kin... Oh Moon Goddess, I didn't even think of it earlier!

Baby, you call auntie Nora or Daddy with all your puppy heart, okay?

Daddy too?

"Yes, baby," I say while putting my jacket around her. "You call Nora and Daddy with your wolf until mommy comes to get you, okay?"

Why can't I call you, mommy?

Oh, Moon Goddess, how could I explain to her? But if I run away, this might be the only chance to drive that witch away from her!

"Mommy knows where you are, baby. I have to go away, but... It will be okay, but promise me you will stay here, okay? You'll be a good girl and stay here, okay?"

"I promise..." She whispers.

I take a deep breath and hold my daughter one last time, very tight against my heart. Moon Goddess, I love her so, so much... We are both crying silently. She's four years old and a bright girl, but I don't know how much of this she really understands...

With a heavy heart, I give her one last glance and run in the opposite direction, towards the North. I stop calling Nora for help and pray Moon Goddess she can find my daughter instead.

I try to take the west direction, shape-shifting as soon as I can. I'm faster, and letting my Alpha aura out, hoping the dark witch will take the bait...

Finally, I hear it. A rumbling coming after me. That's right, b***h, follow me. Let's see how fast your damned water can be. I fasten my speed, trying to mind-link Reagan at the same time.

Kid! Where are you!

Headed North, Reagan!

Okay, I feel you! On my way!

I keep running, praying for my baby to be okay. Nora will find you, baby, don't worry.

Suddenly, a sharp pain struck me. I'm thrown several yards to my left, before violently hitting a tree. Holy sh!t, it hurts... I'm dizzy from the shock, but my shoulder is painful as fvck. I look, and my fur is covered in red. Damn it...

"Are you done running, dog?"

I turn my head, but my vision is all red and blurry. The woman walks up to me, I can hear her annoying laugh. Damn her...

"You... You're not the one I want. What are you, a halfling? Interesting. I've never seen a half-werewolf before..."

I feel her walk up to me and grabbing my neck. I try to bite, and she takes her hand off.

"Feisty. But lucky you, I need you alive, so you can talk, and tell me where you left your offspring..."

A sharp pain again, in my shoulder as she stepping on it.

"Where is it? Where is the Royal?"

fvck you! I growl back.

Elena!

From the corner of my vision, I see the old grey wolf jumping in, and the witch screeches. I hear something like a fight, but I struggle to get back on my feet and retreat. I can't stay here. I'm too injured to fight. If only I could...

"Enough!"

I hear a yapping, and a wolf's body falls in front of me. Inert. No, no, no, Reagan...

Something suddenly drags me from behind, while I struggle to stay with my mentor. I feel trapped, a pressure on my body like a huge rock.

“I’ll make you talk, wolf. You’ll talk!”

A horrible pain pierces my legs, something sharp pinning them to the ground. I growl, furious and blinded by the pain. Moon Goddess, I swear she could kill me a hundred times I’d never, ever give my daughter to that b***h!

“You damn stubborn...! Fine! I don’t need you anyway, I only need the child...”