

The Warrior's Broken Mate Chapter 17

The Warrior's Broken Mate Chapter 17

ALPHA Elias POV

Everyone in the pack understood that Lyra had only just been freed from the abuse she'd

endured. They didn't judge her for staying quiet, for keeping her distance. They gave her

space because they remembered what it was like to survive cruelty. Every single one of them -including Lenore-had once needed time to heal.

Looking back, I realize now that I gave Lenore too much attention when she first arrived at

the pack. I treated her with kindness and gave her trust too easily. That was my mistake. I

didn't see how it fed into her obsession. She started pushing away every female who got close to me, always trying to stake some invisible claim. But this time, she crossed a line she

couldn't come back from. This-this was unforgivable.

kept staring at her tear-streaked face, but all I saw was manipulation. Those weren't tears of guilt. They were tears of frustration-because she had failed.

Disgusted, I struck her again-this time across the face with my full strength. She went down hard, slamming onto the cold concrete. She clutched her cheek in shock, her lip split and

blood dripping freely from her nose.

"Elias..." she whimpered.

"That's Alpha to you," I corrected her coldly, my voice devoid of anything resembling mercy or

feeling.

Outside the cell, Alpha Alaric and Luke stood watching. Lenore glanced at them in a desperate bid for help, but they didn't move. Luke leaned casually against the bars

across the room, expression unreadable. None of this mattered to them. And I knew Alaric—he would’ve done the exact same thing if someone tried to harm his Luna. Hell, he wouldn’t have waited.

Lenore would be dead already.

Honestly, I was surprised at how much restraint I was showing.

“Alpha, please, I’m begging you. Don’t kill me,” Lenore sobbed, voice trembling with fear. “I wasn’t thinking—I lost control. I thought you brought her here to punish me... I didn’t know...”

“She’s my mate. Your Luna,” I snarled, stepping closer. “How the hell is that punishment? That’s the bond we live by. That’s what it means to be a werewolf. She’s the only one who matters to me now, and she’s lying in a damn hospital bed—because of you.”

1/5

< CHAPTER 17

More Rewards >

My fury surged and I grabbed her by the collar, yanking her upright. While she was still on the ground, I slammed my fist into her face—once, twice, again—until she was reeling.

By the time I let her go, her face was a mess of swelling bruises and bleeding cuts, but she was still breathing—barely.

“I didn’t have a choice!” she cried out suddenly, trying to stop me from continuing.

“What the hell does that mean?” I growled, releasing my grip on her shirt. She collapsed, her

body hitting the floor like a rag doll.

She lay sprawled on the ground, her face pressed into the dirt as she sobbed uncontrollably. Her words had turned nearly unintelligible, just fragmented cries of distress—but that last thing she said struck me. It didn’t add up. Why in the world would she ever think she had to kill her own Luna? I’d always known Lenore wasn’t stable, but this... this was on a completely

different level than anything I’d imagined.

“You had a choice!” I shouted down at her, my voice filled with rage. “You didn’t have to try and kill Lyra!”

“Yes, I did!” she screamed back at me, desperation twisting her face. “I didn’t have a choice! He was going to come for me—he said he’d find me if I didn’t do exactly what he told me to!”

I narrowed my eyes, taking a cautious step back. “What the hell are you talking about?”

She struggled to pull herself together, her breathing shallow and fast, but after a moment, she sat up against the wall. Her face was bruised, streaked with blood and tears, but her eyes locked onto each of ours—mine, Alaric’s, and Luke’s—with a fearful kind of determination. We were all watching her now, listening closely. It was clear there was more to this mess than we originally thought. I just needed her to spit it out.

“Start talking, Lenore,” I warned, my voice low and threatening. “Because I can drag this out for as long as it takes, and I promise you won’t like how I do it.”

She inhaled deeply, her shoulders shaking, and leaned her back against the cold brick wall

behind her.

“I went to the Crystal River Pack,” she began, voice trembling but audible. “I was trying to surprise you. I didn’t know you’d already left. And that’s when I met Alpha Thorne. He was the one who told me everything—that you’d taken his daughter away.”

I clenched my jaw, but said nothing.

2/5

< CHAPTER 17

More Rewards >

“He ordered me to bring her back to him,” Lenore continued. “And if I couldn’t manage that...

then I had to kill her. I had to make sure she didn’t make it past tomorrow.”

“Why tomorrow?” I demanded, frowning. The timing didn’t make sense.

“Because tomorrow is her sixteenth birthday,” Lenore explained, her voice barely above a

whisper now. “That’s when she’ll come into her wolf... and her royal powers. If Alpha Thorne

can’t control that kind of power, then he doesn’t want anyone else to have it either.”

I turned to look at Alpha Alaric and Luke, hoping for some reaction—shock, confusion, anything

1. g. But both of them just stared back at me, their expressions unreadable, cold. No surprise.

No outrage. Just silent understanding.

I looked back at Lenore, and something in me snapped. In one swift, fluid motion, I reached down, grabbed her by the throat, and with a burst of rage, I ripped it out clean. Blood sprayed

across the floor as I let go, dropping the torn flesh onto the stone at the same moment her lifeless body crumpled beside it.

“I’ll get someone down here to clean that up,” Alpha Alaric said calmly from behind me, like it was just another Tuesday.

Without a word, I turned and walked out of the dungeon, the blood still fresh on my hands. I was halfway down the corridor when Luke’s phone started ringing. I caught the name Dr. Eris from the screen before he even answered. Something about that made me freeze.

I pivoted and strode back toward him, snatching the phone from his hand.

“What happened?” I barked into the receiver, my stomach already twisting with unease.

“Alpha...” Dr. Eris’s voice came through, tight and unsure. “I’m not entirely sure how to explain it. But... Lyra’s gone.”

The air left my lungs. “What do you mean she’s gone?”

“I mean she’s not here anymore,” Dr. Eris said. “She’s missing. Her hospital room is empty- she’s just... vanished.”

Luke and I tore through the pack grounds on foot, running as fast as our legs could carry us, our only goal being the hospital. My heart was racing, panic flooding every inch of me as I stormed into Lyra’s hospital room. The place was swarming with people—warriors standing at alert, nurses rushing around with nervous energy, and Dr. Eris at the center of it all, her expression tight with stress. Everyone who’d been involved in Lyra’s care was there, but none of them seemed to have any answers.

< CHAPTER 17

More Rewards >

“What the hell happened here?” I snapped, shoving the door open with a loud bang that echoed through the room. A nurse stepped forward quickly, trembling slightly under my glare.

“Alpha... I don’t know exactly what happened,” she stammered. “I went in at around 12:20 to check her vitals, like usual, but when I walked in... she was gone.”

I whipped my head toward the wall clock—12:30 AM. It had just crossed midnight. That meant today was officially Lyra’s sixteenth birthday.

“It’s her birthday,” I said through gritted teeth. “I need access to the security footage. Everything you’ve got. I need to see if any of Alpha Thorne’s people showed up.” My voice was clipped, urgent, and the head warrior nodded, motioning for me to follow.

We made our way swiftly to the surveillance room, where they had screens showing live and archived footage of every hallway in the hospital. There weren’t any cameras inside the rooms for privacy reasons, just in the corridors, so we started scrubbing through the footage right outside Lyra’s door, minute by minute.

We kept watching. We went back further in time, triple-checked every second. But there was nothing. Not a damn thing. The recordings didn’t show anyone walking into Lyra’s room or out of it. Not even Lyra herself. It was as if she had vanished from existence—completely and

without a trace.

How was that even possible?

Security was thick right now. Warriors had been posted at every major entrance and hallway since Lenore’s incident. No way would anyone be stupid enough to try something here. But Lyra’s room was on the first floor. It wouldn’t take much effort to climb in or out through the

window

I bolted back to her room, shoving the door open again and going straight for the window. I inspected it thoroughly—it looked completely shut, no obvious tampering—but there was no lock. It was the kind of window that could easily be pushed closed from the outside.

“This has to be how they got in,” I told the room firmly, turning to face the others. “No one came or went through the door, that much is clear. The footage proves it. So someone used

the damn window.”

The Warrior's Broken Mate Chapter 18

The Warrior's Broken Mate Chapter 18

ALPHA ELIAS' POV

Luke walked over, arms crossed, eyes narrowed. “Well, whoever did it had a hell of a lot of guts. This place is crawling with warriors. Ever since Lenore was on the loose, we’ve had double the guards patrolling the grounds.”

“They used that as a distraction,” I said bitterly, staring out into the darkness beyond the window. “We were so focused on finding Lenore, so desperate to stop her, we let our guard

down when it came to Lyra. I let my guard down. You told me she didn’t even bother masking her scent when she left my house. She wanted us to catch her. She wanted all the attention

on her... so someone else could come in here and take my mate.”

The woods loomed just beyond the edge of the hospital property, clearly visible from the window. There was nothing blocking the path. No walls, no barriers. It would have been incredibly easy for someone to slip in, grab her, and vanish into the trees—especially if they knew what they were doing.

And Thorne? He definitely knew what he was doing. He’d had sixteen years to prepare for

this.

We hadn’t mated yet. We hadn’t marked each other. She wasn’t officially a member of my

pack. She hadn’t taken the oath. Which meant I couldn’t feel anything through the bond. No

pain. No fear. Not even a flicker of her presence. The mate bond, as it stood, was still one-sided. And I couldn’t use it to track her.

It wasn't the first time it had felt like this. After her surgery, when she was knocked out and

pumped full of sedatives, I'd felt this emptiness too. But this was different. This was far more

terrifying.

It didn't help me now. I had nothing. No direction. No scent to follow. No pain to guide me.

Desperate, I shoved open the window and leapt outside into the night. My feet hit the ground

and I started scanning the area immediately, sniffing the air, searching for any sign of her scent—but it was gone. Completely wiped.

I stood there stunned. There was no scent trail. Nothing at all. That wasn't natural. That was magic. Witchcraft. The only way to completely erase a scent like that was to use spells—and witches were outlawed. Werewolves weren't even supposed to associate with them. The council had banned any interaction long ago because of how dangerous they were.

1/4

< CHAPTER 18

More Rewards >

But clearly, someone had broken those rules. And if witches were involved, then this had just gotten a hell of a lot more complicated.

I set my jaw and started walking toward the woods, relying on nothing but instinct now. If

there was even the smallest clue—broken branches, footprints, scraps of fabric—I would find

1. it.

Luke followed right behind me, silent but present. Thankfully, we'd trained for this. We were

both expert trackers, and our warriors were trained the same. If it came to it, I could call in

the entire pack to search every inch of these woods. But right now, it was just me and Luke,

moving steadily forward in a straight line, scanning for anything at all that might lead us to

my missing mate.

She had only been missing for around twenty minutes, not even half an hour, and yet it

already felt like my entire world was caving in on itself. My chest ached like something vital

had been torn out of me, and my heart felt like it was being shredded into pieces with every

second that passed without her. It was unbearable, the suffocating sense of loss. I felt like I

was already unraveling, like my sanity was slipping away one heartbeat at a time. I needed to

know where she was—desperately. I needed to know that she was safe and unharmed. I

needed to hold her in my arms again, to feel her warmth and know she was real. The urge

was stronger than ever before, more intense than when she hadn't been ready for me. Now I

didn't just want her—I needed her, in a way that was agonizing.

Luke, walking beside me through the trees, didn't have to say a single word to let me know he

understood. He could read the panic on my face and the desperation in my steps. He knew

exactly how worried I was, and though he kept silent, he was tracking just as fiercely, just as relentlessly. He understood that this wasn't just about duty or responsibility anymore. It

wasn't about Lyra's bloodline or the possibility of royal ties. This was about something much

deeper—because she was my mate. And losing her now, right after fate finally brought her to

me, would destroy me from the inside out.

And I swear to the Moon Goddess herself, I was going to kill the bastard who took her from me. That much was absolute. No mercy. No hesitation. My fury was simmering just beneath the surface, ready to explode. I don't think Luke had ever seen me this on edge before. Not even close. And considering we'd known each other since we were five years old, that said a lot. We had literally grown up together. We'd survived being beaten and broken by our fathers together. But even those memories—those painful, scarring moments—couldn't compare to the sheer devastation I was feeling right now. This was different. This was personal.

2/4

< CHAPTER 18

More Rewards

After a while, Luke widened the space between us just a little, spreading out to my left. I

could still see him clearly through the trees, but now we were covering more ground between

the two of us. The search was methodical, focused, but the anxiety eating away at me made

it feel painfully slow.

A bitter part of me started to question if I had acted too rashly by killing Lenore so quickly.

Maybe she had known something more—some tiny detail that could have helped me. But

then I reminded myself that Thorne never would've trusted her with critical information. She

had been more than happy just to do his bidding and help him get Lyra out of the picture. She

wouldn't have asked any questions. Not after he told her to eliminate Lyra. She wouldn't have

needed to know the plan—just the kill order.

The longer we kept combing through the woods, the more help we started to receive.

Warriors arrived in waves, forming a long, staggered line along the edge of the forest so that

we could scan a much larger area more efficiently. No one knew which direction they'd gone.

Once they'd reached the woods, they could've veered off anywhere—north, east, deep into the

heart of the territory. It was pitch black, and the darkness certainly wasn't making things

easier for us. If it wasn't for werewolf night vision, we'd be blind out here. That was the only

advantage we had right now—our enhanced senses.

Two hours passed. Two full hours of nonstop searching. And still, not a single clue. Not even

a broken twig or a dropped item. I could tell that the longer this went on, the more doubt began to creep into the minds of the warriors around me. Some were beginning to believe that we wouldn't find anything—that we'd hit a dead end. But I refused to accept that. I turned

to them, voice like steel, and told them straight: they could leave if they wanted. No hard feelings. But I wasn't going anywhere. I would search these woods until my legs gave out,

until I had no voice left to call her name. I wasn't stopping. I wasn't returning home without

Lyra.

At one point, I finally stopped and pressed my palm against a tree, taking in the scene around me. Ahead of me, behind me, and all around was dense forest. Endless trees, thick underbrush, and silence. This entire region was vast and wild, riddled with caves and hidden places to conceal someone. I had everyone searching every possible location—nothing was too small or insignificant to be checked. I wasn't taking chances. No crevice would be left

unexplored. Not on my watch.

I could see the exhaustion in the movements of my warriors and in those from Alpha Alaric's pack who had joined us. They were getting tired—some dragging their feet slightly, their breathing labored—but not one of them complained. No one said a word about stopping. No

3/4

< CHAPTER 18

More Rewards >

one asked to leave or return to their duties. They all kept moving, silently determined to stay

out here with me, sharing my mission, my desperation.

Then, as a faint golden glow began to spread through the canopy above us, I realized the sun was rising. Hours had passed. I had lost track of time completely. I hadn't slept, hadn't eaten, hadn't thought of anything except Lyra. I turned to the others and told them again: they could go if they wanted. They'd given me their all. But when they saw that I wasn't budging, that I had no intention of retreating, none of them moved either. They stayed.

"Alpha." A voice suddenly reached into my mind through the pack link.

"Yeah," I responded immediately, halting mid-step, eyes scanning the area, trying to pinpoint who had reached out. But they were too far for me to see them through the trees.

"North side of the territory," the warrior said, his voice focused.

My heart jumped. "What did you find?" I asked sharply, adrenaline spiking again.

"Luna Lyra," he replied.

The Warrior's Broken Mate Chapter 19

The Warrior's Broken Mate Chapter 19

ALPHA Elias's POV

More Rewards >

I launched myself into a full sprint toward the North side of the territory, pushing my legs harder than ever. The trees blurred past me, my sole focus on reaching where my

warrior said he'd seen Lyra. The others quickly fell behind, their footsteps fading. But I couldn't slow down -I had one goal, and nothing else mattered. I had to get to her. The warrior who contacted me hadn't told me what condition Lyra was in—not a word, not even a hint if she was alive.

That terrified me.

He didn't say if she was breathing or already gone. For all I knew, he'd found her lifeless and was too shaken to speak it aloud. There was something off in his voice—uncertainty and hollowness, as if he'd seen more than just her. My heart hammered, each beat echoing panic. My mind kept conjuring the worst—her beyond saving. I tried to push those thoughts aside. When we fear the unknown, our minds go dark. This was no different.

The lack of information only fueled my fear. I was in the dark, the silence eating me alive. If he'd said anything in a different tone—calmer, more certain—I might've prepared for what was coming. He didn't. So whatever he saw wasn't ordinary. The idea of a world without Lyra shattered something deep inside me. She hadn't accepted our bond yet, but I'd already committed—fully. I didn't think I could go on if she wasn't here.

I needed her. I loved her already—deeply, permanently. She'd survived pain no one could imagine and still stood strong, fighting. No one in my pack had endured what she had, and

yet, she survived.

Lyra was the strongest person I'd ever met. She was my other half, the one fate set for me. I knew I wouldn't survive her loss—not emotionally, not spiritually. Nothing else mattered—only Lyra, my sweet, broken, beautiful girl. I couldn't live in a world without her.

Just thinking about losing her brought tears to my eyes. But I refused to cry until I knew what I was facing. I had to keep running. The territory was massive, but finally I spotted one of my warriors standing stiffly by a large pine, tense,

I skidded to a halt beside him, chest heaving, my eyes locked on his face. But he didn't look at me. He was staring straight ahead, unmoving. I followed his gaze, and after a few heartbeats he finally turned his eyes toward mine. Without saying a word, he lifted one arm

and pointed into the forest. I turned my head—and that's when I saw her.

1/4

C CHAPTER 19

More Rewards

There was a woman standing alone in the middle of the trees, her light brown hair long and rippling in the wind. She was wearing a white dress—lightweight, almost ethereal—and it

flowed around her like mist. It wasn't a hospital gown. It wasn't what I remembered. This was

something different. Something strange. I blinked, trying to process what I was seeing. Could

that really be Lyra?

I took a cautious step forward, heart hammering in my chest, and instantly caught her scent

on the breeze. It hit me like a wave—yes, that was her. No doubt. Her scent hadn't changed. But how had she ended up out here? And how had she done it without leaving a trail for us to

follow?

I moved toward her slowly, afraid that if I made a sound she might disappear. And as I got

closer, I realized she wasn't the same girl I had last seen in the hospital bed. She wasn't the fragile, malnourished figure her father had reduced her to. She looked... different. She had her

back to me, but I could already tell—she looked stronger. Her posture was straighter, her frame healthier. She wasn't painfully thin anymore. Her hair wasn't stringy or lifeless like before—it was full, soft, and stunning, catching the sunlight as it blew behind her. And even from behind, she looked taller—more solid somehow. Like she had transformed.

She'd always been small—about five foot five. Dr. Eris once said her height was due to years locked away, deprived of sunlight and proper care. But now, illuminated by the golden light

through the trees, she looked two or three inches taller. That alone made my breath catch.

I glanced at my warriors, expecting disbelief. But they all stood silent, staring at her too. We

were frozen by the same question: Was this real? This radiant, transformed Lyra was unlike

anything we'd seen. She was so different from yesterday that our minds could barely keep

1. up. There was no logical explanation.

I moved toward her, mesmerized. As I stepped, a twig cracked beneath my boot. She twitched, then turned gracefully to face me. For a moment I stopped breathing. There she

was. Lyra. But not the Lyra I'd known. Her features were no longer sunken. Her face was healthy, her skin glowing, her green eyes locked onto mine with new confidence. She was the

most beautiful creature I'd ever seen.

My breath caught as our eyes met. The wind shifted. She closed her eyes, breathed in my scent, then smiled. As if something clicked, she began walking toward me, drawn just as I

was to her.

When we were finally standing face to face, barely a few inches separating us, I couldn't stop my eyes from roaming her features. I wanted to take in every detail of her transformed

2/4

< CHAPTER 19

More Rewards >

appearance. But she didn't flinch. She didn't glance away or look down like she normally would. No, she held my gaze with unwavering confidence, her green eyes fierce and calm all

at once. She had never done that before. Not once. And then... she said it.

"Mate," she whispered, the word barely louder than a breath—but it landed with the weight of

the world.

It was the word I had been silently, desperately waiting to hear since the moment I laid eyes on her. A soft, almost disbelieving chuckle escaped my lips as a wave of emotion surged

through me. I tried to keep my tears at bay, but a few slipped past my defenses, hot and

unrelenting as they streaked down my cheeks.

Lyra lifted one delicate hand and gently brushed the tears from my face. Then, without hesitation, she rose onto her tiptoes, wrapped her arms carefully around the back of my neck,

and leaned forward to kiss me. It was a soft kiss, tentative and gentle, as if she wasn't sure what kind of response she would get. Maybe she was still scared I would pull away, or maybe she wasn't sure if I still wanted her now that she'd changed. But her lips were warm against mine, and for that brief second, everything else in the world fell away.

She didn't linger in the kiss. She pulled back slightly, still standing on her toes, her arms lightly resting on my shoulders as she looked into my eyes once more. This time, I reached out and wrapped both of my arms securely around her waist, pulling her close, drawing her against me. And then I kissed her again—this time deeper, fuller, pouring all the longing, all the hope and heartbreak and love I had bottled up into that kiss. It was everything I had dreamed of but never dared to act on, terrified that moving too fast would scare her away. But she wasn't scared now.

I still didn't know what had happened to her during the night—how she ended up here in the middle of the woods, or how she had changed so completely in such a short time—but whatever it was, I liked it. I loved it. And I was never going to let her go again. That much, I swore to myself.

Eventually, I forced myself to pull away from her kiss, just far enough to catch my breath, and that's when I realized something else. All of my warriors—every last one of them—were gone. They must have slipped away quietly to give us this moment alone. But I couldn't even be bothered to think about them. My eyes were still locked on Lyra, soaking in the impossible beauty she had become, the confidence she now radiated. She wasn't afraid anymore. She wasn't timid or shrinking into herself like yesterday.

“How?” I finally managed to whisper, my voice hoarse with emotion.

3/4

< CHAPTER 19

More Rewards >

“I don’t really know,” she said softly, her gaze still locked to mine without wavering. “I woke up

here.”

“You look so different,” I murmured, almost in awe. “You’re beautiful.”

She smiled then—soft, shy, but real. “I don’t know what happened,” she repeated, her voice

still barely above a whisper.

“It’s alright,” I told her, pressing my forehead gently to hers. “I don’t care what happened. I only care that you’re alright. You can’t even imagine the things that were going through my

head.”

“I’m sorry,” she whispered, lowering her arms and wrapping them gently around my waist, holding me close.

“I don’t blame you,” I murmured. “I’m just so damn happy you’re alright.”

“I’m fine,” she said, her voice quiet but sure.

I turned, keeping one arm securely wrapped around her waist, and we started walking slowly together through the trees, heading back toward the town. But as we moved, I caught her glancing briefly over her shoulder—just a flick of her eyes—and then she looked straight ahead again.

The Warrior's Broken Mate Chapter 20

The Warrior’s Broken Mate Chapter 20

Lyra’s POV

When the clock hit midnight on what I didn’t even realize was my sixteenth birthday, I opened my eyes and found myself standing alone in the forest.

I had no idea how I’d gotten there. The last thing I could recall was Lenore attacking me at

Elias’s house. I could faintly remember being in a hospital, but nothing beyond that. My

hands instinctively went to my stomach, and I looked down—it wasn't as bony as it had been. It was still relatively flat, but at least my ribs didn't stick out like they used to. Somehow, I'd put on a bit of weight. How was that even possible? How long had I been lying in that hospital bed? And the dress I was wearing—it was white, flowing, absolutely beautiful, and

the way it moved with the breeze made me feel like I was floating. I looked around and realized it was deep into the night. The full moon glowed high above me in the sky, and yet I

had no memory of walking into the forest.

I looked down at myself again and could feel something was off. I didn't feel frail anymore.

When I checked my hair, it looked thick and full and glossy. For a moment, I truly thought I

might have died—that maybe I was in some kind of afterlife. Because this wasn't how I ever

looked or felt when I was human. I felt alive in a way I never had before. Strong, capable, even

powerful.

"Yep. That's my doing," said a voice suddenly, catching me off guard, and

trying to locate where it came from.

"Who's there?" I called, confused.

I spun around,

"You're never going to find me that way," the voice said again, playfully taunting me. I froze for a moment and then tilted my head up toward the moon.

"Oh my god," I whispered in disbelief.

"That's right. I'm in your head. You're stuck with me now. No getting rid of me, not ever," she replied with amusement.

"What's your name?" I asked, still stunned.

“Noir. It’s nice to finally meet you, Lyra. I’m your wolf,” she said, full of bright, vibrant energy. and I could actually feel her moving inside my mind.

“I have a wolf,” I repeated, more to myself than anyone else.

1/5

CHAPTER 20

More Rewards »

a very

“Exactly. And you better hope we get along, because otherwise, it’s going to be miserable life for both of us,” she said, making me laugh a little. I already liked her. She was cheerful, full of life, and strangely comforting. I had a feeling I actually needed someone like

her in my life.

I glanced down at my body again, still unable to wrap my head around how much I had changed. I had a wolf now, so that meant I wasn’t dead. But how could I have transformed

I

this drastically in less than a single day?

“I can answer that for you,” a calm voice said from behind me, and I turned around to see two

women standing there. I recognized Rowan instantly. Both of them were wearing dresses

similar to mine. Rowan’s was a soft, pale blue, and the other woman’s was a stunning gold.

They were absolutely gorgeous. Breathtaking, even.

“Mom,” I said, barely able to speak.

“Hello, Lyra. You did it,” she said, her voice warm and proud..

“I did what?” I asked, completely lost, glancing between the two women.

“You made it to your sixteenth birthday. You stayed strong. You survived,” my mother said

gently. But I was still staring at the other woman. She was smiling at me with the same pride

my mother had. I had never seen her before, but I just knew who she was the moment I looked at her.

“Isolde,” I breathed, shocked.

“Yes, my dear,” she answered without breaking her serene smile. I didn’t know what I was

supposed to do in that moment, but I knew she deserved the utmost respect. So I lowered

my head and bowed. She was the Moon Goddess—the highest being in all of werewolf existence. Showing one’s neck to someone of higher rank was the greatest sign of respect,

and right now, that’s all I could think to offer.

I stood there in silence, overwhelmed. I didn’t know what to say or how to act. I was face to face with the Moon Goddess herself. My thoughts were a total mess.

She was sacred to every werewolf alive. Why would someone as divine as her come directly to me? I wasn’t special. I wasn’t anything.

“That’s not true, Lyra. You are far from nothing” Isolde said gently, and it hit me then—she could hear every one of my thoughts. I stared at her, speechless, unsure if I even needed to speak aloud. If she could already hear my thoughts, what was the point of saying anything?

2/5

<CHAPTER 20

More Rewards a

“Lyra, all of this was always meant to happen the moment you turned sixteen. No matter how

hard

your father tried to crush you,” my mother told me, her voice firm but warm.

“So... that’s the reason he tried to keep me locked up. Or maybe even tried to kill me,” I said

slowly, realization sinking in.

“Exactly. He needed to make sure you never learned to use your power. He wanted to be the only one with control over it. And the last thing he would ever want is that power ending up with the Vanguards,” she explained, her expression grave.

“Mom... did Dad kill you? Or was that just something I dreamed?” I asked, uncertain whether I

wanted to know the answer.

“It was a dream, but one that showed the truth. I had to make sure you saw it. I needed you to

understand that it wasn’t your fault. You didn’t kill me, Lyra. And even if I had died that way, I

would never blame you for it,” she said tenderly.

“How old was I when it happened?” I asked quietly.

“You were only a few months old. But Lyra, that detail doesn’t matter right now. There are more urgent things we need to explain to you,” she said, her tone shifting to something more

serious.

“What is it?” I asked. I noticed them exchange a look, and the tension between them told me whatever was coming next, it was important—and something I’d have to do alone. I looked between them, waiting for them to speak.

“You have to stop your father,” my mother said, her voice steady with determination.

“What’s he trying to do?” I asked, hesitant, almost afraid to hear the answer. I knew my father’s cruelty too well. If he was truly planning something, it had to be terrifying.

“He intends to change the fate of every werewolf on Earth. And not for the better,” Isolde answered grimly.

“Can’t you tell me exactly what he’s planning?” I asked, hoping for more clarity.

"I'm afraid we can't. That's all we're allowed to say. You simply need to stop him, Lyra. Prevent him from ever harming anyone again," she replied firmly.

I could feel my heart pounding violently in my chest as they spoke. Fear twisted inside me. This was the man who had tormented me for fifteen long years, who had broken me piece by piece. And now I was supposed to stop him? I wasn't sure I could.

3.5

CHAPTER 20

More Rewards

"We believe in you. We know you can do it. You're the only one who can," Isolde said with

conviction.

"But how? I mean... I know I have a wolf now, but that's not enough. He has one too. And if he

sees me, he'll kill me without hesitation," I said, my voice trembling.

"You need to be extremely careful. We never said this would be easy or safe. But you have

time to prepare, and you need to use every bit of it," my mom said, her gaze serious.

"I will. I promise I won't fail you. I won't let either of you down," I said. My mother stepped

I

forward and wrapped me in a warm embrace.

"Your warrior has found you," she whispered softly in my ear. Then she stepped back beside Isolde, and in the blink of an eye, they both vanished.

I stood there, staring at the empty space where they had just stood, unmoving, overwhelmed,

until a sudden snap of a twig behind me brought me back to the present. I turned around

slowly and saw Elias coming toward me, a strange expression on his face.

He clearly recognized me, but he could also see something had changed. Something drastic

had happened to me—something that had shifted overnight, or maybe in even less time than

that. And when the wind shifted direction, his scent hit me, and Noir immediately started to

stir inside my head.

“Mate, mate, mate,” Noir chanted, her voice wild with excitement. I felt my feet moving toward him, slowly but surely.

He seemed unsure about what he was seeing, but it didn’t make him retreat. I had been afraid

that what happened to me might scare him off, but it didn’t seem to.

When I got close enough to him, I said, “Mate,” and the way his face lit up told me everything I

needed to know. He was thrilled that I recognized him as mine. I leaned forward and gave

him a soft kiss. That’s when I noticed the warriors beginning to disperse. And then Elias kissed me again, this time more urgently, more possessively.

“Come on. Let’s go home,” he said, turning around and wrapping an arm around my waist. Together, we started walking back through the forest, heading toward the town.