

TLOA Lycan 421

Chapter 421 - THREE YEARS OLD

"NO!" Kace's heart skipped a beat as he rushed toward a certain little girl, who was trying to climb the stairs the moment no one saw her.

Lana walked out of her room when she heard Kace cried and found the big guy was carrying Hope to get down from the stairs.

"Why she likes to climb the stairs?!" Kace tugged his hair in frustration as he saw Lana on the second floor, staring down at him and Hope.

"I don't know. She just likes it." Lana shrugged her shoulder and walked back to her room, there was something that she had to finish because Serefina needed it this evening. "I will be in my room if you need me." She said before turned on her heel and left the two people there.

"I want stairs!" Hope tried to wriggle her small body from Kace's grip, but it was definitely a futile attempt. "Bad brother! Climb!" Hope pounded her small fist on Kace's chest because he didn't let her go.

"No! It's dangerous!" Kace objected and carried her to the kitchen. He was making a lunch for Hope when the baby girl rushed out of the kitchen. "And I am not a bad guy."

"Bad! Bad!" Hope kept pounding her small fist on Kace and started to cry.

"You will fall." Kace sighed helplessly, he didn't like it when his baby girl was about to cry like this. "You have to eat."

"No eating." Hope covered her mouth with both of her hands and shook her head as her pigtail swung with her movement. "No eating."

"No, you have to eat." Kace put her down on her chair and brought the bowl that filled with cereal in front of her. "Eat, okay?"

Yet, the little girl frowned and stared at Kace with her teary eyes while pouting her lips, ready to cry her heart out.

"No. No. No. don't cry..." Kace became panic and squatted down in front of her. "Sst... sst..."

However, the more anxious Kace became, the more tears that spilled from her beautiful eyes until her cry echoed inside the kitchen.

"Lana... Lana..." Hope sobbed pitifully until her face turned red.

Seeing his mate was crying, Kace tried to coax her and wiped away her tears. "LANA! LANA!" Even Kace cried out to call the other girl.

"What? Why? What happened?" the sounds of Lana footsteps could be heard when she rushed down the stairs and ran on the corridor.

The first scene that she watched was; Hope, who was crying with tears streaming down her cheeks and Kace, who seemed about to cry too.

"What is going on here?" Lana was confused. action

"Lana..." Hope raised both of her arms, asking the girl to carry her. "Climb..." She said between her sobs.

Lana immediately approached the little girl and picked her up from her chair. "What happened to her?"

"She wants to climb the stairs... but, it's dangerous." Kace pouted and grimaced when Hope didn't even want to see him.

"Why is she like that?" Kace spoke pitifully. "Why she doesn't like me? I just don't want her to be hurt..."

At this moment, Lana really wanted to face- palm herself because she couldn't understand, how the legendary Kace Donovan, who managed to survive the great war and led their kind along with his two other brothers, managed to act all pitiful, childish and over sensitive like right now.

Just because the rejection of three years old child.

"Kace. Please. You don't live up your name as the great Lycan." Lana glared at Kace. This man was totally clueless about how to handle his little mate.

Well, Lana couldn't blame him. Kace was only allowed to meet with Hope once a year and every time he came, Hope would forget about him.

She was only a child after all.

And Kace over protective nature didn't help the case either. He would freak out about everything while Hope was an adventurous little child.

Lana could already see it when Hope would always be curious about her surroundings.

"Bad brother!" Hope cried on the crook of Lana's shoulder.

"Nooo..." Kace howled when he heard Hope's words. "No, baby no..."

Lana sent Kace a look that was saying; stay there.

Kace, who was about to approach Hope and explain why he did not allow her to climb the stairs, as though Hope could understand him, stopped on his track and stood still obediently, watching as Lana coaxed her.

"What do you want baby?" Lana caressed her back and nuzzled her head. The gesture that Kace envied.

"Climb." Hope raised her head and pointed at the direction of the kitchen door, she wanted to climb the stairs.

Indeed, this was her favorite now.

"Alright, but after that, you have to eat." Lana tried to compromise with her

"No." Hope shook her head and covered her mouth again.

"If you don't eat, then I will not let you climb the stairs." Lana's expression turned stern.

"Climb the stairs!" Hope pouted her lips, though her tears had stopped, but her long lashes still wet. She looked like a stubborn little girl now.

"No eat, no climb the stairs." Lana also didn't back down as she looked straight into her eyes. "Okey?"

Hope lowered her eyes and snuggled into the crook of Lana's shoulder as she replied sullenly. "Okey..."

That little banter made Kace's eyes wide in surprise. How Lana could have a conversation like that?

"Do you want to ride a wolf?" Lana asked again and gave Kace a look.

"Wuulf?" Hope raised her head again and bit her lips as she nodded excitedly before a smile bloomed on her face. "Hope wants wuulf!"

"You can ask him. He can show you a wolf." Lana nodded at Kace, who was looking at her eagerly. "He can give you a wolf."

Hope turned her attention toward Kace, thinking, while the later waiting for her reaction and the moment Hope raised her arms toward Kace, his heart swelled with happiness as he carried her.

"Wuulf for Hope?"

"I will give you everything, baby."

Chapter 422 - FOUR YEARS OLD

"Wolf!"

The first thing that Kace heard the moment he stepped inside the house was the sound of his mate's voice. action

The little girl ran along the corridor and opened her arms widely as she approached Kace.

The smile on Kace's face was so bright that put the sun into a shame. Out of instinct, Kace bent his body and caught her small body, which almost bumped onto him.

"Hai, my baby girl!" Kace picked her up and raised her as high as his arms length that made Hope giggled excitedly.

"Wolf!" Hope screamed. "High! High!"

Kace spun on his heels a few times before he put Hope on his shoulder as the little girl grabbed his dark hair.

Lana was standing not too far from them while Serefina, like the other time Kace's visit, she was nowhere to be found.

Yet, Kace didn't care much about it. The witch must be taking care of something. The business that Kace didn't want to know or got involved with.

As long as Serefina kept this place protected and Hope was safe and sound, he didn't mind at all, moreover Lana was always there, to take care of Hope.

Only now Kace was able to see it, that took Lana with them had this much benefit. If it was only the witch, Kace was very sure that Hope would be neglected.

"I want to see wolf." Hope laughed when Kace spun once again.

"Don't do that, she just had her meal." Lana warned Kace as she reached out her arms to carry Hope down from Kace's shoulder.

Yet, the baby refused and clutched on his hair even tighter. "No. Hope wants wolf!"

Hearing that, Kace was beyond happy. The last three years when he visited Hope, she would forget about him and Kace would start all over again to approach her.

However this year, Hope was actually waiting and running toward him. Kace was surprised, but very please nonetheless.

It must be because last year, he had shifted right in front of Hope into his white beast, just like her favorite doll. That event must be deeply engraved in her mind and made her remembered him.

Kace even let her to ride the white lycan and the beast was so elated as well.

"Yeah! Hope wants wolf! Hope will get wolf!" Kace cooed, but he put her down, didn't want to upset her little stomach because of what he did.

At the side, Lana could only shake her head because of the Lycan's antics and left both of them alone just like Kace's previous visit, he would call her if he needed something.

She had to finish the task that Serefina was given to her.

On the other hand, Kace took Hope to the back yard and shifted into his beast, spending all day playing with Hope and let the little girl to pat him or tug his ears.

There was a moment when Hope was running too fast and the beast was late to catch her, in the end she hurt herself.

"Hope is hurt..." Hope whined as she showed the big wolf her dirty palms, which she used to support her body when she fell. "Hope dirty..."

There was a small frown between her eyebrows when she looked at her beautiful dress got ruined. The beast nuzzled her hands and licked her palms.

There were small cuts on it and that made the beast whimpered. He didn't like it when she got hurt. No matter how small was it.

Hope didn't cry, but her glistening eyes indicating she would.

However, when she felt the wet and warm tongue swept on her palms, it felt very ticklish as she giggled and drew back her hand.

"It tickles." She hid her hand behind her back, but the smile on her face only last for a while because the moment she watched her dress again, she looked sad.

"Let's change your dress." Kace pat her head.

Hope blinked her eyes when she watched Kace was squatting down on the same spot where the white wolf was there a second ago.

She was still thinking that Kace and the white wolf were two different entities. But, she understood that whenever there was Kace, there would be the white wolf.

"Wolf?" Hope tried to look over Kace's shoulder as if the man before her eyes could hide the huge beast behind his back.

"The wolf will come back to play with you again, but before that, let's clean your wound first, okay?" Kace spoke softly at her.

"Okay." Hope nodded and stretched out her arms, asking to be carried and Kace fulfilled her wish gladly.

Hope wrapped her arms around Kace's neck and buried her face on the crook of his shoulder as she smelled his scent. She liked it.

This man smells like a chocolate, milk and cream which is so sweet and Hope likes it.

Not to mention there was a tingling feeling every time she touched him, it wasn't unpleasant feeling, but quite the opposite.

Seeing the little girl warmed up with him, Kace sighed in relief, he caressed her back as he carried her inside the house.

His steps were so light as he whistled, enjoying the moment.

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After Kace cleaned her up and changed her clothes, Hope ran toward the table beside her bed and pulled a box out from there.

"Hope wants hair braids." She gave the box toward Kace and hopped on the bed. She crawled and turned her long black hair to him.

"Braids?" Kace was staring at the box in her hands that filled with colorful hairbands.

"Hurry. Hurry. Hurry..." Hope urged him while hugging her white wolf doll.

However, even after half an hour passed the braids that Hope wanted had not done yet. The little girl stared at Kace with scowl on her cute face.

"I am sorry baby girl, but I don't know how to do it..." Kace cowered under his mate sullen expression.

He made a mental note to learn it.

Chapter 423 - FIVE YEARS OLD

"So, where will you go next?" Kace was braiding Hope's hair skillfully while the little girl was playing with her white wolf doll and another doll that resemble her; long black hair, fair skin and eyes that were as beautiful as black tourmaline stone.

"Red river city." Serefina didn't shift her attention from the book that she was reading, flipping through the pages, she has been looking for something from that odd huge book, which looked so old.

"What?" Kace snapped his head and gave Serefina a questioning look that demanded for answer. "That is Torak's territory."

"Exactly." Serefina murmured, still not taking away her eyes from the book on her laps.

"No way!" Kace objected, his voice a little bit harsh and made Hope turned her head curiously, but when she saw he was smiling sweetly at her, the little girl resumed playing with her dolls again.

Yet, the moment Hope didn't see it, Kace's expression turned rigid once again.

"Why do you want to live in his territory?!" Kace hissed, trying to not raise his tone and startled Hope.

"Why do you always take risks?!"

"Why? Torak is not Jedrek, he didn't give an order to hunt down your mate." Serefina answered casually as she leaned her back against the backrest of the sofa.

"Yes." That was true but, "we don't know if he wants a mate or not." Kace was trying to make his point across. "He has never shown any interest to find his mate and when he knows that Jedrek was crazy enough to issue an order to finish the resurrected of the guardian angel, he did nothing."

"But that also doesn't mean he agrees." Serefina countered.

"So, do you want to gamble in this?" Kace could feel that this conversation would go nowhere except another complicated discussion.

"I always win the bet." Serefina shrugged, glancing at Kace's direction before she resumed perusing her book.

"Tell me why do you insist to go to his territory?" Actually, rather than Jedrek, Kace would choose to deal with Torak. At least his second brother wasn't as crazy as the first one.

"The same reason why I chose this place five years ago." Serefina frowned because she couldn't find whatever she was searching on her book.

Kace tied the end of the braid of Hope's hair and kissed her head as the girl touched her braided hair and a satisfied smile appeared on her lips before she resumed to play again.

"Do you think Torak will not able to find you?" Kace questioned her.

"Why he has to care about me? I will be his last priority." Serefina said in matter of fact tone.

Torak was busy with his pack and his company, moreover Serefina and Torak couldn't be said was in good terms, thus there was no reason for him to be alarmed by the witch visit.

However, it didn't mean that Serefina would come knocking on his territory with open arms and revealed herself. Of course, she wouldn't do that.

Serefina would stay in his territory without being noticed.

"What if..." Kace was about to retort the witch's statement when she cut him off icily and closed her book with irritation in her eyes. action

"Look!" Serefina glared at Kace. "I was the one who found her. I care about her being just like you do. do you think I will let her die after what I had been through to find her?"

Well, though Serefina neglected Hope thoroughly and completely let Lana to take care of the little girl, but she would always ensure her safety.

"Don't be ridiculous, pup." Serefina sneered and Kace growled at her. "Moreover, Jedrek will be more careful in his brother's territory, since both of them are very territorial."

Despite Kace wasn't one hundred percent agreed with Serefina's idea, he disagreed with most of her idea though, but what she said was true.

"She needs to go to school also." Serefina added.

There was only one school in this area and Serefina didn't want Hope's presence drew unnecessary attention from people from northern coven.

It was fine as long as she was inside this house, but out there, there would be more than a handful of witches and vampires that would start to realize about her original.

Being in Torak's territory would be a better choice for now.

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Kace put Hope on her bed after the little girl was tired enough chasing after his beast's tail. It was her favorite. She would rub her face against his soft fur and giggle when it tickled her skin.

The beast purred in delight when he felt his mate was happy.

Kace tucked the blanket under her chin, put the wolf doll beside her and made sure the temperature in her room wasn't too cool or hot, so she could sleep comfortably. He brushed away a lock of her hair and caressed her chubby cheeks.

Kace was sure, he could stay all night just looking at her. Hope's sleeping face was very serene that made Kace forget all of his trouble.

However, he had to go and when the night was getting dark, he walked out of Hope's bedroom and walked inside his car before driving away from that house.

There was no need to notify anyone about his leaving, because Serefina would know it the moment he stepped away from the foyer.

However, the thing that Kace didn't know was that a certain someone was staring at the car that he drove away.

Lana was standing behind the window in the other room next to the leaving room, her brown eyes looked complicated.

"Stop it."

Lana nearly jumped in scared when all of sudden Serefina's voice rang from behind her back.

"What?!" She snapped at the witch as she turned her body to face her, whether it was because she felt guilty or surprised that caused her strong reaction.

"I have been there and felt that. So, my gentle reminder for you; stop it."

"I don't know what you are talking about."

"Of course you know."

Chapter 424 - SIX YEARS OLD

"Today is not her birthday. What are you doing here?" Serefina just woke up because she heard a noisy sound from outside of her bedroom.

The three of them moved to red river city and bought a fancy apartment with four bedrooms. The witch wouldn't settle with something that less than this though.

They moved three months ago after taking care of all the documents that they needed to stay in that city. Especially documents for Hope to enroll her in school.

"What am I doing here?" Kace was braiding Hope's hair while the little girl was eating her breakfast. "Of course to see her on the first day of her school, right baby?"

"Right!" Hope grinned at Kace excitedly. "Will I ride your wolf to school?"

Serefina shot Kace a dagger look when she heard that. Kace had recklessly showed the beast to Hope and now, he had to deal with it so the little girl wouldn't say anything.

"Baby, don't talk about wolf to other people, okay?" Kace ignored Serefina's warning glare. He knew what he had to do and Hope was big enough to understand this.

"But, why?" Hope tilted her head cutely, her long lashes fluttered like a butterfly and made Kace wanted to pinch her cheeks.

"Because this is a secret." Kace put his forefinger in front of his lips. "This is a secret between the two of us."

"But, why?" Hope wanted a detail explanation about why she couldn't tell anything about the white wolf. She wanted to show it to her new friends.

"Because..." Kace furrowed his eyebrows, trying to find a way to explain it to her. "Because if you tell anyone about the white wolf, then the white wolf doesn't want to play with Hope again."

Hope's face turned sad when she heard that, but of course, there would be another question that she wanted to know. "But, why?"

That single line of question was her favorite words recently. She had been asking about everything around her and would ask Lana or Serefina relentlessly.

And now that line of question started to give the lycan a headache, yet he still loved the way it sounded from her nonetheless.

"Because the white wolf is very shy and he doesn't want to befriend with other child." Kace wiped away dripping sauce from the corner of Hope's lips with his thumb.

"But, I am also a child." Hope was being critical now. "But, white wolf wants to play with me."

"Yes, because white wolf only like Hope. He doesn't like to play with other children." Kace was very patient when he talked to her. "Moreover, your friend will not be able to see the white wolf."

"But, why? I can see the white wolf." Hope's eyes grew big with this information and Kace chuckled by how cute she looked now.

"Because the white wolf belongs to Hope only, therefore, only Hope can see him, except from Serefina and Lana." Kace explained it softly.

"But, I want to show the white wolf to my new friend." She pouted her lips as her fingers playing with her pendant.

"I am sorry my dear, but white wolf doesn't want it." Kace looked apologetic. "Okay?"

Hope lowered her head, at first she was so happy when Kace came this morning, usually he would come after long time.

And while Kace away, Hope couldn't play with the white wolf.

"After you return from school, let's play with the white wolf shall we?" Kace persuaded the sullen Hope as he brushed his hands on her tender cheeks. action

Though the gaze on her eyes were still upset, but she nodded anyway. "Okay."

"This is our secret, okay?" Kace asked again just to make sure his baby girl would slip a word about the wolf.

"Okay."

"Good girl, now finish your breakfast and I will drop you to your school." Kace kissed her forehead and stood up to face the annoying witch. "Let's talk somewhere."

Serefina rolled her eyes and let out an irritated sigh as she followed the lycan to the balcony.

"What is it now? Are you using your chance to meet her next year, that's why you are here?" Serefina didn't bother to hide the fact that she was annoyed by seeing Kace now.

"Stop that sarcastic comment, we have another important thing to deal with." Kace leaned his back against the rail.

"What? I have enough trouble already, don't you dare to add it on my plate." Serefina crossed her arms and glowered.

"This is already on your plate witch." Kace bit back. This would be their usual bickering if she was in her mood swing, which was almost every time. "Beelzebub has been looking for Hope since our encountered six years ago."

Gluttony was one of the seven devils. He wouldn't let go his prey once he set his eyes on it, especially children and women.

This past six years, Kace has been distracting Maximus about his whereabouts or Serefina and Hope, along with that, he was also chased after Beelzebub, yet she was so cunning and was hard to follow.

Serefina didn't look surprised when she heard that, it was indicating that she already knew it and it didn't surprised Kace either.

"What you will do about that?" Kace frowned.

Since they were in this different territory and away from the protection of the spells from the northern coven, it would be easier for the devil to track down his mate, the thought only managed to boil Kace's blood with anger.

"You could do nothing about it." Serefina shrugged her shoulder and was regarded a hard look by Kace.

"What do you mean we can't do anything about it?" Kace was beyond annoyed by the witch ignorance attitude.

"You can't destroy Gluttony just because you want to, she and the other devils are different entity." Serefina twirled her hair, which had already grown very long until it reached her waist. It was time to cut it. "Have you forgotten about the real reason why the guardian angels are being resurrected?"

Chapter 425 - SIX YEARS OLD (2)

Of course not.

Kace would never forget about what the cruel reason for him and his other brothers were blessed with mate.

For the reason why their curse was lifted.

Actually this love was a bless and curse at the same time.

Kace just couldn't wrap it in his head yet and chose to ignore that fact.

"I know." Kace's answer was a low, deep, grumbled as he averted his gaze toward the city landscape before his eyes, let the sunlight bathed his body.

And then there was sounds of light footsteps that Kace was way too familiar and before her small figure appeared, her scent had managed to appease the raging anxiety that started to brew inside him.

"Wolf!" Hope called out for Kace as she hugged his legs. "Let's go to school!" she grinned at him and showed her tinny teeth.

It was almost immediately when Kace grinned back at her and picked her up from the ground that made the little girl squalled in delight as she wrapped her arms around his neck.

"Let's go to your school, my little munchkin." Kace nuzzled her cheeks.

"You spoil her too much." Serefina squinted her eyes. Didn't really like the way Kace treated Hope. She didn't want the little girl to grow up into a weak woman, who would grin and act foolishly.

"She is my mate, of course I will spoil her." Kace shot her a look that said; what is wrong with you?

Serefina could only scoff and follow the two of them inside again.

Kace was helping Hope with her shoelaces when Serefina was enjoying her morning coffee when he asked.

"I don't see Lana, where is she?" Kace didn't lift his head from Hope's shoes, but he just realized that Lana was not around.

When he entered the apartment, he could still smell her scent, but now there was not, as if she had gone since Kace stepped inside.

"She is running my errand." Serefina answered lightly, sipping on her coffee. She had warned the girl to stay as far as she could from Kace and apparently Lana took that advice seriously.

Well, that was for her own good though.

"Hm..." Kace didn't pursue the matter further as he finished the knot on Hope's shoes and carried her small bag on his shoulder before he helped his little girl to stand up. "I will drive her to school, but I don't think I can manage to pick her up."

"Lana or I will pick her up." Serefina knew what Kace wanted to say.

"Make sure you are not late." There was a warning tone that laced in Kace's grumble. He didn't trust the witch in this matter, knowing her personality, she could appear hours after the school ended and Hope needed to wait for that long time.

"I know, I know..." Serefina waved her hand nonchalantly, without even looking at Kace's direction.

However, she felt someone was tugging her sleeves and when she turned her attention, Hope was standing there, asking Serefina to bend down a little bit with her action.

"What do you want?" Serefina frowned, yet she still bent her body slightly so her ears could reach the little girl's mouth.

And then, a soft kiss was pressed against the witch cheek as a childish voice rang in her ears. "I am going to go to school, bye Serefina." action

Kace, who watched the entire event, was frowning in displeasure by his mate action. "You don't have to kiss her, you know."

Serefina's face didn't show any reaction or she said something to Hope for her kiss, only when the sound of the door was being closed, she touched her cheek absentmindedly, which had been kissed by the little girl.

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"Are you going to be alright if I leave you alone here, baby?" Kace stared at the building that filled with children around Hope's age, they were also accompanied by their parents, some with only their mother or father and there were more with both of them.

"Yes." Hope was practically jumping with excitement when she watched there were a lot of children there.

Kace could understand it. She had been kept from the outside world for the first six years of her age and now to have other friends, except the boring Lana and Serefina, must feel great to her.

"There is something that I can help?" there was a sweet sound that greeted them from Kace's left side as the owner of that voice appeared in his line of sight. "I am Ariel, the teacher here and I think she will be my new student."

Kace smiled back at the teacher. She was a young woman in her twenties and has blue light eyes that matched with her short blonde hair, she has dimple on her left cheekbone and was smiling very sweetly at him.

Kace didn't like her, yet he smiled nonetheless.

The kind of smile that could make the young woman fluttered and lowered her gaze to look for the curious little girl.

Actually, she was attracted by Kace's figure. With that face and body, she was not surprised if he said he was a model.

The nonchalant air around him only added his charm, besides his blue ocean eyes and his black long hair that reached his shoulder that he tied behind his nape.

Kace was too lazy to cut his hair and what else, he liked this style as his baby girl would play with his hair and sometime braided it, that was one of the reasons why he didn't cut it short.

"Hai, what is your name?" Ariel dropped to her knees so she was in the same eyes level with Hope.

"Hope." Hope said curtly, for some reason she didn't like this overly sweet teacher.

"Nice name." Ariel clapped her hands and was about to touse her head, but the little girl avoid it.

"Don't touch my hair, wolf had braided it for me." Her frown deepened as she hid behind Kace's legs.

Chapter 426 - SIX YEARS OLD (3)

Ariel's hand froze mid air, yet her smile was still on her lips as she caught the words. "Wolf?" action

Hope hugged Kace's legs, didn't want that teacher to ruin her hair. She liked her braid so much and Kace was not often around to give made it for her, while Lana was never done it as beautiful as Kace's and Serefina...

Well, she often went outside and even when she was around, she would be too busy to play with Hope.

"Hahaha..." Kace let out a dry laughed. True his baby girl didn't tell other people about the white wolf, but she didn't change the way she called him. "It's me... that's my nickname. I am sorry, but she doesn't like people to touch her hair."

Kace smoothed the situation with his charming smile.

Ariel reciprocated Kace's smile sweetly as she shook her head and made her blonde hairs flapped against her face.

Her blue light eyes shone with infatuation when she looked at Kace. "It's alright, I can understand, some children dislike certain thing. You don't have to be sorry for that."

Well, actually Kace was not...

"I think we will be best friend later, right Hope?" Ariel asked the girl, but she refused to look at her. Awkwardly, Ariel shifted her attention back to Kace. "And you are?"

"I am..." Kace was about to answer that when Hope's voice interrupted.

"My wolf." She said firmly.

Kace let out helpless chuckle and caressed the girl's face tenderly. "Yes, yes... you are right." because that was what he always told her. Her wolf.

"Hahaha... she is so cute." Ariel didn't think of that seriously. "Are you her brother?" he looked too young to be her father, though it was possible if he had her when he was very young.

"You can say so." Kace shrugged his shoulder, didn't give the curious young woman a definitive answer.

"Oh." Ariel didn't know how to react on that answer and at the same time, she was being called by her fellow teacher. "I think I have to go now. See you later inside the class Hope and..."

Ariel didn't know Kace's name except the way Hope called him, but the man seemed didn't know her intention or he pretended to not know it.

"Well, see you later..." Ariel smiled sheepishly and walked back to the person who had called her.

Once Ariel had gone, Kace dropped to her knees and looked at Hope with raising eyebrows. "Why were you treating her like that? She is your teacher."

Even though the little girl's behavior amused him, but Kace didn't want her to get trouble with that woman. He wanted her to have a normal life, for as long as he could provide her, before everything became a mess.

"I don't like her touching my hair." Hope pouted sullenly as she held Kace's gaze bravely. "I don't like her.

Kace had to admit it that he didn't like the teacher either.

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Hope was running toward the only person that she was familiar with, despite her surprise because Serefina was the one who picked her up after her first day.

"Where is wolf?" Hope was looking behind Serefina, searching for the presence of Kace, but she couldn't find him.

"He is busy." Serefina opened the car door and let the little girl slipped into the front of seat and strapped herself with seatbelt.

"Will he come for dinner?" Kace had promised her to play with the white wolf when she returned from school.

"No." Serefina hoped Kace wouldn't appear in front of her door too often.

"Will he come tomorrow?" Hope kept asking, but Serefina slammed the car door shut and this made the little girl pouted her lips.

"He promised me to play with me." Hope's voice reached Serefina's ears the moment she opened the door to her seat.

However, before she could answer the little girl's annoying question, someone had made a pleasantries talk with her.

"Good afternoon, are you Hope's family?" Ariel approached Serefina timidly, feeling intimidated by the figure before her eyes.

Serefina looked like a beautiful tycoon and wasn't as easy going as the man in this morning, who had dropped Hope.

"Yes." Serefina answered curtly, she didn't hide the annoyed expression on her face.

"Oh, my name is Ariel. I am Hope's home teacher." Ariel gave Serefina a perfect smile that didn't reach her eyes. "I just want to discuss something with you about Hope."

At first, Ariel wished to meet with the mysterious man, but it was such a pity that her another guardian who came to pick her up.

"What is it?" Serefina asked impatiently.

"Maybe we can discuss this inside." Ariel gestured Serefina to come with her to his office room, because it was quite uncomfortable to stand there and discussed this matter.

Yet, Serefina didn't move even an inch and crossed her slender arms impatiently. "Just say it here."

Ariel was surprised, but she concealed it quickly and tried to persuade Serefina again. "I am sorry ma'am, but I think we need to talk this in private." There was urgency by the way Ariel spoke.

"I don't have too much time." Serefina glanced at her wrist watch and shot her another impatient look. "If you can't say it now, we can discuss about it later."

Serefina would be always her rude self, especially to those who she didn't think worth her attention.

Ariel looked like she was in trouble to explain the matter at hand, but when she watched Serefina was about to enter her car, she spoke hastily.

"Ma'am, do you know that Hope has imaginary friends?" Ariel talked hesitantly. If it was a normal imaginary friend that children around her age had, she wouldn't mind like this, but Hope's behavior during her class truly bothered her.

"Imaginary friend?" Serefina raised her eyebrows, though she already knew what was this about.

"Yes, she said she saw something. I mean, she has more than ten imaginary friends and..."

But, Serefina cut her off. "Maybe it is you who can't see them..." And with that, Serefina drove away from the parking lot, didn't bother to talk further with the teacher.

Chapter 427 - SEVEN YEARS OLD

"What happened to you?" Serefina stared at the crying little Hope before her green lime eyes demanded an explanation from Ariel.

Today was one of those very rare days when Serefina had time to pick Hope up from her school and found the little girl was crying her eyes out until her breath turned rasps.

Ariel, who walked her out from the school gates, was looking at Serefina apologetically and started to speak timidly.

"I am sorry Mrs. Manson," She started, Ariel knew Serefina as Hope's mother because that was what on the paper said, as for Lana she was Hope's sister and would often drive and pick up the little girl if it wasn't Serefina herself, who did that.

As for the man that Ariel saw a year ago, she had never seen him since their last encounter.

Just like always, Serefina completely ignored Ariel and walked toward Hope as she still covered her face with her hands.

"Stop crying." Serefina's voice was firm with no trace of warm laced on it. "I said stop crying." This time her voice sounded firmer than before and made Ariel flinched.

"Mrs. Manson..." Ariel tried to talk to Serefina, but the witch refused to look at her.

However, Hope choked twice before she stopped her sobbing and put down her hands as she stared at Serefina with teary eyes. Though her cry had stopped, but her tinny shoulders were still shaking from the after outburst.

"Talk to me what happened." Serefina demanded, disregarded Ariel, who was still standing there.

If Serefina thought Ariel was someone not important, then she wouldn't waste her seconds for her, not even spared her a glance.

As for Ariel, the school where she was working was one of the most prestigious schools in this red river city, hence all the children there must come from prominent family, though she had never heard about Manson family, but Ariel wouldn't treat Hope recklessly, especially after she witnessed how arrogant Hope's mother was.

"There was a boy..." Ariel tried to explain to Serefina, but the later shot her an icy glare.

"I asked her, not you." Serefina became impatient. "Tell me what happened." she shifted her eyes toward Hope again.

"It was Drake..." Hope talked in her soft, quiver voice as she played with the edge of her shirt nervously. She didn't like it when Serefina was glaring at her. "He bullied me..."

"Bullied you?" Serefina's face turned unsightly.

"So, it was..." Ariel tried to explain it hastily, but Serefina had raised her hands to stop her from spouting another words.

"Why he bullied you?" Serefina frowned. How come someone under her was bullied easily?

"Because... because..." Hope fidgeted, she averted her gazes elsewhere before she answered. "Because my front tooth is missing..." she pursed her lips sullenly.

Hope had just starting to lose her baby teeth a few weeks ago and now her front tooth was missing that made the little girl quite upset because how she looked like without her tooth.

Serefina raised her eyebrows questioningly. "Then, what did you do?"

"Hm?" Hope choke once again and blinked her eyes as a tear fell on her cheek that she wiped it immediately because she knew Serefina didn't like to see her cry.

"What did you do to him after he mocked you about your missing tooth." Serefina elaborated her words impatiently.

Hope shook her head. "Nothing..." she said timidly.

"Mrs. Mason, please don't be angry... I had given Drake a punishment because his rude behavior." Ariel interrupted again, didn't want Serefina to misunderstanding the situation.

"What kind of punishment that you give him?" this time, Serefina turned her head to look at Ariel.

Ariel bit her lips nervously under Serefina's hard gaze. This woman was always scary to look at. "I asked the boy to apologize to Hope."

"And?" Serefina raised her eyebrows.

"And I gave him a punishment to write down ten pages of apologize for Hope." Ariel dropped her gaze as she fidgeted. For some reason, she couldn't bring herself to look at the woman in front of her. Mrs. Mason has this overbearing aura.

"And?" Serefina asked the same question impatiently, didn't even care when she watched Ariel had started to cower under her eyes.

"I think... I think that punishment was enough for the boy. They are still children." Ariel tried to find an excuse to justify her decision. It was the right punishment as she had followed the school rules, yet Serefina made it, as if it wasn't enough.

There was an uncomfortable silence that followed afterward before Serefina talked to Hope coldly.

"Next time, if there is someone bullied you like that again, punch them in their face. Got it?"

"Mrs. Mason... you can't teach your daughter like that." Ariel startled when she heard her.

Yet, Serefina didn't bother to argue with the home teacher as she ushered Hope into the car, leaving Ariel in her puzzle state.

She could just shake her head helplessly and prayed that Serefina didn't mean her words, unknowing to her, it was really the opposite.

"Do you remember what I said before?" Serefina glared at the little girl beside her. "If someone bullied you, you have to punch them in the face, so they will stop doing that."

Hope bit her bottom lips as she kept silence for awhile before she answered. "But, what if I don't have a friend anymore because of that?"

Hope had been struggling to have a friend because she kept seeing things that all of her friends couldn't see it. action

They thought Hope was weird as she kept talking about something that they couldn't understand.

Only when Lana had a nice talk with her and explained one or two things that she had to know, Hope started to ignore those creatures that her friends couldn't see it.

And Kace said she was not a weird child. Hope was special because she could see them.

"What's the point of having a friend that will hurt your feeling? You don't need to have a bunch of idiot to be called as friends, you just need some who keeps you happy."

Chapter 428 - SEVEN YEARS OLD (2)

"What the hell you are doing right now?!" Serefina was truly upset because the moment she opened the door, she found Kace was sitting comfortably on the sofa with his wolfish grin pulled on his lips.

How frustrating it would be to have this creature around?!

Ever since, Serefina couldn't use the same reason why she demanded for Kace to visit Hope only once a year, this crazy lycan kept coming at least once a month.

They were in the heart of Torak's territory and under the protection of her spell as well, thus it would be more lenient for Kace to meet Hope regularly.

Knowing Torak's temper, Jedrek's people would be more carefully around this red river city.

Moreover, it had been decades since both brothers were talking with each other, thus it wouldn't be pretty if there were a dispute over trespassing the other territory.

"Wolf!" Hope practically threw her backpack and jumped onto Kace's arms.

"My little Hope!" ignoring the witch's complain, Kace squeezed Hope's small body, feeling the warmth that radiated from her and relishing her scent.

However, he felt there was something wrong.

Kace sat down and put her on his lap as he scrutinized her face. "Did you cry?" there was a stain of tears on her cheeks and her beautiful eyes were a little bit swollen. "Did she scold you?"

The lycan shot the witch a dagger look, which reciprocated with the same hostility.

Serefina didn't bother to explain because the little fella would be more than glad to chatter about it with Kace, thus she chose to go back to her room.

"No." Hope shook her head. "It wasn't Serefina. It was Drake." She pouted.

"Who is this Drake?!" Kace growled viciously upon hearing a man name was the cause of his mate crying.

"My schoolmate." Hope answered.

Kace's anger a little bit subsided when he knew it was only a child around her age, but it didn't mean he wasn't upset because that boy was dare enough to make his precious Hope swollen her eyes.

However, there was another thing that piqued Kace curiosity. "Why do you keep covering your mouth?" he frowned. "Let me see it."

Yet, Hope shook her head vigorously and refused to put her hand down.

Her strange action made Kace's frown deepened. "What? What happened? Are you hurt?"

"No."

"Let me see it."

"No."

"Hope."

"No."

Kace couldn't take it anymore, he pried her hands away from her mouth despite the little girl protest. "Let me see it Hope. Did he hurt you? Did he hit you?"

If that was true, kid or not, Kace would deal with him.

Once Kace managed to put her down, Hope closed her mouth tightly. Refused to talk. This only increased Kace's curiosity.

"What happened?" Kace took a closer look on her face, but except of the stain of her tears, he saw nothing there.

There was no bruise, there was no cut and the most important thing was; he didn't smell blood on her. She was perfectly fine.

"She just missed her front tooth." Lana walked past the living room as she headed toward's Serefina's room.

She was trying to not be around Kace as much as possible, especially when he was with Hope.

"Missing front tooth?" Kace raised his eyebrows, but when he turned his head to ask Lana, the girl had disappeared.

Though Kace was a little bit wonder why Lana wouldn't be around whenever he came, as matter of fact, Kace had not had a proper talk with Lana since three years ago.

The girl would look so busy with the task that Serefina had given to her. Kace didn't want to know what it was, as long as she took care of Hope, he was fine.

It would be only her shadow that Kace watched and her voice that could be heard once in a while.

Yet, Kace didn't think much about it as his focus was on Hope.

"Have you started losing your baby teeth?" Kace asked excitedly. He tried to open Hope's mouth. "Open, open, I want to see."

Hope swatted away his hand as she glared at him and covered her mouth again. "No!"

Inside her room, Serefina could hear both of them argumentation. Sometime she was wonder, which one more childish between the two.

"Alright. Alright." Kace raised both of his hands, surrendered, but the amused in his blue eyes didn't fade away. "So, tell me what this Drake did to you?" His voice turned serious.

Kace didn't like to see his mate was crying and moreover, he wouldn't tolerate it even if he was only a kid.

And then, Hope spent half an hour to tell Kace what Drake had told her and why she was crying as Kace listened to her every words patiently.

During the time she was talking, there was a moment when Hope forgot and put down her hands as her missing teeth was clearly visible.

"... Serefina said that I have to punch him on his face if he bothered me again." Hope ended her story with what Serefina had told to her home teacher.

"Of course you have to do that!" Kace exclaimed, he pumped his fist in the air as a sign that he was completely agreed with Serefina's statement. action

Hope stared at the excitement that radiated from Kace and got a little bit confused. "But, I have never punched anyone before..."

"There will always the first time for everything babe." Kace grinned. "Don't let them to get away easily after mocking you." he tousled her hair lovingly.

"But, what if he calls for his parents?" Hope was afraid if it involved a.d.u.l.ts. "I don't have parents."

Actually, Hope was a little bit sad when she watched how the other children had their own parents while she had none. She averted her eyes from Kace.

"Baby girl." Kace gripped her chin softly so she could see him in the eyes. "You don't have them, but you have me, Serefina and Lana. Are you unhappy with us?"

Chapter 429 - SEVEN YEARS OLD (3)

"No..." Hope threw her arms around Kace's neck and buried her face on the crook of his shoulder. "I love you all." She said softly.

Kace hugged her small figure tightly, but not strong enough to hurt her. "I know you do."

He cradled her like that for a few moments until her small voice broke the silence. "Why I don't have parents? Do they not want me?"

Kace rubbed her back as he leaned against the backrest of the sofa. "Of course they want you. They love you." He placed a tender kiss on her forehead as he could feel that fact had upset her.

The fact that she didn't have parents. action

The fact that Hope didn't realize it until she enrolled in her school and watched that she was different. She knew Serefina wasn't her mother and Lana was not her sister, just like people assumed they were.

"So, why they are not here with me?" Hope raised her head and looked at Kace sullenly. "I had never seen them."

There was slightly frown on Kace's face when he heard Hope's words as he didn't know how to explain it. "I will explain it when you grew older, okay?" for the meantime, he would settle with that.

"But I am older." Hope pulled her lips into a frown. "I am big already."

"Yes, you are a big girl now." Kace agreed. "But, I will tell you when you are bigger than this. Okay?" until that moment, Kace would find a way to explain the whole situation to her.

Though Hope disagreed with Kace's idea, it could be seen from the way her eyes shone in dissent, yet she nodded anyway.

"Alright, are you still upset now?" Kace tucked her stray hair behind her ears and the little girl nodded again. "How about we go out to buy some ice cream and snack?"

"Yes!" just like the bright sun that appeared after gloomy days, Hope's smile bloomed beautifully.

"Change your dress first, I have to talk about something with Serefina first, okay?" Kace put her down and she ran toward her bedroom excitedly. "Be careful, or you will trip."

Yet, she still ran along the corridor regardless Kace's warning and he could only shake his head helplessly.

Kace stood up and walked toward Serefina's bedroom, but before he could knock on the door, the witch had opened it.

"What?" Serefina closed the door behind her and crossed her arms as she stared at Kace.

"I will bring Hope outside for a moment." Kace told Serefina about his plan. "She is quite upset because of what happened in the school, we will take a walk for awhile."

Serefina raised her eyebrows. "You will risk our situation."

"She had been locked for five years in her early life and now you have been locked her for another two years." Kace argued.

"She goes to school." Serefina said in matter of fact.

"Yes, but she needs to see the outside world too." Kace pulled his lips into a scowl. He didn't want Hope to be locked away from the world. That wasn't life that he wanted to show her.

"Alright." unexpectedly Serefina agreed. She shrugged and was about to enter her room again. "Come back before sunset."

Because after the sun had set, her magic would wear off, the magic that helped them to hide from unnecessary trouble and uninvited creatures.

"Don't worry, we will come back before that." Kace gave her a wolfish grin, but a second later his face turned serious. "Have you heard something about Gluttony?"

Kace lost the devil's tracks two months ago when he tried to escape from Jedrek's people. Until now, Kace still led them to the west side of this realm, made them believe if he was there.

Serefina thought about that for a little while longer before she spoke in concern. "Be careful. She is the determined one." But, then she added. "Well, the seven of them are very determined on their target too."

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"I can't see it." Hope jumped a few times, but because of the crowd on the street, she couldn't see anything.

Apparently, it was the season for festivity and there was a long parade and carnival on the street. Hope was very excited because this was the first time she watched something like this.

"I want to see it." Hope used Kace's feet as her footing, yet it didn't help much with her height all she could see was only the back of people in front of her.

Kace let out joyful chuckled upon seeing his little mate futile attempt, he liked the way her eyebrows scrunched in frustration or the way she got angry and annoyed.

But, definitely Kace wouldn't ruin his precious little thing mood now, just to enjoy a look of annoyance on her face.

"Come here." Kace bent his body to pick her up as if she was weight nothing, well that was true though. Hope was like a cotton; fluffy, cute and pure, everything that Kace loved.

"WHOA!" The lycan picked her up and put her on his shoulder, let both of her legs dangled on the front side of his body as he held her h.i.p.s carefully and Hope grabbed onto his hair.

"Can you see it now?" Kace raised his head just in time to see how her face beamed in happiness and her obsidian eyes shone beautifully.

"Yes!" Hope laughed and clapped her hands, following the music from the parade in front of her. She was very happy, smiling widely, forgetting her missing tooth.

And for Kace, there was nothing else that he wanted in this world, he would trade everything in his possession only to see those dazzling happiness from her face.

Unknown to them, there was a pair of golden eyes that stared at them widely among the crowd. Her golden eyes too, shining in delight as she licked her lips and gulped hard.

A wick devilish smile tugged on her lips. She finally found her...

Chapter 430 - EIGHT YEARS OLD

"Hachi!" action

The sound of that made Kace panicked even more, he hurriedly went back to Hope's bedroom while bringing a bowl of warm soup in his hand.

"Baby..." Kace crouched down beside Hope's bed and touched her scorching hot forehead. "How do you feel?"

"My head aching..." Hope's voice sounded very pitiful as a tear escape from her eyes, it wasn't because she was in so much pain that she was crying, but the heat from her fever that made her eyes felt like they were burning.

Kace wiped her tear, but her skin was very hot when he touched her, the feeling didn't settle well with him.

Lana was coming inside the room a while later. "We can't go out in this kind of weather." She said in regret. Her eyes flickered between Hope and Kace in the same anxiety.

"D*mn!" Kace cursed out loud as he gritted his teeth.

There was snow storm outside and no cars could make it through in this kind of weather with harsh wind howled and freezing cold, it was simply too dangerous.

"Where is Serefina!?" Kace snapped at Lana angrily. Not because he was angry to her, but rather because he couldn't keep calm in this situation, knowing there was only little options that left for him while the witch was nowhere to be found in this critical juncture.

"She left since two days ago." Lana informed him. "I don't know where she is."

Serefina had left the apartment since two days ago without saying anything like always and until now she had not yet returned. Usually, Serefina would come back after three days up to a week.

"Don't you have any medicine?" Kace rubbed his face harshly as he stared at Hope's face, which as red as tomatoes.

When he was calling this morning to talk to Hope, Lana told him that she was sick and when Kace heard Hope was crying over the phone, he ran for miles in his beast form in this bad weather because there was not transportation operated at this moment.

Hope stretched out her arms as her teary eyes looked at Kace, pleading.

Kace knew what she wanted and immediately pulled her up and hugged her. He sat down on her bed and leaned against the wall behind him with Hope buried her face on his chest and hugged his waist, just like a baby panda.

Hope felt better this way, the tingling feeling that she felt every time she touched him, helped to subside her aching joints.

She nuzzled her head, looking for comfortable position as Kace wrapped her in blanket.

"She needs to eat first before she drinks the medicine." Lana reminded him. "She has not yet eat anything since this morning."

That explanation made another waves of frustration rolled in Kace's throat as a growl vibrated from his chest.

Hope whimpered when she heard that.

"Baby, eat something okay?" Kace tried to persuade her, but she shook her head weakly.

In this condition everything that she ate would feel terrible no matter how delicious the food. Hope also had tried to eat a few spoon of porridge only ended up she threw up right after she swallow it.

Kace felt his chest caved in only by the sight how pale Hope now.

"How she could fall sick like this!?" Kace glared at Lana and she lowered her head, too afraid to look him straight in the eyes, as she could see the beast scampered on the edge of his mind.

"I think... I think..." Lana gulped hard. "I bring her outside to play yesterday and I think we came back late..."

His grip on the rail on the feet of Hope's bed tightened as it left a dent there because he couldn't contain his anger. The hand that still holding Hope was shaking.

Kace sighed a deep breath, if he let his anger consumed him now, he would end up hurting his mate and that was the very last thing that he wished to happen.

"How far the nearest hospital?" Kace asked with his eyes closed, focused solely on Hope's heartbeat, which thumping against his chest.

"It's around three hours walk from here." Lana fidgeted when she realized what Kace would do. "The weather outside is very bad, you will not make it through."

And as if on cue, Hope was vomiting again. She vomited right on Kace's body, tears started streaming down her pale face and she whimpered pitifully after that.

"I am hurt..." Hope sobbed while Kace cleaned her mouth. The stress on his face was clear to see.

"I know baby, I know... we will bring you to the Hospital, alright?" He gave Hope to Lana, so she wouldn't dirty herself with the vomit on Kace's front shirt.

However, Hope extended her arms, trying to reach Kace. She didn't want to be separated from him and the helplessness in her eyes made Kace's heart hurt badly.

Once Kace had changed his shirt and Lana had cleaned her up, he hugged the little girl tightly. "We will go to the hospital now."

Three hours by walking. Kace could make it one and half hours or two.

As a Lycan, their body temperature was unusually hotter than human, that was why Kace managed to run for miles in this kind of weather without freezing.

Kace put thick jacket on Hope and wrapped her in blanket before he strapped her on his back and zipped the larger jacket around their body so Hope could be protected from the harsh wind outside.

The warm that Hope felt started to form sweats on her forehead, yet once they were outside, the temperature would drop drastically compared to this room.

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The ragging snow storm started to calm when a huge man walked into the hospital lobby along with a girl behind him.

This made the other nurses and people there stared at them blankly. How this two people managed to come to this hospital in this kind of situation?

"Where is the doctor!?" the man practically glared at everyone there, who were still in a daze.