

# The Rise Of The King

## The Rise Of The King Chapter 36

-Vera-

\*Vera, are you up?\* I hear in my head.

\*Yup.\*

\*

\*Good! Could you come up here real quick?\*

\*I'll be right there.\*

Just as I had predicted. I didn't get any sleep last night. I simply stared at the ceiling until the sun rose at 5:30 A.M.

It took me some time to calm down after that vision. Thinking of Ellie Goldmoon and that sorry excuse of a man just made me so angry; at one point, I even felt my wolf come up to the surface, ready to fight whomever the heck he was. I had to try and think of anything else to keep my temper down,

It makes me so wildly angry that she had to go through that; it makes me even angrier that I couldn't do anything about it. If this is the Ellie Goldmoon I'm thinking of, and there is no other one to my knowledge, this is Noah's mother. She seemed so sweet, so fragile and charming. The idea of this man hurting her like that, repeatedly, is once again making my blood boil.

I get up quickly before my temper rises again, quickly splashing water on my face to help me calm down.

I put on some pants and a t-shirt, which is designated to be my travel outfit for the day and head out to Sofia's room. Once there, I knock on the door gently, careful not to wake the twins if they're asleep. \*Come in,\* I hear.

Slowly creaking the door open as to not make any noise, I step inside. Looking over to the side

of the room where the nursery is, the twins are in fact still sleeping soundly in their cribs.

"I didn't want to wake them," Sofia says, popping her head from her walk in closet.

I go to her, curious as to what she's doing.

This place is a mess. She's tossed almost every dress she owns into a pile in the middle of the closet.

"What are you doing?" I frown.

"You know the Goldmoons go all out, I have to dress to impress."

I raise an eyebrow.

"And this has nothing to do with a handsome yet toxic man by the name of Elliot?"

"No," she rolls her eyes, "of course not."

"Aha," I say, not believing her one bit.

Many years ago, when Sofia and I were teenagers, we visited the Goldmoons on official business with her father, who was then the Alpha of this clan. She developed a major crush on Elliot, the Goldmoons oldest son, and she swore he was her mate. Of course, by then she didn't have her wolf so there was no way to know if Elliot really was her mate, nonetheless she was obsessed with him and they dated for a few years.

Of course, the two clans were elated. They thought Sofia and Elliot would marry and the two packs could merge into one massive, powerful clan. It was a dream come true. That is until Sofia's wolf came and laid eyes on Alex. It was all down-hill from there. It's one of the reasons why Sofia's parents never truly accepted Alex as her mate; they had other plans.

"Okay, maybe. But is that weird? Like I'm married and I have two wonderful kids with the love of my life! But I just... I just \*need\* to make his jaw like... drop when he sees me, like, this is what you missed."

"Sof, \*you\* rejected "him, remember?"

"Yeah, and he was apparently so heart-broken he never took in a mate."

"You're kidding..."

"I'm sure not," she says, trying on dresses in front of her tall mirror, "what about this one?"

"That's the dress you wore to your Alpha ceremony, it's a little much," I say.

"Ugh, you're right," she tosses the dress to a side, bending down and digging through the pile of dresses in the middle of the room in case she missed one.

In the rack of dresses, one catches my eye.

I pull out a beautiful, satin black dress with thin straps and a v-neck. Simple, elegant, and incredibly flattering.

"Try this one on," I say.

She turns to me, contemplating the dress.

"You know what? I like it. I'm also still lactating so I gotta put these to work," she says, motioning to her breasts.

I chuckle.

I really did miss her.

"Did you know I never even actually rejected him? My dad had to call his dad to tell him that their little plan was off because I had found a mate. To this day. I can't forgive myself for being so rude, the man at least deserved a phone call." "I'm sure he understood. Sof. Especially considering that you found your mate. He had not chance."

"Yeah, but still. Despite the fact that I found Alex later on, I still feel like the connection I had with Elliot was real, at the time. Then, of course, nothing trumps what a mate makes you feel."

I smile, suddenly feeling sad as my mind wanders to Noah. After that vision I had last night, I feel the overwhelming need to be close to him.

Caught up in my own thoughts, I hadn't noticed Sofia coming closer to me, her gaze on my neck.

"I was going to offer to cut your hair before we go, it's grown rather long, but maybe we can do it after we return," she says.

I frown at her. Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

She takes me in front of a mirror and place my hair back, revealing Noah's mark on my neck. She also bears her mark in front of the mirror.

"A wolf's mark and a lycan's mark are quite different. I wouldn't want curious eyes noting just how different yours is and why. The Goldmoons hate lycans with passion."

I nod and she lets go of my hair. Because it's longer than I would normally wear it, it covers a great portion of my mark, which goes down into part of my shoulder and back.

"Oh, also, you're coming to that dinner with me, I packed a dress for you," she says, taking the black dress to her bed where she's packing her bags.

"We're only going to be there for a few days at most, is all of this necessary?" I ask, sitting on the bed beside her bags.

"Obviously," she says, then she pauses. "I know I don't have to tell you this, but you have to be very careful, V."

I nod, understanding why she's saying that. If my connection to lycans were to be discovered, it would be a huge problem. Not only for me, but for Sofia and the entire pack as well.

"I'll finish packing." I say, standing up. "I'll see you in a bit for breakfast."

"Sure."

She smiles at me and continues packing as I exit her room.

I make my way back my room, but really there isn't anything for me to pack. Instead, I take a quick shower, noting that the clock reads 6:00 A.M. When I'm done, I settle for organizing my duffel bag again, just to make sure I'm not missing anything. When I lift it off the floor where it had been placed yesterday, I hear a small 'clack' as something hits the wooden floor.

It's the small wooden box Elden gave me before leaving the Castle.

I pick it up, hearing something clonking around inside.

When I open it, I frown, baffled by the object.

How odd. Why would Elden give me this?

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After breakfast, a party of ten including Sofia, Thomas, and Jeremy are outside the pack house, getting "Are you ready?" Sofia asks me and I nod.

There's a feeling of apprehension blooming in my stomach, especially after my vision earlier today; fo my entire pack in danger; if my true intentions were to be found out, it could end my pack's relationsh "Let's go then," Sofia says, kissing both John and Rose on their foreheads as they comfortably sit on Al "Give me a call when you guys get there," Alex says, pecking Sofia on the lips after she's done saying g "I will," she says, returning the kiss.

With that, Sofia and I turn into our wolves in the privacy of the pack house, while the warriors turn ou "Let's get going. Sofia mind links us all when we join the rest of the group outside the pack. house. She's carrying both of her bags on her back, as I'm carrying my bag on mine.

\*Alpha,\*

\*Yes, Thomas?\*

\*I forgot to mention, the lycans insisted I give them a job while they're here, I have them training with Sofia turns her head to me, not saying a word.

\*You can use them for patrolling the border. Ezra and Colt are expert trackers, too, if that helps.\*

\*Trackers? We could use them, then,\* Thomas says.

\*Great, let's go,\* Sofia says, and we all take off in the direction of the Goldmoon pack house.

to leave for the Goldmoon pack house. Thankfully, the journey is rather short, half a day's worth in our wolf forms.

reason, it felt like a sort of warning. Not only is this mission one of the most crucial elements for our plan back at the Castle, but it's also putting Sofia and he Goldmoons.

mms.

to the twins.

rriors in the meantime, but I don't know what the best use for their skills is.

Instead of running full speed, we settle for a jog for now. We all run in silence, and I once again revel at the feeling of the forest and nature around me. Visit Job n i b.com to read the complete chapters for free. My wolf has been happy since coming back and having the freedom to run through the woods, but somehow, I feel like she's also feeling my uneasiness; I ca er being extra cautious.

Before long, we are making steady progress as we exit our pack's territory.

Since our pack, the Dark Moon Pack, sits at the border of our territory, the next pack house, the Goldmoon's, is relatively close.

Given that the Goldmoons and the Allens have always been friendly with each other, the proximity of the territories has never been a problem, but rather, a strategic advantage in the case of conflict with other clans; if it came to it, the Goldmoons could seek refuge at Dark Moon without a problem, and vice versa.

My wolf and I are so deep in thought that we don't realize when Sofia slows down to jog next to us.

"Are you okay?" she asks.

I turn to her,

\*Just a little nervous,\* I tell her, not revealing just why I'm nervous.

Sofia's wolf stares at me with those deep, yellow eyes, but says nothing.

She turns away, returning to leading the party as we make it closer and closer to the Goldmoon's pack house.

After a few hours and before we reach the pack house, my wolf already sees it through the visions of the forest. We're still several miles away, but already we can see wolves coming to us from all directions.

\*We have incoming. Five wolves from the west, seven from the north. More are leaving the pack house now, about 10, heading our way."

\*That's quite a welcome party, thank you Vera. Everyone, try your best to cover Vera, we want to keep her eyes hidden as much as possible but be discreet about it."

The loose formation we had been travelling in tightens, with Jeremy and I as the last ones in the group. Jeremy is the largest wolf in the party, he'll cover me just fine if it comes to it.

We keep running as we had, not altering our speed. After maybe an hour, we come into contact with the first group I saw approaching us.

Jeremy comes to my side, partially hiding me but making it look like this is our natural formation.

\*State your business in our territory!\* I hear the leader of the party ask Sofia, who is at the head of ours.

\*We come invited by Alpha Elliot Goldmoon, we are from the Dark Moon clan and we come to talk business.\*

\*Prove it,\* he says with an attitude and Sofia growls, loudly, her alpha aura seeping through.

I know she's doing it intentionally, and beside me, Jeremy cowers a little. The wolves from the Goldmoon pack also take a few steps back.

Without saying another word, Sofia orders us to continue, completely ignoring the scout's request and disrespect.

"Is her aura that strong?" I ask Jeremy, genuinely surprised that these wolves let us go without questioning us or making an attempt to stop us.

\*It's one of the strongest I've ever felt,\* he says, \*and I've been around.\*

I look at Sofia, impressed by my friend.

When we were younger, and even later on before I got my wolf, I never responded to her aura. She would even use me to practice it, but I would never 'submit' to her via her alpha aura. In fact, I could barely even feel her father's, which is saying something because he was one of the greatest alphas to ever exist.

I'm just surprised that even now that I have my wolf, I barely even notice her aura. Her mood however...

\*Sof.\* I begin.

\*I know, and I don't like it either. Can you see if the others are still coming towards us?\*

It takes me a minute to focus.

"They've stopped. We shouldn't intercept anyone else until we get to the pack house.\*

"Good," she says.

Our brief conversation ends like that. Sofia is probably in such a sour mood from the way we were just received, and I can't blame her. We are guests here, we were invited by the alpha himself, there is no reason why that encounter should have ever happened; unless there's something we don't know, and that's why Sofia is in a bad mood.

We continue running in the direction of the pack house, but now there's been a shift in the mood of our entire group as the warriors are very sensitive to their Alpha. The truth is, if we were truly welcome here, that scouting party would've been a reception party,

guiding the guests to their destination rather than questioning the purpose of our visit; they should all already be aware that we were coming.

After a few more hours, we finally reach the pack house. There is minimal security at the pack house considering this clan lies between two peaceful clans, and doesn't share a border with lycans.

Once we reach the main entry, a man greets us.

"Alpha Sofia, I presume?"

Sofia nods.

"Excellent. My name is Seth, I am Alpha Elliot's beta. Please follow me, I'll escort you to your rooms."

Still in our wolf forms, we follow beta Seth to the eastern part of the pack house, normally reserved for guests. [SEARCH the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.](#)

"Your warriors can stay here," he says, gesturing to a room with bunk beds and a single shower. Honestly, it's better than I expected. "Your beta, whom I assume is with you, will take the room next to yours, please follow me," he says, continuing on further into the corridor.

I stay behind, not following Sofia or Thomas into their rooms since this is where I'll be sleeping.

When I go in, all of the warriors have already shifted to their human form and are putting on clothes. I turn my head down slightly, avoiding seeing anything I wouldn't want to see, not that they'd care.

I go into the bathroom, quickly shifting and putting on clothes. Thankfully, all pack houses are designed for wolves, rather than humans, so the doorways and spaces are big enough for my wolf to fit comfortably in.

I stare at myself in the mirror, splashing water on my face, taking a moment to steady myself. I sigh, looking down at Noah's mark.

"I'll do my best." I whisper, lightly touching it before covering it with my hair and stepping out.

The uneasiness that settled in my stomach earlier is still here, making its presence known; even making me slightly nauseous.



My mission hasn't even began, and already, from the way we are being received, I feel like there's more to this visit than we had initially anticipated.

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When I step outside with my bag, I notice the guys have already chosen their beds, leaving me a top bunk bed all to myself.

"Hey," Jeremy says, "Thomas offered to give you his room if you wanted to be closer to Alpha Sofia."

I consider this for a moment as I put my bag on my bed.

"Thank you, Jeremy. But I rather stay here," I tell him with a smile.

Even if I am Sofia's best friend, I hold no rank within the pack, meaning I get no 'diplomatic' privileges when visiting another clan. If I did switch rooms with Thomas and it was found out, we could risk offending the Goldmoons.

He simply nods and heads into the bathroom while the other guys are resting on their beds.

\*Vera, can you come? I'm the last room down the hall to your left,\* I hear Sofia.

\*I'll be right there.\* I respond.

In a few short minutes, I'm knocking on her door.

"Come in," I hear.

"Hey," I say, coming in, "what's going on?"

She's sitting in the middle of her bed, her arms crossed, looking pissed.

"This is a beta room," she says.

I stay silent, waiting for her to continue because so far, I don't actually see what the problem is.

"Vera, this is a "beta" room," she explains, "they put me, the Alpha of their most trusted allied clan, in a \*beta\* room. This whole thing isn't sitting right with me."

"Maybe the Alpha room is being remodeled?" I say unconvincingly, trying to give the Goldmoons the benefit of the doubt.

"It isn't. It's only a few doors down. I saw the cleaning lady go in there. It's being used."

"Being used? You think they have another guest here other than us?"

"Yes. And it's a guest they consider to be more important than me."

I thought she was only being pissy because she didn't get the biggest room, but I have to remember we aren't children anymore. Sofia is the Alpha of her pack and if that's the case, if the room is being used for someone deemed more important by the Goldmoons, she has a right to be angry.

For any other Alpha coming to visit, it would be a deep sign of disrespect to not be placed at the Alpha guest room, particularly if it's a clan they're friendly with. In this case, our pack is not only friendly, we are actively investing in the Goldmoon clan by opening a clinic here; and still, they choose someone other than Sofia as their primary guest? Added to the fact that their warriors weren't even aware of our visit, which was planned ahead of time; something isn't adding up. "Do you think he's just being petty because of your history?"

Sofia is now serious; not angry, not offended or pouty, just serious. She's in Alpha business mode.

"No. I don't recall him being stupid, and if he dared risk offending me because of something that happened so long ago, this isn't someone I want our pack doing business with. Too emotional, too stupid," she says. "Who do you think they're hosting?" I ask, sitting on the bed beside her.

"I don't know, but we need to find out. Whomever it is, their business here must be extremely important for the Goldmoons, even more than ours."

We stay silent for a while as Sofia sits looking at the door, thinking.

"Oh, I almost forgot. I mind-linked Dr. Owens earlier. He'll be waiting for you at the new clinic as soon as you're ready, and please take this bag to him."

My eyes light up and I jump from the bed. This news instantly lifts my mood, replacing it with excitement. One of the main reasons for visiting the pack house was Sofia and the twins, of course, but also Dr. Owens. "Where's the clinic?" I say, maybe a little too excited.

Sofia raises an eyebrow.

"Southern portion of the pack house, it's a new building, hard to miss I imagine."

I take the bag hurriedly. It's quite heavy, but it doesn't matter.

"You weren't this excited to see me, just saying!" Sofia yells after me as I close the door and head towards the new clinic. I'm so excited I barely even notice how \*heavy\* this bag is, it feels like I'm carrying a literal ton of bricks. Once I reach the open courtyard in the middle of the pack house, finding the new building is quite easy.

I reach it after about 20 minutes of power walking through the pack house and everybody staring at me as if I'm crazy.

When I reach the building. I notice everyone hard at work, organizing the interior and placing all the equipment. It's a carbon copy of the clinic back home, so it's not difficult to guess where Dr. Owens will be.

I head to the third floor and walk past the clinic rooms and the nurse's station, which still doesn't host any nurses, a sense of nostalgia invading me.

I reach Dr. Owens's office, finding him organizing a bunch of papers into his archives.

"And here I was thinking you had taken a vacation," I say, walking in through the door and dumping the bag on the floor.

He looks up, a big smile on his face.

"Vera," he says, standing up and giving me a tight hug.

I hug him back, incredibly happy to see him again.

Dr. Owens is really the only father I've ever known, and I was touched to know, before I left for

the lycan Castle, that he considered me a daughter.

"It's been so long." he says as he holds me at arm's length, "you've changed so much."

I laugh.

"Well, I hope not too much."

"No, of course not," he smiles at me, "oh, you're just in time for lunch," he says, "come with me, I'll show you around."

"Oh, there's that bag Sofia asked me to give you, I don't know what it is but it weighs a lot."

"We can take care of that when we come back. Come, I'm starving."

We walk towards the courtyard once again and then take a left, leading us to the cafeteria. The cuisine varies from territory to territory, and I do vaguely remember the Goldmoons having the best desserts of all wolf packs. "Hey, Dr. Owens!" Someone approaches him as we are in line picking up our food.

"Oh, Amelia, hi. This is Vera," he introduces me, "she's here for a few days visiting from Dark Moon."

"\*The\* Vera?" Amelia comes closer to me, extending her hand, "it's nice to finally meet you, Dr. Owens has told us so much about you!"

I shake her hand and smile.

"All good things, I hope."

"Well..." says Dr. Owens and Amelia and I both laugh.

"You guys can sit over here, I saved you a spot."

Dr. Owens and I follow Amelia to a table off to the side that is partially empty.

"Amelia has been of great help in establishing the clinic, once it opens, she'll probably be the one in charge of the staff, if she accepts, of course," Dr. Owens says, beginning to eat his food.

"You are too kind, Michael, but I still don't know if I'll be the right fit for a clinic," she says, but notices my frown, "I'm a warrior, you see, I don't think I have the tact to run the staff at a clinic."

I was actually raising my eyebrow at her addressing Dr. Owens so casually, but I digress.

"Oh, I wouldn't worry about that. Dr. Owens is never wrong. If he thinks you're the right candidate, trust him. Besides, I can tell you from experience, your warrior training will be \* extremely useful with running the clinic; it's more like a warzone than you can imagine."

She laughs and takes a long look at Dr. Owens while he's busying himself with his meal.

I once again raise an eyebrow at this.

Perhaps Amelia has a crush on Dr. Owens? I mean she seems like a mature woman, it would be age appropriate.

She notices my stare and clears her throat, returning her attention to her food.

We continue eating, chatting here and there until Amelia politely excuses herself as she is late to the training grounds where she's in charge of the new recruits.

"She has a massive crush on you," I tell Dr. Owens as Amelia walks out through the cafeteria doors.

"Nonsense," he says, wiping his mouth with a napkin, "she's far too young."

"Now that's\* nonsense. She's what, in her forties?"

"Fifties," he clarifies, "far too young."

I snort.

"It's perfectly age appropriate."

"It absolutely isn't."

"Dr. Owens you're not \*old.\*"

We begin walking towards the kitchen with our trays.

"No, but I'm way older than her," I roll my eyes at him, and then it hits me. The sweet, nostalgic smell of those desserts I loved so much as a child. My mouth is watering already.

"If you don't drop it, I won't tell you where they are," he says with a mischievous smile.

I narrow my eyes at him.

"You would keep those desserts from me?"

"If you don't drop it, absolutely."

After a moment of consideration, I give in.

"Fine, no more mention of Amelia... for now."

"Good girl," he says, dipping below a counter in the kitchen and retrieving three desserts.

Oh, Goddess. The smell.

"Come, we have to hide them. There usually aren't any desserts left at this time so whomever was saving them can't know we took them."

We both giggle and leave the cafeteria, I almost feel bad for stealing these.

Almost.

We enter the clinic again and head straight to his office to eat the stolen goods. Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"This is amazing." I say, tasting the first crème brulee with that sweet, sugary top and then the soft, cool interior. It's the best thing I have ever tasted; perhaps Jeremy back at the pack house can recreate some of these desserts. We eat the rest in silence, unable to speak and relish on the taste at the same time.

"So," Dr. Owens says once we are done, "are you going to tell me why you're really here or do I have to guess?"

I sigh, setting my spoon down and getting ready to tell my story all over again.

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Vera- Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"So," Dr. Owens says, "are you going to tell me why you're really here or do I have to guess?"

"It's a good thing we have time," I say.

It's also a good thing that we have a private office to ourselves.

I proceed to tell him \*everything\*.

The coup on Alistair, Noah becoming King, the Council trying to force him to take a wife, the rogue invasions throughout the entire territory, Noah's true parentage and scary Alpha aura. I also tell him about me, of course; my lineage, my abilities, my wolf, everything I have discovered on the Witch Mother, my training. I even tell him how hard it's been to try to establish a clinic like the one we have at the pack house because lycans are so traditional and stupid.

After I'm done, I'm quite frankly out of breath.

It's the second time I tell this story in two days and even I find some parts of it hard to believe.

Dr. Owens stares at me for a long time, giving nothing away.

Several minutes pass, and he's still digesting the information as he asks me,

"So, I assume you are here because of Noah's parentage considering he's a Goldmoon?"

"Yes, we have to prove that he's in fact King Alexander's son. His lineage is not only respected by the lycans, it is regarded as the only bloodline fit to rule. If we can't prove he's a legitimate heir, the entire plan could crumble."

"I see," he says, deep in thought once again, staring at the wall.

Finally, after a few more minutes, he speaks again.

"The only archive room I have heard of is in the cellar. They converted part of the dungeons into libraries and storage; I think it might be a good place to begin your search. But Vera, I have to warn you, from what I've gathered in my time here, the Goldmoons despise the lycans. They still blame them for Ellie Goldmoon's disappearance and presumed death. And from what you told me, if she is indeed Noah's mom and she is diseased, they can never know that."

"But her husband was terrible, that's why she ran away. Ellie and Alexander were fated mates, Noah was born out of love."

"I believe you, my child, but you have no evidence."

I purse my lips.

I understand what Dr. Owens is saying, and I agree. I can't make wild allegations without any proof, especially because Ellie's marriage, from what I understand, was arranged by her family. If I were to claim that her husband abused her and caused her to run away... "Well, the best time to go down there is at night. There aren't any guards, but the entrance to the cellar is not hidden whatsoever. You have to go when the pack house is deserted. In the meantime, would you help me organize those books you brought me? They're for training the new staff."

"Oh! Sure. Is that what it is?"

I pick up the bag from the floor where I had left it earlier.

When I open it up, I notice it's all the guides and protocols from our clinic. No wonder it was so heavy.

"Most of these I will leave here only as a reference, since most of the departments we have back at our clinic won't be opened here until much later. For now, we are focusing on a first care department. Any challenging case will be deferred to Dark Moon for the time being."

I nod, agreeing that it's the best way to properly establish a clinic anywhere. If I could send my lycan cases to Dark Moon, I could focus on scaling the project down, leaving one emergency care wing for the time being while we build up to other departments. Time passes by quickly working with Dr. Owens. Despite the many months of not working together, we slip back into our old working habits in no time. We spent years perfecting this dynamic, and it works well.

While he sorts through his papers to categorize them by importance, I sort through them alphabetically. Then, we both create a system in the computer that is easy to understand and sorts the information based on key words. This makes it easy to understand and accessible to anyone trying to use it, especially people who are new to this field.

There's a lot of research that goes into being a doctor, and this system not only makes it accessible to anyone, it already sorts the information by relevance.

After several hours and many, many papers, we are almost done with our work.

He checks his watch.

"Oh, Goddess. Look at the time."

I turn my head up to the clock on the wall and it reads seven P.M.

"Already?" I ask, but it's always like this. We always lose track of time when we work together.

\*Vera, are you still at the clinic? We need to get ready for dinner.\*

\*Ready for dinner?

"They're throwing us a welcome dinner, as if that makes up for putting me in this room.\*

I can feel her rolling her eyes at this.

\*I'll be right there.\*

"Alpha Sofia?" Dr. Owens asks, noticing my glassy eyes.



"Yeah, she says they're throwing us a welcome dinner."

In that moment, Dr. Owens's eyes glaze over too.

"I see," he says, "well, we better get ready, then. This should be interesting."

We step out of his office and out of the clinic, each headed in a different direction once we reach the courtyard.

"I'll let our Alpha know where the cellar is so she can relay the information," he begins.

"Or..." I interrupt him and mind-link him, \*you could just let me know through here.\* I say.

He looks at me with a smile.

\*Even better,\* he says and gives me a quick hug, \*I'll see you soon.\*

\*See you soon,\* I say, walking towards the opposite direction to him to reach my room.

When I get there, all the guys that came with us are already dressed.

"Oh, Vera," one of them says, "Alpha Sofia was waiting for you in her room."

"Thank you," I say, noticing just how elegantly they're all dressed.

When I'm at her door, I mind link her,

\*Can I come in?\*

\*Of course! She responds.

When I walk in, her room is a mess.

So, this is why she wanted a bigger room; she wanted one in which all of her dresses would fit extended on the floor, I note sarcastically.

"I thought we decided on the black one," I say.

"Well, you know me, I can never have too many options," she says from the bathroom.

When she walks out, she's wearing the black dress we indeed had settled on, and she looks phenomenal. The dress is satin so it flatters her figure immensely. It's a tight bodice that hugs her curves and then flows to the floor, ending in a small tail. And she was right, her boobs look amazing. "Are you trying to give that man a heart attack?" I ask, pointing to her cleavage.

"Is it too much? I don't think it's too much. I mean, I don't own any dresses that will hide these, anyway. Besides, my other option is this," she lifts up a dress from her bed that has an open back \*and\* a slit to show her legs, "if I wanted to give him a heart attack, this is what I'd wear."

We both laugh and she continues to look at herself in the mirror, deciding on what to do with her hair.

"I think you should keep it down, it looks lovely."

She smiles.

"Thanks, I actually think I'll do that."

She turns to me,

"So, now, what are you going to wear?"

She squints her eyes, trying to picture me in one of the dresses she brought.

Of course, she's not actually asking me. It's a rhetorical question. She's always picked my dresses and style for these things; she actually enjoys doing it so I never opposed. Besides, if it were up to me, I'd show up in jeans and a t-shirt. "Ah, I have just the one."

She goes to her bag, pulling out another satin dress, only this one is forest green with a turtle neck.

I strip and put it on, already feeling like it's too much, even if it's less elegant than Sofia's.

"Do I really have to?" I complain.

"We are here for you, remember? You will \*not\* leave me alone with them during this dinner."

I purse my lips, saying nothing else because she's right. This is the least I can do.

I finish putting the dress on, feeling the smooth silk against my skin.

It's actually very nice.

It does have a turtle neck, no doubt to hide Noah's mark, but it also has no sleeves, so it gives me a nice silhouette. It also hugs my curves nicely, ending in a slit on my right leg. "Wow," I say, pulling my emerald necklace from under the turtle neck, "this is a beautiful dress, Sof."

"I know," she says, joining me in the mirror and admiring the dress, too. "Normally I would pull your hair up because it's so long but, all things considered," she eyes my mark. "Yeah, it's fine," I smile at her.

"Thank the Goddess your hair is thick, it really hides what the dress can't cover of your mark."

We both continue getting ready, putting on minimal make up.

"Ready?" she asks, "the guys are waiting outside."

"Yes," I say, taking one last look at myself in the mirror, feeling a little sad thinking the only thing I'm missing is my mate by my side.

We exit Sofia's room and the guys are indeed outside, waiting for us. As we make our way to the dining hall, Sofia walks first, followed by Thomas, and then myself. When we get there, there is a seating arrangement already in place. I am seated next to Dr. Owens, who is already seated at the table looking very elegant. Next to Dr. Owens is Thomas's seat, and next to Thomas is Sofia's seat.

"Alpha Sofia," someone calls her before we take our seats, "it is such an honor to finally have you here again."

It's Elliot, looking his very best in his suit and sleeked back blonde hair.

He comes close to her, grabbing her hands and kissing both of her cheeks.

This would have melted teenage Sofia, but not adult, mated Sofia.

"Alpha Elliot," she replies sweetly, politely, "on the contrary, thank you for having us."

"Nonsense. Of course, you remember my father," Elliot points to his side where his father comes forward to shake Sofia's hand.

"How could I not? I was young, but my father always spoke so fondly of you," she replies, shaking his hand.

"It's a great pleasure to hear that, your father was one of the best men I have ever known, and an even better wolf," he says. "Thank you," Sofia says, sincerely.

"And my mother, of course," Elliot continues, an elegant woman coming forward, taking Sofia's hands delicately in hers. "Of course," Sofia says, smiling warmly at her.

"Sofia, you've grown so much. I'm so proud of the young woman you've become."

Elliot's mother mimics Elliot's actions and kisses Sofia on her cheeks.

The pleasantries continue for a few more minutes as Elliot introduces his family and Sofia introduces us.

When Elliot introduces his grandparents, however, something catches my eye. Visit [Johnib.com](http://Johnib.com) to read the complete chapters for free. They have stayed seated far away, so I can't be sure of what I'm looking at, but his grandmother is wearing a pearl pendant around her neck that seems very familiar.

I stay focused on it, slightly squinting to perhaps get a better look at it as we all sit down, trying to pin point just why it looks so familiar.

Vaguely, I hear Sofia teasing Elliot about not giving her the Alpha guest room, trying to figure out who is currently occupying the room. But then, I feel it.

The hairs on my nape rise as a chill travels through my entire body, leaving me cold and with a racing heart.

That smell.

That aura.

That "presence".

Slowly, I turn my head to the entrance of the dining hall as I begin to sweat, sensing his arrival.

"Ah, here he is." Elliot says, his guest walking through the door, "I'm sure you, Sofia, as well as your entire pack, will also come to appreciate our guest and his ideas."

I gulp, my eyes glued to him in horror as he makes his way to the table.

It's him.

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## **The Rise Of The King Chapter 40**

-Vera-

He's aged since my vision, but there is no doubt in my mind that this is Ellie Goldmoon's husband. Everything from his smell to his aura puts me back in my vision. I'm starting to get nauseous.

"Vera?" Dr. Owens whispers beside me, putting his hand on mine, "Goddess, Vera, you're cold as a ghost. What's wrong?"

I shake my head, swallowing hard, trying to compose myself; I still have a dinner to get through.

"This is Alpha Samael from the Red Moon Pack; as you may know, the Red Moon pack is our neighbor to the south."

Alpha Samael approaches Sofia, extending his hand, but when Sofia goes to shake it, he instead takes it and kisses it. It's repulsive.

"Very nice to meet you, Alpha Sofia, I've heard great things about you," he says.

He doesn't even hide his shameless lingering stare on her neck, checking if she has a mate.

"Funny, I haven't heard anything about you," Sofia says, retreating her hand.

"Ah, well, hopefully that can change tonight," he says, walking back to his seat, right in front of Sofia.

Elliot clears his throat.

"Ladies and gentlemen, thank you all for coming here, and thank you Sofia, for coming here on such short notice." Sofia raises an eyebrow at him, "so now, please, let us enjoy this dinner our cooks have prepared. We can talk business later." \*Can you believe this clown?\* Sofia mind links me, \*\*thank you for coming on such short notice?\*

I can sense her getting annoyed and we haven't even began eating dinner.

\*I don't like Alpha Samael, Sofia. Be careful.\*

\*Oh, I don't like him one bit, either. I've heard stories of him.\*

\*He was Ellie Goldmoon's husband,\* I tell her.

She stays quiet for a while, looking at him.

\*Interesting.\*

With that, our conversation ends and the first course rolls in. It's a salmon dish; it looks delicious but I have lost all of my appetite.

For the rest of the evening and no matter what they put in front of me, I simply take a few bites here and there and roll my food on my plate for the time being.

Sitting at the same table as this man as he casually dines and laughs with the Goldmoons makes me sick; I would bet my life that they have no idea the kind of monster he is or just how he treated their daughter.

Ironically, the one seeming to entertain him the most is Ellie's father, Elliot's grandfather.

"It seems very unlike you to have no appetite, it's even rarer for you not to devour that dessert," Dr. Owens notes beside me as I'm merely toying with my dessert.

"I just think we had enough dessert this afternoon," I tell him with a smile, though I'm not sure he's buying it.

Once everyone is done with their desserts and the plates have been removed, Elliot stands up, drawing our attention.

"Now, to the real reason why this evening was planned in the first place." he says, "Alpha Samael, if you will."

I narrow my eyes at this. So, we were indeed brought here under false pretenses.

"Thank you, Alpha Elliot, and thank you, Alpha Sofia, for coming so quickly," I can see out of the corner of my eye as Sofia discreetly grinds her teeth. She doesn't like being taken for a fool, much less being used in this way. We didn't come here at their request, and to have this man believe otherwise is disingenuous.

Alpha Samael continues,

"As you all may be aware, or not," he says, sounding condescending. "there has been a coup in lycan territory. The previous king, the one who had held on to power for almost three decades is now gone, and with him, their unity," now I'm the one grinding my teeth, "I have also become aware that the new King, some... runt... is further crippling their kingdom, dividing all of them."

What the fuck is this man talking about?

Alpha Samael pauses, looking at us as if we should be impressed with his knowledge.

I'm slightly shaking as I close my eyes for a quick second to control my temper; things could get out of control very quickly if I don't considering that my magic is heavily swayed by my mood. [SEAR\\*ch the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.](#)

After Alpha Samael's pause extends, Sofia breaks the silence.

"Very... interesting... Alpha Samael. I fail to see your point."

He grinds his teeth. Clearly this is not the reaction he expected; maybe he wanted us to be too stunned at his revelation to ask questions.

"What Alpha Samael is trying to say, Alpha Sofia, is that this is the perfect opportunity to attack!" Elliot says.

Sofia frowns, looking between Alpha Samael and Elliot without saying a word.

"Do not dare speak for me, Alpha Elliot." Alpha Samael says, the tone of his voice an implicit threat. "I am perfectly capable of speaking for myself."

Elliot sits down, like a scolded child.

I guess it's very clear what the power dynamic here is.

"Alpha Sofia, it came to our attention that a few months ago you had lycan intruders come into

your territory, we want to avoid that happening in the future, in that way, we can protect you and your pack," Alpha Samael says.

I feel Sofia's temper rising.

"Those lycans were dealt with, Alpha Samael, as have many others that have dared cross us. Now, I'm not one to dance around the point, so I will be direct. \*We\* do not need your protection, and \*we do not take kindly to being pawns," she stares directly at Elliot, though he does not dare meet her gaze. "Now," she continues, "I would appreciate the same frankness from you, Alpha Samael, what do you \*really\* want from us?"

She's staring at Samael directly now, some of her Alpha aura seeping through to make it very clear that she's losing patience.

"We need to use your territory to plan our attack to lycan territory. It is the closest border to their Castle and will be the perfect strategic stronghold."

"No," she says, without a second to consider.

"Alpha Sofia, we will never have an opportunity like this again. Their kingdom is weak, we will be able to take over their entire territory and get rid of lycans once and for all!" Elliot's father says.

"Don't you mean you will finally be able to avenge your sister?" Sofia says coldly.

Now I can sense a shift in the mood of the entire room. Sofia has hit the nail on the head.

"I will not put my pack at risk for your personal vendetta," she says with finality.

"Your father would be ashamed," Elliot's father says, scornful.

"Yes," Sofia says, "of you."

She stands up, and with her, all of us do the same.

"Thank you, truly, for hosting us. It was great to see you all again. We will be leaving first thing tomorrow morning," she says, tossing the napkin that laid on her lap on the table.

Just as she turns, Alpha Samael speaks again.

"That would be very unwise of you, Alpha Sofia, I have spies within the lycan ranks and they are already planning an attack on your territory in retaliation for killing the trespassers. It's a matter of time before you come to us, begging for our help and protection." \*He's bluffing, he would know about me if he truly had spies inside,\* I mink link Sofia and quickly feed her information. Names, titles, everything.

"Is that so?" Sofia turns around, "tell me, Alpha Samael, are these spies of yours within the Council? Could it be Council member William of House Cerulean? Or could it be Council member Alcott? I hear he's not a fan of the current King. Or perhaps, Council member Caldwell? Hmmm... no? Then perhaps Eli, the King's beta?"

There is a pregnant silence following Sofia's comment, everyone clearly taken aback by her knowledge.

Alpha Samael purses his lips, not at all happy with having his bluff called.

"Unlike Alpha Samael, \*I\* actually have spies within the Castle walls. If \*you\* want to go ahead and wage a war you cannot win based on false pretenses, be my guest, lead your people to slaughter," she says, turning around and giving them her back as we all walk away with her.

\*Everyone, we will only mind link from now on,\* Sofia tells us all, \*keep your eyes and ears open. Vera, I'm sorry, you will only have tonight to look for the documents. We are leaving before sunrise, Dr. Owens, that includes you, too.\* \*Understood, we all nod.

\*Well, that didn't go as expected,\* Dr. Owens mind links me as we make our way down the hallway to our rooms.

As we reach the room where the warriors and I are staying, Dr. Owens grabs my arm and holds me at arm's length.



\*The door you are looking for is down by the main corridor, the one that leads to the kitchen. It is hidden behind a red curtain and is marked with a teardrop shape. Wait until midnight and be very careful,\* he says, giving me a hug. I hug him back.

When I enter the room, I notice one of the warriors sitting in the middle of the room.

"We will take turns keeping guard, just in case, he tells me and I nod.

I go into the bathroom and change into leggings and a fitted t-shirt, all black. It will help me blend in with the dark of the night as I make my way through the pack house. Leaving the bathroom, the night light has already been turned off and I crawl into my bed, waiting patiently for midnight.

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