

His Sunshine Baby Chapter 96 - Tips

Nathaniel shakes his head, confused.

“Wait a second. If that’s the case, why didn’t she... why didn’t that witch attack when James was born?”

“I’m not sure. She might have missed her chance. Nora’s power was even stronger while she was asleep, remember? Her aura could be felt all the time, and even stronger at night.”

“When her hair went white...” whispers Tonia.

“That’s right. And it was not that long after the Vampire’s attack, which you decimated.”

“So she probably didn’t have an army to attack with, even if it had been two years,” I say.

Sylviana sighs.

“She’s... she’s just like me. A woman, even if it’s a witch, all on her own. I don’t know how she can compel vampires to do her bidding, but... but, If it were me, I would have taken my time to gather a new army, and focused on improving my magic too. Since she was beaten once and aware of the fact that I’m there, she couldn’t attack blindly a second time.”

“You’re still stronger than her, right?” Asks Tonia, concerned.

After a few seconds, Sylviana sighs.

“I’m not sure, these days. She’s getting closer, and... whatever I try to do, I’m barely slowing her down. I only win over her by a bit because of our elements, so...”

“Because of what you explained to me?” Asks Nora. “The cycle? Water wins fire, fire wins earth and...”

“Earth overpowers water. It’s a very simplistic way to put it, but yes... But there’s a lot more than that to take into consideration. Our race doesn’t function like humans, even less like werewolves. We can change a lot in a few

years' time. I've put all the defenses I can around Silver City, but without Nora..."

"Okay, time out," I exclaimed, standing up. "Can someone explain to me what is Nora's superpower? Because I'm really feeling like I missed a chapter there. Her hair glows white, and she's got a big mean Royal supersized aura. What else?"

Nora blushes a bit, and I frown. What now? My cousin turns to me, hesitating a bit.

"I have some sort of power that makes people listen to me."

"That's part of the aura thing."

"No, not just that," says my cousin, shaking her head. "I noticed a few months ago after I woke up. It had appeared before, but I can give orders, and people can't fight it."

I'm about to say something, but Damian puts his hand around her with a little smile.

"...Even I can't say no when she gets mad."

Even the King? Okay, that's a bit weird... I turn to Sylviana. The witch is fidgeting, maybe for the first time since we've met her. She's brushing her long red hair, frowning, visibly thinking deeply about all of this.

"You're going to tell that's not... part of the aura thing?"

"Oh, it is. But just imagine it as Nora having an unfightable willpower. It's as if the Moon Goddess herself spoke. No werewolf can fight her, not even her own mate, or any Alpha out there."

I shake my head. I'm getting very confused here. I had noticed that Nora's aura had gotten crazy strong, stronger than before, but it's not nearly as aggressive and scary as her husband's. She's like a calm force... it would be like comparing a small breeze of fresh white snow to a stormy dark hurricane. I can't even picture her making her husband submit to her...

"I know," says Sylviana, "But it's the truth. No living night creature in Silver City can refuse Nora. Even a human would feel something."

I chuckle nervously, as I start to understand.

“Wait, you’re telling me Nora could potentially... Control that dark witch? For... for real?”

“I can’t guarantee her aura is strong enough, but we are creatures under the Moon Goddess’ power, just like you. If Nora ordered me to go and hang myself right now, I’d probably have a hard time ignoring her.”

I stay speechless.

This is... h.uge. fvcking*g h.uge. My cousin’s superpower is to give orders? Unrefusable orders? Like a... a werewolf Queen, for Moon Goddess’ sake. Even stronger than a Luna... I laugh nervously, but there’s really nothing funny about it. I turn to Nathaniel, who’s frowning, visibly confused too. I eventually turn to Nora.

“Why... Why don’t we just end it now? We could just find that witch, and if you...”

Next to her, Damian growls at me immediately.

“Nora is pregnant, she’s not taking one step outside Silver City.”

His murderous glare is very... convincing. I look down, reminding myself he’s still the King...

“Even if she could potentially fight off that witch, there’s still the vampires,” says Tonia. “It’s her main problem, as long as she is pregnant, that is. If she gets bitten just once...”

“She could die,” whispers Nathaniel, bitter.

Why do I feel like this is a taboo subject here...? I shake my head, annoyed. I can’t believe we’re stuck. On one side, that Witch is too scared of Nora’s power to attack, and on the other, Nora can’t risk a vampire bite...

I hate this.

I hate not being able to do anything, waiting for something to happen in this stupid climate of fear. Nate walks up to me, putting his arms around me to try and comfort me, but I keep shaking my head. Why do I even feel like crying?

“Elena...”

Here we go, I’m crying. I’m so fvcking*g tired of crying those days! But I can’t stop it, neither can I stop Nathaniel from hugging me, though he’s careful not to hurt my arm...

I hear Nora growl behind me, pissed too. She suddenly stands up.

“I’m not waiting and doing nothing. I want all the Alphas gathering tomorrow. Let’s explain this to them. If hell must break loose when this baby decides to come out, I’d rather be ready. Sylviana, you too, please.”

“Of course.”

“I’m coming too,” I declare, sniffing, but Nora shakes her head.

“No, Elena, you go home and focus on getting better, okay?”

“Don’t leave me out of it!”

“Elena, I’m the one who’s going to be left out!” She yells. “Don’t you think I’m frustrated too? I’m already scared enough for my babies, now I’m going to be the trigger on when that damned dark witch will attack, and there’s nothing I’ll be able to do because I’ll be too focused on giving birth!”

Only then do I realize my cousin’s crying too, with red eyes and a raspy voice. She walks up to me, facing me, voicing her emotions out. She’s triturating her messy curls, her thing when she’s frustrated or stressed. Or both, I guess.

“Elena, I’m... You’re the fighter,” she says. “I’m the healer, the protector. I was never a fighter, okay? It was always going to turn this way, right? You’ll be healed back then, but I won’t be able to fight. Trust me, I hate it. I hate standing on the sideline, but this time, I probably won’t have a choice. You... you’ll be the one, this time. Okay?”

I shake my head. I hate this, I fvcking*g hate this whole situation... Nora won’t be in the battle, but she’ll be the target. The first fvcking*g target of that dark witch. She doesn’t care about me, the half-breed. In a way, I was lucky to have a human mother. But Estelle...

I glance at my daughter, who's babbling with James, trying to catch Boyan's tail and giggling with her cutest smile. Estelle will be a target too. I take a deep breath and turn to Nora, who's clumsily wiping her tears off.

"Promise me you'll protect her."

"W...What?"

"All three of the Black brothers and I will be fighting, so... So if anything happens to Nate and I, you'll be the only family Estelle has left, okay? Promise me you'll protect her. I can fight, but I won't be able to focus if I don't know my daughter is safe."

"Elena!" Yells Nate, but I turn to him.

"Don't act like you don't know, Nate. It's going to be an all-out war. They'll need both of us, and Estelle... I love Danny, but his family is at best Beta, and they'll probably be in the front lines too. Nora will be the only one to protect our baby."

"Stop it. Nothing will happen to you... to us."

"I'm just saying if."

We stare at each other for a few seconds, a heated tension between us. I'm dead serious, and I don't care if he doesn't want to hear the truth. Nora gently takes my hand.

"Elena, it will be alright. We'll win, okay?"

I nod, but truth is, I don't have the confidence.

Sylviana's expression is too dark to be confident. She's blankly staring at the children. How much does she really know? Our good witch realizes I'm watching her, and leaves the room without a warning. Liam follows right after her.

I leave out a big sigh.

"Anyone else wants to add something not depressing for this?"

...I'm hungry.

I can't help but chuckle at Boyan's out of the blue sentence. Immediately, both kids jump on his back.

I'm hungry too!

"Me too!"

"Let's have a brunch," says Tonia, heading to the kitchen as if this was her own house.

Meanwhile, I exchange a glance with Nora.

"Is it me or did James just..."

"Mind-link Boyan and Estelle? Yeah, he can do that... Well, he hears it. Estelle's not the only precocious one," sighs my cousin. "Royal babies are full of surprises..."

Gosh, such a headache...

Behind me, Nate chuckles and walks up to me, hugging me from behind. Damian and Nora silently walk to the kitchen, leaving us alone with Boyan and the kids.

"Aren't you taking advantage of the situation?" I ask.

"You think?"

He has no intention to let go, apparently. I sigh. I'm in no mood to fight now, so I just rest my head on his shoulder, enjoying this innocent hug for a while. It's too much emotions for one morning... Seeing this as a silent agreement, Nate goes ahead to kiss my shoulder.

"Hey..."

But he ignores me, and keeps going, climbing up to my neck. Oh, gosh, he's so...

Ahem.

Boyan the bear-sized wolf is staring at us, with a blank expression, clearing reminding us we're not alone... Crap. I push Nate away and escape, hearing him chuckle behind me. He's so annoying!

After texting Daniel to come over, we enjoy a long family brunch in the garden. It's a nice day of July and frankly, when we're all gathered like this it doesn't feel like it could end in a few weeks. Liam and Boyan, in their wolf forms, keep the kids entertained as long as we feed them too. I get why Nora needs Boyan as a nanny, James is an energy pill... Not in a bad way, though, he does listen to his parents.

I realize my best friend is staring fondly at his fiancé. So cute. I can't help but wink at him, making him blush immediately.

Oh, stop it. Where are you at with mister-perfect-abs?

How do you know about his abs?

He was in an amazing sports outfit when he got you. Very fitting. Tight. Well, I have an eye for that. So?

Nothing...

Oh, shut up, Boyan said you were shamelessly hugging minutes ago.

Why do you ask if you already know!

We bicker a bit longer. Daniel and I got so used to mindlinking each other at his family dinners, we can keep going for a long time without anyone even noticing. It's a bit impolite, but with this topic, we are certainly not going to mention it out loud...

So you're giving him the go.

No.

You really want to give him the go.

No!

Oh, please girl, you lived alone in a freaking mountain for four years and a half. You're not a nun, and you live with your very, very sexy ex sex-friend-almost-boyfriend who had the great idea to get an even sexier body meanwhile; You're hungry.

Daniel, shut up.

Hungry and starving...

I decide to ignore him, but his smirk is not subtle. I hate how right he is sometimes! I need to focus hard on something else to elude both Daniel's eyes and Nathaniel's direction. I eat a bit more and try to participate in Nora and Damian's debate over the baby's name, which, surprisingly, they haven't agreed on yet.

An hour later, Daniel needs to get back to work, and James and Nora need their nap. I guess it's time for us to go back too. Thank Moon Goddess, Estelle shape-shifted back, and we carefully explained to her why she should learn to control herself from now on. Though Silver City's humans are used to werewolves, we can't have people, especially young ones, running around and shape-shifting in front of their noses all day.

Nate drives us back to his apartment, and Estelle is sleeping soundly in his arms when we get to the elevator. I take note that playing with her cousin managed to have her that tired... I just hope she won't be sleeping too much and be hard to put to sleep tonight...

When Nathaniel closes her bedroom door, I let out a long sigh.

"What a matinee, huh?" He says.

I nod, landing my arse on the living room's couch. Nate comes to sit opposite to me, with a faint smile.

"What are you smiling for?" I ask.

"I... I think I'm a bit crazy. I know we're about to face a never seen before war, yet all I can think about is how happy I am that you and Estelle are living here."

"You idiot..." I say, pushing him with my foot.

He grabs my ankle and, without warning, starts to caress my ankle. The feeling of his fingers on my skin makes me blush like crazy... I try to get away, but the sofa isn't that big. He pulls my legs on his knee, and I don't have the strength to refuse him. Gosh...

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I don't want to give in to him so easily, but when he keeps caressing my skin, I don't say anything. Why did I put something so short? I mean, it's summer, but still... Nathaniel keeps going, silently going on my leg, his electric blue eyes still on me. So annoying... I'm blushing.

"You're not too tired? You should take your meds..."

I shake my head. I hate taking medicine, it makes me drowsy. I would rather stay there and snooze on the couch with him. Nathaniel doesn't add, anything, either, but he won't take his eyes off me. This is such a strange situation... Back a few days ago, we couldn't have been further apart. It took a witch's attack to bind us back together. So, what now?

"How are you feeling?"

"I'm fine... I may be a slow-healer, but I can still heal. It doesn't hurt more than a sprain now."

To prove my words, I take off the useless scarf that was binding my arm, and pull down my shirt to show the pink scar on my shoulder. I was wondering if he might feel disgusted by it, but he just nods, with a satisfied look.

"Can you move?"

"Yeah... It just aches a bit if I use my muscles too much..."

Wait, he's not thinking of doing anything too... straining, right? I frown a bit, recalling Danny's earlier words. I don't know how much I can trust my own self-control, right now. I've been se.x-deprived for a few years, after all... I wonder if that's the case for him too.

"Nate."

"Hm?"

"Did you sleep with someone else after I left?"

He doesn't answer, but goes white as sheet, which pretty much sums up his answer. fvck. I had hoped for something different. I click my tongue, a bit annoyed. I guess I was the only one living like a nun...

"Nothing serious," he says. "It was only a few one-night-stands."

“fvck you, Nate.”

“I swear, I never saw them twice.”

“fvck you, and shut up.”

He looks down, and from his expression, I can tell his swearing internally, probably pissed at himself. Suits him, that i***t. I’m not in a forgiving mood anyway, so I’d rather not talk about this again. At least he’s not giving me the Alpha male excuse...

Following this, I see him take a deep breath. I wonder where is deep thinking brought him too... Back then, I thought I had learned to decipher his emotions but now, it’s like we’re back to square one all over again. It annoys me a bit. It’s not like we both have a clean plate, anyway...

“Elena, would you marry me?”

...As he gone crazy now? I look at him, speechless. What the heck was he thinking to utter those words now? Is he that desperate?

“No. Hell no.”

No way I’m ready for this kind of things, and certainly not with a man who just confessed he had se.x with Moon Goddess knows how many women since I’ve been gone. Unlike my expectations, he slowly nods, not looking surprised.

“I thought you’d trust me more that way...”

“You think marriage prevents cheating? Are you serious?”

“It works for Nora and Damian.”

“Your brother and my cousin are fated mates, they stayed faithful to each other basically for life. I don’t know if you’ve noticed, but neither of use is anything close to that,” I reply angrily.

I get up, annoyed at him for some reason.

He can’t compare me too Nora. I’m not my cousin. I love her, truly, but we’re worlds apart. In the way we were raised, grew up, fought and found love, Nora and I are absolutely nothing alike. If it wasn’t for a bl00d test I wouldn’t even believe we’re the same family, and our parents were twins...

I see him get up too, and just as I want to walk away from him, this i***t follows me all the way to the kitchen. I try to ignore him and grab a glass of wine. Nathaniel chuckles, annoying me a bit because I'm torn between ignoring him and asking what is so funny.

"Stop laughing."

"I'm not laughing."

"You're having fun, anyway. Nothing is fun..."

"Elena, calm down."

Before I can protest, he corners me, putting his arms around me. I'm so surprised I miss the chance to say anything. Moreover, he's already dangerously close, and his scent becomes a bit of a problem. It's alluring. Too alluring.

"It's fine. Estelle will be fine, so will we."

"I saw my baby shapeshift for the first time today, Nate. it's not..."

"It's in the order of things, she had to shapeshift one day. So what if she's early, and a royal? You already knew that, right? It's useless to worry over that. She is who she is. I don't care how many witches come after her, I'll protect my daughter."

"Our daughter."

"Our daughter. Elena, I'm her dad, alright."

"It's easy for you to say, now!"

He smiles, annoying me to the core. Can't he just drop that attitude of his? He goes one step closer. I didn't realize he could come closer and still not touch me. He's driving me crazy... I have to look away to not look at him now. It's unnatural. He knows. We both know.

"Estelle has two powerful uncles, the greatest luna aunt, and her parents are warriors. Her mom is the strongest, toughest she-wolf I know. She'll grow old and beautiful like her mom..."

"Stop the sweet-talking, idiot..."

Of course, he doesn't listen.

I freeze when his lips get dangerously close. I'm taking a deep breath in, but right before our lips touch, he suddenly changes direction, and softly kisses my cheek. I blush. That... That!!

"Elena?"

"You're kidding me, right?"

Before he can add anything else, I grab his hair, and pull him in, kissing him fiercely. That how you should be kissing me, you i***t! ...is what I want to say, but of course, my mouth is too busy for that.

Moon Goddess, his lips, his taste... I missed it so much. His hands are already caressing my body, my neck, my hair, while I moan under our passionate kissing. How did I survive without his kisses for four years? How? Nate's tongue is on mine, driving me crazy, bringing the heat from the depths of my body, making me burn all the way. I'm trembling, grabbing him, kissing him hard and deep.

"Elena... Elena..."

His voice is consummated by desire, and driving me equally crazy.... We're both going nuts. I don't know. I keep looking for air, but I want his kisses more. I'm cornered in his kitchen, his arms all around me, caressing my skin and undoing my clothes skillfully. I'm so hot... I want more, more.

My self-control flew out of the window as soon as he touched me. I hate him... I hate what he does to me, and this foolish body of mine craving him when I should resent him for... I don't know, at least a few weeks more. Nate lifts me without warning, making me sit on the kitchen counter. I immediately entrap him between my legs, while he gets rid of my outfit, having it slid down to my ankles until it drops to the floor. I'm in my underwear, in his kitchen, facing him. I'm hot. So fvcking*g hot.

His fingers keep caressing my skin, my thighs, my waist, my back. I shiver and let the sparkles crawl under my skin, a wave of pleasure slowly coming back and forth. I struggle to get him out of his shirt, making him chuckle... I make him shut up with even more kissing, our tongues fighting to get a better taste of the other. When I suddenly feel his fingers on my panties, I grab his wrist, freezing.

It's... not...

"Elena?" He asks, out of breath too.

"I... I..."

My head is in such confusion right now, I don't even know how to formulate my thoughts into words. I'm red from heat to toe, out of breath and excited. He stares at me, confused, half-naked and in about the same state as I am.

"I... I had a baby."

"I already know that..." He replies, a bit confused.

"It means my body changed. I... My... I mean, se.x is not going to be... To be like before."

He chuckles, caressing my nape with a tender look in his eyes. I don't think he's getting it, but a wave of anxiousness overpowers me in a few seconds. What if he's disappointed? What if he doesn't like my body anymore? What if we have the lousiest se.x ever and...

"Elena, look at me."

He manages to get my attention, but I shake my head.

"You know what? Let's forget it. It's a bad idea. I can just..."

But while I struggle to escape him, he keeps smiling and holds me back, until I stop fighting and sigh.

"Elena Whitewood, I love you."

Holy Moon Goddess, why does he have to be so cheesy right now... I'm blushing like crazy, trying to evade his eyes, but he caresses my neck, speaking softly.

"I don't care how much your body changed. I want to embrace the woman I love. That's all I am thinking about. I'll love it because it's you. I don't care how much your body changes, my sunshine. Even if you get wrinkles or a hundred more pounds, I'll love this body of yours."

"Sh... Shut up..." I stutter, even more ashamed right now.

Is he saying that because he noticed I took on a bit more weight? Before I can say anything else, he slowly kisses the tip of my fingers. His mesmerizing blue gaze is on me, making me crazy. He kisses each of my fingers one by one, then goes to my palm. It's like this part of my body is suddenly connected to another, more intimate part, and sending electricity there. I shiver, burning inside. His kisses go to my wrist, and keeps going higher and higher, until he shifts to my b*a. His lips go in between, and, skilled as he is, that bastard, he takes it off in a matter of second. I'd better not remember how he got so skilled...

I breathe louder as he keeps kissing, fondling and caressing me. I reach out for his warmth too, my arms go to his back, caressing it, going lower. I can't strain my shoulder, but I won't let him do it all by himself either...

The heat goes up in the kitchen, and before I know it, we're both n**d against each other, hotter than ever. My heart is thumping in my ears, I'm... excited beyond words. It's Nate. Nathaniel. The man I left four years ago, the man I've been wanting for four years. I don't know if I should be glad or regretful, but it's way too late.

I want him. I want him so bad. When we unite our body, I can't hold a cry of pleasure. It takes the two of us a few seconds to recover just from that deep, forceful contact. We kiss again in that short lap of time, unable to hold it. It's like it never happened. Like we're back to four years ago but... With something better. Something more fusional between us, something I don't want to miss ever again. His body is bulkier, manlier, and I can't handle it all. The muscles moving under his skin are driving me crazy.

Nate keeps moving, inside, and I can't hold it. He's gotten even better, if it was possible. My extremities are going insane with pleasure, tickling, and I need to focus on breathing not to explode. He's not even going fast or wild, it's just... So, so good. He remembers my body, how to make me go insane with pleasure. My stomach his bursting, my insides overwhelmed by the friction of our bodies between my legs. Worse thing is, I have to be careful not to be too loud, I'm scared will wake Estelle up, and I really don't want that.

"Nate... Nate... More... Please..."

As if he was waiting for my go, he suddenly accelerates, and I wasn't prepared. I breathe and moan, grabbing his broad shoulders to hold on, the blood rushing. After a while, I realize his erratic breathing is mixed with his

husky voice, calling my name. I hear it, again and again, as he keeps thrusting, making sparkles inside, having me cry out.

After awhile, I finally feel it coming. I don't know how long we've been like this, but I can't take it anymore, and I can feel him tensing up, gr0aning louder. A few second later, we both explode, like a firework in my head and our joint bodies.

"You... Are you okay?" He asks, out of breath.

I slowly nod.

Moon Goddess... How did we spend hours having se.x before? Just a few minutes and I'm so freaking tired... Nathaniel doesn't seem as exhausted as I am. He just k!sses my shoulder while I rest on his, caressing my back.

"I missed you... I missed you so much..." He whispers while slowly hugging me.

To my own surprise, his words bring me to tears. I hug him back, hiding my pathetic sobbing in his shoulder.

"Elena? Are you in pain? Did I..."

"Shut up..." I sob.

He sighs, and lifts me up again, caressing me effortlessly. Damn it. Between his strength and new muscles, I'll really get addicted to this new body of his...

"...I missed you too. You j.erk."

"Elena, I..."

"You damn j.erk. i***t. I hate you..."

I hear him chuckle, and k!ss my neck again.

"I know. I'm sorry. And I love you, too."

"Stop saying that. I still hate you."

"Mh."

I know he doesn't care, but I'm still annoyed at him.

A bit.

"...Bath? Shower?" He asks softly.

"Mh... A bath."

"Alright. And maybe we can go for a second..."

"Shut up!"

I hear him chuckles while he carries me to the bathroom.

Damn it.

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I can't help but smile, watching this beautiful woman sleep. I missed this view.... Elena, sleeping soundly on my bed. She's n***d and damn gorgeous. I'm still feeling the aftermath of our wild se.x rounds last night, but she's exhausted. We both lack practice... and some adjustments. It's been almost five years, after all. Our bodies have changed, the way we interact, too.

I know she still doesn't trust me. It's probably going to take a while before she can. I know that, and it's only fair. Truthfully, a part of me is still afraid she's going to run away with my baby girl and find some prince charming to marry. Moon Goddess, why did I have to mess up so badly? As if Elena wasn't temperamental enough already...

Feeling energized, I woke up early again. So early, the sun isn't even up yet. I watch her sleep for a while, but I can't stay still for some reason. I decide to silently get up and leave, letting her rest. I shut the door and head to my dressing to grab something I can workout in. I've missed the gym.

I make sure to stop by Estelle's room, to check on my little princess. She's sleeping soundly just like her mom, squeezing some colored monster plushie I bought her. I can't believe she's slept so long. We got her to bed early yesterday, she even skipped dinner! Did playing with James all day exhaust her? I can resist and softly k!ss her before heading to the kitchen. There, I write a quick note for Elena when she wakes up, letting her know I'll be at the building's gym. I'll try to be quick, anyway. I want to make them breakfast...

As usual, so early, the gym is empty. I sweat out to my heart's content, happy to reunite with those familiar sensations of pushing my body to its limits. With some music on, I enjoy this familiar adrenaline rushing through my veins, calming my inner instincts. I'm still thinking about Elena's power that probably healed me... No wonder I've always been so energetic after the nights with her. I just hope it doesn't put a strain on her body, especially since she's still healing.

I keep exercising, but my mind is elsewhere. I already miss my girls, and though it's only been a bit over an hour, I decide to go back as the sun rises slowly. Should I make something new for breakfast? I know Elena loves my french croissants, but Estelle would love a pain au chocolat better, I bet...

Daddy... Daddy... Mommy...

I'm struck. What the heck is going on? My baby's crying! I don't wait for the elevator and run to the stairs, climbing as fast as I can back to my apartment. What happened for Estelle to cry like so? Did she get hurt? Did something happen to her mom? I'm panicking like crazy, my wolf is going nuts too.

sh!t, I shouldn't have left! I run into the apartment and find Estelle alone in the middle of the living room, crying buckets.

"Daddy!" She screams as soon as she sees me.

She runs to me, and I h.ug her back, completely lost. I try to check for any injuries, but aside from the erratic sobbing, she seems fine.

"Baby, what's wrong? Tell daddy, baby. Did you get hurt? Are you hurting somewhere? Tell me, Estelle!"

"Da... Daddy, I... I woke up and... and you were gone, and... and mommy was gone, and... I was alone and I got very scared. I don't want you to leave daddy, please... Please don't leave me alone... I don't want to be alone... I'm scared... Daddy... Mommy..."

My heart breaks. Holy Moon Goddess... I h.ug her tight, so tight as if I could melt her and keep her close to my heart forever. My poor little baby girl. I shouldn't have left her! Did she panic because she couldn't find us? I closed my bedroom door, with the soundproofing Elena probably didn't hear a thing even if she called her...

“It’s okay, baby star. I’m here, I’m not leaving you, I promise. I’m here...”

“Daddy... I’m scared... I’m scared mommy will leave, and you’ll leave, and I will be all alone... I promise I’ll be a good girl, so don’t leave me... Please... I’ll really be a good girl... ”

I keep patting her back. How do I calm her down? And how did she get so scared in the first place? Is it because of what happened? Or because I was absent for the four first years of her life, she’ll think I’ll be gone anytime? I keep hugging her, feeling like a useless i***t, and the worst father.

“Estelle, Daddy loves you. I love you more than anything, my baby star. I promise I won’t leave you, and mommy too. You’ll have both of us. We’re not leaving you.”

“You... You promise...?”

“I promise, baby star. Your daddy will always love you, and I’ll be there for you. You’re not alone. You’re not alone...”

She keeps crying silently, and I hug my daughter for as long as she needs it, until she actually calms down. I really didn’t see that one coming... After a few more minutes, I see Elena coming out of my bedroom, in her panties and a shirt of mine she found, dangerously se.xy so early in the morning. She should be grateful I’m busy soothing our daughter because this woman is too hot for her own sake.

She frowns and walks up to us, seeing Estelle and her red, teary eyes in my arms.

“Oh, baby... What happened?”

“I woke up and... Daddy wasn’t there, and you weren’t there, mommy... So I was really scared and I cried a lot...”

“Don’t be scared, baby star, we’re there. I always told you, didn’t I? Mommy will always be there for you.”

She gently caresses Estelle’s hair, calming her down, kissing her wet cheeks and talking to her softly. Elena being a mom is probably the best thing I’ve seen in my whole life. I didn’t think I could love this woman more than I

already do, but I'm falling lower and lower. She's gentle, caring and looks at our baby girl like she's the most precious thing ever.

"Do you want hot cocoa, baby star? I think you're hungry, my baby. You skipped dinner last night, remember?"

Estelle hesitates before nodding, and sitting up in my arms, looking at me. Moon Goddess, she's too cute for my heart to handle. Those big blue eyes of hers are still all sparkling from her tears earlier, and her hair in a mess is just like her mom's.

"Daddy... Can we have breakfast now... Please?"

I smile and kiss her cheek, carrying her to the kitchen. I have her sit up on the counter, while Elena takes a stool to sit on the other side with a little smile, brushing Estelle's hair.

"What does our baby star want to eat?"

"I think our empty stomachs call for a brunch..." says Elena with a wink.

Oh, I know what she wants. Back then, she loved me making brunch when she was always starving after our wild weekends partying and having adult activities in bed. I turn to Estelle, kissing her forehead.

"You like a good potato omelet, baby?"

Estelle's all curious, watching me cook with wide eyes. I go all out and make three big potato omelets, with some bell peppers, smoked salmon on the side and toasts. Of course, our princess gets her hot cocoa while her mom and I gulp down our dose of caffeine. We cheerfully eat breakfast all together in the kitchen, and the tears from earlier are easily dried up, Estelle laughing with us about her mom's poor cooking skills and telling us all about her play from last night with her cousin.

When she's done eating, she runs to her bedroom to play, leaving us alone in the kitchen. Elena's chewing her toast with a satisfied expression. I walk over to her side, putting my hands on her butt, stealing some of her food in one bite.

"Hey, let me eat, you wolf..."

“I’m hungry.”

“Well, in that case, you should have cooked more.”

“I’m not talking about the food...”

She blushes, finally getting what I’m talking about. Well, it’s her fault. She knows how se.xy she is, especially in the morning. And how much I love it when she’s like that. I hug her, humming her scent in her neck, leaving k!sses on her skin.

“Nate, stop it...”

sh!t, I’m really getting excited. I take a deep breath, trying to calm down. Not the time and place, man... She chuckles.

“Someone’s been working on their self-control...”

“Don’t tempt me. You’re the one walking around legs n***d in my apartment.”

“I didn’t think the sight of my bare legs could get you excited,” she says with an amused smile.

“Any bare part of you is exciting.”

“Even if I’m not shaved? And I got fatter?”

I roll my eyes. Really, this woman... She doesn’t trust me one bit, does she?

“Yes, and you didn’t get fatter. I’m even thinking you got thinner, but no worry, I can take care of that for you.”

“Are you planning on fattening me up?”

“I like your curves,” I admit. “By the way, did you think about my question?”

She frowns, visibly wondering what I’m talking about. I chuckle. I knew it, she completely omitted it. That’s fine, I give her some time to remember. When she finally understands, she scoffs.

“Oh, hell no, Nathaniel Black, I’m not marrying you. Or anyone.”

“Are you sure? Estelle would be so cute in a little white dress...”

“She can wear one when she marries. I won’t.”

I frown. Damn, I didn’t think I’d hate the idea of my daughter getting married so much. Is that me being a dad? Whoever she’ll like better be ready, I’m going to be one hell of a protective father. Maybe I can forbid her from dating until she’s twenty. Or twenty-five.

Anyway, I push those concerns for later and get back to my own future wife.

“Please marry me,” I ask again.

“No, Nate. I just agreed to live with you, now you want to wed me? Or you nuts? Do I get any room for thinking at all? You’re rushing things.”

“Well considering we went rather quickly from being reunited, to living together, and then having se.x, I figured...”

She slaps my shoulder, annoyed.

“It’s a no, you i***t. And if you insist again, I’ll even take a step back and sleep with my daughter rather than you.”

I chuckle.

“You’ll miss me first.”

“Oh, shut up!”

She pushes me away and walks to the bathroom, locking the door behind her. Damn, I love this stubborn woman. I’m not a big r0mantic like Damian, but I bet I can make her give in someday. I’m in no rush, anyway. As long as I bind her to me one way or another... I’m getting clingier, aren’t I?

Ah, I really want to take a shower now... I haven’t showered since I came back from the gym, and bonus, Elena’s in there too. I sigh and decide to go see how Estelle’s doing instead. She got into some little castle toy with her princess figurines and takes it all around her room. Now that it’s properly painted, her room looks a lot more suited for a child, and she seems to love it. She probably could use some more clothes too... But I’ll let Elena handle, or she’ll nagging me about spending too much on her again.

When I hear her get out of the shower, I leave Estelle to go and see her. She’s busy putting on some jeans and a tank top. Apparently, her arm and

shoulder are already better enough for her to get dressed without any help. She sighs while trying to brush her hair.

“I need a haircut, this is too annoying,” she growls.

“I could recommend a salon down the street.”

She nods and ties it up quickly, then walks up to me.

“By the way, don’t you have work?” She asks. “I don’t think I’ve seen you with a computer since we came here...”

“Don’t worry, my HR direction is happy to get rid of me for a while. And we have other matters at hand.”

“What are you talking about?”

“Elena, if something big and bad will happen in a few days, we need a back-up plan to protect Estelle. I feel bad raising it up, but I don’t want to wait until it’s too late. I know you’ve probably thought about it already, so tell me.”

She sighs, crossing her arms.

“Yes, I thought about it... I was thinking of asking Danny.”

“What?”

I’m baffled. Of all people, her best friend? I don’t understand what she was thinking about. Elena nods and explains.

“He’s not a good fighter at all, but he’s fast. If things don’t end the way we like, he can take Estelle away from Silver City, fast. We talked about it after Reagan’s funeral, Daniel agrees with it. He will hide during the fight, with Estelle, and leave if things turn badly.”

“I hate that idea,” I reply straight out. “And where would they go?”

“Well... From what Reagan said, my mom was a gypsy from some eastern area, so... I was thinking they’d run east until they meet some human town and hide.”

“Elena, no. I’m not letting my daughter leave Silver City alone with a weak wolf. No offense to Daniel, but if anything happens to me, I want to be sure she’ll be fine.”

“If something happens to you, Nate, we will both be too dead to deal with what happens to her! Do you have a better idea? Everyone will be fighting, so I...”

“Damian has a plan already.”

“What?”

“I... We talked about it after you came back. Damian’s been planning things for months, with William, Nora’s... well, your cousin too. The Sapphire Moon has a safe house in the North, and they know how to get there secretly. When her labor starts, Nora will most likely be moved to the Sapphire Moon territory. The Witch doesn’t know of your connection to this Clan, and will most likely focus on the Blood Moon Clan’s territory. She’ll go with James, and the Sapphire Moon will protect her.”

“You want Estelle to be with them?” She asks, surprised.

“Yeah. Sylviana knows of this plan, and approved it. She’s already placed some more witch protection spells or whatever there. Elena, the children will be safe, and Daniel can go with them if it makes you feel better. Liam will be there too.”

“What? Liam? Why would he be there instead of fighting with you?”

“He will be fighting,” I explain, “but from the rear, like a defensive position. That way, if things turn really bad, Nora and Liam can leave together.”

Her face slowly turns paler and paler. I know it’s not nice to hear, but this plan is probably the best one to guarantee Estelle’s safety if... if things don’t turn the way we hoped. If we’re both killed in battle, I want to know she will be with her aunt and uncle, in a safer place.

Elena looks as if she’s about to cry, but she slowly nods.

“Alright. I trust your brother anyway... If there’s one thing he’s good at, it’s protecting his family... including his niece, I guess. I just... I hate that we’re planning all this when we just promised we’d never leave her. I’ll have to explain it to her before that time comes.”

“I know,” I sigh. “I feel the same thing as you.”

Suddenly, Elena’s eyes darken.

“...Before that, I need to talk to the White Moon Clan.”

What now? I stare at her, surprised. I thought she didn’t want to go back there, but she seems determined.

“If we have to fight, I don’t want it to be last time’s mess. We lost lives because our Alpha didn’t make the right choices. I need to be sure things are as they should be there. Talk to Clark and Chris...”

“Okay.”

“I’m going alone, Nate.”

I chuckle.

“Yeah, I’d expect so. I’ll watch the baby meanwhile.”

“And Nathaniel, I need to ask you something.”

I frown. I don’t like it when she takes that serious look with me. After a while, she takes a deep breath, and I can tell I’m not going to like her question.

“...Who killed Diego, Nate?”

His Sunshine Baby Chapter 99 - Tips

I decided I’d walk to the White Moon Clan’s turf. I need some fresh air to clear my mind before I do this. Truth is, I’m not ecstatic about going back there, but some things need to be done and some need to be said. I managed to avoid them when I buried Reagan, but I won’t go on forever like that.

After all, that pack adopted me, and raised me. There have been... a lot of mistakes, and trust was lost along the way, but they are still my people. At least, in my mind. I know I was officially banned for birthing a child from a different clan, but that was four years ago. Nora and Damian got rid of any frontiers. Now, I can walk into my former territory without anyone to stop me. I knew it wouldn’t be a nice return, but I did not expect to feel so... sad.

I spent my whole childhood in those streets, and until now I hadn't realized how much I missed all of this. The familiar smells, the simple shops, the music coming out from some windows... Especially in the summer, the hispanic neighborhood has to be one of the most lively ones of Silver City. Some people seem to recognize me, surprised, and greet me with a bit of hesitation. Not everyone is a werewolf around here, it's a rather mixed area, almost fifty-fifty between humans and us. Hence, those who didn't know why I disappeared are surprised to see me back, and awkward.

After a while, the first wolves come to greet me. I was prepared to have to struggle a bit, maybe defend myself, but to my surprise they are... happy to see me.

Elena! Welcome back girl!!

Missed ya, Baby!

Guys, look, it's really Elena!

"Jace! Bianca! And..."

In a few minutes, not a few but a whole crowd of werewolves run to me! The ones that were probably on patrol right before are still in their wolf form, but they bicker to run to me, like a wave of furs around my knees. The ones who can all try to hug me, ruffle my hair or grab my hand. I don't even know who to look at anymore!

"Elena!"

I can barely recognize them before the Lewis twins jump at me. Bonnie and Ben have grown up so much! They are freaking adults now! I hug them back, chuckling. I missed the Lewis family so damn much!

After a few seconds of hugging them, I recognize the young man behind them.

"Moon Goddess... Micah?"

He smiles and hugs me. How did he get so big too!

"It was high time you came home, Elena..." He whispers with a smile.

I realize he's right. I was away for so long, and... The White Moon Clan is still a part of me, even if I tried hard to deny it and move on.

For a few minutes, I laugh and tear up a bit, catching up with my old friends, holding Micah's arm and walking with the little crowd to my godfather's house. Most people leave me before we reach it, making me promise to come by that pub or this place before I go back. I feel like this is going to take all day...

When I finally stop at the front door, I'm left with the twins and Micah. Their presence makes me feel a bit better, especially since Danny is busy at work and couldn't be there. I take a deep breath and knock.

To my surprise, someone opens almost immediately.

"Hey, beautiful."

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

He h.ugs me quickly, and shrugs.

"Patrol duty, and Ben mind-linked me to say you were on your way here, so... How have you been? Your shoulder?"

I nod and show him.

"I'll have a nasty scar, but it's doing well, for a slow-healer."

"Good," he says with a smile. "But I'm still going to rip that damn witch apart for what she did to you."

"Alright," I laugh, "but you'll have to share."

"Elena?"

Behind him, Orpheus and Chris just appeared at the same moment. Chris is already smiling from ear to ear. My cousin runs to me, h.ugging me tight with his arm.

"Hey, easy! Seriously, how much did you eat, Chris, you're strong as a bear!"

He laughs while letting me go. sh!t, he grew up too, and he's clearly been working out!

“I didn’t stop training just because you were gone! Actually, our training got even harsher since Isa took over. We almost missed you!”

“Haha, very funny...”

“He’s telling the truth though,” chuckles Orpheus. “Isabella is one tough trainer. Welcome back, Elena...”

I hug him too. Orpheus and I were never very close to begin with, but I don’t think he’s the type to be close to anyone. He’s the typical workaholic introvert.

“Is Clark...?”

Orpheus nods, pointing at the back of the house. I follow him, into the large living room.

To my own surprise, I start tearing up as soon as I spot him, sitting on the couch with a frown, reading some document. Hearing us walk in, he turns his head to us.

“Orpheus, did you have the...”

He goes silent while noticing me in the middle of the little group. He stays mouth and eyes open for a few seconds, while I’m trying hard not to cry. I didn’t think I would be thrown into such disarray once I saw Clark... But I can’t stop it. I even try to look away for a second, and one of the boys rubs my back gently.

Without either of us saying a word, Clark stands up and walks up to me. I have no fvcking*g idea what to say now that I’m here, but before I can think of something, my godfather suddenly hugs me.

“Moon Goddess Mother... I’m so sorry, Baby...”

It’s too much, I’m crying buckets already. Damn him. I missed my godfather more than I thought, and I can’t help but hug him back. His huge arms are covering all of me, and I feel his hand gently caressing my hair, like a child.

“I’m so sorry Elena... I was wrong... This was all wrong...”

“Clark, it’s... over now, so...”

“No, Elena.”

He grabs my shoulders, looking at me with a very serious expression and red eyes.

“It was my fault. Entirely. I was... I’m your godfather. I should have protected you all the way, and I didn’t. You did nothing wrong. I should have told them to fvck off, and never, ever agreed to your banishment. I know that, now.”

I wipe my tears and take deep breaths. I don’t need a nervous breakdown now, now’s not the time for that.

He takes me by the hand and pulls me to sit next to him on the couch. The rest of our little group spread around in the room, sitting or staying up, but no one’s willing to leave. My cousin, Orpheus and the Lewis siblings are all looking at us, waiting for what’s next.

“...It’s good to see you back,” whispers Clark.

“I know. I didn’t think I’d be so happy to be back, to be honest. I guess I missed home more than I wanted to admit...”

Everyone around us chuckles.

“Stubborn as ever,” says Chris with a sneer.

“As long as you’re back, I’m happy. Forget all the banishment, we don’t have any borders anyway, and...”

“Clark, you know it’s not that simple.”

My seriousness seems to pain him, but we have to set things straight. There are some things we won’t be able to avoid.

“I’m no longer part of the White Moon, it’s over.”

“Elena...”

“No, listen. I’m saying this because I need you to know, and because now, it’s okay. I’m fine with that.”

“So you’re with the... Blood Moon now?” Asks Levi.

I shake my head.

“No. I’m my own wolf. I’m fine with not belonging to any pack. I’ve never liked answering to anyone, anyway. Alpha or not, I’m better off being a rogue. It’s better this way.”

Maybe because I’m voicing it out for the first time, I’m more convinced than ever.

I’m my own wolf. Not a white moon daughter, not a Royal, not an Alpha. I’m just me, Elena Whitewood. Selena Blue Moon. I’m half human, and half-werewolf, and a warrior. I’m different from my cousin, different from my peers.

And that’s okay. I don’t need a Clan’s backing, or a Royal’s entitlement. I just need my family and my friends. I think I finally understand Reagan’s feelings a bit better now, and that freedom she always cherished. She couldn’t be tied down, she was a free wolf. I think I’m just like her.

For a while, I explain to Clark everything he may not have heard of already. From when I left the White Moon, to the attack, and the Dark Witch’s threat. Levi and Daniel told him most of what he needed to know already, so I’m actually just filling in the blanks from my perspective. I stop to the point where I decided to get back with Nathaniel, so we could raise our daughter together.

“...I know it’s not what you would have wanted, Clark, but it’s the decision I’ve taken. It’s better for her, too.”

“No, it’s fine Elena. I’ve lost all right to tell you what to do with your life, or you baby girl... I would just like to meet her someday, if you’ll allow it.”

“Of course,” I say with a smile.

Actually, I’ve been dying to show Estelle the streets I grew up in. I never had the chance to know much about my mother, so I want to do that with her, so she knows where I come from, and why our family is like it is now.

“Clark... I wanted to discuss about the Dark Witch, too. I want you to cooperate with the Blood Moon Clan. Unconditionally.”

He sighs.

“To be honest, we won’t have much choice... But it won’t be easy, Elena. A lot of our people still don’t think well of that Clan. We lost too many people back then, in getting involved with them four and a half years ago. If anything bigger

than that is coming, I want to do anything I can to protect our Clan, everyone. We've been watching the North for a while already, we will move first if anything happens. I just don't like to think we will be in the front lines, but..."

"We don't know that for sure," says Levi. "It might come from the east..."

"Our Clan will stand at the border no matter what," replies Clark with a dark expression. "We have always been. Everyone is preparing for what's coming, so... But even if I agree to it, Elena, it won't be easy to convince everyone. They haven't forgotten how the Blood Moon Clan killed Diego. He was a... a criminal, but your mate had no right to kill him like a dog."

I take a deep breath.

"...Nathaniel didn't kill Diego."

"What?"

"When I asked him, he says he couldn't answer. I know he wouldn't lie to me, so it wasn't him, but that means he probably couldn't tell me the truth either."

"Why would he..."

"Clark, I need to see Iris," I declare.

A silence follows my words, all of them doubting their own ears.

"What the heck? Elena, NO!" Yells Chris.

I ignore him to address Clark.

"Clark, Iris knows the answer to what truly happened. She probably didn't say it on purpose. My cousin might be a mythic b***h, but I have to admit, she's a freaking mastermind when it comes down to manipulating people."

"Elena, if it's really the Blood Moon Clan who did it, it could make things worse..."

"Even so, I don't think they would have done this without a reason. I want to know what exactly happened, how Diego died. Moreover, I'm sure that Iris can help us convince everyone to rally the Blood Moon completely."

“Elena, it’s the sh!ttest idea ever”, growls Chris. “My sister’s been locked up for four years. You think she’s going to be happy to see you? No way she’ll agree to help you!”

I chuckle.

“You know Chris, one thing about being locked up is that by now, she might be craving some fresh air.”

He shakes his head, unhappy. I can see they are all in disbelief, or seriously wondering if I’ve gone mad about getting my worst enemy out of prison.

Truth is, I’m not as sure as I want to sound, but at the moment, I’m more concerned about changing opinions in the White Moon Clan. I know a lot of people missed me, and are happy to see me back, but a lot of them won’t trust me either. Even if Nora and Damian did most of the job by erasing the borders, I know the White Moon Clan still isn’t ready to fully cooperate. Both times we did, we lost people, like Eric. We will probably lose a lot more by now, unless we unite as one with the Blood Moon Clan.

Not as several packs gathered, but as one, large pack. One pack of wolves, ready to defend one City. It’s a crazy idea, but it’s our only shot, I realize that now. Especially since it will be the only defense between my child, my nephews and that Dark Witch and her army of vampires.

“You want to ask Iris her help to convince the White Moon to... fusion with the Blood Moon?” Repeats Levi, when I tell him my full idea on the way there.

“It’s already starting, Levi. The Sapphire Moon and The Blood Moon are unified through Nora. Smaller Clans will follow unconditionally. The only big Clan that has always worked alone is the White Moon. It became worse after I left, wasn’t it?”

“Because our people thought you had been driven away by Black! And they killed one of our own, Elena. Even if it was Diego, it was...”

“I know. But I feel like there’s something that still can be done about that.”

“... The situation is already that complicated, and you have to ask your psychopath cousin? Of all people?”

I sigh. Yeah, I have to...

His Sunshine Baby Chapter 100 - Tips

I always imagined Iris to be locked down into some dark, creepy dungeon, but this is the twenty-first century. We don't have a prison on our turf, but we do have a hospital, with a psychiatric ward. It's easy to throw someone in a tiny room, lock it and forget the key for a few years.

So, my cousin is and has been confined in an all-white, rather spacious room with the simplest furniture, and a few books. Her hair has grown a lot, so her lavender curls are now pushed down by her blonde roots. It kind of annoys me that, despite all those years locked away, she's still as pretty and looking fine. I take a few seconds to observe her from behind the tiny window; She's wearing some dark jeans and a se.xy white top. Nothing with the quiet, shy Iris she pretended to be for years... I guess she has no more use in pretending. She's barefoot, but I bet she'd be wearing k!!ler heels if she could.

I take a deep breath and walk in. She raises her eyes from her book, and, as soon as she notices me, sneers.

"Look who's here... My dear cousin. How have you been, Elena? It's been a while! Did you bring me something, since you're visiting?"

Behind me, Levi clicks his tongue.

After a long argument, we decided it would be better for only him to accompany me. Chris strictly refuses to see his sister again, as it upsets him deeply, and the younger Lewis siblings are unrelated to her. Even Clark refused to come.

"I'm not here to play your petty games, Iris," I reply coldly.

She sighs.

"I know. Since you're showing up here, I guess you have something to ask me. I wonder what that is and, more importantly, how you're going to get me to comply..."

She's not going to make it easy, I know. Behind me, Levi's already growling. She chuckles.

"You brought your little sweetheart? No, let me guess... You're a single mother now? I bet Clark changed his mind and let you stay... Well, that i***t

would be glad to take a single mom as his girlfriend, but it doesn't seem like you two are together..."

So she has no idea what happened after she was imprisoned... She doesn't know I was gone for four years or even about the witch's attack. I take a deep breath, and after hesitating a while, undo my shirt, showing her the large scar, still pink and wide. It runs from my back, to my shoulder and down to my right breast. It's thick and ugly, and she probably can tell it's rather fresh.

Iris frowns. I managed to get her attention.

"Someone attacked you with a chainsaw?" She says with a mocking tone.

"Very funny, Iris, but no. The Dark Witch did this, and without a weapon."

She keeps silent for a few seconds, staring at my injury with an indecipherable expression. After a few seconds, she tilts her head.

"Well, it looks painful. That b***h has some talent."

To my surprise, my injury doesn't seem to make her any happy. My cousin doesn't seem to care at all, in fact. She lets out a long sigh of boredom, sitting back on her bed.

"Oh, well. I guess you didn't come just to strip, so let's get this over with. What's going on?"

"The Dark Witch will attack any time, now," I explain. "I need the White Moon to trust the Blood Moon Clan fully."

"...Okay, and why should I care?" Asks Iris, raising an eyebrow.

"You're the one who knows what really happened to Diego. If I want the White Moon to trust the Blood Moon, I need..."

Before I can finish, Iris burst into an annoying laugh. She shakes her head, unable to stop as if I had said something funny. What the heck is wrong with her?

"Seriously, Elena? That's why? You think resolving your ex's death will solve things? Are you dumb?"

I want to slap her really bad at that moment, but I'll restrain myself... She chuckles and gets up, walking up to me like a cat.

"You're always so strong, but you haven't gotten smarter, Elena. Do you think this is all this is about? That if you can solve Diego's death, you can make things smooth between the White Moon and the Blood Moon? Does that mean you're still... No way. You and Black?"

I growl, truly annoyed at her tone. Maybe it was a bad idea, after all, I shouldn't have come here, she's so...

Iris sighs, crossing her arms.

"Even if I tell you the truth, you think it will solve things? Get real, Elena; The real reason no one trusts the Blood Moon Clan is simply that they are cold-blooded murderers."

I take a deep breath. Iris has no idea.

True, she played her role in getting me and Nathaniel together. But she doesn't know a thing about our relationship, about him. Sure, he's made mistakes. I know he's not as gentle as he is with me when he's being his Alpha self. I've seen it. I've seen him murder a man with his bare hands, and not feel sorry about it. All the times when I smelled blood on him, I didn't say a thing.

Because I know that man isn't my Nathaniel. Yes, we are werewolves and we fight. We defend our territories, we get into battles. We growl when we feel threatened, and we bite when we have to. This is the world we live in, but it doesn't make who we are. That same man can be the sweetest father, the gentlest man. Those same hands who got dirtied can also hug and caress someone. It's just that too few people know about that side of them. That side of him.

The Black Brothers aren't cold-blooded. They are Alphas, scary and mighty, but they are men too. Men who can be reasoned, protect their packs and love their families. They listen to their mates, they care for others. If they kill, they have a reason for it. It's never for free, are unnecessarily cruel.

The cruel one was that b***h witch that tortured me to find my baby and use her as a weapon.

“Iris, tell me,” I growl. “Why do you care, anyway?”

“Why would I tell you? You had no issue with leaving me to rot here for months and months, and now I should be a good girl and obey? What about your little puppy here? You didn’t even ask him, did you?”

I turn to Levi and sigh.

“I already know Danny and Reagan had an agreement with Nate and gave him Diego. They told me a while ago. What I don’t know is what really happened after that. You’re the one who was behind Diego’s return, I bet you were watching him and know who killed him.”

Iris clicks her tongue, meaning I’m right. She seems to hesitate for a bit.

“Why should I help you, Elena? I don’t win anything from opening my mouth, I might as well keep it shut. Actually, I do win some satisfaction from it, so, I’d rather stay silent. Unless you have something worth my while.”

“I’m not playing, Iris,” I growl. “We have a Witch outside our borders that can attack at any moment with her army of vampires. You’d really be fine with that?”

Iris shrugs and opens her arms up, showing her environment.

“I’ve got my own personalized bunker. If you lock me up, I’m probably just going to be happy watching from the sidelines! Oh, maybe I should get some popcorn?”

Can’t I just slap her? This selfish b***h! Our whole civilization is on the verge of war and she finds it funny!

“Iris, I’m not kidding, this is our pack you’re talking about!”

“Our pack, Elena? More like your pack! Ever since Reagan dropped you here, you’ve been entitled to anything! Yes, I’m fvcking*g happy and someone finally gets rid of the eyesore you are! My dad, Chris, Clark, even Eric! Since you came, you did nothing but take what was mine, and disrupt other people’s lives!”

“I’m fed up with your jealousy issue, Iris,” I growl. “Yes, I was adopted into the pack, but that was it. Before I was stronger than you, my Dad was stronger

than yours. I'm sorry Xavier couldn't see anything but our strength, but if you wanted to change things, you should have stood up to him! If you wanted to be closer to Chris and if you wanted Eric to love you, you should have tried harder with both of them! And didn't Eric pick you when you tried? With all your schemes and lies, you're the one who disrupted everything! You can't blame me for everything when you never fought fairly for it!"

My words finally seem to hit her, as she takes a step back. Her sneer disappears, finally replaced by her hatred for me. Seems like playtime is over.

"Moon Goddess, I really hate you, Elena."

"Right back at ya."

We stare and glare at each other for a long time until she rolls her eyes.

"Fine. I'll tell Chris."

I hesitate, but Levi speaks before I do.

"Your brother doesn't want to see you, Iris, you know that."

"Well then find a way, because I'm not going to tell anyone but Chris. Didn't you want an exchange? Well there you go, I want to see my brother."

I frown, a bit confused.

"What are you planning, Iris?"

She clicks her tongue, annoyed.

"Oh, stop it, Elena. I may hate you, but Chris is my younger brother and I haven't seen him in years. You said I should make efforts with him? Well, I'm starting now."

"...Why didn't you ask for your freedom?" I ask, suspicious.

"With the sh!t show that's coming? Thanks but no thanks, I'll stay here, you know, in my private bunker. Now, my brother."

I sigh and turn around, exchanging a look with Levi. Can we convince Chris, though? If he's been ignoring his sister's attempts to talk to him all this time...

We decide to go back. Surprisingly, it only takes a few minutes to convince Chris, but he's clearly unhappy about his sister's bargain. He insists that I come with him first. Less than an hour later, we are back in Iris' cell. She stands up as soon as she sees her brother.

"Chris, I..."

"No, Iris, you listen to me," he says. "First, you tell Elena what she asked you. After that, we will talk. I don't trust you anymore, so if I doubt you're telling the truth, even one bit, I swear I'm leaving and you'll never see me again."

For the first time, Iris seems truly hurt by his words. She probably didn't expect Chris to act like this towards her. His spite seems to have hit a cord. Her mighty attitude soon disappears, and she turns to me, clearly unhappy.

"Fine. What did you want to know?"

"What happened, the night Diego died. Everything you know."

She rolls her eyes, sitting on her bed, but with her brother in the room, she's a lot more docile and less arrogant.

"...I was there when they caught him. I'm not sure how Blondie and Reagan kicked him out of the territory, but as soon as he stepped over, several Blood Moon wolves jumped at him. They dragged him further away, so I followed secretly. I wasn't exactly overjoyed by this situation, as you can imagine."

I bet. It probably disrupted her evil plans by a lot...

"It was quick, though. First, that bastard struggled a bit, but well, your man didn't come alone, so he didn't have a chance to run. The Black blondie was furious, and wanted a duel with him, probably to make him suffer a long death."

"That fight never happened," I say. "Diego's body was fine, he was just shot in the head."

"Yeah, well, your boyfriend didn't see it coming either, from the face he made. His brother arrived."

I stay speechless for a few seconds. His brother?

"Liam?"

“No, not the b.rat, the King. He showed up out of nowhere. From the look on his face, your man didn’t expect him. And just like that, the King took out a g*n. The two brothers argued for a while. Your man wanted a fair fight or whatever, but the King said that give didn’t deserve any chance. Something like he didn’t have any pity for rapists... And just like that, he shot Diego right in the head.”

I’m... I did not expect that at all.

Damian Black. Nora’s husband k!lled Diego. Not to help Nathaniel, but because the King wouldn’t allow a r****t on his territory. I suddenly remember Nora’s past. She... She never really went as far as giving me details, but something like that happened to her. In her previous pack, someone attacked her.

No wonder the King was so cold-bl00ded about k!lling Diego. For him, it wasn’t a murder, it wasn’t a crime. It was the execution of a criminal. Because I went through what Nora barely avoided, and Damian Black knew. And he wouldn’t allow someone like that in Silver City. Did Nate tell his brother about what happened? There are so many ways Damian could have known, back then. He was watching me because of my relationship with Nate, I bet he got a hold of my criminal record, too...

“Shit...” Whispers Chris.

“Yeah, it doesn’t make the situation better at all,” sighs Levi.

Indeed, this is a problem. Nathaniel or Damian, either of the brothers k!lled Diego doesn’t change anything. A member of the White Moon Clan was k!lled by one of the Black brothers, that’s all our pack members are going to see. This is such a mess! Even if he is the King, even if Diego was formerly banished, Damian Black had no right to execute him, he was part of another Clan, not his.

We exchange looks, but this is a real situation. If we can’t get the White Moon to change their opinion...

“Oh, please,” suddenly says Iris with a dramatic sigh. “You guys are such idiots, aren’t you?”

“Iris, you better have something smart and useful to say following that sentence,” growls Levi, just as irritated as I am.

Chris glares at her too, but his sister just shrugs.

“There’s one simple way to resolve this, isn’t there? Tell them the truth.”

I stay silent, unsure about what she means, and Levi and Chris look just as confused. Iris sneers.

“Just tell them the truth, Elena, what happened seven years ago. The real reason Diego and you fought. The White Moon will change their minds if they know what Diego did.”

I slowly understand. That’s right... I stayed silent about what had truly happened, back then. Aside from a handful of people, no one knew that I stabbed Diego because he r***d me and that I lost a baby. I didn’t want to talk about it, so I let people make their assumptions about the real reasons for the fight, and Clark was the only judge for it. I went to jail, and Diego disappeared, no one brought it up again. People thought we had always been an electric, unstable couple, that suddenly went over the line. For werewolves, especially alphas, it didn’t seem so crazy.

However, it wasn’t so simple. Iris is right. People would change their minds if they knew the truth about Diego. No one would cry or even mind the death of someone like him. Actually, they might even think it was justice. He committed the worst sin possible for a werewolf. The one thing our kind can never, ever forgive.

Killing a werewolf pup.