

THE REJECTED WEREWOLF PRINCESS

The Rejected Werewolf Princess Chapter 251



CAMILLA'S P.O.V

I left Ryker with Juan and decided to check up on Christine. I knew they would be fine together. I wasn't sure how long they had been running but from the ease in their movements, it seemed like it had been a while. They were going to be fine together so I pushed them out of my mind and focused on my cousin.

I wasn't sure how I knew, I just knew Christine wouldn't be in the physician's quarters anymore and sure enough, she was in her room when I walked in. She was seated up in bed staring at the wall and she didn't even blink when I took the spot next to her. I could only imagine the millions of questions running through her mind at the moment and the worst part was I wasn't sure if I could explain them all to her.

I wasn't sure if she would want me to hold her or not, she had never truly been big on physical contact and although she was getting better with Juan, I still didn't want to make her uncomfortable. She had gone through something traumatic yesterday on what was meant to be the happiest day of her life and she was never going to forget it. We sat in silence for a full minute before she spoke.

"How did he know I was having twins?" she asked. I wasn't sure what I expected to be her first question but that wasn't it.

"He didn't," I began but she turned to me so fast I was scared she would get whiplash.

"Don't lie to me, not today and not about this," her voice was hard. "I heard him and he said babies. I'm not stupid, Camilla, and I deserve to know the truth. I deserve that much after everything that happened."

I let out a sigh. There were only two choices- I could either tell her about Audrey or tell her about Ryker. Neither was something I was particularly interested in doing but she was right- she deserved the truth. I had also promised myself that I would talk to Ryker first before telling anyone about what was going on with him. It was like asking myself who I was going to protect- my daughter or my mate.

"Audrey drew something," I said finally and surprise was etched on Christine's face because that was clearly not what she was expecting to hear. "It was a family picture and she drew twin babies for you. We didn't want to say anything until we were sure."

"So, Ryker was sure?" she asked and I shrugged. I couldn't tell her that. "I'll get back to Audrey in a second but how did he know that something was wrong?"

"You'd have to talk to him about that. I can't say anything more than I already have."

I could tell that wasn't the answer she was looking for because she let out an exasperated sigh. "Goddess, Camilla, why wasn't I told that all of this has been going on? I still don't know exactly what the hell is going on." "Trust me when I say that I don't either. I am just going with the flow and hoping that I figure something out soon."

She ran her hands down her face. "How did Audrey know? Are her powers coming back?" I nodded and Christine cursed. "I didn't realize. She looks a lot better than she did the last time."

"She said the goddess helps her and sits with her through the visions. I still don't completely understand how that works but right now, I will take any win I can get. I don't have any witches who can lock up her powers again and I don't trust any other witch to bring them herer after everything that happened with Reina."

She nodded in understanding. "I'm still pissed that you kept me out of the loop. Why would you do that? We are a team, aren't we?" I opened my mouth to speak but she cut me off. "If you say that you did it because I am pregnant, I will kill you, I swear it." This time, I couldn't help but laugh. It was part of the reason but it wasn't the full reason. "I just wanted normalcy for a little while. It doesn't seem to be a big issue right now and I am hoping we can keep it that way for now but things seem to be getting out of hand."

"We will get to the bottom of things," it didn't skip my attention that she said the word 'we' instead of you. She thread her fingers with mine and lay her head on my shoulder. "Everything will be fine, it always is in the end. Audrey seems to be doing well and that is more than good enough for me."

I couldn't help but agree. "I have to go, Riley and Damien are leaving today. With everything that has been going on, I don't want to give her any more reason to believe that we hate them."

"Do you want me to come?" she began but I shook my head quickly.

"You need to rest, leave them to Ryker and I, okay?"

She frowned but nodded and once I was sure she wouldn't sneak out of the room, I was gone.

Ryker and Juan were already done with their run by the time I got down the stairs and Riley and Damien were already loading their things into the carriage.

"I thought you would leave later in the day," I said making everyone turn to me. "The day has barely broken and half of the palace is still asleep."

Riley shrugged. There was something different about her, I wasn't sure what it was but I could almost see it. She didn't seem to be carrying any form of anger towards me anymore and there was an ease in her step. Her cheeks were tinged slight pink and I noticed she was avoiding my gaze but I couldn't figure out why.

"I thought it would be best if we got a head start," she mumbled but I knew without a doubt that she was lying. There was more to the story and although I wanted to push, it wasn't the best choice. "I am grateful to you all for having us here, even with everything that was going on and with me being rude to you."

"It is forgotten," I didn't hesitate. I knew that was why she wasn't meeting my eye. Something had happened between yesterday and today and she felt embarrassed about everything that had transpired.

At my words, she turned to me in shock. I could tell she didn't quite believe me but I was telling the truth. I held nothing against her and I couldn't even if I tried. We might not have been related by blood but she was my sister and sisters fought, sisters disagreed, it didn't mean that we ended up hating each other. I wasn't sure I could hate her even if I wanted to.

"Thank you," she whispered and I pulled her into a hug. She wrapped her arms around me and we stayed there for what felt like hours. I didn't move until she pulled away first.

I saw her wipe a stray tear from her face before turning to Ryker. While they were talking, Damien made his way over to me.

"She needed that," he whispered. "She had been beating herself up all night thinking you were pissed."

"You're family," I said simply. "I wasn't going to hold one disagreement against either of you. You are more than welcome here anytime you want."

"I think we will hold off on that invitation for a while," he joked before pulling me into a hug.

Once the goodbyes had been exchanged, I watched them get into their carriage and ride off. Sometime during the goodbyes, Juan had disappeared and now it was just Ryker and I. The air felt thick with indecision. I knew I had to tell him about last night but I didn't know if now was the right time. He had his arms around me and his chin was resting on my head. He seemed relaxed and in a good mood. Realistically speaking, there was no better time to talk to him.

"We have some time before the girls wake up," he whispered. "We should go back to bed and milk in the rest of our morning."

"We should," I mumbled but I couldn't move.

"Is everything okay?" he asked and I nodded but that couldn't be further from the truth. He grabbed my shoulders and turned me to face him. "Talk to me, you've been acting weird all morning. First of all, you are never up this early. What is going on?" "Something happened last night," I began slowly and he sighed.

"I thought we already handled the issue with Christine. I told you what happened and-"

"It isn't about that. This happened after, in our room," I explained slowly hoping that something had changed and maybe he had a sense of what happened but he didn't. "Do you remember when you opened your eyes and saw me in the room? You thought that you had zoned out or something."

He nodded slowly. "What is going on, Camilla?"

"You didn't zone out," I whispered and he stilled. "You were there and you were talking to me but it wasn't you. There was something talking through you. I was talking to the literal embodiment of the magic inside of you."

For a full minute, there was silence and I thought that Ryker was going to laugh or say that I was imagining things but he said nothing and somehow that was worse. I could handle disbelief, I could handle a scoff or a laugh but I couldn't handle the silence because that meant that he did not think I was crazy; that meant that he believed me.

It took a long two minutes before he finally spoke. "We should get back to our room."

"Why?"

"Because you are going to tell me everything and I don't want anyone accidentally overhearing."

The Rejected Werewolf Princess Chapter 252



RYKER'S

P.O.V

When Camilla was done speaking, I was numb. I wasn't sure how to process everything that she had just said. It felt like a fever dream that I couldn't help but want to wake up from but a part of me knew she was telling the truth. There was nothing she would gain from lying to me- especially not about this- and from the look on her face, she was equally as worried and unnerved about this.

"Say something," she whispered after a beat of silence. "I can't handle you going quiet on me right now. What do we do?"

"We do nothing," I said simply and her brows furrowed in confusion.

"What do you mean by nothing? Didn't you hear a word I just said?"

"I did," I stood to my feet and cleared my throat. "This is my problem and I will fix it. You don't have to worry about a thing."

My body was moving on autopilot as I kissed her forehead. I headed straight for the door but she was faster and blocked the exit. She had her hands crossed over her chest and she looked annoyed. I tried to side step her but she wasn't letting me off the hook that easily.

"Camilla-" I began but she held up a hand to cut me off.

"You are such a hypocrite sometimes, do you know that?" she asked and I was shocked by her choice of words. I wasn't sure if it was the anger or something else but I forced myself to stay silent and let her finish. "If the tables were turned, would you allow me make it my problem and let me walk away?"

"That has nothing to do with this. This is my problem and you know that." Exclusive content © by

"My powers were my problem but you made it yours. When I lost my memory, it was my problem as well but you made it yours. Why won't you let me make this mine as well? I can help you. I want to help you and be there for you."

"I don't want you to get hurt," I admitted finally. That was the one thing that had been bothering me since she spoke. "What if we realize that deep down, I am just like Reina? What if the merging happens and I become a cruel person? What happens then? You could get hurt. Reina burned down her entire coven. I don't want to do that to you."

"You won't," she sounded so sure. "I know you, Ryker Caine and I know who you are on the inside. You are a good man and you would rather die than hurt us."

"I haven't always been a good man," I said softly but she still didn't budge.

She was rooted in her stance and nothing I said or did was going to change that. A part of me was actually relieved about that because I needed someone who believed in me because I clearly didn't. She closed the distance between us and wrapped her arms around my mid-section. I pulled her in as tight as I could and inhaled her scent long enough to forget everything. All I needed was her.

We stood like that for what felt like hours before she finally pulled back long enough to stare into my eyes. "You are good and we will get through this together."

I couldn't have refused her even if I tried so I nodded. "Together."

She smiled and pulled away from me. She turned to leave but stopped at the last minute and levelled me with a harsh look. "If you ever pull something like this again and try to push me out of something, I will kill you slowly and I will make sure to enjoy every second of it."

The corner of my lips curled up and I tried and failed to hide my smile. There was something undeniably sexy about her when she tried to be stern with me. It made my dick swell and in that moment there was nothing I wanted more than to bend her over, lift her skirts and-

"No," she said suddenly and my brows rose. "I see that look in your eye and no, we have things to do."

She didn't sound nearly as convincing as she wanted to so I leaned forward. "Do we, now?"

She nodded but didn't try to move away. When I stepped closer to her, her eyes darkened considerably and her breath caught in her throat. I reached out and tangled my fingers into her hair and the sound that left her lips went straight to my d**k. "I'm sure we can spare a few minutes," I mused aloud and I didn't give her a chance to respond before kissing her.

It took us almost an hour to leave the room after that. Camilla had a sheepish grin on her face and her cheeks were tinged pink. It was amusing that after so long, she still managed to get embarrassed about things. I offered to get the girls ready today. It wasn't a school day so Audrey was going to be home all day and I wanted to give Camilla some time to clear her head while I did the same.

"Daddy!" Audrey exclaimed when she saw me by her door. She all but flew into my arms and I ran my fingers through her hair slowly. "You look sad, daddy."

"I'm fine," I assured her with a soft kiss on the top of her head. "Why don't we focus on getting you dressed for breakfast? You're home all day today," she nodded excitedly. "Did you have any other dreams today?"

She shook her head and I couldn't describe the feeling of relief that rushed over my body. I wanted her to have a normal life or at least, the closest she could get to one. Despite everything, she was still a child and she deserved as much. I wanted the best for her and I couldn't have that if she was having different dreams every other day.

"What about the dark magic?" she asked and I stilled. She was looking up at me expectantly and I sighed. I gently set her down on the bed and squatted so she could look at me.

"You shouldn't be worrying about me or the dark magic," I told her simply. She started to refute but I stopped her. "You're the kid, okay? You're my little girl and I am meant to protect you, not the other way around. I can handle myself, don't worry about me." She nodded but her eyes were welling with tears. I pulled her in for another hug and she sniffled. "I don't want you to be like the bad witch."

"I won't be like her," I spoke like someone who was sure, not someone who didn't even know his left from his right. I couldn't let her know that I was probably just as worried as she was. If I needed to lie to her to keep her safe then I was going to do that. When she finally pulled away, she looked better. She wiped her tears from her cheeks and looked up at me. "I'm hungry, can we go for breakfast now?"

I laughed and gestured for her to come with me.

Once she was dressed, it was Aurora next. She was relatively easier to handle and within minutes, we were on our way to the dining room. Everyone else was already seated and it was amazing how easy it was for everyone to pretend like things were fine for the sake of the girls. To avoid an incomplete reading experience, visit Jobn'i'b.com. It was smiles all around and if not for the occasional glance my way, I would have thought that yesterday happened in my head.

Audrey was the star of the show as usual and held up most of the conversation. Long after we had finished eating, she was talking to the girls and I took the opportunity to quietly excuse myself. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw Juan follow me and I could have asked him to stay back but the honest truth was, I needed someone who wasn't Camilla to talk to. I took the

bench closest to the dining room. It was directly facing the door and I watched as he took the spot next to me.

"I could turn into a raging monster," I said simply and he laughed. It was refreshing to hear someone actually laugh about the situation.

"Are we talking monster in the darkness with sharp teeth and drool in your mouth?" he asked and I rolled my eyes. "I'm just trying to understand what kind of monster. Perhaps we could domesticate you and keep you as a house pet."

Even I couldn't help but laugh this time. Juan was a much needed addition in all our lives and I had never fully been able to appreciate him until today. There was no one else in this castle who could have made me laugh in a moment like this except him. It was like a super power for him. He did it with such ease.

"What's wrong, Ryker?" he asked and I explained everything to him. By the time I was done, he just sighed. "Camilla is right, you are a good person. I think out of everyone in this palace, you are the least at risk to turn into a monster."

I shook my head. "You don't get it. I can see auras now. Everyone else's is a normal color, there's blue and orange and red and I- mine is black."

"Black is a normal color."

"No, not just black, it is complete shadows. I don't have an aura, I have shadows. I can't explain it but that is not a good thing. I don't know how I know, I just do. Who has shadows as an aura?"

"You apparently," he shrugged as if it were no big deal. "I could panic with you or I could be your voice of reason. It is your choice."

He was right but that wasn't why I wanted him here. "I need you to do me a favor but you cannot tell Camilla."

His spine straightened. "I don't like the sound of that but what favor are we talking about?"

"When this merging happens," I began slowly. "If for any reason I become like Reina, don't wait for me to hurt anyone. I want you to kill me."

"Ryker-

"I am asking you as a friend, Juan. I would never be able to live with myself if I hurt my family. End me before I hurt them. I need you to promise me."

He swallowed deeply before nodding. "I promise."

The Rejected Werewolf Princess Chapter 253



CAMILLA'S P.O.V

To say I was not concerned or curious when Ryker disappeared with Juan would have been a lie. It was made worse when they both returned and Ryker looked relieved but Juan looked concerned. He looked like he had a million things going on in his mind at the moment and it nearly sent me into a panic not knowing what it was because I knew it had something to do with Ryker.

"Camilla," Christine whisper yelled snapping me back to my thoughts.

After Ryker had returned, he said something about having some work to attend to so he disappeared leaving Christine and I with the girls. We finished up with breakfast and made our way to the private living room where we were

currently sitting down. I looked up at Christine who gestured to Aurora who had been trying to climb onto my legs and failing.

"I'm sorry, sweetheart," I whispered when I noticed her bottom lip already quivering. I picked her up and balanced her on my hip. She sniffled and buried her head into my shoulder and I absentmindedly ran my fingers through her hair.

I felt someone trying to mind link me and the moment I put down my wall, Christine's voice flooded my mind. "What is going on with you?"

"I'm worried about Ryker," there was no use lying and saying nothing. We had clearly gone way past that point. "Did you see how Juan looked when they returned together? Something happened and I am concerned about it."

"Do you trust him?" she asked and my brows scrunched in confusion. "If you trust the both of them then trust that whatever this is, they can handle it. If it is too bad, they will reach out for help."

"Not Ryker," I mumbled. "He doesn't even want me involved in this. I had to plead for him to be honest with me about this because he said he didn't want to bother me. If he had his way, he would keep me far away from all of this." "What exactly is 'all of this?'" she asked and it was at that moment I realized that she had no idea what was going on.

I had given her a rough breakdown but she didn't know everything. I assumed Juan did because Ryker told him almost everything but she was in the dark. It was unintentional, I had just been too focused on taking care of Ryker that I had somehow forgotten to catch her up and at the moment, I wasn't sure if Ryker would want her knowing everything. I wasn't sure how much he was willing to let her know or not so I just ended up shrugging.

"I think Ryker should be the one to tell you," I said finally. "He is the one who has to go through it, not me."

"Completely understandable," she didn't miss a beat with her response. "I think you should just give him space. You are worried and I get that but if you don't want him to shut you out, you should give him some space."

She was right and I knew it. I cut off the mind link and gave her a curt nod. She just smiled in return and I decided to take a walk outside the room for some fresh air. I had barely taken two steps when I bumped into someone.

"I am so sorry," the person began and I instantly recognized the voice.

"Caius," he turned to me and bowed with a smile. "I haven't seen you around in a while."

"You haven't summoned us, your majesty," he said simply. "I have to say, I was a bit disappointed that I wasn't consulted or included in the plan to kill the witch."

"A lot was happening at once and forgive me, but, I fear the elders confuse me more than they help me most of the times."

The corner of his lips quirked up. "Unfortunately, I cannot disagree with you there. It just gladdens me to know that you are all safe. You definitely look better than the last time I saw you."

"What do you mean?"

He paused and dropped his voice to a whisper. "The last time, you looked at me like you didn't know who I was. I feared that perhaps you had lost your memory. I even spoke to his majesty about it but he assured me that my assumptions were untrue."

My mind went back to the last time I saw him and sure enough, it was shortly after I had returned from the city. I truly didn't know who he was at the time and I couldn't help but feel a sense of pride towards Ryker for helping me hide my secret even from Caius who he knew was an ally.

I balanced Aurora higher on my hip and gave Caius a small smile. "I fear I must have been exhausted that day. It had been a long ride back and I had not completely healed yet. There is no way I could have forgotten you."

The lie slipped easily out of my tongue and it was clear that he didn't completely believe me but he couldn't push it without out rightly calling me a liar and even he was smarter than that. Instead, he just bowed and gave me a small smile.

"If you are certain then who am I to say otherwise?" he mused before turning to Aurora. "The little princess grows more each time I see her. I believe she will grow up to be just as strong and beautiful as her mother."

"Thank you, Caius," I gave him a small smile. "And do be sure to let the elders know that we have not forgotten that they exist, we just haven't found use for them yet."

"I am not sure if they will be pleased or angry to hear that, your majesty."

I shrugged. "Perhaps if they found something to do instead of sitting on their asses each day and waiting to be called on by us, then I would remember them more. What do the elders do, Caius?"

He grimaced and I knew what the answer was- nothing. It was absurd that we were paying six old men to sit on their asses all day long and do nothing but breed discord and confusion. I had no idea how they managed to remain ordained for so long. It seemed like the kind of thing my mother would hate.

"Now that you mention it, Caius, I think we do need to see the elders. How does tomorrow morning sound?"

"Tomorrow is Sunday, your majesty."

"Is there a reason they cannot come out on a Sunday?" I asked and he fell silent. Sunday was typically everyone's day off but he wasn't going to say that, not when he had all but confirmed that they do nothing all day long.

"I will relay the message," he bowed and I watched him walk off before I had the chance to say anything else.

As he walked away, I glanced over at Aurora who had been quiet in my arms during the entire conversation. She looked up at me with her wide eyes and gave me a toothy smile. I could never pick a favorite child, my daughters had completely different personalities and I loved them for that but Aurora had always been the quiet and calm child. Where Audrey was loud and outspoken, my youngest was silent. I wasn't sure if it would change with age but I truly hoped it didn't.

"Do you want to go back inside?" I asked but she shook her head. "Where do you want to go?"

"Daddy," she mumbled and my cheeks hurt from smiling because of how cute she was. "I wanna see daddy."

"Okay, sweetheart, we'll go see daddy, but we need to ask your sister if she wants to see daddy too."

I had barely turned to the door when it was pulled open and Christine rushed out. As soon as she saw me, she let out a sigh of relief and my spine instantly straightened. She looked a tad bit panicked but she was trying to hide it. Audrey walked out after her looking completely at ease and a bit bored if I was being honest.

"What happened?" I asked and Christine couldn't speak. She just pushed a piece of parchment paper into my hands. "What is this?"

"Audrey drew it," she whispered. "It probably isn't something I should panic over but I cannot help but-I asked her to make me a drawing just to pass the time and-"

She trailed off and I unfolded it. It took me a second to realize what I was seeing. In the picture, there was someone who I assumed was Christine because she had a huge baby bump. Standing on either side of her were two men and there was what seemed to be blood all around her.

I folded it and turned to Christine. "You've helped out enough for today. You should go up and rest."

"But-" she began but I cut her off.

"You're panicking and fear kills faster than any drug so leave. I can handle my daughter and her drawing. If it is important, I will let you know," she didn't want to agree at first, but she knew I was right and disappeared. I waited until she was gone before I turned to Audrey. "Do you want to help me explain the picture? I'm not mad, I promise, I just want to know."

"It's aunt Christine," she said simply. "She's having her babies."

"Why is there so much blood?" I asked but she turned away from me.

"Audrey, please, you scared Christine there a little. You aren't in any trouble, I just want to know why-"

"Can I go to see daddy?" she asked and I stilled. It was clear she didn't want to talk to me about it and as much as that hurt, it didn't matter in the long run. What mattered was that she talked at all so I nodded.

"Okay, do you hear that Aurora? We are going to see your daddy."





CAMILLA'S P.O.V

Aurora and I waited in Ryker's office while he spoke to Audrey in the bathroom. She hadn't wanted anyone else there to interrupt. For Aurora, it was easier, she just sat on the floor playing with a doll and was content simply to be in her father's office but I was scared and panicked for my child.

They spent fifteen minutes in there before they both walked out and neither of their faces betrayed anything. Audrey just walked over to where her sister was playing and joined her to play with her dolls while Ryker walked over to me. He wrapped his hand around my waist and pressed a soft kiss to the side of my head. It should have calmed me down a little but I was worried and panicking already.

"Relax," he whispered against my skin. "I can feel your emotions running all over the place and I am sure that she can too."

"She doesn't have a wolf yet, she can't," I quipped back and he rolled his eyes payfully.

"Camilla, this is more than that and you know it. If she already has control of her powers this much, she can definitely read emotions and right now, you are staring at her like you are scared that someone is going to grab her and run away, or worse, she is not your child."

"I know she's my child," I mumbled but I knew he was right and forced myself to look away from her. After that, I switched to our mind link. "Tell me what happened."

He hesitated before speaking and that had me worrying. My spine straightened and I dragged him over to the couches. He avoided my eyes the entire time and I knew immediately that whatever this was, he was serious, he

was just trying to blow it off. I crossed my arms over my chest and waited for him to speak but he never did.

"Ryker," I probed and he sighed.

"Don't worry about it, I have it handled."

I was shocked that he would even suggest that. "This is our child that you are talking about. What do you mean by I should just leave it to you? Why would you even suggest that? I have a right to know."

"I know that, Camilla, but she came to me and I don't want to scare her from coming back next time."

We were having this entire conversation in our heads and I was getting more annoyed with each passing second. Yes, Audrey came to him, I wasn't going to deny that but we were partners and I deserved to know especially when it was about something that concerned someone else's life.

"She is a scared child and she doesn't know who to go to. I deserve to know, and not just me, but Christine to."

At that, I felt him shut down entirely. I felt a rush of cold emotion hit me right in the face as he said in a bland voice. "I am not telling Christine a thing."

"Why not? This is about her and her babies. Why wouldn't you-"

"How do I tell her that Audrey saw a possibility where she dies in the process of having those children?" he asked and I paused. I literally could not move or say another word as I stared at Ryker. He still wasn't looking at me and he ran his hands through his hair in frustration. "I will not do that to her and neither will you. Tell her that it was a fluke, Audrey saw her in labor and over exaggerated the blood because she is a child."

"You want me to lie to her," I finished and he nodded.

"She will not live with the knowledge that she could die."

"But what about the first picture that Audrey drew? It had Christine in it with her kids. Does this one override that?"

"Unfortunately, I haven't completely figured out how her powers work," he drawled and there was an edge of sarcasm in his tone. "The future isn't always set in stone. There are different paths to it. I don't know which will cause which outcome, all I know is there is a possible future where she dies while-

I was torn away from his words when I felt a small tap on my shoulder. I broke off the mind link and turned to find Audrey standing in front of me. She looked normal, but there was a tinge of sadness and exhaustion in her eyes. I couldn't help but panic, the last time I saw her like this, she was having trouble sleeping and she was being plagued by nightmares as a result of these powers.

I didn't hesitate before drawing her into my lap and thankfully, she clung to me. She rested her head in my bosom and wrapped her arms around me without saying a single word. I looked up at Ryker who just shrugged, he had no idea what was going on either. I rocked my almost six year old in my lap while softly stroking her hair until she felt comfortable enough to speak.

"I don't want you and daddy to fight," she mumbled and I turned to her with an incredulous look.

"We aren't fighting, sweetheart, I promise you."

She still didn't look convince because her lips turned downward. "You are and you'll keep fighting because daddy is changing." holds this content.

"What do you mean by that? How is he changing?"

She dropped her voice into a whisper as if she were scared of being overheard. "The shadows mummy, they're going into him. He's turning into shadows. Can't you see it?"

I turned to Ryker but he had already looked away. He cleared his throat and stood to his feet without another word. I knew she was talking about the merging and despite knowing she was right, it hurt me that my child had to be so involved in things far beyond her age. She was a child, and she deserved to have a child for as long as possible.

"Daddy is fine," I lied. "Why don't we play a little, okay?"

She nodded and rushed off my lap. I couldn't help but glance at the bathroom that Ryker had disappeared into. I tried to reach out to him but was met with a firm wall. He clearly didn't want to speak and although I could have stormed in and demanded an audience, I didn't. He deserved some form of privacy and I was willing to give him that for as long as necessary.

The girls fell asleep less than two hours later and Ryker had opted to put them in bed. I knew it was partly because he wanted to avoid a conversation with me but I allowed him because there was something else that I needed to do.

I easily made my way to the ground floor of the palace where the shrine to the goddess was erected. It was massive and I had only ever come to it a few times but I found myself in front of it after what felt like years. It was a bit hidden away from the general public in a room of its own but people knew where it was and it was easy to access. I went on my knees and closed my eyes.

"I don't ask you for much," I began slowly. "I am not asking for you to give me powers back and I am not asking for anything for myself but my daughter- she is a child. She isn't even six years old yet. You are showing her far too much than she should see." I was met with silence and a feeling of coldness as if I were alone but I didn't stop.

"And Ryker, he has already been through so much. He doesn't deserve this, they don't deserve this."

I thought that would have gone unanswered too but I heard a soft voice in my heart. "Who does? If they don't then who?"

"I don't know," I whispered back. "But they don't and I am in front of you begging for you to give my child and mate a break. It is far too much for them and you know that they deserve better."

As the last word left my lips, it felt like the pressure in the room had dropped below freezing level. My teeth were chattering and my fingers felt like someone had covered them in ice. I felt power so raw and so heavy that I had to bow my head down in fear that it was going to come against me.

"How dare you?" I heard this voice as clear as day, like someone was speaking to me. "Do you know how much I have protected you from already? I sit with your daughter every day so the dreams are not too much for her. You caused this when you locked away her powers instead of training her."

"Training involves locking her up until she is completely overwhelmed by said powers and I couldn't do that. She was a child. Most people don't get their powers until later. I am just trying to look out for her."

"By telling me how to rule?" she asked and I fell silent. "I have been ruling werewolves long before your grandparents were alive. You are nothing but a speck of dust in my life so you will do well to know your place."

"I'm sorry," I said immediately but her anger had not abated so I tried another alternative. "We are your children and I know you worry about us so you understand when I worry about mine." It seemed to be working because the room heated up a little more. "I spoke out of turn but that was just the ramblings of a worried mother. I know you have done your best and I am grateful for all you have done. I just worry for my child."

The ice in the room abated and I felt like I could finally breathe properly again.

"Don't ever question me again, Camilla," she warned. "I already protect your child, as for your mate, this is a test that he has to pass on his own."

"A test?" I asked and she hummed.

"You better keep an eye on him because if he fails, he will be lost forever."

The Rejected Werewolf Princess Chapter 255



CAMILLA'S P.O.V

I was in such a daze when walking back that I didn't even realize someone was calling out to me until I felt their hand on my shoulder. I nearly jumped until I heard Christine's voice behind me. "Relax, it's me," she whispered, her tone had an edge of concern to it. "Are you alright? You are way too jumpy. Did something happen?"

Only that I just had a terrifying experience with the moon goddess and for a while, I feared that I was going to die because her presence was so terrifying and she felt so angry with me that for a while, I thought it was the end of it all. It was an experience I had never and did not ever want to experience again. The coldness was out of this world, it felt different. It came from my inside, like someone had dropped an icicle into my stomach and I knew for a fact that I would never find anywhere on earth to rival that level of coldness even if I wanted to explain.

"Nothing I can explain," I kept my answer short and cryptic. "What are you doing out here? Do you need something or were you looking for someone?"

"I was going to find Ryker, he mind linked me. When I saw you, I hoped you would have an idea about it but the curiosity on your face tells me that you

don't," she finished and I let out an awkward laugh before wiping the curious expression off my face. "You can come with us if you-"

"I think you should go alone. It is you he wants to speak to," her brows furrowed and I knew she was skeptical about something. "I know one of you will tell me what you talked about if it is important so I am not bothered. Besides, I need to prepare for the meeting with the elders tomorrow."

Thankfully, that was enough to get her attention off Ryker because her eyes widened. "I heard about that. I overheard Caius telling one of the other elders to be worried because it seemed like you wanted to get rid of them or something." I shrugged. "Or something. I just realized how utterly useless they are. All they do is wear cloaks and sit on their asses while trying to come up with stupid ideas that don't even help us. I can't believe that we actually pay them for that." Christine laughed. It was one of pure amusement and by the time she was done, she wiped away a stray tear from her eye. "I have been thinking the exact same thing for years."

"You could have suggested it."

She shook her head. "One thing I learned early was not to question things. I am not Queen, it isn't my job to ask questions or raise suggestions."

I frowned and crossed my arms over my chest. "But you are my family and my best friend, it is your job to raise suggestions to me- not to your queen- to your family."

I could tell she didn't quite agree but I didn't push it. It wasn't easy to get rid of years of teaching in just one sentence.

"I should be going," she said finally. "I'll be sure to tell you what happened later."

I watched her walk away and when she was gone, I let the mask fall and let out a heavy exhale. I looked down at my fingers that were shivering as I tried

to keep them clutched to my dress so that Christine wouldn't notice. I let out a gasp at what I saw, I blinked twice hoping I had seen it properly but it didn't disappear.

Right at my fingertips was ice. It was almost crusted to it and I tried to wipe it off but it just wouldn't seem to go on its own. There were too many people around and I didn't want to risk anyone seeing it and whispering about it, so I shoved my fingers back into my dress and rushed out of there.

I didn't leave my room for the rest of the day because although the ice had somehow disappeared from my fingertips, my entire body still felt cold. I was shivering at odd times and I didn't know when it would stop. A part of me knew that it was just after effects of being in the goddess' presence but that didn't stop me from worrying that maybe it could be worse.

I heard the door to my room start to creep open so I pulled the covers over my head and pretended to be asleep. I immediately knew once the presence filled the room that it was Ryker. I tried to track his movements using just my hearing but he was quiet and almost impossible to decipher. One minute I heard him by the door and the next, I felt him by the bedside.

He ran his fingers through my hair and placed a soft kiss on my temple.
"You're f*****g freezing."

He was talking more to himself than to me because the next thing I knew, he had pulled out another blanket from the drawers and pulled it over me.

"What could you have possibly done in the peak of summer to get this cold?" he mused aloud. "Do I wake you for dinner or not?"

"Not," I mumbled deciding to give up the pretense. "I don't think I'm fit to go out yet." holds this content.

Another uncontrollable shiver hit me and Ryker's eyes narrowed. "I think we should take you to the physician. That did not look right."

"I'm fine," I tried to wave him off but his fingers wrapped around my wrist.
"Ryker, I'm serious, don't worry about it."

"That was not normal. You were visibly shaking. Something is definitely wrong and-"

"I spoke to the goddess today," I blurted out and he stilled. "I went to pray to her for Audrey- and you. I didn't actually expect her to audibly respond but she did and I felt coldness on my inside. This is probably the aftershock, I will be fine so please can you stop pushing and just get into bed with me?"

He frowned but nodded and without hesitation on his part, he crawled into bed behind me and pulled me close to him. It did wonders for me to feel his body heat surrounding me.

"You really went to talk to the goddess about me?" he asked and I nodded.

"I was worried about you," I shrugged. It truly was that simple. He was my mate and I was worried so I spoke to her. It was what every normal person in my shoes would have done. "She told me something about you by the way."

He stilled behind me for a split second before quickly snapping back to normal and running his fingers through my hair. "What did she say?"

"She said all of this is a test and if you didn't pass it, you would be gone forever."

"Almost everything in our lives is a test," he said it so blandly that I couldn't make out any emotion behind his words. "Don't worry about ne, Camilla, I never fail."

That should have been comforting but something told me that this test was different.

"Just promise me something."

He didn't miss a beat. "Anything."

"You're going to try your hardest to pass it because I can't lose you."

I felt something shift in the air as Ryker cursed and pulled me impossibly closer to him. He pressed a lingering kiss to my temple and we just stayed that way for a full minute enjoying each other's company and it wasn't until much later that I realized, he never actually promised me anything.

I woke up much later than I usually did the next morning and for the first five minutes, I wanted to spend my entire day in bed but got a rude awakening that I needed to be with the elders. I forced myself out of bed and got dressed ready for the inevitably long and exhausting day.

After breakfast, Ryker was immediately by my side. "What's the course of action for today? I want to make sure that no matter what, I am on your side."

"Honestly, I don't know," I admitted. "Yesterday I must have been feeling something because otherwise why would I bring them here? But I think I want to get rid of them. They aren't helping, not at all."

He just nodded because we had gotten to the council room and when the door was opened, I saw all the elders seated around the table. I expected a sarcastic remark about how we had called for them and left them waiting but there was none. The air was thick with fear and anxiety. It felt good knowing that I could make them shiver.

As we walked in, there was a chorus of 'your majesties: Ryker and I ignored them as we took out spots at the head of the table. I watched them with my hands folded neatly in my lap and I made sure to run my eyes over each and every single one of them watching them quiver but not saying a word.

After about three minutes, one of the elders cleared his throat. "You didn't tell us when you wanted to meet, your majesty, only that you did and we still don't know why."

"It's simple really," I said leaning back into my seat. "What do you do?"

"I don't quite understand, your majesty."

"What is your purpose? Of what use are you to me? Why should I keep you around because frankly the way I see it is that we pay you so much to do nothing, so my question is, why should we keep you?"

No one could speak, they all stared at me like I had somehow grown a fifth head. I could tell they were having a quiet conversation in their heads and I glanced over at Ryker and he immediately spoke in my mind.

"I have an idea," he said simply and my brows rose. "Do you trust me?"

"Always, the floor is yours."

He broke off the mind link and cleared his throat. Everyone turned to him and he smiled. "Following the Queen's recent convictions, we have decided to give you a chance."

He paused for dramatic effects and I could almost see the elders shaking with anticipation.

"We have no use for six elders, we only have space for two or three. We will evaluate your behavior over the next few weeks and decide our top choices."

The Rejected Werewolf Princess Chapter 256



CAMILLA'S P.O.V

I wasn't sure if Ryker's idea was amazing or going to end up being a total disaster. It had the possibility to be both depending on how the elders chose to go along with things. The elders stayed staring at us after his words, their faces held various expressions from shock to disbelief and finally annoyance

but no one said a single word. "Your majesty," one of the elders began clearing his throat. "There have always been six elders. It is the way it has been for ages. Your ancestors-

"Probably had use for six elders," Ryker said simply and they all went silent. "As of right now, I have no use for six elders who waste time and resources. Prove to me that you are useful and you will be kept. It shouldn't be so hard, should it?"

He pursed his lips but didn't say anything. I glanced over at Ryker who said nothing. He was leaning back into his chair with a look on his face that could only be described as superior. No one spoke for a full minute and I realized that they were waiting for me to say something. I didn't know what to do. On one hand, I understood what Ryker was trying to do but on the other, I recognized the need for tradition.

Still, there was no possibility that I was going to stand against my mate so I cleared my throat. "I believe the prince has spoke. Does anyone have any questions?" "None, your majesty," they bowed in unison.

"Good, you can all leave now."

There were grumbles and chairs being dragged unnecessarily against the floor as they stood to their feet. I watched them file out in order and I watched them leave. Visit Jobnib.com to read the complete chapters for free. Just as the door was about to close, I noticed one of the elders lingering. I knew without looking that it was Caius, he was the only one who ever lingered. He was the only one who would dare to.

"Do you need something, Caius?" I asked looking up at him with a bored expression and he pursed his lips.

"I just wanted to ask if you knew what you were doing, your majesty. This kind of competition could prove to be unhealthy amongst the elders. Not a lot of

them are willing to ever go back to being normal citizens. Things could end up in a way that you don't expect. "I believe we can handle ourselves, Caius," I drawled. "You would do well to focus on your own problems right now. Everyone is at risk of losing their jobs, including you."

I could see the surprise on his face. For some reason, he might have thought that it didn't affect him but it did, it affected everyone. Sure, he was kinder to us than the others and he was arguably more useful than the others but he was going to have to test it like everyone else. There was no way in hell I was giving anyone any kind of preferential treatment.

"Of course, your majesty," he bowed and I watched him walk away.

Once he was gone and I was sure the door was securely shut behind us, I turned to Ryker. I finally let my wall down and let all my worry flood his senses. It took him off guard because I saw something flash in his eyes as he turned to me.

"I always support you and you know that," I began with a soft whisper. "But you know that this has the possibility to go south very quickly."

"I know, but this is one good way to get them off our backs as well as sort out most of the pack problems without actually leaving the palace," when he said it like that, it sounded smarter. "We already have a shit ton of things going on right now and we need to focus on it but we can't if we don't have the things in the pack handled."

"So you aren't going to remove any of them?" I asked to be sure and he nodded. "You are devious, Ryker Caine."

"Always," he winked before getting to his feet. "I have some work to attend to right now but I'll be back before dinner."

My brows scrunched because he hadn't told me about having any work and I didn't think there was anything that required that much time and attention. I

crossed my arms over my chest and tried not to let my suspicion and anxiety show. A few weeks ago, I wouldn't have cared but now that he had whatever that thing was inside of him, I was

"Where are you going?" I tried to keep my voice even and light hearted. "I didn't know you were going to be going out."

"Don't worry, I'm just going to do some research with Juan. I need to understand these powers that I am working with if I have any plans to pass the test."

"Do you want any help?"

I had barely finished my statement before he refused. I would have been lying if I said I didn't feel bad that he wasn't accepting my help but I pursed my lips and said nothing. He was at liberty to do such and I could understand not wanting to put yourself out there especially considering everything that had happened so far. I would have done the same in his shoes.

All I could do was smile. "Just be safe, okay?"

"I will," he assured me and with a kiss on my forehead, he was gone.

I didn't have much to do if I was being honest. I tried to focus on my work so I could finish up early but my every thought revolved around Ryker and if he was safe. His wall was up so I couldn't sense him but that didn't stop me from worrying every few seconds. He hadn't told me where he was going and neither had Juan. It was almost like they had disappeared and thankfully, I wasn't the only one concerned. Christine had spent half an hour talking about it and she was arguably more pissed than I was but there wasn't much we could do about it.

I was holding Aurora and feeding her lunch in her room when I heard a knock on the door. I glanced over at Christine who was lying on the bed in front of me and her brows rose. Neither Ryker nor Juan would have knocked so that

left a stranger. "Come in," I called out and the door opened to reveal a guard holding Audrey by hand. My eyes widened because Audrey was meant to be in school by now. I had taken her less than two hours ago. "What happened? Did she get sick?"

"No, your majesty," the guard responded but he didn't say anything else. It was almost like he was contemplating whether or not he should talk to me and that infuriated me. This was my child that we were talking about.

"Well then what happened and why is she back early?" I asked opening my arms for Audrey to rush into and she didn't hesitate.

"The principal asked that we send her home because according to her, the princess was scaring some of her classmates and talking about seas of blood," he sounded as confused as he looked.

I glanced down at my daughter who was pointedly looking at her hands. She seemed slightly embarrassed and I knew she didn't want to talk about this with him in the room so I cleared my throat and looked at him.

"Tell the principal that she must be mistaken and I will personally bring Audrey in tomorrow so that we can talk as well," I told him and he bowed. "You may leave now."

He shut the door behind us and I immediately handed over the plate of mashed food to Christine who was more than happy to take over for me with feeding Aurora. Audrey still hadn't looked up from her hands and when she saw that my complete attention was on her, she tried to run off but I grabbed her and gently pulled her to a stop.

"I'm sorry," she whispered and my brows furrowed. "Where's daddy?"

"Daddy isn't here right now," I told her trying to keep my voice down and her face fell even more. "Tell me what happened, Audrey, what did you see and why did you talk about seas of blood?"

She shrugged but still wouldn't look at me. I sighed and went on my knees so that we were at eye level and I gently cupped her tiny face into my hands. It was at that moment I realized that there were tears streaming down her face and I quickly wiped them away. Was what she saw so terrible that she was crying or were her tears as a result of something else? For the life of me I couldn't tell and I asked a million and one times over but she wouldn't speak to me.

"Audrey, you can trust me," I coaxed. "What's going on?"

"You have good magic and I don't," she muttered after a few seconds and I stilled.

"What do you mean?"

"You have good and me and daddy, our magic is bad. I don't want you to be mad."

It suddenly made sense why she had been avoiding me and I couldn't help but wonder if I had done something to feed into that narrative. She was crying already and I pulled her into my lap. She buried her face into my chest and I wrapped my arms around her. "Your powers are not bad," I whispered to her. "You are good and that means your powers are good, Audrey. I love you and I love your powers. They are not evil and I cannot be mad at you."

She sniffled. "Do you mean that?"

I nodded immediately. "Of course, darling. Now, tell me about what you saw."

Her face fell. She didn't want to speak but I decided to give her some space and wait for her to share it at

her own pace. It took a few minutes before she finally spoke.

"I saw the front of the palace, it was covered with blood."



RYKER'S P.O.V

"Remind me again what we are doing here?" Juan drawled from behind me.

If I didn't need someone's company so badly, I wouldn't have asked him to come with but out of everyone I knew, he was the only one who didn't ask too many questions and was willing to go at anything blindly.

I turned to him and he was sitting with his feet propped up on the table. It should have annoyed me that he was touching his feet onto books that were probably thousands of years old but I couldn't bring myself to care much. He was helping me out and it wasn't my place to implement too strict rules.

"Have you seen anything?" I asked and he just shrugged. I didn't need any form o clarification, I let out an exhausted sigh and took the seat next to him. "I honestly thought I would find something here. This is arguably the largest and oldest library in the world." Juan just shrugged and placed the book in his hands on the table. At least he dropped it gently and not tossed it like I had expected. We stared at each other for a full minute before I sighed and grabbed another book from the premade pile.

We had planned this thing last night. I knew I needed some time alone to investigate so I had called Juan and he went into the private library to check out some titles. He arranged them in a neat pile and after we had told the women that we were going out, we snuck in through the back and spent our time here. I was very much aware that I could have told Camilla exactly what I was doing but I didn't want to worry her more than she already was.

There was already so much going on with Audrey and with this new development and what was worse was that I could feel it. I could feel the change coming day by day. I wasn't sure how to explain it but I felt more in tune with the life force of everyone around me. I could sense their auras and I could tell when something was wrong. If this was half of how Camilla felt when she had her powers then I couldn't understand why she didn't run mad because it felt like I was going to,

"Remind me again what exactly we are looking for," Juan's question snapped me out of my thoughts. "I think magic is too broad of a topic."

"It isn't just magic," I felt almost annoyed by the analogy. "It is death magic, Juan, dark magic. This isn't just your run of the mill party trick. The goddess said I could be lost forever if I didn't pass the test. I want to know what the test is."

"So you want to cheat the test?" he mused and I shrugged. "Well then, we can keep looking. But I think you're stressing too much about this. It said it would test your character and you are a good person."

I couldn't trust that. We were dealing with forces far bigger than us, I could never be sure of their definition of good and I couldn't trust that I was going to meet up to it. I needed to know exactly what I was dealing with so that I could avoid it. It was the least that my family deserved. It was almost laughable how Camilla had powers for over five years now and she only had good powers. The moment I got powers for the first time, I got stuck with dark magic.

Reina had chosen me for a reason. Perhaps she knew that I was the only one who could handle the powers.

She didn't do things by accident, she had known that Camilla was too good for it and that was why she had chosen me. It was the only logical reason.

"I don't like that look," Juan frowned making me turn to him. "What are you thinking about?"

"I am thinking that we are in the wrong place," I said simply as I stood to my feet. "We need to get our answers from Reina herself. She chose this, she knew this was going to happen and she doesn't do anything by mistake."

"What exactly are you suggesting then?"

"I need to go back to where she died."

Juan just stared at me unblinking for a second and then two before finally letting out an exhausted sigh and pulling himself to his feet. "It isn't as if I can let you go on your own. When do we leave?" "Now."

We snuck out of the palace the very same way that we snuck in. it wasn't hard to leave without anyone seeing us and although I wanted to check on Camilla, I stopped myself from doing so. The ride to Reina's death spot was short and I barely paid attention on the way because I knew the road like the back of my hand.

This time, the horses didn't seem concerned to stop. It must have been the presence of the doll that made them stop all those times and now that I had taken it away, there was nothing for them to fear. I dismounted leaving Juan to follow behind me only because I didn't want him to ask what I had planned. I was winging the entire fucking thing and hoping that something good would come from it.

"I need you to tell me a plan, Ryker," Juan's voice was calm but there was an edge to it. "I need to know what we are searching for."

"I don't know," I admitted. "There has to be something else here."

"But we didn't see anything else the last time we came. What exactly do you think we might be looking for?" I couldn't respond because the truth was, I

didn't know. I just knew as well as I knew my own name that there was something here that I was meant to figure out.

"I just need you to trust me on this, please," I whispered and although he sighed, he nodded. He didn't ask any more questions after that, he just went in the opposite direction and started looking.

We walked around aimlessly for half an hour before I started to get frustrated. Reina had deliberately made this harder than it needed to be and it pissed me the fuck off. She wanted me to suffer, even in her death and I knew that if she could see me now, she would have been having a field day. Everything in me wanted to just give up and call it over but I couldn't go back home empty handed even if it meant spending the entire night here.

"Anything?" Juan asked and I nearly jumped because I hadn't noticed him walking up to me. I shook my head and he leaned against a tree. "I want to help, Ryker, but I need to know what the hell is going on in your mind to help. I'm not a mind reader." Even though it had nothing to do with the situation, I couldn't help but smile. There was just something remotely amusing about the possibility of being a mind reader. At least I would not have needed to work this hard to figure out what Reina wanted. Before she died, I would have found it out.

"We should go back home," I said simply and even though I could see the skepticism on Juan's face, he didn't protest. He stood to his feet and just as we were about to leave, I saw something out of the corner of my eye.

It looked almost like a wisp of a shadow. It could have been anything but I found myself drawn to it. I looked over wondering if I had imagined it when I saw it again in the air. It was going down a path and before I knew what I was doing, I was going that way too. I heard Juan call out to me but I couldn't be bothered to respond to him. It felt like if I even took my eyes off the wisp for

one second, it was going to disappear. It was that fast. I could barely keep up with it.

It led me to the mouth of a cave before disappearing. I stood there just staring and wondering whether or not to go in when Juan caught up to me.

"Are you insane?" he whispered harshly. "What the hell were you thinking taking off like that? You didn't respond when I called and-

"There is something here," I cut him off and he stilled. He looked over at me with questions in his eyes but I didn't know how to answer those questions because I didn't have the answers. "I saw something and it led me here. This could be what we are looking for." "What are you waiting for? Go in."

"I don't go into random caves anymore. The last time I did that, I was greeted with a vampire holding my mate hostage."

He seemed to understand because the next thing I knew, Juan was walking in. I tried to reach out to stop him but he was faster and disappeared into the mouth. Visit [Job n i b .co m](http://Jobnib.com) to read the complete chapters for free. I stood there wondering if I should follow him or stay put. It was the longest one minute of my life before I finally heard his voice.

"It is safe, I guess, but you really want to see this."

I didn't waste any more time after that before rushing in after him and sure enough, I was stunned by what I saw. Even though the scent in here was old and stale, I knew without a doubt that it was Reina who had stayed here. I could almost feel her energy and the remnants of whatever power now resided inside of me.

Juan was saying something but I couldn't pay much attention to him because I was transfixed by what I saw. There was a small mat where I was sure she slept and the rest of the room was littered with books and parchment. "This is exactly what you need," Juan said in awe and I couldn't help but agree. No

one knew Reina's powers better than Reina and I could have bet my life that the books were about her magic. "I can only imagine the-" He trailed off and I turned to him. It didn't take long to see what he was looking at. It was old and faded and looked like it had been written in blood. It was three simple words but they sent a chill down my spine.

The Rejected Werewolf Princess Chapter 258



RYKER'S P.O.V

I choose Ryker.

Those were three words and on paper they looked simple enough but the truth was far terrifying. Who was choosing and why did they choose me? There were so many questions running through my mind but I didn't have an answer for any and it was maddening. I walked closer to the writing on the wall, most of it had faded off due to nature but it was still readable.

"Did Reina write that?" Juan asked and although I knew he was talking aloud, I couldn't help but respond with a shrug. "What do you think she meant?"

"I don't know," I mumbled as I stepped in front of it. I lifted my hand to it and felt a tug in the center of my gut and was pulled to it. I lifted a hand to it and no sooner than the moment my finger touched it, it felt like I was sucked into a void.

At first, all I saw was darkness and then I heard a sound. I turned to it and found Reina there. She was mumbling to herself, her hands were pressed hard against her head as if she was trying to shut out some noise. She looked

insane, there was blood dripping from her nose and she was stumbling around like she was drunk or hurt.

"No!" she screamed. "Stop talking. I can't, I'm not ready."

"Reina?" I asked but she couldn't hear me. It was almost as if she couldn't see me. I tried to move closer to her but I couldn't move. It was almost as if I had been glued to the ground. "What the hell is going on?"

"It is time. Reina," I heard an audible voice in my head. I was sure it was whatever was inside of her that she had passed down to me- the magic. It sounded different though, almost darker and more sinister than what I was used to. "This is what we agreed on. You must pass it on."

"Please," she looked like a child begging on her knees like that. Her hands were still pressed over her ears and drool fell from her lips mixing with the pool of blood in front of her. I almost felt bad for her because in this moment, she looked nothing short of human. She looked like a fragile girl who was scared. "Enough!"

Even I shook from the force of the order. It took everything in me to not fall to my knees and cower. There was sheer and undiluted power in that voice. It was the kind of power that you knew could hurt you, the kind that you knew would unleash years of misery and torment. I couldn't imagine that Reina lived with this for years and I couldn't imagine that this was what was inside of me. It was far greater than what I had bargained for.

Reina's body shook with raw fear. I didn't know how, but I just knew that in that moment, she regretted her choice to even dabble in this magic. It was fun at first, almost light hearted, the power made her drunk and heady, but now, she was paying for her actions. Magic always came with a price and now, it was time to pay.

"I beg of you," she whispered. "I don't want to die."

"You died the moment you killed your entire coven," the voice laughed. "I told you Reina, dark magic comes at its own cost and you said you would pay with your soul, did you not?"

"I did," she sniffled. "I didn't know what I signed up for. I can give you anything else."

"I don't want anything else. I need to choose my next vessel, Reina, tell me the options." Text © owned by

Reina looked distraught but even she knew there was nothing much she could do. I watched her stand on wobbly legs and reach into some glass vials on the ground. There were six in total and they each had strands of hair inside. I knew without a doubt that it belonged to my family.

"Camilla, Ryker, Audrey, Aurora, Christine and Juan," she said as she placed each vial on the table. "You asked for a royal member, these are the ones I could get close to."

There was punctuated silence as it thought. Reina stood there with her head cast to the ground and she waited. Even I felt a sense of anticipation despite already knowing what it chose. After two long minutes, Reina's eyes darkened and she started to move. She moved in a daze, like she wasn't in control of her own body. I watched as she walked past where I stood and withdrew a knife from her pocket.

I knew what was going to happen next but I couldn't stop her. She drew the knife across her skin and with her forefinger, she wrote on the wall in blood. I stared at the writing, fresh and dripping in contrast to the faded mess Juan and I saw and then the most absurd thing happened. Reina turned and with her dark eyes, she looked pointedly at me as if she could see me.

"I choose you," she said- or rather- something said through her. The voice was guttural and otherworldly. As soon as she said that, it felt like I had been thrown out of my body and I landed on my a*s at Juan's feet.

My head was spinning with the revelation and also because of what happened. I could hear Juan asking me some questions but I could barely focus on his voice. I had just gone back into the past and I had seen and felt the potential power that could be brewing inside of me. Was that how I was going to be when the time came? Was that how I was going to beg and plead for my life because of powers that I had not asked for?

I managed to get myself to my feet but I ignored Juan and walked over to where I had seen the vials of hair. They sat in their place just staring at me and before I could think, I had shattered each bottle on the ground. It did nothing to calm the raging storm of emotions inside of me but it was the only outlet that I could think of.

I felt a hand on my shoulder as Juan stepped in front of me. "What the hell is going on? You stood there for like two minutes, I couldn't get to you, I couldn't touch you and now you're smashing bottles so can you tell me what the fuck is going on?" "It chose me," I said simply and Juan's brows furrowed. "Reina didn't choose me. She offered us all up like prized pigs to the magic and it chose me."

I wasn't sure if Juan understood the fullness of what I was saying but he understood enough because he cursed. "Do you know why?"

I shook my head. "It just looked at me and- fuck. I need to go home." "Ryker-" "There is nothing here. Just grab her books and her journals. I need to figure out what I can about this but it chose me, Juan. I don't know why but maybe it thought I could be the next Reina. I don't know why the fuck it did but I would rather die than hurt my family. Juan ran his hands through his hair in

frustration. I could tell there was a lot that he wanted to say but at the last minute, he decided against it and reached down to grab the journal closest to him.

"You'll beat this," he told me and I scoffed because the honest truth was that I wasn't so sure anymore. I tried to brush past him but Juan stopped me. "You will beat this and I will be right by your side helping because f**k me, you are a great man and a great ruler. Your family deserves to have you and I don't care what we have to do to make sure you pass this test but we will do it."

There was something encouraging about hearing someone else believe in you. I couldn't speak because the emotion threatened to overwhelm me. I nodded and he gave me a firm nod before leaning down to pick more books. As soon as we had gathered all of them we were on our way out.

The ride home was quiet. My thoughts kept going back to what I had seen. It had said something to Reina about dark magic having a price. I wasn't sure if I was reaching but could that mean that its magic wasn't inherently dark but she had chosen to make it dark when she killed her coven members? I needed to know more about what had transpired to know the truth but that was the only semblance of hope I had left and I was clinging to it with both hands.

My family deserved better and I was going to do anything possible to be better for them. I had no idea what I was dealing with and I knew I was in way over my head with this but I couldn't stop. The magic was inside of me, swirling inside my blood and in my bonds, it was well within reach and there was an itch, an urge to just touch it, to just feel it and let it take over but I wouldn't- I couldn't, not until I knew exactly what I was dealing with.

By the time we returned, the sun was setting and Camilla was walking outside the palace with Christine. As soon as they noticed us, they rushed over. I stared at my mate with her curly hair billowing behind her. She gave me a small smile before gesturing to the books we had brought back.

"What are those?" she asked but I ignored her question in favor of kissing her deeply. By the time I pulled back, her cheeks were flaming red. "What was that for?"

"Nothing, I love you," I said simply and her brows furrowed in concern. I brushed a strand of her hair behind her ears and kissed her forehead. "I've had a long day, why don't you tell me about yours while we walk in." "Will you tell me what those books are for?"

"Tomorrow," I promised. For today, I just wanted to be with her.

The Rejected Werewolf Princess Chapter 259



CAMILLA'S

P.O.V

I sat up in bed watching my mate sleep. My fingers gently stroked his hair out of his face and I was both amazed and relieved that he didn't wake up. Last night, he explained everything to me and my first instinct was to panic but I knew that he needed me for this and the last thing either of us needed was for me to lose my shit. It was one thing to know that Reina wanted to give him the powers, it was a completely different thing to know that the powers chose him.

He showed me the books and I promised to wait for him so we could start looking through them together. At first, he didn't want me to help but I was quick to remind him about all the hours he spent combing my father's journals with me. I was not going to leave him in his time of need, especially not when he had done the very opposite for me.

"How long have you been awake?" Ryker's husky, sleep laden voice asked and I couldn't stop myself from smiling. "How early is it?"

"Well, for starters, I think you've missed your morning run because the sun is up," I said simply and he groaned but didn't make any efforts to stand up. He rolled over onto his back and took my hand with him so he could place a kiss on the back of my palm. "How do you feel?"

"Like shit," he didn't even hesitate before responding. "Please tell me that we don't have a busy day."

I thought about it before shaking my head. "I don't know if I should be concerned or not but we don't. I haven't heard a single complain from inside the town. I wonder if the elders are fixing it all on their own."

"I wouldn't be surprised if they were," he shrugged as he sat up straight.

He looked considerably better than he did last night. He looked well rested and although I could still sense the edge in his movements, it wasn't as bad as it was last night. He caught me staring and I tried to look away quickly but it was too late. He placed his hands on either side of my face and placed a soft kiss on my forehead. He smelled like him, it was perfect.

"I'm okay, Camilla, you don't have to worry about me," he whispered against my skin. "We have a good day ahead of us and I want to get a head start on the books. Most of them are spell books. I am hoping it would tell me something I need to know." "I know," I wasn't sure if I was lying to him or to myself. "We can go through it together and we will find something, I just know it."

He didn't say anything after and once we were dressed and everyone was accounted for, we made our way to his office where we sat with the books. I didn't have to sit with him while reading, but it was easier to keep a secret when it was just the two of us. Juan knew but Ryker was adamant that he

didn't want too many people involved in this. Juan had to worry about Christine and their children. There was still some panic there due to Audrey's vision.

He still hadn't told Juan about it and I still hadn't told him about the blood in front of the palace. There was just so much going on that I could barely wrap my head around it. It felt like I was going to lose my mind if I tried to handle it all so I decided to focus on the most important which was Ryker. I couldn't lose him to magic. I wasn't going to. I didn't care what I had to do but I was going to do everything possible to make sure that he came out of it alive.

That was the determination in my heart. It was the only thing that kept me reading page after page of magic spells with Reina's writing scribbled into the sides. She made adjustments to the spells. Adjustments meant to make the effects longer and deadlier. Many sentences in this chapter have been removed because you are not reading them on It was while reading that I realized that Reina truly was a dangerous enemy and we simply hadn't realized it because for some reason, she wasn't using her full strength on us. There were spells here that could have burned down the entire palace in seconds and I couldn't help but wonder why she held herself back.

"I think I found something," I announced suddenly rushing over to Ryker's desk. We had been at it for two hours and I wasn't sure how I didn't think of it before. The book in my hands was a simple spell book but Reina had scribbled something behind it. "Read this? "Magic comes with a price, especially dark magic," Ryker repeated before turning to me. "What does this have to do with anything?"

"When I was training with Lois, he kept trying to teach me about the different types of magic. There was light magic and there was dark magic. Think of my powers as a branch, the tree trunk of my powers is elemental magic. It is a

type of magic typically associated with light magic but there is dark elemental magic. Are you following?"

"Not really," he mumbled and I sighed thinking of how best to explain it to him.

"There are types of dark magic and I think instead of trying to figure out what it is, we should figure out what it is not," I explained. "Lois told me that there are two main types of dark magic, we have blood magic and black magic. I think it is very clear that this isn't blood magic or she would have needed to use your blood to give it to you."

"So this is black magic," he deduced and I nodded.

"Not just any kind of black magic, you specifically mentioned being able to see shadows around my hands, right? Then I think that at its core, this is shadow magic. There are books on it in the private library but at its core, it is meant to manipulate the darkness and the unseen."

I could see that he was starting to understand exactly what I was explaining because he sat up straighter. "How do we explain me seeing auras then?"

"It might be a characteristic of shadow magic. I am not completely sure, this is just a theory but I think instead of trying to figure out what exactly we are dealing with, we can figure out what we aren't and take it from there." "This makes sense, but what about Reina? She could raise the dead, that is necromancy, she had the power over death."

"Remember what you told me? It said magic had a price, when she burned down her coven, that might have been her test. She failed it and it turned the magic inherently dark. If she could do all those things on her own, she wouldn't have needed all these spell books. Necromancy was something she had to learn."

His eyes widened in understanding and he scoffed as he ran his hand down his face. I wasn't sure how right I was but somewhere in the depths of my

heart, I knew that I was saying the right thing. It was the only thing that made sense at this moment. We were dealing with shadow magic.

For a full minute, Ryker said nothing and then he pulled me into his arms and kissed me deeply. I was taken aback by the kiss and it took me a few seconds to realize what was going on. By the time he pulled back, my cheeks were flushed and I was breathing heavily.

"You are brilliant," he whispered against my lips. "Do you know where I can find the books on shadow magic?"

"They're in the secret library. I can show you if you'd like," I offered and he nodded. I started to leave when he grabbed my arm.

"There is one more thing," I stopped and turned to him. "Do you really think that burning her coven down was her test?"

"You said that was what you saw in the vision, right? Well then, it only makes sense. She was probably presented with a choice and she chose to kill them all." "Surely there had to be another choice where she could have escaped without killing them, right?"

I thought about it for a second before shrugging. "I don't think magic gives us easy choices. Take me for example, on that cliff, I had a choice, I could have let Aurora die or I could have lost my powers to heal her. It is always a choice between two extremes." "What if I am given a choice like that?" he asked and I stilled. I hadn't thought about that. I was too focused on my happiness at having found out what we were dealing with. I opened my mouth to try and assure him but no words could come out because I knew they would be lies. "What if I am faced with the choice of saving myself or losing myself to the magic to save one of you."

"Then you save yourself," I said simply and he started to protest but I cut him off. "I would never be able to live with myself if I knew that you gave yourself up for us like that." "Camilla-"This content ©

"No," I cut him off. "I won't let you lose yourself for me. I can't do this without you, do you get that?"

"I can't do it without you either," he whispered and I knew- I knew without a doubt that he would never save himself.

All I could hope for in that moment was that it would never come down to it because on one hand, Ryker wasn't going to save himself, but on the other hand, I wasn't going to let him lose himself and in that kind of position, things could get ugly very quickly.

The Rejected Werewolf Princess Chapter 260



CAMILLA'S P.O.V

Ryker and I wrapped up in his office and spent the remainder of the day in the private library. It wasn't hard to find the books on shadow magic and he spent the entire day reading as much as he could while I went through Reina's books. She wrote a lot but barely about anything of substantial value. She mainly talked about spells she wanted to try and about how much of a heady feeling the magic gave her.

When I had used my powers, it was draining for me, I had never felt the heady and euphoric feeling that she spoke about. I couldn't help but wonder what exactly that felt like or what exactly she meant by that. I glanced at Ryker a few times wondering if he felt the same way or if he was going to feel the same way after the test.

I couldn't help but glance over at my mate. He was the epitome of ease as he leaned back in the chair opposite me and flipped through the book in his hands. His brows were scrunched in concentration and I couldn't stop the small smile from pulling at the corner of my lips. It was terrifying to think that there was a possibility where I could lose him. It was scary to even imagine that there could be a future where he would end up like Reina.

"You're staring," I heard his voice in my head and my cheeks flushed pink.

"Did you need something?"

"No," I was quick with my response and I felt him tense in worry. "I just zoned out for a second. Did you find anything?"

"Nothing of substance, only what you said earlier, shadow magic isn't inherently bad or good. It depends on the context in which it is used. I also keep seeing the phrase 'all magic comes with a price' which does not worry me at all."

I could hear the heavy laden sarcasm in his words. I wasn't sure if I was to laugh or take him seriously so I sighed. "There is nothing on how she could have gotten the magic in the first place?"

"Not really, I read something about a sacrifice done in the dead of the night but I don't really care much about it at the moment. I already have the powers, I just want to get rid of them or learn to control them. It feels like there is a looming clock over my head and don't know when it will run out."

It was at that moment I realized exactly what we were doing wrong. I stood to my feet and cleared the distance between us then with his eyes on me, I carefully crawled into Ryker's lap. He didn't hesitate before pushing the book to the side and wrapping his arms firmly around me. For a while, there were no sounds, no one spoke, no one even dared to breathe loudly. It was just us in each other's embrace against a harsh future that threatened to ruin us.

"What happens now?" he asked after a beat of silence and I shrugged.

"I'll keep looking for anything about the fire in her coven. If I find something I will let you know."

"I will keep looking into the magic as well," he continued. "I need to learn how to control it because if I do beat this test-"

"When," I cut him off. "When you beat the test."

His eyes softened considerably and he placed a lingering kiss on my temple.

"When I beat the test, I need to know how to handle what I have been given."

"Lois can train you too," I offered and the corner of his lips quirked up in a small smile. "It would be fun to have training together."

"I suppose it is," he mused. I made to rise from his body but he held me impossibly tighter. "Give it a few minutes please, I just want to stay like this."

I didn't protest, I just leaned further into him.

I wasn't sure how long we stayed there, but by the time we finally emerged, it was time for dinner. It was difficult sitting at the table and pretending everything was fine when all I wanted was to return to the solace of my room and keep searching the books. My ever waking thought was plagued by this predicament. Ryker might not have known how important he was to us but I did.

He was the glue that held our entire family together. He was the silent pillar that kept this kingdom afloat. The kingdom could do without me, our family could go on without me but without Ryker, it was going to crash to the ground like dominos. He was the silent partner who gave everyone support. He was the friend who was by your side when you needed it most and he didn't realize it sometimes but I knew enough to know that we needed everyone's help if we were going to get through this.

Audrey and Aurora fell asleep in their plates. Ryker offered to take them and put them to bed. I didn't protest because I needed the time to do something else. Once he was gone, I quickly cornered Juan and Christine on the way to their rooms.

"I didn't want to ask this of you because honestly, what you need right now is peace but I need your help," I said and they both stilled. They shared a wary look before turning back to me and nodding. "You all know Ryker is going to face a test, right? I have reason to believe that Reina's test was whether or not to burn down her coven."

Christine crossed her arms over her chest. "So you think Ryker's test might be of the same magnitude?"

I nodded. "I still haven't gotten any proof to back up my claim yet but I will. Until then, I need you both to help me find out what you can on shadow magic and on the coven's burning."

"It happened so many years ago," Juan said and I nodded. "There is barely anyone alive who saw it happen and even the ones who did don't know what happened, the only person who does is Reina." © 2024.

"I know that but please, I am desperate," my voice cracked on the end. "This thing can come any time and I don't want to lose my mate. I will take any piece of information you have to offer, I just don't want to lose him."

Juan nodded. He didn't need any more persuasion. "I'll see what I can find."

"Thank you," I whispered. "I have to go before he finds out what I did. Please don't tell him that you know, he wanted to keep it between us."

"Our lips are sealed," they said in unison.

Once I was sure that everything was settled, I grabbed my skirts and rushed back to our room. I wanted to get there before Ryker so I didn't have to explain to him where I went. I managed to get in just a few seconds before

him and the relief in my heart was palpable. If he knew that I hadn't been in the room, he didn't let on. He just told me that the girls were safely in bed and started to undress.

I debated telling him that I had asked for help, but decided against it at the last minute. I didn't want to give him reason to fret or worry so I stripped alongside him and pulled on my favorite white nightdress. I lay in his arms, both of us engrossed by our respective books. I got to a point where it was more rambling and as much as I hated to admit it, it was fun reading from Reina's mind. She seemed like a very smart person, she had just made some wrong choices.

I got to a point where she spoke about her old coven. She described the incident as a spur of the moment decision and something she didn't expect. I was intrigued and wanted to see where it was going when I heard a knock on our door. Ryker heard it too because he stilled. He gestured for me to wait while he went to open the door and I was surprised to see a guard at our door.

I knew from experience that whatever the guard wanted to say wasn't good so before he spoke, I already rose to my feet and grabbed a cloak to throw over my night dress.

"Just show us," I sighed and he nodded. He led Ryker and I down the steps and towards the front of the palace where three people lay.

They looked like townsfolk and at first, they looked relatively unhurt until I saw that they were all covering another. There was a fourth person and when I saw them, I had to look away and breathe through my nose to stop myself from throwing up. "What's going on?" I heard Christine ask as she came closer but I quickly shot my hands out to stop her. I shook my head at her and thankfully, she heeded my advice and took a step back. "Is everything okay?"

"No," I whispered before turning back to the people. The person they were covering was badly bruised and battered and I could tell he was dead. "What happened to you?"

"A wolf attacked us tonight while we were walking home. We managed to cut it with a silver knife but it killed him first."

"Was it a rogue?" Ryker asked and the woman shot him a death glare. Normally, that would be grounds for punishment but she deserved a break today considering her friend just died. "No, it wasn't, it was a palace wolf."

My brows rose. "That is a serious accusation."

"Maybe, but I saw it run towards the palace. It may not be a palace wolf but it is within the palace walls right now."