

I Am The Luna Chapter 61 – 70 By Moonlight Muse

Posted by **NovelHeart**, 2802 Views, Released on August 18, 2023

ZAIA.

I look at the eight men who now crowd my office at the pack house; I don't know what to say. Five of them are meant to be some of our most trusted, for them to simply allow Annette in like that...

The door shuts after the last one and I place my chin on top of my clasped hands, my elbows resting on the desk. "I don't know where I should start," I say quietly.

I'm a little restless as I haven't been able to contact Dad either. I hope he has been able to take a little time alone to clear his head, but I do need to speak to him. 2

I just hope he got my voicemail since he wasn't opening any of his messages. "I do apologise, ma'am, for everything. I never should have let the Luna onto the property but..." one of the men trails off.

"But what?" I ask the guard, tilting my head. "I am truly disappointed in the lack of security. This woman was shouting at my mother, and you all stood by."

"She said there would be consequences if we didn't let her pass." Another said, and I sigh in exasperation.

"Consequences? So, if someone is going to blackmail or threaten you, will you simply step aside and allow them to do whatever they wish?" I ask in disbelief. "This is absolutely ridiculous! Why apply to be a guard, then?"

I turn my attention to Annette's three guards. "You may work for the Luna, but if there is ever an issue where your family is threatened you know you can come to me. Furthermore, please write up a report of Luna threatening your family. This is something that I can assure you my father will not tolerate. Please do so now, outside. Whilst I talk to my own security team."

I motion with my head for them to leave the room, when the door shuts behind them, I stand up, looking at the five men before me as I begin to pace behind my desk slowly, the sound of my heels loud in the silent room.

“My father hand-selected all of you because he trusted you.” I begin.

Four of them were those replaced after the shooting, and I understand they may not be as seasoned. However, this is a dire situation.

“You are all aware of the threats that we face. No one is a friend, and the enemy can be anyone among us and the pack. No one is to be let onto the premises of that property without my or my father’s permission. That is an absolute rule!”

My anger is rising, but my children are there! Sia can’t handle stressful situations, she needs as much calm as possible. Anything could have gone wrong.

I know I need to tell my men about the Blood Born. We need to be ready for everything and if they aren’t alerted to the actual threats, then what?

“We are sorry Alpha, it will not happen again.”

“It better not. The thing is, if you aren’t willing to do the job properly regardless of the risks that you all knew came with it when you accepted the hefty payments, then tell me now. You can leave. I don’t need a spineless team.” I say, clenching my jaw.

The way they’re acting – aside from Gordon, who was one of the previous ones – are now shutting or lowering their heads like children being scolded. I don’t trust them... I don’t even want them around us anymore!

Calm down, Zaia....

“I’m sorry, but she said she was only going to have a word,” Gaspard says as he steps forward. “I take full responsibility for this, and you are correct, it was a dangerous mistake, one that never should have been made. Whatever you decide, Alpha Zaia, we will accept it. However, I would like one more chance, if you will. We will work harder on this, Luna’s wording was... innocent, but we have learned that no matter if it is a woman pretending to come with good intent or someone asking for help, we must always follow the rules, Luna and his daughter are included in that. Forgive us.” 2

He places a hand on his chest, lowering his head to me, and I frown. I’m glad he understands... I sigh.

“There are to be no more mistakes. A single mistake can cost a life. From this day forth be alert... as for what the Luna said, I want written statements, rest assured you will be under mine and the Alphas’ protection. If the Luna is threatening her own pack members, that is cause for concern.” I say, running my fingers through my hair.

“Yes Alpha!” they say in unison. I hold out the files for them to write their reports before motioning to them to leave. “May I have an additional word?”

Gaspard asks, glancing at the other men. They look at him curiously, but I nod, dismissing them. Once the door shuts behind them, I look at him.

“What is it?” I ask.

He lowers his head in respect. “I just wanted to say, your display of power... is impressive. My mother’s family is from France, and we often were told the story of Alphas who can summon forth their wolf at any given time, without the need of the strength from the moon.” He takes a pause and looks at me with clear respect as he continues.

“I’ve never witnessed it and I actually came to believe that it was just that, a myth. Until I saw you today, my Alpha. You are a true Alpha...” He smiles and lowers his head. “And I will serve you with everything I have until the very end.”

His words fill me with warmth. In a world where there is no care for our wolves, there are those who genuinely want to cherish the blessing it is to have a wolf. I tilt my head, a thought coming to my head.

“Gaspard, we have issues with rogues...those who they say are men who have lost themselves to their wolves... has anyone ever tried to talk to rogues?” It’s an odd question... but I’m genuinely curious.

“Rogues are lost, Alpha. I’ve battled a few and they don’t seem to hold the ability to interact with people.”

“Perhaps because they go into survival mode, wasn’t there a report from several months back about rogues in a pack? That’s new, they don’t really reside in packs usually. Can you have some of their locations tracked? I want to see something.” a He looks surprised but nods. “Yes Alpha, of course.”

I give a nod. “Excellent, gather the reports from the others and call a pack meeting for tomorrow. There is something I need to share with everyone. You may leave, thank you.” I say dismissing him.

“Yes, Alpha.” He says before he takes his leave and I sit down in my seat, closing my eyes.

The Blood Born... Atticus and Sebastian need to talk. I don't know how that will go but it's needed.

My phone begins to ring, and I open my eyes, picking it up. “Hello,” I say, it's the man I had sent to locate Dad.

“Hello, Ma'am.”

“Have you found him?”

“Yes, he's down at the Atomic bar,” he says hesitantly.

That isn't like Dad...

Things have gotten rough for him to go to that extent. “Very well, thank you. I will go to him.” I say, ending the call. I stand up, walking over to the window before I ring Sebastian.

“Missing me already?” he asks, and I can just picture him. I can hear the children laughing and talking in the background, it seems they've kept him company for the day.

“You wish, actually I need to go get Dad. He's down at the local bar here. It's at the edge of town.”

“Don't go alone, especially since you've just called me. I don't trust anything, Zaia. Send someone to bring him back. I would come with was upto it.” you, if I I sigh. “You have a point, fine. I'll have someone get him.”

“Good girl.” He says, his deep sexy voice making my stomach flip and I bite my lip.

Why did that sound so sexy?

“Behave, I'll see you tonight, seems the children are keeping you occupied.”

“I’m behaving, trust me, Little Fox I’m behaving... and yes, they are. Never a dull moment.”

“Great, well I better get someone to get Dad then.”

“Alright.”

I hang up and sit down again, contacting Dad’s personal guard via text.

ZAIA: Let my father know if he doesn’t come to the pack house now I will be forced to come out to Atomic myself, and I know he wouldn’t want that. I’ll await his reply. If I don’t get one in the next five minutes, I will make my way there.

I place my phone on my desk, perching on it as I cross my legs and stare out of the window, waiting. A minute passes before the screen lights up and I pick up my phone, unlocking it.

GORDON: We are on our way.

Finally! It’s about half an hour before Dad finally shows up, there’s a hard knock on the door before I say enter and Gordon opens it, stepping aside and allowing Dad to step inside.

The strong smell of alcohol surprises me, and I clear my throat, trying not to inhale it. I’ve never seen Dad like this.

His hair is messy, and his eyes are shadowed. For the first time in my life, he looks like a man burdened with the weight of the world.

“Dad...” I stand up and walk over to him, motioning for Gordon to leave us. I help him to a seat and walk over to the small fridge to the side and take out a water bottle. Unscrewing it I pass it to Dad and sit on the chair beside him.

“What happened?” I ask softly.

“Nothing just needed a break.” I sigh, running my fingers through my hair.

“Please, now is not the time for secrets. My entire life, you and Mom have done nothing but keep secrets from me. When will it stop? A problem shared is a problem solved, Father.”

He looks down at his hand that holds the water bottle limply. Not even having taken a sip. "Where do I begin? With that dastardly woman?" He looks at me, and I can see the anger and pain in his eyes.

"Start at the beginning..." I say gently, reaching for the bottle. I take it from him and place it on the desk, taking his I won't show it. I won't let him see that seeing him like this has shaken me... I've always seen him as untouchable... but even the strongest of men can be brought to their knees...

By a woman..

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HUGH. I look across at her. My head is bursting with incessant throbbing. I have drunk far too much, but even then; it was not enough to drown out the suffering within my mind.

The turmoil of the past and present mix into one bubbling stew that is ready to explode. What exactly did I do for the world and the Goddess if she is up there to work against me time and time again? "Dad..."

She brings me from my train of thought, and I suck in a slow breath as I look at her. She is nothing like her mother. I am truly proud of her.

"There's far too much to share, Zaia." "I'm ready to hear it. You have been here for me father, let me be here for you."

I sigh heavily. Never have I felt so tired of carrying these secrets. "The beginning," I say as I tug free from her hold and stand up. "The beginning..."

I walk towards the window and stare out at the moon. Do I tell her? There is so much that this might change...

"Zaia... there is no turning back from here. If I tell you the truth, then-"

"I'm ready for it," I say quietly. Am I wrong to tell her? But if something happens to me... she should know the reality.

"Very well then, I swear that everything I say is nothing but the truth. But I want you to remember that regardless of what I tell you, it should not affect the way you see things and... it remains between us."

“Ok...” She sounds worried and I look up at the moon. It’s glowing brightly, almost soothing

It’s time to share the burden that has been on my mind for years. The mistakes I’ve made, the betrayal I was dealt, the sins I’ve committed... it is all becoming too much.

“I will go back to when it all began when everything was perfectly fine. When I was happy and content with my mother. I didn’t expect things to change overnight, but that’s just how life deals its blows... When you least expect it.” I begin, memories of the past begin to cloud my mind... Will it change things between us?

“You probably don’t know this, since I’m certain you would have mentioned it if your mother had told you... but... I had a brother, he was a few years older than me...”

She gasps, and I try to remain emotionless. “No, Mom’s never mentioned that.” She murmurs. “So, she didn’t.” I can’t help but smile bitterly.

Why does it still hurt? I nod slowly. “Well... his name was Adam, and he was all set to become the future Alpha.”

(FLASHBACK TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO)

Where are they? I walk through the silent house, it’s too quiet.

Didn’t Melanie say she was going to be spending the evening with friends? I was away on a business trip and was not set to return until Friday, but after sealing the deal early; I was able to catch a flight home two days earlier than planned.

I couldn’t wait to spend the evening with her and surprise her, she’ll be happy to see me.

It’s not even 10 pm yet. Where is she?

I pause in the archway to the lounge, spotting the two glasses of wine on the table and the half-empty bottle.

I wouldn’t call that a party. I sniff the air. I can only pick up Melanie’s and Adam’s scents.

Adam? Was he back in town? Maybe she changed her plans because he showed up. I take off my jacket and put my small suitcase down, loosening my tie.

It sure was a long flight, but I wanted to get back quickly. I head upstairs to find her. I'm halfway down the hall to our bedroom when I stop outside the guest room, which Adam usually uses when he stops by.

Despite being the firstborn, he hasn't found his mate, nor had he taken a Luna of choice, preferring his bachelor lifestyle.

The door to the guestroom is open, and I pop my head inside but it's empty.

I continue down the hall to my own bedroom when the sound of moans reaches my ears. My heart thuds as I slowly step closer, fear clawing at me as a heavy weight settles in the pit of my stomach. Maybe Adam's brought someone back with him...

I inch close to my room; the moans getting louder and sickening. I recognise that voice. I've heard it far too many times...

Turn away Hugh, what you don't see, you don't know...

It won't hurt Leave. But no, I have to know. The lamp is on, bathing the master bedroom in a warm glow, and the door stands slightly ajar.

The sight before me is one that I will never forget. Melanie is on all fours on our bed as none other than Adam, my brother, is pounding into her from behind.

I'm frozen for a moment as she begs him to fuck her harder like 'last time'. I turn away as my entire world crashes down around me.

My mate is cheating on me. My brother betrayed me. Silently I make my way back downstairs, I grab my jacket and briefcase exiting the house silently....

(END OF FLASHBACK)

I spare her the details, telling her I saw her mother cheat on me with my brother. I was always the one doing the workload... the boring one... of course, they'd all prefer him. She gasps, but now that I've begun, I can't stop.

“I returned the following day, and they both looked me in the eye as if nothing was wrong. I couldn’t bring myself to tell them I knew... and so I didn’t. I kept it in. I went through grief, regret, pain, betrayal... alone... As Melani pretended to love me, each day that passed only made the pain inside of me fester.”

I stop when she places a hand on my back, but I can’t look at her.

She’s my daughter... regardless...

“She told me she was pregnant... I wasn’t expecting that and after what happened I wanted to know if the child was even mine... and so with the help of a doctor, at one of her check-ups I had a small amount of amniotic fluid drawn from her without her knowing and then I had it tested against both mine and Adam’s DNA.”

“No...” Zaia whispers, sounding horrified.

“Don’t worry, you are my daughter...” I say quietly. Her heart is thumping, and I grip the window ledge. “Knowing I was the father, I decided to try to give it another chance, our fake relationship.” My voice breaks and I stop.

“I’m so sorry,” she whispers, I turn to her, guilt filling me. I’m causing her additional stress. As her father, I should be the pillar of strength for her.

“You are my daughter. Never apologise for something you had no hand in.” I say quietly, touching her cheek. She looks down, and she reminds me of the child that was constantly pulled between us. I have failed one child already.

“Then what happened? Where is he now?” she asks, her eyes glittering with tears. “Adam.” I sigh before turning back to the moon.

“I thought the bond of fated mates would be beautiful, that she’d soon see the error in her ways and return to me. That this pregnancy would bring us closer. I made sure to give her attention and love. Yet... they didn’t stop their relationship. I kept an eye on them, and it continued.”

“How could she... and then calling Annette...” She huffs and I can sense her disappointment.

“Melanie was in her last trimester when Adam was telling me about a woman who he is seeing but luckily she’s in a relationship so he doesn’t need to worry

about committing... How her mate is an idiot who didn't notice what was right beneath his nose.

That's when I lost it. In my rage, I killed him." I say closing my eyes, remembering pulling out that gun and shooting him square in the chest.

"Oh, my goddess..." Zaia murmurs, shocked. He died with that smirk on his face...

"And that's when Annette came into the picture." My eyes glimmer with rage as I remember her words from back then.

"What, so you two weren't together by then?" she asks, confused. "But she was pregnant at the same time as Mom."

I turn and look at her sharply. "I don't think you understand, Zaia. I have never been with another woman since I met your mother. I never cheated on her." I say quietly. Her eyes widen as she stares at me, and I frown.

"Annette gave me an ultimatum, accept her and her child, make her Luna, and she will never tell anyone what I did. I killed the future Alpha... that could have cost me life in prison or death. So, I accepted. I was already angry at your mother and wanted to hurt her the way she hurt me; I fabricated the story that I had an affair. I thought she'd tell me the truth. Seeing her so devastated over Adam's death only strengthened my resolution that this was the perfect revenge."

I walk to the chair and sit down again, feeling tired. Slumping forward in the seat, I stare at the hardwood floor.

"In my rage, I made more than one mistake and let her blackmail me. After that, anytime I didn't do what Annette wanted, she would threaten me with exposing my truth. And so, I did as she asked – every time, even

distancing myself from you. She never knew about what happened between Adam and Melanie, I kept that a secret, wanting to take it to the grave... After Dad passed away, I was made Alpha and I continued with my life, trying to let go of the past."

There... it's all on the table. She kneels on the floor in front of me, sitting with her legs tucked under her, her hands in her lap. Tears stream down her cheek as she looks back at me.

I didn't tell her for fear she'd deem me a weak father, but she was the strength that helped me carry on. "You... you were always in the right and all those hurtful things I said to you..." she whispers.

I look at her. "There's no satisfaction in proving someone wrong or right... I committed a crime by killing him too... I should have owned up to it but I didn't want to throw away my life,"

"And until this day, Mom doesn't know? She's always acted like she's innocent after what she did..." she says. There's confusion in her eyes as she looks up at me. I sit back, feeling the weight of carrying that secret ease slightly.

"Of course, Adam was gone. She knew, or so she thought anyway, that no one else knew her dirty secret. We were still fated, and she thought I cheated on her. Seeing her feel betrayed was satisfying." I scoff humourlessly.

"I was often tempted to ask her why... but with Adam dead, I didn't want anything pointing in my direction. His death was written off as an accident and no proof was ever found. Something that devastated our parents."

There is still a part of me that is attached to her... a part that yearns for her, but that is just this wretched bond. "I'm sorry, Dad," Zaia whispers, looking up at me. "I'm so sorry."

I don't respond, knowing if I did, it would only hurt more. We remain in silence and it's comforting as she rests her head on my knee.

"But... Annalise... she's not your daughter then?" she asks after a few moments, raising her head. I shake my head slowly in confirmation as she ponders over it.

"I've never slept with Annette. That woman is with me only for the status and image of being a woman in a position of power." "But Annalise does look a little like me .." she says.

I smile bitterly; ah... the icing on the cake.

"Of course she does. She also looks like her mother. You can call it some form of twisted solace, but when I learned of Annette's identity, I realised that it was indeed karma. After all, Melanie may not know it, but Annette is her half-sister." A/N: Please keep the comments on social media free from

spoilers! To my reader Melanie! I'm so sorry that this chapter fell on your birthday! Forgive me for doing your name dirty and happy birthday! XD

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ZAIA. I stare at him trying to process everything he has just told me. My mind and emotions are wreaking havoc within me. How is this possible?

How could Mom do this?

How could she lie to me like this?

Annette is Mom's sister?

I'm conflicted, but it's clear he is not lying. There is so much to take in, including the fact that Annalise and I are not sisters but cousins. It's our moms who are half-sisters, something even Mom doesn't know.

This is a mess. First, I learn I have a brother, then I learn Dad had a brother, followed by me learning that Annalise is not my sister and that Annette is Mom's sister.

That's... confusing. But more than that is the fact that Mom cheated. I am unable to process how she always portrayed herself as the one being cheated on.

She genuinely looked the part too... I had seen her sadness and her struggle so many times. It's not possible, I mean I believe Dad but is there a possibility it's a lie? A misconception or maybe even a trick?

I've seen the raw pain Mom's been in.... the sadness at the fact Annette stole her mate. That can't be faked, can it?

Only a terrifyingly good actress could put up such an act for so many years. There's got to be more to it!

She told me when I was old enough that it had broken her, realising Dad had cheated on her and wanted to be with his mistress. Why would she do that and break down into tears?

"Dad..." I say softly, we've never been close until the last few years, and even now I feel we are still becoming closer.

I don't know if he'd appreciate my concern, but right now, I can't hide the pain I feel for him. I love him and I want him to know I will always be here for him. "Look at me."

He looks up from where he had his head hanging, and I smile gently. "Things will be alright..." I promise. Will it?

How do you recover from betrayal after betrayal?

"Of course." He replies, reminding me of his usual self. My father is strong, that I know.

"Good, but if it's alright with you... can I ask Mom about this? I mean, she's always been so heartbroken with you cheating on her. Is there a high chance that maybe... maybe it wasn't her? Of course I won't mention the truth about you, Adam or your relationship with Annette.

He looks sad as he shrugs slightly. "Maybe there's a misunderstanding?" "No, it was definitely her, I saw her clearly, unless there is a woman who smells, and looks exactly like her then, maybe. It was my mate in that room that night." he says quietly.

I feel disgusted at the thought but he seems so sure. "I see... then, may I confront her? It's just that... I need to know."

"If Annette finds out, it could mean the truth of Adam being brought to light." He says quietly. I get it... that could put Dad in trouble....

"I understand..."

"I am fine with that. At some point the truth must be revealed... but until all this mess with the Blood Born and these attacks is sorted out, I can't be locked away."

"No. It won't. I won't let it. You are not going to prison father," I say, a sudden thought occurring to me. "I have a plan ...I can do this without mentioning you. "Zaia, what are you planning?"

I smile slightly. I need the truth from her... a part of me doesn't want to believe this... but a part of me also wants to see her reaction when I question her about it. If there's even a ray of hope that maybe, just maybe, something is

untrue in this entire situation – something that was perhaps overlooked – then I want to find it.

“I will send a note to myself... with this information... something I will open in front of Mom, I want to see her reaction when I show it to her. It’s safe and believable, these people have pictures and things on both Sebastian and I, it will be believable.”

“Be careful. If that is what you want, and if that’s what you need to do to believe me, then go ahead.”

A flash of hurt skims through me at the fact I’m hurting him; and I take his hand. “I believe you Dad, and I am so sorry... All my life I’ve been told by mom that you cheated... you never denied it and I always blamed you for that... but to learn that it was not you but Mom who truly cheated. It’s shocking and I won’t deny that I am struggling to believe it...” I explain softly.

“If it’ll help you, regardless of what happened between us, your mother loves you, that won’t change, Zaia. Are you certain you want to do this now?” he asks. “I don’t want it to cause issues between you. Live in denial if you must.”

I nod. “No, I want the truth... If you allow me to do so, of course,” I say gently.

I don’t want to pressurise him when I promised him whatever he told me will not leave this room, but I am also warmed by his words in defence of Mom. How can your views and respect for a person change so quickly?

He seems to think over it before he nods slowly, frowning. “Very well,” he says.

“Thank you,” I reply. He looks tired, and I know he needs a good night’s rest, I think we both need it.

I want to ask him why he’s never liked the Kings and I’m sure there’s more to it than just business rivalry, but he’s been through enough today. That can wait for another day.

I stand up and offer him my hands. “Come, let’s go home, I’ll make us both a hot drink, Father.”

“As pleasant as that sounds, I need to go home, Annette and I have already argued.” He says with a heavy sigh. I frown, she’s blackmailing Dad... now do we fix that?

I’m not letting Dad suffer and be blackmailed like this. I brush my tears away and fix my top, hoping I don’t look like I’ve been crying too much.

I am going to fix things for him. He’s held strong for me. It’s my turn to carry the weight for those whom I love, and I will.

We head out, and I take the reports the guards had written up. Gaspard observes me for a moment and I’m sure he can see I’ve been crying.

I order the driver to take us to Dad’s mansion first. I make sure Dad enters the mansion with Gordon, who is on duty, anyway. Only when the door shuts, do I tell the driver to take me home. One of my guards sits in the front, staying on alert.

Looking down at the files in my hand, I flip through them. Annette has gone as far as to threaten their families...

I lean back, staring up at the night sky out of the window. I need to comb through the guards and pack members and find out if there are others she’s blackmailed or abused... A full investigation must be carried out. If I build my case, I might be able to strike a deal with her...

It is worth a try. I just need to have more solid backing. Mom’s family knew about the Blood Born, which means there’s a chance that maybe Annette does?

But Mom never knew she was her sister ... is it from Mom’s maternal or paternal side? Ah, so many questions!

I massage my temples, and I lean back against the leather seat, mulling over everything Dad had said. Adam... I need to learn more.

Mom and Annette’s history...

Ok, stop girl stop. I’m becoming obsessive! When the car halts outside the house, I get out. Maybe I need a run...

I look towards the dark path that curls around the side of the house, and for a split second, I'm tempted to try to shift again.

I shake my head as I walk towards the door. I didn't shift because it is so, so painful... I felt like I was going to die... but I want to try again. Maybe things will become easier.

Another day. I unlock the door and head to Valerie's room. Jai is fast asleep on the armchair beside the bed, his head on the bed, as he holds her hand loosely. I silently leave the room and head upstairs.

After checking up on the kids, I find myself walking towards Sebastian's room before I stop in my tracks.

What am I doing?

My cheeks burn and I turn quickly and head to my room, but I slow down half way there, hesitating once more. I do need to fill him in on how the meeting went...

I just need to see him, he gives me strength and brings me peace...

No... not like this. I look in the mirror. My eyes are puffy and red; he'd instantly know something happened.

Sighing, I head to my room, shutting the door behind me, I throw the file onto the bed and strip out of my clothes.

Tossing them into the washing hamper, I enter the bathroom. I stay in there for far longer than I meant to, replaying over the events of the evening again and again. The hot water soothes the tension in my neck and back. I'm so tired...

Finally, I switch the shower off and grab a towel. I should just drop Sebastian a message about the meeting. He will be waiting. I towel my hair dry first, as I dry my body quickly and step out of the steamy bathroom and into my bedroom.

The room is no longer bathed in darkness; the lamp is on and there's a man sitting on my bed, in nothing but grey sweatpants.

His ankles are crossed as he flips through the file I had left on it. His chiselled godly body looks so good and it sends a shiver of pleasure through me.

“Holy fuck...” Sebastian mutters, his eyes raking over me. They darken with approval and carnal hunger, and I can’t help but press my thighs together, clutching the towel in front of me.

My heart is racing as I poke my eyes out at him, and try to mask how hot and bothered I’m suddenly feeling. “What are you doing here?!” I exclaim, whipping open the towel and wrapping it around myself quickly.

“I heard you come in, but when you didn’t show up in my room, I thought I’ll come find you myself.” He retorts arrogantly. “But that view... how about you just drop the towel and let me get a better look? I won’t bite, I just want to see that sexy body of yours naked and wet...”

“Sebastian! Behave! How shameless, I exclaim, blushing as I look around. for a distraction. I glance at the blinds which he has thankfully drawn before turning the light on.

“Proud to be,” he winks at me cockily and shaking my head, I walk over to my wardrobe and take out some panties and nightwear.

“I’ll be right back,” I say as I go to the bathroom with my clothes, making sure to keep my panties wrapped in my night dress I know he’s smirking as I leave the door open and quickly pull on my panties and satin slip dress. I’m about to wrap my matching gown over it when I look up at the mirror.

My heart thuds and I freeze, the temperature suddenly seems to drop as a shiver runs down my spine.

There in the steamed up mirror staring back at me is the symbol of the Blood Born emphasised by the steam and below it, there are four words written.
THE END IS NEAR

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SEBASTIAN. I hear her heart rate change and I put the file down, concern flitting through me.

“Zaia?” I get off the bed, ignoring the pain in my body and make my way across the room. I enter the bathroom to see her standing there in a tiny

nightdress... She looks damn fine, and it drives me nuts, but I force myself to look up, spotting the imprint in the steamed-up mirror.

My eyes flash, and I look around the mirror. Who put that there? "How did that get there?" She asks quietly.

"It wasn't me," I say, trying to calm a her by attempting to lighten the situation. She's been through a lot and is weighed down by so much. I don't want this to just get her more worked up. My words do the job, and she tilts her head and gives me a look.

"Of course, it wasn't you. You have sausage fingers! There's no way you could have drawn that," she says, her gown slipping through her fingers. It falls to the floor, and it's obvious by the fact she doesn't notice that it's shaken her.

"Unless, of course, I used something to make it," I state lightly. "This is no big 'I deal.'" She raises an eyebrow sceptically but nods as she looks back at the mirror. The end is near...

Those words feel ominous...

"Ok sausage fingers, maybe I am overreacting," she sighs.

"Sausage fingers? Speaking of fingers.... you never seemed to have an issue with them when they're buried deep inside of you..." I purr as I step up behind her and wrap my arms around her, under her breasts, trapping her arms by her side. "Bastien, stop it," she says, despite not fighting me at all.

I look back at the mirror, our steamed- up reflection marred by the symbol drawn upon it by someone who has access to this home... but why would they be stupid enough to do that? Or are they playing a game of reverse psychology? So that no one would think they'd do it from within...

I tilt my head, calculatingly. Or they are trying to frame someone else... "Someone's messing with you," I say, giving her a slight squeeze.

She closes her eyes. "I know... and I no longer know who or what to believe, Sebastian... I've learned things today that have messed with my mind and made me question my support system and everything I've ever stood for. The stability of those in whom I trust is failing." She murmurs heavily.

I frown. She went after her father... what did she learn that had made her feel like this? "What happened?" I ask; "Come on..."

Letting go of her, I place my hand on the small of her back and guide her out of the bathroom.

She shakes her head, sitting down on the bed and running her fingers through her wet locks. She's leaning forward, giving me an excellent eyeful of her boobs as she heaves a sigh.

I'm glad she's forgotten her gown. I'm enjoying the view. She doesn't respond, and I furrow my brows. "Zaia?"

"Sorry... I just..."

"What is it?" I persist. "You know you can tell me." I sit down on the bed beside her, facing her, one leg bent up on the bed, the other on the ground as I reach over, taking hold of her chin.

She looks up at me and I now notice her swollen eyes. It's not just from the shower... she's been crying. Anger flits through me.

"What happened?" I almost growl. I hate her upset. She lowers her head, "I don't know, I can't say anything but... according to Dad; Mom cheated on him with his brother and Annette; she's mom's half- sister.

Something that Mom doesn't know... I'm not sure, I don't know what to believe, Dad wasn't lying but Mom- Mom wouldn't cheat, heck she was so against you cheating. She has been heartbroken about Dad having a mistress all her life. How does one fake. that?" she whispers.

I stare at her, letting her words sink in. Melanie cheated on Hugh? Zaia's in denial, but why does it not seem as surprising to me as it is to her?

"Listen to me, Little Fox." I begin quietly. "I don't know the truth. I mean, every story has more than one side, but it's not that hard for a cheater to feel cheated. It hits differently when you're the one being cheated on."

She looks up at me, hurt flashing in her Morge eyes, but she knows there is truth in my words. "Are you saying Mom could have?"

“Only she knows that, but if your dad saw her, there’s not really place for doubt, but there can be things that influenced her decision or things that made her do what she did. Being drunk, Ashbane, blackmail... Only your mother will know the answer to that. I’m not saying it’s right, but I think you’re right not to jump to conclusions until you have all the pieces before you.”

My words seem to bring her comfort and she closes her eyes as she nods her head in understanding.

“I’m so tired, and this Adam, have your ever heard about him, like has your family ever mentioned him? Because as far as I know, Dad’s claim as Alpha has never been questioned.” She asks, looking at me. “He was Dad’s older brother.”

Adam...

“No, however, I can do some research. I’m sure Dad would possibly know him, but with your dad being every inch the Alpha he needed to be, I don’t think anyone had an issue with it.” I say.

There’s never been mention of another Toussaint potential Alpha. She nods, planting her face in her hands before she rubs her face.

“I have a plan...” she says, lifting her head. “Oh? I’m all yours. Tell me what needs doing and I’ll get it done.” I promise. “Blindly promising me your help, Mr King?”

“That is what I said,” I respond. She smiles wryly. “Only a fool would make blind promises.” “Wrong, only a man madly in love and if that makes me a fool, then so be it.”

She smiles and tells me the plan she has to test her mother. It sounds pretty straightforward and I’m sure we’ll get a reaction... and if she’s such a good actress; I wonder what else she’s lying about and hiding?

It’s clear her dad saw her mother, it wasn’t just blind guessing on his behalf. I don’t trust anyone... and Melanie has always rubbed me the wrong way with her hostility...

I’ll find out. After all, she’s always around Zaia... her being in on the notes and the threats.... there’s a possibility...

I know when her son was kidnapped; she said she was threatened to back off or something would happen to Zaia, but what if it was all just part of her master plan?

I look at Zaia. I can't share those thoughts with her, it would only upset her more. "We're going to figure this out," I say quietly.

She nods.

"Yeah... I guess we will... So, you should go to your room now." She says, sitting up straight.

I smirk, glancing at the outline of her nipples against the satin fabric of her top. "Or I could help you relax a little? I could put these fingers to use?" I suggest with a smirk as I lean back,

Instantly her cheeks flush and her gaze dips to my abs and the front of my pants and I can't help but feel a little cocky. Oh, I have such a pull on her...

"Can you ever not be shameless!" She scolds, smacking my thigh. I cock a brow. "What is going on in that mind of yours, Little Fox... I was thinking about a massage, nothing more." I count making her eyes widen.

I might have meant both. "I'm sure you did!" she scoffs in disbelief, crossing her arms. Leaning forward, I grip the back of her neck and tug her closer.

"Oh, I'm being completely honest.... I mean, if I were to offer to pleasure you ...I would suggest using my tongue, not my fingers." I whisper, looking into her eyes.

She holds my gaze, her eyes dipping to my lips. The sound of her thumping heart is music to my ears.

I want to kiss her, to ravish her, to rip apart all these barriers between us and reassure her that she'll always have me.

Our lips are inches apart and I'm about to yank her closer when she sighs and gently pushes me away. "Stop teasing... you need to rest Sebastian," she whispers.

I look at her, masking my concern and yank her close. Her head hits my chest making her yelp, but I turn her, so her back is to me, ignoring the agonising pain in my body.

“And so do you... there’s a lot we need to do, Zaia, and for that, we need you at your best too.” I say, brushing her gorgeous red locks over her shoulder and placing my hands on her shoulders. I begin massaging her.

She tenses, but I don’t stop massaging the back of her neck and her shoulders. She moans softly, rolling her head as if wanting to get the kinks out.

“You’re so tense,” I murmur, trying not to pay attention to how good her skin feels beneath my fingers, or the soft sighs that are escaping her.

“I’m tired,” she replies softly, sighing as she tilts her head. I bite back the urge to kiss her, knowing she’ll probably push me away ...but I have another idea...

My eyes flash as I softly run my knuckles down her arm. “Do you have any oil?” I whisper huskily into her ear. Her eyes flutter shut, and she nods after a moment.

“Mm... the top drawer...” she murmurs. I glance around the room, spotting her chest drawer and get off the bed before she snaps out of her relaxed state.

I open the drawer, grabbing the bottle of oil before returning to the bed. I pull back the duvet, ignoring the ripple of pain that goes through me and fold it at the end of the bed before I get onto it.

“Lie down,” I command. Her eyes widen slightly as she looks up at me.” Or I’ll have to force you to lie down,” I add huskily.

Her heart skips a beat as she gives me a little tantalising smile and drops back onto the bed. Her eyes lock with mine before she rolls onto her stomach, wriggling a little as she gets comfortable with a pillow under her head.

My gaze dips to her ass that’s not fully covered by her tiny dress, I feel myself throb as I straddle her legs so it’s easier to reach over.

This is about her... I open the oil bottle, pouring a little onto my hands before I begin massaging her shoulders and neck, rubbing my thumbs in circular motions, targeting those knots.

“Oh, that’s it...” she moans, making me throb in my pants. I keep working on her back, inching closer to her dress... I pour a little oil over my hand sitting back before I begin massaging her left foot.

She lets out a little whimper as I continue working on her leg all the way up to her thigh.

Oh, fuck yes...

She feels so damn good... the moment I’m closer to her ass I stop and switch to the other leg, running my fingers up her leg, massaging and kneading her smooth, sexy skin.

This time I target her inner thigh, making her tense a little... I smirk in satisfaction as I pour a little oil over her thighs, making her breath hitch.

“Do you feel good, Foxie?” I purr huskily.

I can’t see her face, but I’m certain she’s blushing.

“Mhmm... you’re good...” she murmurs in contentment.

Smirking, I grab her thighs as I rub the oil I spilt in, rubbing her inner thighs sensually, my fingers so close to her hot core...

It takes all my self-restraint to pull back and run my hands down her thighs before I move on to her arms.

Touching her and massaging her is a fucking turn-on... feeling her skin beneath my finger is so perfect...

“You can stop...” she murmurs, and I smirk. Of course, she’d say that... I can smell her intoxicating arousal and the urge to eat her out is getting the better of me. “I’m not done...” I whisper, my lips brushing her ear. I run my hands down her arms before I lean over her.

“Arms up...” I whisper seductively in her ear. She shivers in reply and obeys, allowing me to run my oiled fingers down and under her arm.

A moan escapes her, as my hands run down the side of her breasts and that's when I decide to push it a little... I slip my hands under her gown, grabbing her boobs in my oiled hands...

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ZAIA. Oh fuck! Pleasure erupts through me when he grabs my breasts massaging them sensually. My pussy clenches with need. Oh, he's always been so good with his hands... but his massages... his touch... so damn good...

I've missed this...

I gasp when he kneads my breasts, his rough fingertips brushing my hardened nipples and I arch my back, jolt after jolt of pleasure rushing through me. I can feel his hard shaft pressing against my ass, the fabric of our clothes a barrier I don't want between us. I want him inside of me now...

He's so good at this. "Let's get rid of this gown..." He purrs huskily in my ear.

Yes, please. I nod, my cheeks flushed as I tilt my head to the right, teasing him with access to my neck. As expected, he leans in, inhaling deeply, but he doesn't kiss me.

His hands slip down over my waist and hips before he bunches up my dress and with one deft move has it off over my head, tossing it onto the floor.

I'm in nothing but my lace panties. For a moment, I feel self-conscious, sensing his burning gaze upon me. I press my thighs together, closing my eyes as his hands brush down my waist. He massages me sensually, his knees on either side of my thighs...

I want his cock against me, or even better, in me. Oh, fuck... but he's teasing me as he moves lower, pouring oil onto my ass. I bite back a moan, my pussy clenching as he begins kneading and massaging my ass.

His fingers skim under the fabric of my panties and I'm unable to hold back the whimper of pleasure when his finger slips between my ass cheeks.

"Mm..." I whimper. His hands slide around my hips, massaging them sensually and sending rippling jolts of pleasure to my core.

His fingers brush along my public bone, but just when I think he'll go lower, he pulls back.

Tease! But if he wants me to ask him for more, I won't. "You're slacking," I murmur, crossing my arms under my head and re-adjusting my position as I rest my head on my arms.

He chuckles before he slips his hands out from beneath the flimsy fabric and grabs my hips; he flips me over onto my back, making my breasts bounce and a sizzle of pleasure rushes through me.

My eyes widen, my heart thundering as I look up at him. I'm lying here with my breasts on show, and he's practically eye fucking me, something he makes no effort to hide.

"Fuck... they're so damn beautiful- you're fucking beautiful," he murmurs as he leans down and cups my breasts.

Are they? My body changed slightly after the twins, my hips remained wider and my breasts larger. But the way he's looking at me now is with such intense admiration and hunger that any self-doubt I have disappears.

The other night we were so consumed in one another there was no time to simply admire the other's body properly.

I watch him massaging my breasts, enjoying the view before me too as my own gaze runs over him. He's healing well, but some of the injuries look like my shoulder wound, not as bad but possibly still hurting inside. Is he ok? I know he's probably in pain...

"You should stop... your body must be hurting," I murmur, reaching over. I run my hand down his arm, his eyes flash silver and I bite my lip as I rest my hand back near my head.

"I'm perfectly fine," He replies, shooting me an orgasm-inducing smirk. He's so sexy... I won't deny that I feel incredibly lucky knowing his attention is just on me....

His muscles flex as his hands run down my waist and hips to my thighs, making me arch my back in response.

I watch him through hooded lids as he pours a little more oil over my breasts and stomach before he massages it in sensually...

I'm so turned on right now... yet at the same time I feel so content and relaxed His cock is hard in his pants right now and simply looking at him makes me want to almost give in and ask him to fuck me...

"Relax..." He purrs as he finally touches my aching core. A moan leaves my lips and I part my legs slightly, his fingers brush up between my lips rubbing my clit. Pleasure rips through me as he massages and teases my pussy in the same way he did the rest of my body. "That's it... relax and don't hold back."

He murmurs as I whimper in pleasure. I'm lost in the waves of ecstasy, and I no longer care if I'm the one giving in as he plays with me, rewarded with my moans of pleasure.

I gasp when his fingers slip inside of me, thrusting in and out. Delicious intense pleasure rushes through me as he curls his fingers inside of me, hitting my G-spot every time.

He moves his other hand down, pushing my thigh up and against the bed and I spread my legs further, shamelessly baring my pussy even more to him.

"That's it, spread these legs for me," he whispers huskily, approval clear in his gorgeous eyes. A cool wave of air brushes over my pussy as he pushes aside my panties completely. Satisfaction and approval flash across his face.

Oh fuck...

I moan as I begin grinding my body against his hand. "Good girl, show me how much you're enjoying this..." His voice is low, deep, and seductive...

Suddenly my eyes fly open when he goes down on me and I feel his tongue swirl along my clit, sending my body into overdrive.

My eyes roll backwards, as one hand twists into his hair, the other clenched beside me as he plays my body like a fiddle, knowing exactly what makes me go wild.

I bite my lip to stop from crying out as the pleasure intensifies. He's so damn good...

Applying just the right amount of pressure and speed as he continues. “Fuck Bastien, that’s it. Oh, I feel so good.” I moan. His tongue flicks my clit, his fingers slamming into me and I’m teetering on the edge, the pressure heightening.

“Do you like that?” I whisper when I hear him groan in pleasure. “Fuck yes... you taste divine Little Fox, and this pussy belongs to me.” He murmurs before he returns to pleasuring me with his tongue.

I can’t reply, the intense pleasure rendering me That’s it! Oh fuck!

He groans in pleasure as my juices squirt from me and I automatically try to wriggle free, but he only growls, yanking me down again as he slams his fingers harder into me and my cheeks burn knowing my juices are all over him.

So close! I’m so- fuck!

White-hot euphoria explodes inside making my vision darken and white dots appear in my vision as my body arches and I let out a groan of satisfaction.

My body slumps back onto the bed as I shudder from the waves of pleasure as another wave rolls through me. I gasp as I lay there, trembling, as I slowly come down from my high. That orgasm was... mind-blowing...

I shiver once more, my pussy throbbing as he slips his fingers out of me. He runs his tongue along my sore pussy, licking up my juices.

“I’ve missed how good you fucking taste.” He murmurs as eats my pu\$sy for a few minutes.

I lay there, my pussy throbbing, my legs spread, allowing him to eat me out to his satisfaction,

I’m ready for him to enter me, but instead, he plants a soft last kiss on my pussy before he gets off the bed. The rustle of my duvet makes me open my eyes and look at him with confusion.

I’m too exhausted to get up, but what is happening?

“Bastien...”

“Sleep...” He murmurs, as he comes over and kisses my forehead softly. My heart pounds as I realise, he has only pleased me and doesn't seem to be expecting anything in return... What about him?

I can see his visible hard-on. When he adjusts the pillow beneath my head and tugs the blanket around my shoulders, I feel sleep overcoming me.

“Bastien...” I murmur, inhaling his scent as he steps back. I'm so tired....

“Hush Little Fox. Sleep.”

I want to argue but... I feel so comfortable. “Goodnight Beautiful.” He murmurs. I feel his fingers ghost through my hair before he steps away, and the light is switched off.

“Mm... Night...” I murmur before I hear the door open and shut. As I drift off to sleep, the one thing that I remember is the intense pleasure he spoiled me with, and I realise he indeed managed to ease my troubled mind....

Goddess, I love you, cocky annoyingness and all... I love you... Bastien...

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66. A Belief

ZAIA. It's noon the following day and I haven't seen Sebastian since last night. Every time I think of him, I end up all jittery again and I need to focus, not be lost on cloud nine!

I don't know where we stand or what exactly we are right now, but one thing I will admit is that last night... I submitted and was ready to give him everything.

I don't want to fight him anymore... it wasn't about him winning points with me last night... Last night he took care of me; he spoiled me and then tucked me in to sleep before leaving. Sure, I know he enjoyed it too, but he didn't get the release that I did.

Last night was all about me and although I know he didn't do it so I owe him, I would happily return the favour. I mean, I want to.

I flip through the papers on the desk in front of me before I look across at Gaspard. “Everyone, and I mean from every single guard, I want the

statements on video. Here.” I hold out a small box that contains a camera that will be discreet once hooked up.

“Alpha... are you concerned about the Luna’s integrity?” he asks, taking it from me. “Forgive me if I’m overstepping.”

I shake my head. I’m not about to share my thoughts, but I also need him to feel like I can trust him. I want to trust him, but I also need to be careful.

“After what we learned from the guards, I’m just concerned if this is how she treats our people, because then it’s a problem. No one should feel threatened by their leaders. That is not what a pack is about,” I reply, brushing my fingers through my hair. I’ve left it open but I’m regretting it now. I have run my hands through it countless times today.

He nods slowly. “I understand. Don’t worry, I will begin on my rounds, starting immediately. I will get you the answers, Alpha.” He lowers his head to me, and I smile slightly.

“Thank you,” I reply, scanning the list of guards who have already supplied a written statement—the ones from yesterday. There’s nothing that jumps off of the page. It just seems she demanded absolute obedience. “I have a suggestion, Alpha... if you wish to hear it,” Gaspard says hesitantly.

I look up, raising an eyebrow. “What is it?” “I think... I think you need to educate the people on the Blood Born, to let them know of your importance and the reminder of what you are and what you represent.” He says solemnly.

I nod slowly, and a flicker of unease rushes through me. I didn’t mention the Blood Born openly to him. I mean, aside from my get up....

So, he knows of the Blood Born....

Last night he mentioned his family was from France, and a little about respect, but he didn’t mention this. Was it a slip-up? Or does he actually know about the Blood Born and have nothing to hide?

“I think you’re right. People need to know. It’s a shame it took me many years to learn about who I am and what I am on this earth for... I wish I knew sooner... it’s nice to come across someone who knows about us.” I say, smiling smoothly, hoping that my reaction shows I am completely comfortable with it. His eyes meet mine, and he swallows.

So, he slipped up... I keep my face passive, acting completely relaxed as I continue to flip through the file. "I only have your best interest at heart, Alpha. I assure you that... I- I learned of the Blood Borns from my father."

"I see, and is your father part of this pack?" I ask, glancing up. He looks down. "I'm afraid he passed long ago," he answers quietly.

"Oh... I'm sorry about that." I reply. "What else do you know about the Blood Born? I wish I knew more. I feel like a failure."

"I don't know much, Alpha, but I believe you will deliver judgement to those who have lost faith in our goddess." He says. Judgement... it sounds almost ominous

"Yes. I will... Oh, and what about the rogues? Have you looked into it?" I ask quietly. I'm unable to shake off his words, feeling extremely uneasy.

"I have already gotten the ball moving, Alpha. We will track down their locations and report back to you with our findings."

I smile politely and nod. "Thank you, Gaspard." He reciprocates the smile and lowers his head respectfully. "I won't disappoint you, Alpha."

"I know."

He stands up, bowing his head once more before he leaves the office and I sit back. His behaviour was... strange. But perhaps by mentioning the Blood Born as he suggested would weed out those who know about it if I show them why I'm here.

If only there was something to show I believe in their cause. It's clear they are clever... assuming that they are the ones behind these attacks.

Gaspard obviously had the same mentality as me, where he has faith in Selene and respect for those who channel their inner wolf. But is he more of a Sable or a Sublime believer? I want to know what others-

I sit forward suddenly, an idea coming to me, and my heart skips a beat. Fuck! This is it! To weed them out. What if I pretend to have the same mentality as them?

Even if that means acting a little extreme... forcing those who believe in the Sable Triquetra to think I am on their side! My heart thuds as I stand up quickly and rush to the office door.

“Gaspard!” I shout, seeing him round the corner. He stops and looks back.

“Alpha?” “There’s something else I want to ask,” I say quietly. He nods slowly and I smooth my hair back. What if he knows more. “Of course.” He walks back over to me, and I smile.

“I have to go with Alpha Sebastian to the Dark Hollow Falls Pack as we are together again... however, what you said about the Blood Born really hit something inside. I want the people to know the meaning behind us. Do you know anyone else who is as passionate about our goddess and her will as we are? Those who could back me and even teach me the right way?” I ask smoothly. I hope I don’t sound like a freak...

He smiles and seems to mull over what I said. “I can find out, but if you are to leave, then perhaps you can tell them prior to leaving?” He suggests solemnly. “Yes, I like that idea. I think I will.” I say. “I can’t wait. Thank you for listening, Alpha.”

I smile before he lowers his head and walks off and I turn back to my office, thinking of a plan. Tonight, under the moon... in the forest we will hold a gathering...

This time... I don’t plan to tell anyone my idea, because right now I can’t trust even those around me. The secrets or the lies...

Well, I guess it’s time to get the gathering put into place... a request to all werewolves who can come to the forest when the moon is shining in the Sky.

No manners and reputation will be important, save the ranks of us- as werewolves. I return early after sending out the request. Stepping inside, silence greets me, and I look around the hall. There’s not even a sound from the children...

“Hello?” I call down the hallway.”

Mom?” No one, The guards are outside. Where is everyone? “Sebastian!” I call. The sound of footsteps makes me turn and I see a nurse step out of

Valerie's room. "Ma'am, the children have gone with Alpha Sebastian and your father. No one is home."

"Oh? Where?" "I do not know, I'm sorry." She says politely. I nod slowly. "And Jai? And Mom?" I ask. "I'm not sure about Mr O'Dell, but Ms Walton said she had a few errands to run since you will be leaving tomorrow."

Hmm, I did tell her that in the morning But why are Dad and Sebastian together? I head to Valerie's room. It's strange for Jai and Mom both not to be here. Someone is always with her.

The nurse steps back in as she continues with her checks. "Who left first, Mom or Jai?" I ask. "Mr O'Dell." She responds as she takes Valerie's blood pressure. I fall silent, letting her do her work.

After taking her reading down on the chart, she turns Valerie onto her side. "She's getting better." She tells me proudly and I smile, happy to hear that.

"Excuse me. She leaves the room, leaving me along with Valerie. I stand up, my smile fading as I circle the bed. I was so confident that the full moon would heal her, but since then there's not been any progress or activity.

I place my hand on her head, brushing my fingers through her hair. Wake up, Valerie... Please wake up. I stare down at her, wishing she'd wake up. Come on...

Sebastian heals fast... because he's in touch with his wolf... I wish she was too. I sit down on the edge of the bed, taking her hand in mine, my other hand still resting on her head.

"If you can hear me, Valerie, wake up.. Call upon your wolf. She is a part of you. She can and will help you heal. Come on, Valerie... fight this slumber, wake up." I whisper urgently.

Come on! My own eyes are blazing orange, and I can feel my aura almost physically around me, my frustration growing. I want her to get better!

The beeping quickens and I glance up at the machine, seeing her brain activity pick up. My heart skips a beat as I look down at her, frowning deeply as my heart races.

She can do it! “Valerie. Wake up.” My aura surges, my voice deeper and stronger. “Wake up. Now! Fight it!” The machine begins beeping faster, as her eyes twitch and her heart pounds. ”

Wake up. Valerie, you can do it. Channel your wolf! She is within you! Ready to break free if you let her! She is the power you need to break free from this slumber! Rise!”

The door flies open.

“Ma’am please!” “Fight it, Valerie, wake up!” I shout, ignoring the commotion around me. They’re all trying to get close, but I don’t care as I hold on to Valerie, wishing I can give her my strength.

“In the name of Selene, wake up!” My own heart is raging, the machine’s beep becoming an incessant ringing in my ears. Her eyes fly open, gasping as she scans the room before her eyes find me, her heart thundering violently. “Valerie...” I whisper.

She grabs my hand weakly, yet with clear panic as she opens her mouth. Nothing comes out and a nurse instantly runs to grab water.

I take it from her, helping pour a small amount into her mouth. She clears her throat weakly. “Run. Run. He’s coming... Run.” She whispers hoarsely, her words choked and raspy as her nails dig into my hand. 2

She’s terrified, and I can see that clearly in her eyes. “Hush, you’re ok, you’re safe. It’s going to be OK,” I whisper, wrapping my arms around her, my heart hammering as I hold her close.

She’s awake. Valerie has woken up! I can’t help but smile, feeling so relieved.

Thank Selene!

“No... no. no. no.” Her breathing is becoming rapid and uneven. “She needs to rest. “She’s having a panic attack!” The nurses begin panicking, but Valerie refuses to let go of me. “Let me calm her!” I shout as I caress her back, motioning them all to move back and give us space.

“Calm down, Val... I’m here... no one can hurt you.” I promise softly. “No, listen to me, run, he’s going to kill us! He’ll kill us!”

“Who?” I whisper, cupping her face. She’s scaring me. Is that night replaying in her mind? She opens her mouth when the sound of footsteps approaching only makes her turn in fear. Mom and Jai enter the room, both of them wide-eyed as they take in the scene before them.

“Val...” Jai says as he stops at the door, his heart pounding as he stares at her as if he can’t believe his eyes. She looks back at him, almost as if she’s struggling to recognise him.

“Is she ok?” he whispers; his eyes shine with emotions but it’s obvious he’s trying to control them. I nod, as she looks between us and scans the room.

“She was just about to say something important,” I say, smiling down at her. “What is it, Valerie?” Mom asks with concern as she walks over.

“Wait, do you know who attacked you?” Jai asks as he drops to his knees beside the bed, almost reaching for her, but she moves away. A flash of hurt crosses his eyes as she looks between the three of us and, to my surprise, she forces a smile. Her eyes meet mine, her heart still racing as she speaks once again, her smile faltering.

“I don’t...I don’t remember anything.”

Posted by **NovelHeart**, ? Views, Released on August 19, 2023

67. A Hidden Reason

SEBASTIAN. I look across at Hugh as we sit silently opposite one another in a private room at a local teahouse. We brought the twins along, as Zaia wasn’t around. I didn’t want to leave them.

They’re currently happily eating cake as I wait for Hugh to state the reason he invited me. I don’t think he was expecting me to bring the children along.

I’m seeing him in a different light from what I know from last night, but I don’t let on I know anything. After all, Zaia told me that in confidence.

“Daddy look, cake! Do you want some?” Sia asks, holding up a spoonful for me. I bend down, accept it and give her a smile. “Thank you, Princess,” I say, ruffling her hair as I swallow the mouthful of sweetness.

It's too sweet. I don't know how she can eat something so sweet but as long as she's enjoying it, that's the main thing. Hugh clears his throat and I glance back at him.

"So..." he begins "You wanted to talk to me," I state. He nods. "I did, then you were adamant about bringing the children..."

I cock a brow. "We can have a cordial meeting with them right here," I say arrogantly, switching to French. He observes me before he sighs. "Well, I will cut to the chase then." He begins as he picks up his cup. "Please do."

"With everything that has been happening, I am worried about Zaia." He begins in fluent French. Clearly not wanting to discuss this in front of the kids. "I'm worried about her too," I reply in French.

"I've never liked you nor your family and they have never been fond of me, but I won't deny that I know if something is to happen to me, you are the one person I know who I can entrust her to." He says. Why is he talking like that?

"I don't think Zaia will appreciate you talking like this... however, you can rest assured that despite the differences between our families that she will be my utmost priority," I reply. "And since we are on the topic, what exactly is the issue between your family and mine, anyway?"

"That is a story for another day... make sure nothing happens to her, Sebastian, or my grandchildren. I have protected them to the best of my capability for so many years. I expect you to continue doing so." He sighs heavily.

"And I presume this is because you know she will return with me," I say, sitting back. "Yes, although I have no idea what she sees in you," he retorts.

"However, I cannot make her decision for her."

"I will take care of her. I have plans in place, right down to her location, and her guards will be your trusted ones from this pack." I say quietly.

He frowns, but nods. "I don't know how many I can truly trust... and with the recent mistakes made and the change, even I am uncertain if the new team can be fully capable of protecting her." It is a risk.

“I will handle it.” We fall silent again and I drink my tea watching him, he wants to say more. “So, will you spit it out? I never knew Hugh Toussaint was a nervous kind of person.” I mock.

He frowns at me before glaring down at his cup. “I’m not... but as you might know, I have made Zaia my heir and-” “Of course, I know. We don’t really hide anything from one another.” I reply. That only earns me another frown.

“I’m sure you do. That’s why you divorced her.” He counters sarcastically. I almost smirk, “I see that’s where Zaia gets her sass from.” He’s about to cut in when I gesture, “Do continue.” He puts his cup down and stares at it, lost deep in thought.

“As my heir... it means after my death she will be the alpha... if... if the time comes where you both think that perhaps the packs should be combined ... then make sure you first ask your father if he will allow that... and if you do, make sure my pack is remembered for who they truly are and if he says no then do not force it. Do not tarnish my pack’s name when you have already taken my most treasured possessions.”

He strokes Zion’s hair, and for a moment, he reminds me of a tired old man. “What does that even mean?” I ask sharply. He looks back at me and tilts his head. ”

It is not important.” I frown but say nothing for a moment. It is important, but he clearly doesn’t want to discuss it.

“So, you called me here to tell me that we should only combine the packs if it’s allowed by my father? Usually, an alpha would be devastated to find out there is a possibility of their pack merging with a rival pack.” I remark What is his angle?

“Don’t you think we’ve been cryptic enough? Secrets and lies are what have gotten us to where we are. Just tell me, what is the issue between you and my family and their issue with you? Neither you nor Melanie have ever taken a liking to me, however, despite their blatant dislike for you, my family have loved Zaia.” I say sharply. “So, what am I missing?”

He frowns. “There are things that I cannot speak of. An oath is an oath. I am not the one who can tell you of the past.” I bite back a retort, trying to control my irritation. “Really? You won’t even say what your issue with me is?”

“I am trying to like you and failing. I am still baffled by what Zaia sees in you. Don’t try my patience.” He replies coldly. I raise my eyebrows.

“I could list a couple of things, but I’ll keep it clean. She just has better eyes than you.” I reply smugly. He massages his temples as if I’ve given him a headache. If only he realises he’s messing with my head too.

“You called me here to give me a cryptic message... rethink it. I will let Zaia know of this conversation, but I do hope that you find a way to somehow tell us exactly what the issue between our two packs is. I just hope that if something does happen to you, we are not left searching for answers that we cannot find!” Our eyes meet, both of us glaring at the other before he balls his fist.

“There is... an ancient... I can’t believe I’m saying this, but magic. If I tell you, that will be the end for me. I cannot say or I would!” He snaps, making the kids who were imitating us speaking French look up in alarm.

He sighs and gives them a small smile and I frown. Didn’t Zaia say her Mom couldn’t tell us more about the mystery surrounding her brother as well? Are they talking about the same thing and if so... does that mean my family might know something?

Guess I’ll find out tomorrow when we return. “So then, do you believe? I mean, in the goddess, in what we are and the power of the moon?”

“Somewhat... I know that there is so much more to what we are than what we have become.” “So, I presume the fact that I like to shift isn’t what worries you.”

“No. I will always see you as an animal whether you shift to wolf form or not,” he retorts. I cock a brow before glancing at the kids, who are mumbling gibberish as they continue with their ‘French’ and I smile. I hope they can at least have a good life.

“Well, despite our differences, I’ll take care of her and the children. You have my word... I know that you don’t like me, but I want you to know that I have, and always will love Zaia. Always.”

He watches me before he nods slowly. “I hope so.”

“I will.” I reaffirm when my phone rings and I take it out.

Jai...

"Hello?" I answer it. "She's awake! Fuck Sebastian, she's awake!"

Valerie. I look across at Hugh, who has heard. "Let's get back there. Tell them she is not to be left alone." Hugh says, standing up quickly. "Jai, stay with her. Is Zaia there?"

"Yeah, Val's not letting go of her." He says and there's a glimmer of wistfulness in his voice. As we get up and I scoop Sia into my arms. I'm healing well. Soon I'll be back to full strength.

"Alright, both of you stay with her, we are on our way back," I say to Jai just as I hold my hand out to Zion, but at the same time so does Hugh.

Zion looks between us as a grin crosses his lips before I retract mine and Hugh smiles. As much as they're mine, he has taken care of them, and they are his grandchildren. An hour has passed since we returned, but Valerie has been in an extremely strange state since she woke up.

Even when I talked to her, she refused to answer, and she has done nothing but cling to Zaia. Zaia has made us leave the room so she can talk to her alone, but I can hear her begging Zaia to take her away from here. Her words make me feel uneasy as they ring in my head.

'Get the children! Get your children, we must go far, far away! Don't trust them, don't trust anyone!' The fear in her voice is not something that can be faked. "She needs rest," Melanie says as she sits there carrying Sia.

Hugh is frowning but doesn't reply and Jai is sitting there tapping his foot. He's worried and restless but he's trying to hold himself together. I know he's hurt because whenever he tried to talk to her or go near her, she got worked up. There has to be a reason behind it...

We can't hear anything from out here, and it's just a waiting game hoping that she has something to tell Zaia regarding why she's so worried. It feels like hours, although it's a mere twenty-minutes waiting for Zaia to come out.

The silence in the hall is loud, and after another five minutes, Zaia steps out of the room. Zion rushes to her and hugs her, and she smiles down at him as she hugs him back, but it's clear from the look in her eyes that she's troubled.

Jai stands up, looking at her expectantly. "What did she say?" Hugh asks, talking for the first time since we returned. She looks down and shakes her head. "

She's not saying. She doesn't remember anything. I think it's what's causing her panic. Tonight, I have a pack meeting and I want her to be there too... she isn't safe to be alone, she's very disturbed." She sighs.

"Don't worry, we'll bring her and make sure she's happy with whoever is around her. "Thank you." She says quietly. "So, she didn't say anything? Did she see her attacker?" Melanie asks, concern on her face.

"Nothing," Zaia answers. Before anyone can say anything more, a member of staff comes down the hall. "Ma'am, this was delivered for you." She says to Zaia.

Oh shit. That's the envelope I had sorted for her regarding Melanie. With everything going on, I had forgotten to even give her a heads-up. She opens it distractedly as everyone watches her. Fuck, how do I tell her?

It's too late. As she pulls the card out, reading it, her heart races as her gaze snaps to my mine before she stares down at the card once more. "Zaia, are you alright?" Melanie asks.

Well, at least her reaction is real. Zaia stares down at the card, reading it all as Hugh crosses the room, making Zaia step back and hide it behind her back. "This... this is for my eyes only..." she murmurs, staring at her mother. "Mother... can we have a word alone? Now?"

Melanie looks confused as she stares between us before she nods and stands up. Zaia walks down the hall to the lounge and Melanie follows. I hope Zaia gets the answers she desires...

And something tells me that tonight will be intense...

Posted by **NovelHeart**, ? Views, Released on August 20, 2023

68. A Confrontation

ZAIA. The moment of truth is finally here. The time to confront Mom about this. Sebastian had it sent over faster than I was expecting and as Mom and I enter the kitchen, I feel my stomach flip nervously. My heart is pounding and

the fear of what might actually turn out to be the truth is making my heart clamour with anxiousness.

What if it's true? I was in denial. The fear inside of me is proof that I was not expecting this. I look around the large kitchen, where I have lived for the last few years. A home that we made together...

I still remember the moments Mom and I shared here over hot drinks. She has been there for me through all my worries and is always someone I could lean on. The one who has looked after my children when I have been busy.

"Zaia, why are you so pale?" Mom asks me, concerned, as she goes over to the sink and fills a glass of water from the tap. The sound of the water seems to echo loudly in the silence of the large kitchen. I look down at the paper. Sebastian had kept it to what I had asked him to include, but now that it's in my hand...

"I'm going to ask you something, Mom and I want the truth. Take an oath upon me that you will tell the truth and only the truth." My voice is shaky, and I observe her carefully as I await her answer. She looks concerned, worried, and even uneasy...

"I swear upon your life, Zaia. I will speak only the truth. Honey, what is it?" She asks, taking a gulp of the water as she approaches me. How do I ask her?

How do I accept the answer if it turns out to be true? This could change things between us forever if it is the truth.

"According to this... You were having an affair with someone by the name of Adam Toussaint, whilst you were with father. Is it true?" I ask. My heart is pounding incessantly as I stare at her.

Her face turns ashen, her hand flying to her chest as she steps back as if seeing a ghost. The moment she begins to tremble, her hands clamping over her mouth, I get my answer. It's true.

How?

Why?

“You can’t show that to anyone!” Mom whispers as she rushes over and snatches it from my limp fingers.

My mind is spinning, and I feel sick, but I simply stare at her. Her face turns even more pale as she stares at the message, and I look down at the card as well.

SECRETS ARE NEVER A SECRET. SOMEONE ALWAYS KNOWS. YOUR MOTHER WHOM YOU ADMIRE IS NOT WHO YOU THINK SHE IS.

HAVING AN AFFAIR WITH HER

MATE’S BROTHER IS A SIN AFTER ALL. WE ALL KNOW HUGH TOUSSAINT IS NO SAINT, GET IT?

Sebastian’s humour.

PERHAPS MY NEXT MESSAGE SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO HUGH TOUSSAINT HIMSELF, HE GOT A TASTE OF HIS BROTHER ADAM TOUSSAINT’S POSITION OF ALPHA AND ADAM GOT A TASTE OF HIS MATE.

IT’S FAIR, ISN’T IT?

HOW WILL HE FEEL WHEN HE REALISES THAT HIS MATE AND BROTHER BETRAYED HIM?

DO NOT RETURN TO THE DARK HOLLOW FALLS PACK OR I WILL MAKE THIS PUBLIC.

That last sentence was something I had added to see how terrified Mom would be if this came out. “Why can’t I show it to anyone? It’s not true, is it?” I ask quietly. Her heart hammers as she tries to rip it and I snatch it from her.

“Give it to me!” she screams, shocking me. “Mom!” I shout. My eyes flash as I step back, holding it away from her. Enough! What is wrong with you?”

Her eyes dart to the door, and she runs her hand through her hair frantically. I have never seen her so disturbed.

“Zaia... Zaia, listen to me. No one can know.” She warns me in a hushed whisper, grabbing my arm. “Your father also cheated on me! It’s no big deal, I was hurt-”

“Were you?! Two wrongs don’t make a right! Tell me, Mother, were you even hurt? Did you really cheat on Dad after you found out? Because that makes no sense! Dad left you when he told you about Annette, not before that! This message states you cheated on him when you were together!”

My own voice is shrill as Mom glances towards the windows, as if scared someone might hear. “You yourself told me how he told you his mistress is pregnant and he broke up with you right then!”

My entire world which seems to be ridden with cracks is crumbling a little more. Mom cheated on Dad. She has lied to me all my life.

“Z-Zaia, please calm down. Don’t open things of the past! Adam is dead! I don’t know how this person has found out, I need- I need- just don’t tell anyone!” Mom’s jumbled words are erratic as she holds onto me as if for dear life. Desperation clear in her eyes.

“How could you... The hatred you have for Annette... when you yourself are just the same as her?” I whisper, unable to hide my disappointment.

“No! I’m not!” “Then tell me how you are not! Why? Why did you do it? You said you Dad. Did you really fake that too?” loved.

“I loved your father, but Adam was... he had a way, and we were alone so often! Your father was so lost in his work that he didn’t give me the time and attention I needed! Of course, now I know why he was so busy because he had another woman!”

I want to scream and tell her that Dad had never cheated on her! Is this really my mom? “True love means you can be apart for weeks, months or years and you won’t cheat!”

“Stop it... just stop it!” I scream, cutting into her rambling of hatred. I know Dad is innocent, but I won’t tell her that. “You did the same to him as he did you! It doesn’t make it right! You lied to me, Mom! You always pretended to be a victim when you have done nothing but lie to me! How dare you?!” My own voice is trembling. It sounds pitchy to even me, but today I feel like I’ve just lost so much. How can I remain calm?!

“Zaia! It’s in the past. We are not together, stop it!” she hisses, glancing at the door worriedly, her tears streaming down her cheeks. I pull away, and she begins sobbing when I shake my head.

“No. You hated Sebastian and called him a cheat, and so much more, yet YOU are the cheater, not him! How could you even be so rude to him when you yourself have done worse?” I ask, my voice breaking. She stares at me, as if stricken, before she slowly steps back.

“I was young... and stupid-”

“And you should have owned up to it! You have done nothing but fill my ears against Dad when you did the very same!” I shout. “You instilled hatred for Dad into me!”

My heart is thundering far too loudly, and we stare at one another. Neither of us speaks for a moment, our emotions consuming us before she rushes to the kitchen counter and, to my surprise, she grabs a knife.

“If you tell anyone, I will kill myself!” She threatens, holding the knife to her neck. I stare at her, unable to believe this. “Put it down,” I say quietly. I’m so tired....

“No!” “Very well... I won’t tell anyone, but I will be leaving for Dark Hollow Falls pack, and that means it might come out “Then you can’t go!” She cuts me off, her eyes look wild. “I’ll kill myself, Zaia!”

I shake my head slowly, brushing my hair back. “I will, but I know you now and I know that you won’t hurt yourself. You’re too selfish for that.” I whisper, turning my back on her. I close my eyes as silent tears trickle down my cheeks. How could she?

I open the door, about to step out, when Mom calls out to me. “Zaia, please! Please listen to me!” she grabs the back of my top and I look at her. Her eyes are filled with guilt as I slowly remove her hands from me.

“Please, it’s not my fault.” “If you didn’t play the victim... If you admitted your wrongs, I would have forgiven you and accepted you as I did, Dad.” I whisper. “But all my life you made Dad the bad one and even now... you’re pretending to play the victim.”

“Zaia... Adam is dead. Don’t cause more problems.” She whispers. “I regret what happened!”

“No, you regret getting caught,” I say, pushing her hand off me. “Your secret will not leave my lips... but if someone else announces it’ that is not on me,

nor will I allow your wrongs to hold me back. You are free to move to that pack or remain here. I honestly don't care."

"Zaia, please." I brush my tears away as I walk away from her, refusing to answer her. She lied... she kept at it... as if wanting me to hate father... even as the years passed, she'd often bring it up...

Lies...

A little sob escapes me, and I halt, not wanting the others to see me like this. I rush to the stairs instead, ready to go to my room, but I'm only a few steps up when someone grabs my wrist. My heart thuds, recognising the touch and I look down at Sebastian.

His piercing eyes are filled with concern. I turn away as he reaches me and pulls me into his arms. I clutch his shirt, allowing myself to cry into his chest, feeling protected. It hurts so much...

He holds me, caressing my back, and I feel safe. I remain like that for a while, until all my tears have dried, and I have calmed down. And as much as I want to remain in his arms forever, we have things to do...

Taking a deep breath, I move back slightly and look up at him. He frowns as he brushes my tears away, searching my eyes for confirmation of whether it's true or not...

I nod slowly, and he looks down for a second, heaving a heavy sigh, but says nothing on the matter. "It's going to be ok," he says quietly.

Will it be? Because the way I see it, nothing can fix the trust she destroyed between us... things will never be the same...

Ever. But... if the Colosseum of Rome can stand to this very day... Then, something like this cannot break me.

Posted by **NovelHeart**, ? Views, Released on August 20, 2023

69. A Triquetra

SEBASTIAN. If I could take away all her worries I would. Night has fallen and we're in the woods where she had decided to hold this gathering. She's

planning something and although I don't know the details, I'm worried about her.

She's dressed in a white simple dress, and nude-coloured sandals and her hair is open. She's wearing soft make-up and no jewellery but something about her tonight looks extremely alluring and even ethereal. She is a beauty, one that nothing can compare to, and her amethyst eyes are vibrant.

The symbols on her arms from the henna stain have faded, but they are still visible, and she keeps looking at them. I don't miss the fact she's holding the book that contains the little information regarding the Blood Born.

She's going to do something tonight, but when I asked her, she simply said she knows what she's doing and to trust her.

I'm worried she's keeping too much inside. She's been on the brink of breaking down a couple of times but she's pushing through. I'm just going crazy, worried that something will happen soon, and it will be the final nail in the coffin for her and it ends up being too much for her. I don't want her to break down because she's doing far too much.

It's windy tonight, but the moon is glowing through the trees. I like the night, the feel of nature around me, the rustle of the wind through the leaves and the smell of the earth beneath my feet.

This is where I feel most at peace. The perfect night for a run. I look around the trees. I had settled for sweatpants and a t-shirt, but there's clearly many here in suits and formal attire...

The glances I'm getting are filled with curiosity, nervousness, and even fear. It's a little amusement and I bring forward my wolf, letting my eyes glow in the night, and I almost smirk when they step back. Scared of their own kind, pathetic.

"Zaia." That voice makes my amusement vanish and I turn when I see Atticus pull her into his arms for a hug. My eyes blaze once again, and I let my aura surge around me.

His eyes snap up to mine and he smirks, his demeanour turning colder as he slowly moves back. "Alpha Sebastian, it's been a while."

“Alpha Payne.” In the fucking ass. “It sure has.” He smirks and nods as Zaia looks between us, clearly not sure about how things are between us. I am tempted to punch that cocky look off his face, but for her, I decide to let him keep his teeth.

He still has his hand on her shoulder, but I’m satisfied when she moves away. The urge to crush it was extremely appealing. Zaia places her hand on my arm and smiles gently at Atticus.

“Best behaviour, please. The both of you,” she whispers to us both. “We’re not children that we are going to start hitting one another, Zaia.” Atticus smirks. Of course, he’d say that, knowing that I want to break his damn pretty boy face.

“No, but I’m not against a one-on-one match with you, so I can take you to the brink of death, or better, unalive you entirely. I’m totally for that.”

As predicted, it takes Zaia a moment to comprehend what I mean, and her gorgeous amethyst eyes widen.

“Sebastian!” she scolds, appalled, as Atticus chuckles. “Don’t worry too much about him, Zaia, he’s just jealous of our friendship,” he says, leaning closer to her and fucking brushing her hair back. She smiles at him again, but I hide my irritation instead, placing my arm around her shoulders loosely.

“Oh, absolutely not. I mean, clearly, even with all those years together, that is just how far you got. Still in the friend zone.” I taunt him.

Atticus’s smile vanished and I smirk. If that’s how he wants to play, then so be it. “Bastien behave.” Zaia scolds, “This is not the time for macho behaviour.”

I don’t miss the jealousy in his eyes, and I can’t help but smirk. “For you, of course. As long as I’m repaid.” I wink at her. She gives me a look before she pulls away and my gaze dips to her breasts.

She’s beautiful... her smooth, supple cleavage is on display, her breasts begging for some attention, and I’d happily give them all the attention they need...

Hugh clears his throat behind me, and I turn to him smoothly. He is pushing Valerie’s wheelchair. “A little discretion, Alpha Sebastian? Please do have a little shame.”

“I don’t really have any,” I respond as Zaia blushes before she looks at Valerie. Looking at her now, you can tell how thin she has become.

She’s wearing a peach dress, but the time spent immobile in bed means it’ll take time before she can walk again even if she was given physio whilst in a coma. Her body and muscles are far too weak. Zaia crouches before her, cupping her face.

“You look beautiful, Val.” She says softly.

“Thanks... So do you, Zaia.” Valerie replies. She’s been uneasy and has only been comfortable around Zaia but she’s hiding something... I just don’t know what.

I’m certain she knows something, although she says she doesn’t. She just needs a little time, time we don’t have.

“May I have everyone’s attention?” Zaia calls out. The chatter dies down as everyone turns to her. She’s nervous, her heartbeat has quickened, and it makes me wonder exactly what she’s planned. I don’t miss the way one of her guards nods. Is he in on what this is about?

I glance at Jai who also looks confused. He gives me a small shrug before his eyes return to Valerie. She has completely ignored him, and I know he’s trying to keep his crap together.

“Thank you, everyone, for coming tonight on such short notice, as you all know I will be leaving tomorrow for the Dark Hollow Falls pack, but I am still to be the future Alpha of this pack.” Her voice rings in the night sky as she’s awarded with complete silence. “Now I know that everyone is wondering the reason behind tonight’s rendezvous, so I won’t keep you in suspense.”

She looks at Hugh, who is watching her with concern. “Do you know what this is about?” He asks me.

“When we’re alone, we are too busy doing other stuff to talk about such matters.” I can’t help but say, he glares at me, and I smirk. “No, no clue.”

“A long time ago, the Goddess of the moon made her creation, werewolves, men who under the moon would shift into magnificent wolves.” She begins walking, looking at the people who encircle us. She has their attention, but I’m not sure where she’s going with this.

“They manifested, able to shift at will, and soon they travelled across rivers and mountains, settling into their own packs. A race, superior to man, a race blessed with speed, smell, hearing, and the ability to heal faster than any human could possibly wish for. This gift, this blessing to shift, was not appreciated as it should have been! We began to feel ashamed of our true form! The blessing of the goddess!”

Her aura swirls around her, her eyes burning orange, and even I feel it. The people watch her with a mix of fear, awe, and admiration.

“Then what did we do? Over time, we tried to blend with civilisation... we began to settle away from our packs.... We began to dress and behave like common humans. Why? When we are superior? We stopped training our young to be at their best, to protect our packs if the need ever arose and above all! We stopped shifting!” Her voice rings in the air as she turns and points at me.

“Alpha Sebastian King, he is given the title of The Black Beast because he is in touch with his werewolf side! Making him superior to every other werewolf... alpha or not. If you cannot shift, then you cannot manifest the gift bestowed upon us by our goddess, who I’m surprised is still blessing us when we don’t deserve it.”

She takes a breath before continuing.” It’s time everyone remembers where they come from and who we are!” “Or there will be consequences.” The guard says. Zaia glances at him and to my surprise, she nods.

What’s going on? It doesn’t sound like Zaia, she’s... harsher, and her words have ruffled the feathers of a few visiting alphas. I scan the crowd, seeing mixed reactions from them all.

“What is the point of this conversation, Alpha-to-be Zaia?” One of the women asks. Zaia turns to her. “To remind you of where we come from, it is my duty as a Blood Born to call our people back on the path that we should walk. A reminder that as werewolves, we need not try to fit in with the humans so desperately that we forget who we are!”

“The Blood Born?” Someone says. “That’s a myth, that they will walk this earth and end our kind,” someone else whispers. How the fuck did people know this, and I had never heard of it?

“Is it a myth? Then please explain why I am before you, with the mark of the Blood Born upon me!” Zaia says. She moves her dress a little, showing her mark on the side of her sweet, supple boob.

Focus. “As am I...” Atticus says, stepping forward he shows the mark on his ankle and I frown. I don’t like him and so I don’t trust him.

“He-he... he said I am too,” Valerie says, looking around the crowd as if almost fearfully. “I have a mark on my scalp he said.”

Who is she on about? Zaia looks concerned as she walks over to Valerie. “Who?” she whispers gently, but Valerie shakes her head. Hugh, who is standing behind the wheelchair, looks down at her head as Zaia leans over her.

She tries to reach for her hair, but her arm gives up and instead, Zaia begins moving her hair around, trying to find it, before she stops and stares at the back of Valerie’s head.

“It’s there,” she whispers, sounding stunned. Atticus and I both move forward, but Atticus gets there first. The moment he too touches her head, a glowing triangle forms in the air above them, making the crowd gasp in shock.

It illuminates the night sky in a brilliant golden light, all three of their eyes blazing. Atticus eyes burn green, Valerie’s turning grey and Zaia’s blaze orange, as one they turn to the triangle above them, their marks burning vibrantly.

“The Sublime Triquetra is complete.’ An unearthly whispery voice fills the air, making everyone scan the surrounding darkness before many drop to their knees, cowering in fear.

I see the guard look confused as he stares at the Triquetra. I glance at them, seeing Atticus smile; so, the bastard is on this side...

Great. I would have enjoyed finishing him off. I’m yanked from my thoughts when I feel a chill rush through me, and I sense something is behind me.

“The wildcard... look to the moon... forgive me... ‘the voice murmurs. My heart thumps as I spin around. There’s nothing there...

I scan the crowd, but no one else seemed to have heard it.... is it only me who heard that? I'm about to ask the others when pain shoots through me and I feel a stinging jolt electrocute my entire body, bringing me to my knees...

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70. A Warning

ZAIA. "Sebastian!" I scream as I pull away and rush to his side the moment he falls to his knees. He's bent over, a hand on his chest and from the groan that leaves his lips, I know he's in a lot of pain.

I drop to my knees in front of him, my own heart thumping violently as I push him gently back and cup his face." Bastien? Sebastian? Talk to me!" I whisper with urgency. The wind around us is whipping faster and I brush his hair back. He's feeling so hot...

Has he over-exerted himself? He opens his eyes which are blazing the colour of his wolf's and for a moment it's like he's unseeing, as he stares vacantly ahead.

"Bastian?" I whisper. He slowly frowns and looks at me for a second, before he topples forward, his head hitting my shoulder.

"Fuck." He groans. I wrap my arms around him looking around the gathering. Jai rushes over.

"Seb?" He mumbles something incoherent before his body gives way completely, making me land on my behind with a thump.

A blush coats my cheeks when his face buries itself between my breasts, but before I can even move him, Jai pulls him back.

"I got him, Luna." He murmurs as he hoists Sebastian's arm over his shoulder. "Thank you, Jai, take them home." "I will go too." Mom states.

"Fine..." I say. I'm not sure why she's offering. She never really cared for him. She looks at Sebastian before her eyes meet mine, and she turns away.

"Take him to the house," Dad says the kids were safe with security and the housekeeper, but I think I'll be happier when Jai will be there too.

I look back at Atticus and Valerie. Valerie looks confused as she keeps looking at the sky where the symbol had appeared. What was that?

I feel strange too... almost as if I've been jump-started or something. There's more energy rippling through me. The crowd is still staring in shock at the three of us, some in awe and others now look a little suspicious.

"What was that, Alpha Hugh?" someone asks, making the others fall silent. "That was a miracle," Dad replies as he observes the three of us.

Of course, he always entertained me, but to actually believe in such things is not his cup of tea... but we had all seen it. We saw how it had appeared. It was beautiful... magical and mind-blowing.

We all saw the Triquetra symbol appear out of nowhere, no one can deny that. There is no way someone could deny what is right before their eyes. "It's a trick! That's just not possible. Are we being played?" someone says.

I frown slightly, looking over at the person who has spoken. "This is not a play, but the truth," I say. "And what was that voice that said the something was completed? The tri.... something," another asks.

"The Sublime Triquetra." Gaspard says quietly. There goes my plan to weed out those who were leaning more to the Sable... my eyes meet Gaspard's and there's something within him that has changed.

"Yes... it seems I am part of the Sublime Triquetra..." I say hesitantly. "I mean, how did that happen? I had a choice, correct?"

He smiles slightly and lowers his head. "Your heart chose," he replies before he glances into the trees. There's something off about him....

"What exactly do you mean, chose?" Valerie asked. "There are two Triquetras, each one chosen to handle the wrongs of our people in different ways," I explain.

"Meaning, the Sublime, – us, will teach people of our goddess, our roots and aim to reconnect with our wolf spirits. And then, there's the Sable Triquetra? They will destroy us all and leave only a handful of devout believers to rekindle our race. Alpha Zaia could have chosen either of the two paths and she has chosen the path of kindness and love." Atticus says, his voice ringing in the air.

Everyone seems to let the words sink in and everyone seems to be listening. “But there is a problem,” Atticus says, now looking at me before he steps forward so everyone can see him properly.

A problem?

“What is it?” I ask. “Although it is our duty to protect, help and show people the correct path, there are those who will want to destroy us and the chance we are offering. Therefore, we need everyone to stay united, and it would be better if everyone tries to connect with their wolves.”

I frown at Atticus’s words, my heart thundering. “What do you mean?” I ask, how did he miss mentioning this part when he told me?

Sure, I know they are dangerous and want me gone, but now that the Triquetra is complete....

“I’m afraid, now that you have chosen your side, they will try to eliminate us all. They would have seen the symbol... or the news would have gotten back to them.”

Fear rushes through those gathered, and I raise my hand.

“We have not done anything intentionally, and we will work on becoming one with our wolves again. We will remember Selene, her blessing and her gift. Nothing will happen to anyone.” I promise.

A promise I’m not sure holds completely true, will I be able to protect them from everyone? I’m not so sure, but I will try my very best. “But even you yourself, Alpha Zaia have faced near death several times.”

“It’s complicated... but please, rest assured, we are going to figure this out.” I say loudly, “For now you may go home. I wanted everyone to know the truth and the rest... we will handle. I promise!”

There are murmurs flitting through the crowd, and I turn my attention to Atticus. I’m pissed off. He had apparently forgotten to share that little tidbit with me. The whispers of the people reach my ears.

“Even the woman in the wheelchair was attacked... who will be able to protect us?” “The Alpha is going to be leaving too.”

“Allow me to explain,” Atticus says to me. “Later.” I manage to reply. I don’t expand on my retort, absolutely seething as I stare back at him. Absolutely livid.

It’s an hour later, and we are back home as I glare at Atticus. “It was not necessary to tell them!” I growl. “You left that part out when you told me.”

Atticus sighs, massaging his temple. Dad and Valerie are also here, and I’m trying to keep my voice down so the children aren’t disturbed.

“Calm down, Zaia. I told you they would hurt you. I told you they were dangerous. It’s not like I lied to you.” “But you never said that once I pick a side that it will cause war.”

“War is inevitable. People who are believers will want those who have forgotten the goddess, dead.” I sigh heavily. “They aren’t complete, the Sable Triquetra is not complete...” It’s all that is currently giving me hope to continue.

“Not yet.”

“And they cannot be, because I chose my side,” I say. Atticus looks down, clearly conflicted. “They say that when you pick your side, and the Triquetra is formed, then both Triquetras shall be completed. That part has always unnerved me. How can both be completed?”

“Great, now you say that!” I exclaim unhappily. “Maybe I’m just paranoid. Not everything we read or know might be correct.

My mind is thinking the same though. After all, wasn’t I the point needed to complete one or the other? Maybe it is nothing, but one thing I do know is we can’t risk it either.

“Look I’m sorry. Get some rest. We’ll talk properly tomorrow.” Atticus says, patting my arm when he stands up.

I frown, but he’s right. Now that we are part of the same Triquetra, it means I can trust him and we need to work together going forward.

After Atticus bids farewell and takes his leave, I re-enter the lounge where Dad looks lost – deep in thought. “Dad, are you alright?” I ask concerned, he looks so tired. He looks up at me before staring at the floor.

“There’s something Melanie said that comes back to me, remember that day in your room, the day she said the Triquetra is needed to purge the world of our kind who has forgotten our creator...” He’s frowning, deep in thought, as he combs his fingers through his short beard. “And that sounds like which triquetra?”

I frown, wondering what he’s pointing towards. Purge the land...

“The Sable Triquetra.” I reply, wondering where he’s going with this. Valerie is listening, even if she missed a lot, she’s sharp and I can tell she’s paying attention and that is something we can use. Her wit.

“Exactly, then she carried on to say, Repercussion, Retribution and Redemption, whereas the Sable Triquetra includes Rebirth and Revenge. I will not be speaking to her again as she can’t tolerate me... but I would advise you to keep an eye on her. You are going to the Dark Hollow Falls Pack. I can’t be there with you... so, please. Take care of yourself, for me and everyone else.”

My heart aches at those words. I will miss him, but I simply nod. Mom has been giving him and me a cold shoulder ever since earlier....

My face remains calm and emotionless; not wanting to worry Dad, but it’s the opposite of what I am feeling inside.

Unease is settling into my stomach and it’s growing. “So you think she knows more than she’s letting on?” I ask.

But even as I say the words, it’s obvious that the possibility of that being true is extremely high. After all, she has lied far too many times already... and although it is something I don’t even want to think is a possibility, I have to face the facts. But if mom does know about it all, her living amongst us could be....

Extremely dangerous.