

The Rejected Werewolf Princess by Didiadeyemi Chapter 98-102

Chapter 98

RYKER'S POV

When I was told that there was another b*dy, I was expecting to see a scene similar to the last ones. When I got there, I was suddenly thankful that I asked Camilla to stay back. It was so graphic that one of the guards threw up on sight. The smell of blood hung in the air and it was so messy that I didn't even know where to stand. It was clear that unlike the others, this man was killed in the forest.

His head was completely severed off and there was blood everywhere- on the grass and on the trees. There was no way we could hide this one even if we tried. I muttered a curse and ran my hands through my hair as I thought of what we could do. The guards were most definitely going to talk and the family of the boy were not going to accept any bullsh it explanations.

"Your majesty," one of the guards spoke snapping me out of my thoughts.

"What do we do with the b*dy."

"Right now, leave it. Get the physician here. We can't risk transporting it back to the palace."

He nodded and left to do as I asked. While we waited for the physician, I spoke to the guards who had found him. They were lured by the scent of blood and discovered the scene. No one recognized him yet and I was grateful for that. It was easier to deal with the victim as a stranger than someone's child or father.

It took twenty minutes for the physician to arrive with his son and I saw him flinch when he took in the scene. He muttered something under his breath and went to work analyzing the b*dy. His son looked a little green and if it were another day, I would have suggested that he sat it out but I needed to get to the bottom of things as soon as possible.

"It is the same as the others," he said as he stood to his feet.

I didn't want to risk the others overhearing us so I turned to the guards. "Wrap up the b*dy and take it back to the palace. Ensure it is cleaned and made presentable then find out who he is and if he has any family."

While they scrambled to do as I asked, I led the physician to a corner of the woods away from prying ears. I didn't know what he wanted to say but I had a feeling that I was not going to like it. He looked around to be sure that no one was listening before he spoke.

"I think it was the same vampire that did this," he whispered. "It looks more disorganized and the scene is made to look like he lost control and ripped the head off but I don't think that's what happened. It was a clean cut. It wasn't

ripped out using teeth because if it was then it would have jagged edges like ripped skin.”

“What are you saying essentially?”

“I’m saying that whoever this is has to be exceptionally brilliant. They know what they’re doing. This is a game your majesty, I just don’t know what the rules are.”

I sighed. “Thank you for your help.”

He nodded and I watched him walk away. I waited until the guards finished clearing the scene before I got into the carriage to leave. I just wanted to sit with my mate and forget everything that happened. I couldn’t remember the last time I felt this exhausted and it wasn’t a physical thing.

As soon as I got to the palace however, I knew something was wrong. It wasn’t as if anything stood out, there was just an unease in my chest. I tried to mind link Camilla but her wall was up. I decided to go looking for her but I saw Christine with the girls.

“Where is Camilla?” I asked making all of them turn to me. Audrey ran into my arms but I could barely focus on her, my attention was on Christine and the guilty expression on her face. “Where did she go?”

“She took some guards to follow up a lead on the vampire king. I tried to convince her to wait for you but she said she would be back soon. I’m sorry.” I cursed and rushed out of the room. I knew Camilla made impulsive decisions but this topped the cake. I immediately up the guards while Christine told me where she went. If it wasn’t so frowned on I would have considered just rallied

permanently locking Camilla up in a room so she wouldn’t make crazy decisions and give me a heart attack before 40.

No words were spoken as we took off. I was burning with anxiety and fear. I kept trying to reach Camilla through her mind link but it was almost as if something was blocking it. I couldn’t get to her no matter how hard I tried. The sun was setting and I was getting increasingly paranoid. The night was their domain and I didn’t want her out while there was a crazed vampire on the loose.

We got to the mountains and I didn’t know where we were going but I trusted that we were going the right way. When I found the horses tied up and abandoned, I let out a sigh of relief. Even though Camilla was not with them, it filled me with a sense of relief that we were going the right way. I decided to continue on foot since we were already at the base of the mountain.

I could feel the curiosity from the guards with me. The sun had almost set completely and we were still nowhere close to finding them. The logical thing to do would have been to call off the search until morning but I had zero plans

of leaving Camilla out alone. There were only two choices- return with her or do not return at all.

“Your majesty, I found something,” I immediately rushed towards the sound of the guard’s voice. I didn’t know what I was expecting but it definitely was not the severed b*dy of one of our guards at the mouth of the cave.

It was an obvious taunt and I knew that we could be walking into a potential ambush but I was determined to go along with it regardless. I had two guards stay outside and keep watch while the rest of us went into the cave. It was eerily quiet and cold. I could have sworn there was no sign of life on the inside.

The guards kept close to me while we moved further inside. It was pitch black and I couldn’t shake the feeling that something was wrong. I thought we were going in circles until I heard a sound. It sounded like cackling and it was a few feet away. I decided to follow it until I came to the center of the cave.

There was blood all over the floors and it was empty save for a man seated in the center of the room. He had Camilla standing in front of him and she looked exhausted. There was a slight sheen of sweat on her face and her lips were tinged blue.

The man had his head down and when he looked up, I was taken aback by how red his eyes were. They were the color of freshly spilled blood and there was blood on his face and teeth as he smiled.

“I was wondering how long it would take for you to show up,” he drawled. “I expected you to be here earlier. Do you know how taxing it has been to wait for you? I even had to put out a welcome gift so you could find your way. I would have put the others but my men wanted snacks.”

I could tell that he was deranged.

“Let her go,” I kept my voice cool although on the inside, I was a raging storm. “Do

you are

“that’s rude. You didn’t even ask my name first. I would have thought that you wolves had better manners. I know dogs but you don’t have to act like it, I growled and took a step forward but he quickly produced a dagger. “Do not take a step closer. She is still in my arms.”

The vampire simply smiled when I froze.

“To answer your demand, I will let her go. I don’t particularly like girls. They taste different. You on the other hand, you’re more my type,” I growled and he laughed. “I should be the last thing on your radar, Ryker. Have you taken a good look at your mate?”

“What are you talking about?” I had barely finished asking when he pushed Camilla forward.

I didn’t think as I rushed to grab her. She collapsed in my arms and I realized

just how cold she was. She was shivering and she tried to speak but no words would come out. I looked up to see the vampire on the other end of the room. "What did you do to her?" the guards started moving forward but he held up a hand and clicked his tongue.

"Let me give you a little insight on vampires that might not be present in your history books. We can bite for three reasons," he paused for dramatic effect and began counting off his fingers. "One is to feed, the second is to turn and the third is to kill. Our venom has poison."

I immediately realized what he was saying and I gently turned Camilla's neck only to see two fang marks in her throat directly over her mark.

"If I were you, I would get that checked as soon as possible. After all, there is no cure."

"You ba stard," I looked up only to see that he had disappeared. I let out a roar of frustration and gently but quickly lifted Camilla in my arms. "Get the horses ready and make sure the physician is on standby by the time we arrive."

"Do you want some of us to go after him?" one of the guards asked but I shook my head.

"We will see again, sooner or later. My bet is on sooner."

Chapter 99

RYKER'S P.O.V

We rushed home with Camilla. I could barely remember the ride back, the only thought on my mind was her. I checked on her almost every second to ensure she was breathing. Her eyes were closed and her lips were still blue but each time I saw her chest rise and fall, it filled me with a sense of hope. When we got to the palace, the physician's son was already waiting outside with Christine. They had done me a favor and cleared out the back entrance to the palace and for that, I was grateful. I already knew the news would spread but all I could ask for was one day of peace and quiet where no one asked me stupid questions about her.

We rushed her into the physician's room which was thankfully devoid of dead bodies. She was placed gently on the bed and he immediately went to work looking over her. I stood by the door so as not to get in their way but to have a good view of what was happening. Christine stood by my side and I could see her hesitating between reaching out to me or staying on her own. At the end of the day, she decided to stand beside me in silence.

"What happened to her?" the physician asked and I swallowed deeply before responding.

"The vampire there said she was bitten," it took everything in me to keep my voice even as I spoke. "He said it was a bite to poison and kill"

The physician froze and turned to me. "Are you sure?"

I nodded. "Is something wrong? Talk to me."

"If that is what he said and he meant it then there are two things at play here. For starters, whoever that vampire was has to be almost as old as time itself. Most vampires don't learn how to poison until they are centuries old and even then, it isn't something they do often because not everyone masters the skill. Whoever you met has to be someone of a high ranking or vast importance."

"The king," Christine whispered and I turned to her. "Camilla told me she found something about the vampire king living in the mountains close to the palace. That's what she wanted to investigate. What if the man is the king?"

"It would make a lot of sense," the physician mumbled more to himself than anyone.

He continued mumbling to himself and while I wouldn't have minded on another day, there was something more important I needed to know.

"What is the second thing?" he looked confused so I explained. "You said there were two things at play but only mentioned one. What is the second?"

A dark look crossed his face and this time he didn't speak. He opened his mouth but no words would come out and I knew that whatever he would say, there was a very high possibility that I would not like it.

"Don't waste my time," I growled and he swallowed.

"There is no known cure for vampire venom. I am sorry, your majesty."

He began speaking about the bite but I couldn't hear him. There was blood rushing through my ears and I couldn't figure out if I was upset with Camilla or with the situation. All she had to do was wait for me and all of this would have been avoided. The more I thought of it, the more annoyed I got. I knew I was a second away from losing my cool so I forced deep breaths out of my lungs. When the vampire said it, I didn't want to believe it but hearing it again was like a wakeup call.

There was a pained gasp and it took me a second to realize it came from Christine. She had a hand over her mouth and I could see tears swimming in her eyes. I wanted to comfort her but I didn't know how so I did the next best thing and opened my arms to her. She wasted no time in wrapping her arms around me as so bs wracked through her b*dy.

In a way, she reminded me of Riley. They both cared too much although she had a harder time showing it. They also liked to pretend to be stronger than they actually were. I held her by her shoulders and allowed her cry while I turned to face the physician who was watching me intently.

"You don't look surprised," he began and I shrugged.

"I already knew," it felt like torture having to keep a straight face when my entire insides were burning.

Camilla had already gone through so much and now this. I knew from a young

age that the world wasn't kind but if there was anyone who deserved kindness from the world, it was her. Despite everything, she never failed to be a good person and all she got nothing but pain in return.

"Do everything you can," I told the physician and he opened his mouth to speak but I cut him off. "I don't care what happens but my mate must not die. Check your history books, hell, I don't even care if you have to find vampires and get answers out of them. I want her alive and healthy."

"Your majesty," his voice was soft. "Thousands before me have tried to get a cure. The venom is strong. Nothing seems to work against it."

"There's always a first time for everything."

He swallowed once he realized how serious I was and nodded. Once I was sure he understood what I was asking, I turned to Christine who had calmed down. "Come, we need to figure out what to tell Audrey. I don't want her seeing her mother like this again."

We ended up telling Audrey that Camilla would be gone for a few days without any other explanation. She asked a lot of questions but if there was one thing I was good at, it was avoiding questions. I left her with Christine while I went to speak with the guards. I knew there was no way to avoid telling the public about the vampires now especially since all the guards that Camilla took with her were dead but I wanted to control the narrative.

I found one of them outside feeding the horses and ordered for the others to be brought to me. It took almost fifteen minutes to get them all assembled.

They were all trying to keep brave faces but there were varying levels of hurt on their faces.

"I know you lost friends and brothers today," I began and a few of their masks cracked, "and for that, you have my sincerest apologies. Lives were lost today and they will forever be remembered as having a great sacrifice. I know we cannot cover up their deaths but discretion is needed when talking about it."

I watched their expressions before continuing.

"If people know where and who was responsible for their deaths, they might want to go there for vengeance and more lives will be lost," I was bluffing but I hoped it would be enough to convince them. "As of right now, all that needs to be said is that vampires are responsible for what happened. Do not give more information than necessary. Am I understood?"

They all nodded and there was a flurry of yes, your majesty. I started to leave when someone cleared their throat behind me. I turned to see one of the younger guards. He looked hesitant as he walked out of the line up.

"Will they be avenged at all?" he asked. "My brother was one of the men who died. I haven't found his b*dy yet. Will there be any retribution? Will their attacker go free?"

"I promise you that the responsible parties will die slow and painful deaths."

He was shocked by my words, they all were. It was rare for me to be anything but stoic in public. I waited to ensure that my words had sunk in before I walked out. I all but ran to the room I shared with Camilla and the moment I was within the safety of the four walls, I allowed myself to feel.

It wasn't until I saw her messy side of the bed and the books stacked up non her bedside table that everything hit me all at once. It felt like a band was being wrapped around my chest and it was getting tighter with every passing second. The reality that there was a possibility she would never be fine came crashing down on me. I couldn't accept it. It didn't matter if I had to go to every vampire den on my own to find out a solution, I was going to do it.

I walked over to her side of the bed and inhaled her scent. It did little to calm me down but it felt like getting a warm hug from her. I could clearly see her lying there and smiling at me. I could feel her skin beneath my fingers.

"She isn't dead, stop acting like she is," my wolf nagged. "She is going to come back. We will find a way." I realized he was right but I couldn't shake the sense of foreboding doom. I lay down on her side of the bed and just inhaled her scent. I knew I was replacing her scent with mine by lying there but I couldn't bring myself to care in that moment. I just wanted to be close to Camilla without having to see her looking sickly pale.

I managed to get five minutes of silence before someone knocked on the door. I tried to ignore it but then I heard Christine's voice.

"Ryker, they need you, I don't know what it is but they were asking for Camilla and she isn't," there was a crack in her voice and I sighed deeply.

I reluctantly stood to my feet and exhaled deeply. When I was sure that I was relaxed and there was no trace of my emotions on my face, I pulled the door open.

Christine stood there. "I'm so-"

"Take me to it," I said immediately. Duty waited for no man.

Chapter 100

I barely managed to get any sleep at night. As soon as I finished with Christine, I had to check on Camilla and I didn't leave her side until well into the early hours of the morning. I was barely able to sleep three hours before I had to get out of bed to deal with the elders. The news about the vampires had spread and people were flooding the palace gates with their concerns and fears. I couldn't help but wish that Camilla was here. She always took the edge off and it was easier to get through a long day with her.

The elders were already waiting in the council room when I arrived. I could tell they were looking for Camilla because they kept glancing at the door. Her

whereabouts was something I planned to keep under wraps for as long as possible. The people didn't need any more reason to go into panic mode.

"Will the Queen be joining us?" one of them finally asked as I took my seat.

"If she were then you would have seen her by now," I drawled. "She has other duties to attend to. Is there a problem?"

"I just thought she would be more concerned with the well-being of her kingdom and people. It should be a topmost priority."

"It is, that is why she is spending her time in a productive manner and not sitting here arguing with fools that lack brain cells," I shot back and his cheeks flushed pink. I was already in a shitty mood and he was making it worse. "I'm not someone you can push around, elder. I would tread carefully if I were you."

He bowed and took his seat at the edge of the room, as far away from me as he could possibly go. There was silence for a full minute before anyone dared to speak. I could tell that they were analyzing the room and the atmosphere. Contrary to what anyone thought, they weren't fools, they were just lazy and proud. I had no idea how Leonor put up with them for so long. I made a mental note to look up the history and find out if there was any way to disband or change them.

"The people are concerned about the vampire attacks. I was thinking it would help alleviate their worries if the Queen made an announcement telling them that the problem is handled."

"That will not be possible," I said immediately and his brows furrowed.

"Your majesty, it will help ease the people's minds."

"I know but I said no. Now, are you going to keep kicking a dead horse or will you come up with something else? I don't know why I bother spending so much time here when it never breeds anything productive. I would have better results if I spoke to my daughters."

There were varying levels of anger on the faces of the elders. If they had their way, they would have left me a long time ago, I could have bet that they weren't used to people speaking back to them. I wouldn't have been surprised if Leonor was the first person to do so. One of them opened his mouth to

speak and I waited to see if he would have the balls to say what they all wanted to but at the last moment, he closed his mouth and breathed deeply.

“We cannot fix this without the Queen.”

“You are not looking to fix it. You are looking to slap a cotton cloth over an open wound. If you wanted to fix it, you would have tried to find out something about the vampire attacking us. Have you tried that? Have you done anything to figure out how to stop the attacks?” none of them could speak. “You are the most useless set of people I have ever had the misfortune to encounter.”

There was a loud gasp. “We are the elders of the monarchy. This position demands respect.”

“I will give you respect when you earn it. Right now, you are as useful to me as a dirty dish rag. Get out,” they sat there staring at me in disbelief. Even on my worst day, I had never spoken to them like this before. “Did I stutter or would you like to be removed from the room?”

They stood to their feet as one and the person closest to me turned to speak. “We are some of the most powerful people in this kingdom, You do not want to make an enemy out of us.”

“Was that a threat?”

“It was an incentive,” he smiled looking somewhat pleased with himself.

I stood to my feet and at my full height, I towered over him. His smile faltered a little at that considering he had to crane his neck to look at me.

“Allow me to give you some incentive of my own. If you ever threaten me again, I will make sure that you leave this palace with nothing but the clothes on your back. You will be a pariah and you will be forced to live the rest of our life in those woods alone. If you truly are one of the most powerful men in the kingdom then you surely have enemies. I wonder how long it will take for them to get to you.”

He swallowed deeply.

“That goes for my mate as well. Am I clear?”

He gritted his teeth and bowed. “Yes, your majesty.”

They filed out after that and I watched them leave. I knew I might have taken it too far with the insults but I couldn't bring myself to care. My mate was in critical condition and I had no visible way to save her. The last thing I wanted to do was cater to the whims of old men.

I took five minutes trying to calm myself down before I began in the direction of the great hall to listen to the complaints of the people. I was almost at the door when I bumped into Christine. For the first time in a long time, I noticed that she was dressed up in an elaborate dress with a small tiara on her head.

"Where are you going?" I asked almost immediately. The last time I saw her dressed up was at Aurora's ceremony."

"I am going to hear out the people," I opened my mouth to speak but she cut me off. I used to do it for the Queen before she passed. When she was too busy, she would send me. You have a lot on your plate right now, Ryker. I can handle this one."

"Are you sure?" I asked and she nodded.

"A maid is with Aurora and if she cries, I will be notified. Audrey is doing her lessons right now as well. I am doing nothing, allow me be useful."

"Thank you," I whispered and she simply squeezed my hand.

She walked away without another word and I felt immense gratitude to her. Talking to people

had never been my strong suit, that was Camilla's thing. I preferred to go straight to action, I wasn't the kind of person who could alleviate people's guilt or worry.

Instead of going to deal with people, I decided to go back to our room. I retrieved all of Camilla's books and took them with me to the physician's room. He was in there with his son but I ignored them and looked straight at my mate. She was lying on the bed but she looked even worse than before. Her skin had a sickly tint to it and she looked like she was barely breathing.

"How is she?" I asked and they hesitated before speaking. That hesitation told me all that I needed to know.

“There are no improvements, your majesty. I am trying everything that I possibly can. I am using old remedies but nothing seems to be working.”

“Then you try again,” he began to protest but I cut him off. “Let me explain this to you in simple terms, physician, my mate is not going to die. You are going to do everything you possibly can and more to make sure that she walks out of this room healthy.”

“There is nothing more that I can do.”

“Then you find someb*dy else to do it, I don’t care whose effort it is as long as she is alive,” I shrugged effectively shutting him out.

Did I know that I was being unfair to him? Of course I did but I didn’t care. If getting Camilla back meant that I had to step in the toes of everyone in this palace then so be it. I didn’t care who I [pis s ed off in the process as long as I got her safe and sound.

I opened up the first book and began to read as I sat next to her. I faintly acknowledged the physician and his son doing their own thing in the background but I paid them no heed. Most of the books were long, boring and unhelpful but I kept flipping the pages in the hopes that I would find something that would be useful.

By the time I got to the third book, I was almost at my wits end. There was nothing on vampires or their bites. I couldn’t help but realize how incredibly st*pid it was for us to have enemies and not know a thing about them. It was a recipe for disaster and that incompetence could possibly cost me my mate’s life. I risked a glance at Camilla on the bed and just the thought of life without her had my heart clenching in a disturbing way.

I stood to my feet abruptly and walked out of the room without a second thought or word. I knew if I stayed, I was going to lose my cool and that was the last thing anyone needed. I started in the direction of our room knowing it was the only place that I was allowed to lose control. I hoped no one would bother me until I got there but unfortunately, I couldn’t even get that prayer answered.

A guard rushed up to me. He took one look at me and his steps faltered. He opened and closed his mouth repeatedly but no words would come out.

“Are you going to stand there gaping like a fish?” I spat and that seemed to snap him out of his stupor.

“Another b*dy was found, your majesty but this one is different?”

“How?”

“For starters, it is a guard and it was placed in the town square.”

Chapter 101

CAMILLA'S P.O.V

78%

I knew I wasn't dead but I was close to it. After Alastair bit me, all I could feel was pain radiating throughout my entire body. It felt like a thousand tiny needles were going through me at the same time. I couldn't move or speak at all and then everything went black. For a while, it was just black, like I was suspended in a limbo or something. I could hear everything that went on around me. I heard the physicians say that there was no cure. I heard Ryker when he whispered in my ears but I could not speak or even move until one moment.

I don't know how it happened but one second, I was in a limbo and the next, my hand was grabbed and everything came crashing down. I wouldn't be able to explain it even if I tried. I just blinked one moment and although I was in the darkness, I wasn't suspended anymore. It was almost like I was now aware of myself. A part of me knew that it meant I was slipping further into death but I couldn't bring myself to care when I noticed who was holding my hand.

“Mother?” I blinked a few times to be sure it was her but the figure in front of me did not change. She smiled softly at me and I couldn't help but throw my hands over her shoulders.

She had not changed one bit. Her hair was tied in a perfect chignon and she had on a dress of rubies. She looked happier than she did while she was alive and I was grateful that death was treating her kindly. She deserved all the happiness in the world.

“I wasn't expecting to see you around here soon,” she pulled back from me and then slapped the back of my head. “Maybe if you stop throwing yourself into bad situations then you wouldn't need to be here.”

“What are you talking about?” I mumbled as I rubbed the sore spot that she hit. “I didn't even do anything.”

“Camilla, darling, I have been watching every single one of your actions since I died; would it kill you to talk to Ryker every once in a while before you make a decision?” I opened my mouth to speak but she cut me off. “Don't answer that, we don't have a lot of time. I need to make this as quick as possible.”

“What do you mean?” Is something happening?”

“I shouldn’t be here. I was sent here by the goddess to speak to you. She thought it would be better if I was the one who came. There is only so much she can do

1/4

12:16 Wed, 10 Januoti

Chapter 101

before she upsets the balance of the world,” I was still so confused but I just nodded. “That vampire, Alastair, he has lived for longer than you can imagine. He was one of the first vampires ever created. To understand how to defeat them, you need to understand how they came to be.”

She led me to sit cross legged on the ground. I didn’t even realize there was a bottom because of how dark everything was.

“The vampires were created as a mistake. There were two witches who were in love. They were from different covens who were banned from ever relating with each other. They were both extremely powerful and everyone knew that if they got together, they would be unstoppable. They ran away so that they could be happy but they didn’t count on being betrayed. They were hunted like animals for sport and one day, while in the woods, the woman was cut down in the trees. The male witch felt her pain and he rushed over to see his beloved bleeding out on the forest floor.”

“He called out to the gods to heal her but they wouldn’t. The gods knew that what the covens feared was true. If they did procreate, they would be unstoppable. When the man realized that no one was coming to his aid, he decided to do something that no one should- blood magic. It was an old and forbidden practice because with blood magic, there is always a price,” she exhaled deeply before continuing. He brought his beloved back to life but for a cost- his soul. The man was never the same after that. He found that his canines had grown longer and he had an unnatural craving for blood. He didn’t realize what he had done until the gods visited him to tell him the punishment of his actions. He had accidentally made himself the first vampire.”

1

“What happened to his beloved?” I asked. “Did she leave him? Did they get their happy ending?”

“She didn’t leave him. She tried to help him control his urges and to an extent, she did. They were happy together until she died. At that time, he hadn’t learned the proper way to turn others. When she died, he went on a killing spree-before hiding in the mountains never to be seen again.”

When she finished her story, I couldn’t help but feel bad for the couple. If the gods had simply granted his request to heal his beloved then he would never

have needed to use blood magic. We wouldn't have vampires today and they probably would have lived a fulfilled life without bothering anyone. That was what they wanted in the first place.

"Things are not always that simple," mother said and for a second, I feared she could hear my thoughts but then she laughed. "I cannot read your mind, Camilla,

2/4

you are just an open thoulk. I cannon well you what the goudle Reared but I can tell you that be upset the balance when the theme a vampire. They live forever, they have a bine with no cure and we woday, there had been no opening for them to fix what had been broken"

"What are you talking abou? anked and the book both hands in mine.

"The wrong will be made right and the balance of the world will be offset. By blood it carne and through blood it will be made whole again"

I didn't understand what she was saying but it sounded very important. I wished f had a book to write it down in because there was a huge possibility that I was going to forget those words. I wasn't sure how long I was going to remain in the limbo for or if I was ever going to live again.

"You will not forget, just stop fretting and trust me."

"I am trying, mother, I swear I am."

"You have done so well in these past few months. There is not a single day that I have not looked down on you with pride. You make some of the most stu pid decisions known to mankind but you make them in love. I could never have asked for a better daughter or a better queen to succeed me."

She pulled me into another hug and I just sat there basking in the feel of her embrace. She still smelled like herself and she was warm all over. I didn't realize

how much I had missed her until that moment.

"I will have to go soon," she whispered and I wanted to protest but she cut me off. "There is one more thing that the goddess asked me to tell you. She said it would be immensely helpful on your journey. She said that you have to forgive your father"

"My father?" my brows scrunched. I had no ill will towards him. I wasn't angry with him in any sense so what did the goddess mean when by forgive him?

"I don't know the details, I just say what I am told. She said that your father would help you get to the bottom of everything. You just have to trust him and trust yourell"

As she spoke, her voice became more distant, I realized that she was somewhat fading away. I tried to hold onto her, I didn't want her to leave but it was almost like she was evaporating right out of my hands. She smiled softly at me when she realized how hard I was trying to keep a grip on her

Wed, 10 Jan Luna

Chapter 101

78%

you are just an open book. I cannot tell you what the gods feared but I can tell you that he upset the balance when he became a vampire. They live forever, they have a bite with no cure and until today, there had been no opening for them to fix what had been broken.”

“What are you talking about?” I asked and she took both hands in mine.

“The wrong will be made right and the balance of the world will be offset. By blood it came and through blood it will be made whole again.”

I didn’t understand what she was saying but it sounded very important. I wished I had a book to write it down in because there was a huge possibility that I was going to forget those words. I wasn’t sure how long I was going to remain in the limbo for or if I was ever going to live again.

“You will not forget, just stop fretting and trust me.”

“I am trying, mother, I swear I am.”

“You have done, so well in these past few months. There is not a single day that I have not looked down on you with pride. You make some of the most stupid decisions known to mankind but you make them in love. I could never have asked for a better daughter or a better queen to succeed me.”

She pulled me into another hug and I just sat there basking in the feel of her embrace. She still smelled like herself and she was warm all over. I didn’t realize how much I had missed her until that moment.

“I will have to go soon,” she whispered and I wanted to protest but she cut me off. “There is one more thing that the goddess asked me to tell you. She said it would be immensely helpful on your journey. She said that you have to forgive your father.”

“My father?” my brows scrunched. I had no ill will towards him. I wasn’t angry with him in any sense so what did the goddess mean when by forgive him?

“I don’t know the details, I just say what I am told. She said that your father would help you get to the bottom of everything. You just have to trust him and trust yourself.”

As she spoke, her voice became more distant, I realized that she was somewhat fading away. I tried to hold onto her, I didn’t want her to leave but it was almost like she was evaporating right out of my hands. She smiled softly at me when she realized how hard I was trying to keep a grip on her.

Chapter 101

“Let go, darling, we will meet again. One day, after your journey is over, we will meet again. Hopefully, in a place much nicer than this one. It sure does look like a drab here,” I couldn’t help but laugh in the midst of the tears that had gathered in my eyes. “I love-”

She disappeared before she could finish her statement but it didn't matter, I knew what she wanted to say and that was why I found myself whispering into the darkness. "I love you too, mother."

I was alone in the darkness once ore but this time, I was filled with some form of reassurance that I wasn't going to die. It didn't make sense that the goddess would go through all of that and have my mother tell me all of those things just for me to end up dead. It was that knowledge that had me standing to my feet and deciding that I was going to look for a way out.

hat I was going

I had no idea where I was going and I could barely see in front of me but I trusted that I was doing the right thing. I stumbled through the darkness blindly trying to find a way out but it was like an endless maze. I walked for what felt like hours. before I realized that I was not going anywhere. I let out a sigh of disappointment and sat back on the ground in disappointment.

"If you have plans to rescue me then this is a very good time," I called out into the darkness but I was greeted with silence. "I'm ready to go back now. I'm ready to live."

It was almost like the darkness went still. I felt the exact moment that the air went cold and everything stopped moving. I held my breath wondering if I had unintentionally triggered something and then I heard a voice. It was as clear as day and it was soft- barely over a whisper.

"Then live

you

shall."

Chapter 102

RYKER'S PO.V

I wasn't able to get to the town square before people saw the body. By the time I arrived, people were gathered around. It was so bad that the guards had to force through them to create a passage for me.

When I got there, I realized why they were gathered. The body was barely recognizable. There was a head mounted on a sp ike and the body was covered with blood and slashes that looked like they were made by claws.

One of the guards next to me had to rush into a bush to throw

up.

"Clear everyone out," I ordered. "I don't want anyone here who isn't a guard. The last thing we need is for the family to see him by accident and for f ucks sake can someone cover up the body."

Two guards rushed to cover the body with a cloth and one of them froze. He stood there immobile for a second before releasing a growl to feral that it shook the grounds. It took me a second to recognize him and I realized he was the one who spoke to me about his brother being missing. I didn't need to

be a mind reader to know that his brother was the one lying on the ground. "Get him away from here before he shifts and kills someone. I don't care if you have to knock him out to do so," I whispered harshly to the guards who were next to me and they rushed over to grab him.

They held him by his arms and dragged him away while the masses watched. If we weren't in such a cluster f u ck before then we were now. I could hear the whispers and for the first time in a long time, I had no idea what I was supposed to do or how I was supposed to fix it.

We spent the next hour cleaning up the town square and getting the boy packed

I didn't leave until everyone else had gone. I couldn't even if I tried. It was my duty to help them and I failed.

up.

"Your majesty," a guard spoke snapping me out of my thoughts and I turned to him. "The carriage is ready for you."

I shook my head. "Go on without me."

"Your majesty, the palace is so far away. Are you sure about that?"

"A run would do me some good. Fresh air has never hurt anyone."

1/4

12:17 Wed, 10 Jan na ॡ

Chapter 102

He didn't look convinced but he nodded and walked away. I waited until the carriage had disappeared from sight before I quietly walked towards the woods. I knew guards were following me at a respectable distance. I couldn't see them but I knew there was no way they would leave me alone.

I stripped out of my clothes and shifted immediately. It felt good to be in my work form. It felt like stretching after a long day of work. I made sure my clothes were carefully situated in my mouth before I took off running. I had no idea where I was going, I just let the wind lead me.

I ran until my limbs hurt and I felt like I was one with the wind. I ran until I felt like I couldn't move anymore and I stopped in front of a stream to drink some water. The air was crisp and quiet, the breeze rustled the leaves and the animals held their breaths.

I was used to the quiet where I was present. I was a predator, it was in their nature to be wary of me. I usually had my guard down while in the woods so it was a surprise when I heard the branch cra ck. My spine straightened and the fur on my back stood on end.

I looked up from my spot and scanned the trees for any sign of life but I couldn't see anything. I let out a warning growl hoping that whatever or whoever was lurking would be smart enough to run but to my surprise, the trees parted and a vampire stepped out.

Thankfully, it wasn't the same one who had bitten Camilla. This one looked younger and more inexperienced, it was obvious in the way he stood and walked.

"You shouldn't be alone here," it was obvious from the way he spoke that he didn't know who I was. "Don't you wolves know that the woods aren't yours anymore?"

He stalked closer to me but I kept my position. I wasn't going to attack him in the woods, I was in wolf form, it narrowed my space and gave him an advantage. Instead, I waited for him to step out and get closer to the stream. Once he was within reach, I jumped on him and pinned him to the ground. I snarled in his face and I saw fear cross his features. He tried to throw me off but I was much more experienced than he was. He opened his mouth and I knew he was going to bite me so in one quick move, I bit his head clean off his shoulders.

A part of me wanted to get rid of the body but another wanted to leave the body for the others to find because I knew there would be others.

I also didn't want to risk bumping into any more vampires. There was no guarantee that they would be as young or easy to defeat as this one. I ran in the

2/4

Chapter 102

direction of the palace without looking back and it wasn't until I got there that I realized I had left my clothes by the stream.

I couldn't go back there but I also couldn't walk into the palace naked. I had to mind link Christine to get me clothes and it took her less than ten minutes to arrive. She gave me the privacy to change and we walked into the palace together.

"When I saw the carriages without you, I was worried," she said under her breath as we walked towards the palace. "I thought that something had happened and my first thought was how I was going to explain to Audrey that she was going to lose both her parents."

"She isn't going to lose either of us," she hummed in disbelief and I couldn't exactly fault her because it was becoming harder for me to believe as well. "I needed some air, I needed to think."

"How did that work out for you?" she asked and I shrugged. She stopped in her tracks and turned to me. "Audrey is asking questions. The guards are asking questions and so are the elders. What do I tell them?"

"Nothing yet, I need more time."

"We don't have time, Ryker," she whirled on me. "We have maybe twenty four hours before we have to do something about this. We have to make a statement. Don't you realize how weak the palace looks when Camilla is

always attacked? The people have barely recovered from Frederick and now this.”

I knew she was right. I didn’t want to hear it but I knew. I had to breathe deeply to calm myself. She had every right to be upset because she was suffering just as much as I was. I was saved from having to respond to her because heavy footsteps rushed towards us.

I saw the physician’s son and fear gripped my heart. In the five seconds it took for him to reach me, I had already imagined a hundred different ways that he could tell me Camilla was dead. I even searched for our mate bond and I only sighed in relief when I felt it still pulsing between us.

“Your majesty,” he panted as he reached us. “You need to come right away. I can’t explain it.”

I nodded immediately and we rushed off in the direction of the room. I couldn’t help but conjure up all the possible worst case scenarios. I braced myself to see Camilla on the bed looking worse for wear but she looked... fine.

“What’s wrong with my mate?” I asked the physician who was leaning over her

3/4

Chapter 102

body.

He gestured for me to come closer and it wasn’t until I was beside her that he spoke. “What do you see, your majesty?”

“I see my mate,” I deadpanned. “I don’t have time for all of this. Tell me what you found out.”

He sighed and tilted her head to the side. I looked around trying to find something but there was nothing there. I opened my mouth to yell when it hit me- there was nothing. Just yesterday, there were two fang marks that looked poisoned.

“Did you find a way to heal her?” I asked and he shook his head.

“I think she found a way to heal herself. It is completely unheard of and it is quite, miraculous if I do say so myself. Her color is returning. I reckon that she will be back to normal in twenty four hours at most.”

“Are you sure?” I didn’t want to risk getting my hopes up only for them to be shattered on the ground like glass. “Will she truly be alright?”

He nodded and I felt a heavy weight lift off my shoulders. I sank into the chair next to her bed and held her hand. I was determined to be there when she woke up. I didn’t care if I had to sit there for the next three days. I just wanted to make sure that my face was the first that she saw.

The others must have realized my intentions because they quickly went off to do their own thing. I heard Christine sobbing quietly as she left the room but I didn’t care about her. My entire focus was on the woman in front of me.

I couldn't tell you how long I stayed there. I wasn't even sure myself but it happened sometime around midnight. The physician and his son had retired to their rooms but I stayed.

My eyes were on the window. I stared at the full moon in the sky and listened to the birds chirping when I heard that voice I hadn't listened to in days.

"It's a beautiful night, don't you agree?"