

## **TLOA Lycan 451**

### **Chapter 451 - FOURTEEN YEARS OLD (2)**

Hope followed him absentmindedly as she listened to his chatter.

Practically, this boy had turned into some kind of tour guide who would let Hope know every part of this school.

Honestly, Hope didn't think that she would be able to remember all of it, but she kept quiet the entire journey to the first floor again.

"You know, you are so quiet for a girl." The boy suddenly turned around to face Hope, his lips slightly pursed as his hazel eyes scrutinized the girl before him.

If it wasn't because Hope's good reflex, she would have bumped onto him and created such a drama scene, gladly she stopped before that could happen.

"Maybe it is you, who talk too much." Hope crossed her arms while glaring at the boy that his name was still unknown.

"Hm..." The boy tapped his fingers on his chin, contemplating Hope's words. "Maybe." He shrugged and resumed walking. "I like your name, somehow it gives me a 'hope'." He winked at Hope beside him.

Hope rolled her eyes dramatically. "So, what's your name? Pervert?"

Unexpectedly, the boy laughed so hard as if he had just heard the best joke of the year. "Good one!" He exclaimed as he jumped three stairs at a time. "But, no. My name is Ian." He grinned.

Hope just nodded, acknowledge his name.

They walked in another corridor before Ian stopped again and turned his body abruptly, good thing Hope didn't walk behind him.

"This is your locker and that is mine." He pointed to opposite locker from Hope, despite not being asked.

"Thanks." Hope said curtly, offered him a small smile before she opened her locker with the key that Mrs. Abby had given to her.

"We are in the same class, let's go there together." Ian beamed when he checked Hope's schedule since the folder was still in his hands.

"Okay." Hope extended her hands to silently ask her folder back, she didn't want this creepy boy looked through her classes.

Ian put the folder on top of Hope's opened palm and walked again to the opposite direction where they came.

"If your locker is in the first floor, what are you doing in the second floor?" Hope just realized it while they were walking, she tried to strike a conversation because the silence was awkward.

Maybe because what Hope said before about him being noisy, thus he didn't talk much now.

"Me? I followed your scent." Again, that strange grin appeared on his lips. "You smell like dark chocolate, sweet and warm."

"Forget that I ever asked." Hope quickened her steps, she didn't want to walk with this weirdo who was talking about her scent.

"Where are you going? Here is our class." Ian grabbed Hope's wrist and pulled her back while his other hand opened the door beside him.

At this time there were many students, roaming around the corridors or simply talking with their friends there.

It goes without saying, what Ian did to her had drawn their attention, not to mention Hope was a new face that they had never seen.

"Sit here." Ian pulled Hope to sit beside him, the last row of the seat near the door. "Don't worry, if there is someone try to bully you here, you can count on me." Ian pointed his own chest.

"Don't worry I can handle myself just fine." Hope replied callously, but didn't move from her seat. Despite how annoying Ian was, she preferred to not have enemy in her first day.

In different light, it was good enough to have Ian around since she didn't know anyone here.

But, it didn't mean Hope was ignorance, she could feel the strange looks that the other students threw at her.

"Are you famous here?" Hope turned to look at Ian.

"Kind of." Ian smiled. "You can say so."

"Oh, good... I will not be surprised if there is someone who wants to talk privately with me later." Hope remarked sarcastically.

"That's the peak of being a friend of famous people." Ian wiggled his eyebrows. "Afraid?"

Hope wanted to laugh out loud, but she settled by unladylike snort. "Don't be too friendly with me."

"Why? I thought we have a lot in common." Ian retorted.

"Enlighten me, how do you know we have something in common." Hope rolled her eyes, at this point she was considering to find another empty seat. "Just because you helped me, it doesn't mean we are friend yet." action

"For example..." Ian closed his eyes for three seconds before he opened them and pointed his finger toward the big window across from their seat.

"You and I can see the big brown wolf out there while the rest of the people here, can not." Ian spoke lazily to give ignorance effect, as if he was talking about the weather and not something like supernatural creatures, which not all the people could see it.

"What?!" Hope's jaw dropped as she darted her gaze at the brown wolf that he pointed.

It was Lana's wolf. What she was doing here? But, Hope could ask that later, the most important thing right now was to ask this 'friendly' boy.

"How can you see it?!" Hope lowered her voice.

For fourteen years she had been living, Hope had never come across with someone who could see those creatures too, except for the people in her house, of course.

"So, consider me as your friend now?" Ian crossed his arms haughtily.

"I would love to have you as my friend!" Hope giggled as she nodded eagerly.

Maybe moving here wasn't a bad idea at all! Hope had never had a friend who she could share this little secret of her.

Not to mention Kace and Lana prevented her to know more about their world while Serefina... well, Hope too afraid to ask anything to her if it's not necessary

But now, since Ian was here, Hope could ask everything that she wanted to know, right?

"I know you will." Ian snickered.

### **Chapter 452 - FOURTEEN YEARS OLD (3)**

"What is this?" Hope whispered at Ian beside her.

When the bell rang for afternoon break, Ian popped out of nowhere and immediately ushered Hope to the other side of the school building where she introduced her to two other people.

"This is the girl that I told you in the math class!" Ian was very happy as he gave Hope a little bit push, so she could be the center of attention.

"Uhm, hi." Hope waved her hand at them awkwardly, one boy and one girl, but in closer look she recognized the boy had the same exact face like Ian. She blinked her eyes and shifted them back and forth between Ian and the other boy.

"I know." The other boy sighed. "This stupid mutt is my twin, so stop staring at me like that."

"I am sorry." Hope said sheepishly as she took a seat in front of the girl while Ian plopped his body next to her. "This is my first time to see twin and both of you look very identical."

Ian grinned. "He is Ethan, my younger brother and he is Rossie, my stupid younger sister." His voice softened when he mentioned his sister, who waved at Hope.

Ethan was slightly leaner than Ian, with the same hazel eyes and golden brown hair along with their warm skin tone, they were perfect portray of the boys next door.

Only, Ethan wasn't as vocal as Ian, but without closer inspection, it was hard to tell them apart.

While Rossie... her expression reminded Hope of a cute little puppy that was at lost. She looked like she was the obedient one with his dark platinum hair color and pair of hazel eyes.

"She is in eight grades." Ian told Hope.

"So?" Hope opened her lunch box, Lana would make it for her every day because she was strictly forbidden from eating anything without their permission.

Sometime, Hope wondered, whose random person would poison her, but after what happened last time, she was more than willing to oblige.

"So, all of you can see 'them' too?" Hope lowered her voice.

"'Them'?" Rossie opened her burrito and took a bite. "Who is 'them'?"

Rossie has shoulder length hair with curl on the end of it, there was a stain of sauce on the corner of her lips that wiped off immediately by Ethan.

Hmm. Despite his slightly ignorant personality, but he was taking good care of his sibling.

"Supernatural creature." Ian answered his sister's question while Ethan answered Hope's

"We are one of 'them', of course we are able to see it." Ethan drank his juice and didn't seem to eat anything.

"We?" Hope caught that word with frown. "You mean the three of you?"

"Including you of course." Ian said in matter of fact as he leaned over to take a bite of burrito in Rossie's hands, but before he could do that, Ethan had pushed his head away and glared.

The message on his twin was clear; stay away from her! She is eating!

Hope was fascinated by the way they interacted with each other. Was this a sibling relationship looked like?

Hope never experienced it and never had a chance to see it because all of her friends were not very close to their sibling. action

"Including me?" Hope kindly pushed her lunch box and silently gave permission for Ian to take whatever he liked from it. "I don't think so."

Ian plopped a sausage into his mouth. "What do you mean, you don't think so?" Ian talked while eating. "You are a werewolf too, I can smell it."

Only then Hope understood what Ian meant when he said he was following his scent this morning and met her in the second floor.

"I think you are wrong." Hope was quite sure the scent of shifter that lingered on her body wasn't hers. It probably Lana or Kace, since the later just visited her last night. "This is not my scent."

Hope sniffed her sweatshirt, though she couldn't smell anything except her own cologne, but she was sure those creatures with acute nose could tell the different.

"No." Ian protested, not so happy for the possibility that he was wrong. "I am sure you are a werewolf. You can't deceive my nose." He tapped his pointed nose.

However, before Hope could protest again, Ethan had leaned over and sniffed her more thoroughly as his nose scrunched.

"I don't think this is her smell." Ethan said before he straightened his back. "It most likely she lives with shifter, thus her scent almost like them."

His guess was right.

Hope was unsure if she could tell them or not about Kace, Serefina and Lana. It must be Kace and Lana's scent that mixed with her since Serefina was rarely at home.

Ian sniffed Hope's shoulder, too close for her liking, but thankfully Ethan pushed away his twin's head and glared at him.

"Really?" Ian frowned. "I think you are right." He talked to his brother and drifted his attention back to Hope while eating another sausage from her lunch box. "Now, she smelled like human."

"If she is a human you are in big trouble." Rossie chimed in, her round eyes glared at her brother. "We are not allowed to reveal our existence to human." She lowered her voice and stared at Hope warily.

"Why so?" Hope knew that she wasn't allowed to tell her friend about her 'special' family, because all the people out there that she met couldn't see what she was able to see, but the three people in front of her was different.

Rossie didn't talk as she sat closer toward Ethan, eating her burrito.

"Because human shouldn't know we are exist." Ethan explained it simply.

"I am in big trouble!" Ian widened his eyes and took the last sausage from Hope's lunch box as he leaned back his body as if she would attack him in the next second.

Ethan looked at his twin's reaction with disdain. "The question is; why she lives with shifter and is able to see them in their beast form."

#### **Chapter 453 - FOURTEEN YEARS OLD (4)**

Now Hope received the three people attention. She bit her lips as she reminded herself to be careful with what she would say.

Hope just met with them and didn't really know them very well, not to mention this was her first day, though Ian and his siblings looked reliable, but she didn't want to upset Serefina further by telling something about her family to the outsider.

"I live with them since I was a baby. I don't know why." Hope answered, that wasn't a lie. action

"Since a baby?" Ian frowned. "That is strange. It is not common for shifter to take care of human's child..." they tend to hate them, actually. But, Ian didn't voice out his last statement.

"Really?" This time, it was Hope who was surprised, but if she thought about this again, Serefina was always very hostile every time she had to have a conversation with her teacher whenever she picked her up from school.

But, Lana and Kace didn't seem like that...

"Are they mistreated you?" Ian asked again, his eyes slanted as if he could smell a lie in Hope's answer.

"No." Raine shook her head. "They treated me very well." Except for the weird restriction to not go out by herself after the sun set, which Hope understood the reason behind it, they have treated her very well.

Especially Kace, he would literally grant every Hope's wishes.

"Maybe her family is a rogue." Rossie blinked her eyes at Hope, finishing her burrito and wiping her mouth.

"Rogue? What is that?" Hope never heard that term and most likely it wasn't the common term that human would use.

"You don't know what is rogue?" Ethan furrowed his brows at Hope was at lost.

"This is interesting." Ian leaned over and scrutinized Hope's face as he tried to find his answer on her face, which was a stupid thought. "You are not a shifter but lives with them and you don't seem know about shifter's life."

"So, she is human?" Rossie still bothered with the fact that Hope was human, yet they were talking about their world to her. "Is it okay that we are talking about this to her?"

"Yes, she is human." Ian nodded, but his eyes still locked on Hope. "But, she is not ordinary human, I think."

Hope didn't understand what Ian was talking about. "What do you mean?"

"Tell me." Ian moved closer and Ethan threw an empty bottle toward him, that he caught before it could hit his head without even looking at it. "Do you have super power ability?"

"Like what?" Hope had never had a conversation like this and she was more than excited to know more about the things that Kace and Serefina kept holding back to tell her. Kace would always say; he would let her know when she was older.

Well, she was older now since the last time he said that.

"Like super strength, super speed, laser vision, invisibility or something?" Ian was very eager to know more about this.

From the corner of Hope's eyes she could see, even Ethan and Rossie were listening.

"Of course not. I don't have that kind of power." Hope laughed. "There are people who have power like that?" she asked incredulously.

"I have never heard." Ian shrugged his shoulder.

"But, witch absolutely can do those kinds of thing." Rossie's hazel eyes shined, intrigued by the topics they discussed.

"Some, yes. But, not all." Ethan replied.

"But, that is still cool." Rossie was stubborn with her opinion and Ethan didn't dissent her again.

Well, that's kind of cool. Hope agreed as she remembered how she used to admire Serefina's magic before she used it to erase her friends' memories.

Even now, Hope was still upset at her, but Serefina didn't seem to mind or even bother to apologize at all.

"You have not answered my question." Hope reminded them. "What is rogue?"

It was Ian and Ethan who explained it to Hope about what was the term of rogue meant in their world.

Basically, rogue was a lone wolf that didn't join any pack, just like their family, and this piece of information surprised Hope.

She did know that werewolves and Lycanthropes formed their own pack and the biggest pack in red river city was Torak Donovan's pack, which covered all the packs across the nation.

Hope just knew about this after that incident in Sebastian's house, Kace told her a little bit about this and to her surprise, Torak Donovan was Kace second brother that he had never met for years now.

Ethan also explained to Hope about hierarchy in werewolves and Lycan's world, about the role of Alpha, Beta and Gamma.

This information was a mind blowing for Hope, she knew there was a pack, but would have never thought that it was very complicated with many roles in there.

"So, why all of you chose to be a rogue?" Hope was curious, she was thirsty to know more about it.

Ethan and Ian were staring at each other before Ian spoke callously. "Family problem."

"Oh." Hope couldn't pursue the reason if their answer was that.

Apparently, most of the rogue was not very welcomed when they trespass another pack territory without permission, thus they chose to live here because no one owned this land.

"Because, from what I heard, there is a portal to another realm behind the forest." Ian's voice was barely a whisper.

"What portal?" Hope couldn't help, but mimicked his gesture as she talked secretively.

"Another world, another realm. The world of magic." Ian gave Hope a suggestive grin.

"Stop trying to corrupt her to break the law." Ethan growled, the same growl that Kace would do every time he was talking to Serefina and they had different opinion, though Kace was more powerful.

"What law? We are not allowed to enter the forest?" Hope just arrived here a week ago and literally didn't took a step out of the house.

"There is this law here..." Ian ignored Ethan's glare and continued.

**Chapter 454 - FOURTEEN YEARS OLD (5)**

"What kind of law?" Hope asked eagerly. This conversation was getting more and more interesting. At this point she had forgotten that she just met them for hours. In Ethan and Rossie case, it was less than an hour to be exact.

However, Hope felt excited as if she had known them for years.

Finally, she found someone who could share this kind of thing and was able to see that most people couldn't see it.

This was kind of conversation that Hope really wanted, rather than talking about fashion and boys. Supernatural world was way more interesting for her since she had been living with them.

"No one is allowed to enter the forest, without permission of course. Both human and shifters or witches, vampires, well you name it." Ian shrugged. "You will get lost there."

"Because there were many people who entered the forest and didn't come back, people in this village thought that forest is cursed, thus it is forbidden to walk there." Rossie chimed in, apparently has the same interest of this kind of topic just like Hope.

"But, we, supernatural creature, know that there is another portal to go to another realm where missing people would go if they couldn't return to this village." Ian added.

"How all of you know about this? Have you been there?" Hope threw a suspicious look to Ian.

"Kind of trying to prove the story." Ian grinned.

"If human is forbidden to go there, but why it implies to supernatural creatures too? Isn't everything in there is from the same kind as you?" Hope didn't understand. It was understandable if human was not allowed there, but why shifters too?

"Because there is dark creatures resided there." Ian shrugged. "It is ironic that we take a shelter here near their realm because this is the safest place for us, rogue, since there are very few places that we can live, to stay away from those packs."

Why don't you join the pack then? That was the question that Hope wanted to ask, but she remembered that Ethan had said it was a family problem, hence she kept her mouth shut.

Moreover, Hope was not in better position too, if the definition of rogue was that, then she had two rogues at house.

And then, they were chatting a few more things about the law in this village and the forbidden forest, before the siblings filled Hope in with the information about werewolves and Lycanthropes.

Well, Hope learned a lot from this one hour conversation about the shifter world rather than living with two shifters and one witch for fourteen years.

"What is mate?" Hope asked curiously when Rossie mentioned about mate.

This time it was the little girl, who explained it to Hope with sparkle in her eyes. "It is your half soul, our kind believe that moon goddess had given all of the shifters in pairs, all we have to do is to find our own mate."



Hope raised her brows, she had never heard something like that. "Wow! How romantic..." Hope felt giddy when she heard that while the two boys rolled their eyes, this was the topic that girls liked after all. "How do you know your mate?"

"There are a few way to know your mate, but most of the case, it happened at the same time." Rossie loosened up with Hope now as she leaned over to tell her this piece of information. "Your mate scent is like perfume that only is made for you."

Hope blinked her eyes. Maybe for those shifters who had acute nose, it was possible, but for her who could barely smell another a faint scent, it was impossible.

But, again... Hope was not a shifter, so how she could have a mate? Stupid... she scolded herself for imagining thing like that. action

What to do, the way Rossie mentioned it, it sounded very romantic and Hope wished to be able to experience that.

"And the way you look your mate eyes, you will feel the pull of mate bond that will make you to be near your mate forever." Rossie grinned giddily, but she had not yet done. "And the last thing..."

"What is it?" Hope asked again. Rossie made it sound like love at first sight and made one believed there were still true love in this cruel world.

"When you touch your mate, you will feel the spark that erupted from your skin to skin contact." Rossie's focus was solely on Hope now, though she was the very person who was reluctant to inform Hope further about their kind.

"Spark?" Hope furrowed her eyebrows. "What do you meant with spark?"

"I don't have idea about that because I have not experienced it yet, but from what I heard, it is like a tingling feeling that spread on your skin, like spark."

Rossie elaborated more detail about the spark that she mentioned, but all Hope could think was the same exact feeling when she touched Kace.

However, before Hope could ask further the bell rang and they had to be separated.

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"How is your first day?" Lana asked when Hope closed the car door.

She was tasked to pick up Hope from her school and observed the situation here, if it was safe enough for Hope to be in this village.

"Good." Hope put her bag on her laps and buckled herself or else Lana wouldn't start the engine and they would never reach home.

Safety first. That was what Lana would say.

"What?" Hope furrowed her brows when Lana tried to sniff her and scrunched her nose afterward.

"There is shifter in your school." Lana stated, it wasn't a question. meant, she knew for sure about Hope's new friends.

"Really? I don't know." For some reason, Hope didn't want Lana to know about them, she didn't want to move again. Knowing Serefina, there was a high chance she would decide to choose that option. "How do you know?"

"I can smell it." Lana replied curtly.

#### **Chapter 455 - FOURTEEN YEARS OLD (6)**

Hope began smelling herself, her hands, her sweatshirt, but she was not able to sense anything aside from her perfume.

"What smell?" Hoper frowned. "I don't smell anything."

Lana turned on the engine and the car started to move toward their house while both of them chatted inside.

"You will not be able to smell it, but I am different, remember?" Lana glanced at the sullen Hope.

"Yeah, I know that you are different." Hope rolled her eyes dramatically and turned on the radio, but it couldn't catch any program. "Is it broken?"

She was trying to divert Lana's attention from asking her about her new friend and the 'shifter smell' on her, because as creepy as it sounded, sometime Hope wondered if Lana actually knew when she was lying.

"No. It is hard to get a signal around here." Lana mumbled as she threw another glance at Hope.

In her previous school, of course there were a few shifters there, but they were children in the pack, the only reason why they couldn't smell Hope was because the necklace that Kace gave to her when she was a baby, yet it had been destroyed by Gluttony, based on what Hope told them.

However, the scent that Lana smelled from Hope at this moment was the rogue.

Did Hope come in contact with rogue? Or one of her friend was a rogue? She had to find out about this before Kace had a panic attack about the safety of his mate and quarreled with Serefina again.

Despite, Lana didn't pursue the matter about the rogue's smell on Hope, but this would be her next task the moment she informed this to the witch.

Lana and Serefina couldn't be said were being in good term, actually both of them were in mutual need while with Kace, since the vow the Lycan seemed had forgotten about that and had never mentioned it again.

"Lana..." Hope mumbled her name.

And Lana hummed in response.

"Why are we not living in the pack?" Hope tried to sound like she didn't care. "You know, most of your kind lives in a pack."

But, without Hope knew it, the question that she asked had concluded Lana's suspicion toward her that she had been talking with the rogue.

It was not usual for Hope to ask anything about werewolf world.

"I have one before I met Serefina and Kace." Lana told Hope with her eyes still on the road when she turned her head and stared at her in surprise. action

"What happened?" Now the sound of Hope's voice was no longer ignorance.

"My previous pack was attacked by vampire." Lana answered her truthfully. "I am the last survivor of that pack," then she added. "I guess..."

"Vampire?" Hope's eyes widened in disbelief. "It feels unreal to hear something like this..."

Serefina glanced at her way. "You have seen me and Kace turn into our beast and Serefina was doing witchy thing." She pointed the truth.

"No, I meant... I had never seen any vampire before." Hope elaborated. "It feels unreal because I had never seen them."

"Don't ever wish to see them. Our kind is not in good term with them and since you carry around our scent, it will not end up good." Lana made Hope grimaced with her bluntness.

"Do vampire not walk in the daylight? Because of that you are not allowed me to go out by myself alone after the sunset?" something clicked in Hope's mind.

"No. they walk in the daylight." Lana drove to the garage. "And yes, they are one of the reasons why we don't allow you to go out alone, but Hope..."

Lana turned off the engine of the car and turned her body to face her. Lana expression created a furrow between Hope's brows. She was very serious when she continued.

"...the universe is so big, there is so many mysteries in it and vampire, shifter, devil are not the only predator out there. So, be careful who you hang out with."

Though it sounded like Lana was giving Hope advice about her last action, but from the sound of it, there was underlying meaning from it.

"Okay." Hope tried to smile, but failed.

Lana could hear how nervous Hope became, but she didn't expose her and acted as if everything was fine, at least for now.

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Hope was eating alone because Serefina and Lana were going out, ever since she turned thirteen, there would be occasion when the two of them would leave her alone.

Because they thought Hope could handle herself now.

It didn't mean she was protest or something, but before they go, Serefina would send her a threat or two to make sure she didn't step out of the house, which Hope always obeyed until this time.

However, Hope didn't like it when she had to eat alone, it felt so lonely when all she could hear was the noisy that she made.

"Don't spacing out while you are eating."

Kace's sudden voice caused Hope to choke on her food and the lycan immediately gave a glass of water to her.

"Drink this." Kace was panic, he didn't know that Hope would be surprised.

The moment Kace massage her neck and when their fingers touched each other, Hope could feel the spark that Rossie had mentioned before.

But, for now she had to save her life first before she wondered about that. Hope drank the water painfully until the clog in her throat disappeared.

"Don't do that!" Hope snapped irritably at Kace.

"Sorry, I don't know that you would be surprised." Kace scratched his head, it was apparent there was a little bit stress by the accident before on his face. "Why are you alone here?"

Kace couldn't smell Lana or Serefina's scent.

"Both of them have something to do." Hope mumbled.

"Ah, this witch!" Kace grumbled under his breath as he poured a glass of water for himself.

"Hm, Kace..." Hope was hesitant whether she had to ask this or not.

"Hm?"

#### **Chapter 456 - FOURTEEN YEARS OLD (7)**

"Can I ask you about something?" Hope was very careful with what she wanted to say next, she fidgeted on her seat and her appetite disappeared.

Kace could sense her nervousness and sat down beside her. It was so rare to see Hope was being restless around him when she wanted to ask something.

"What is it?" Kace leaned over, too close for Hope, which made her leaned back.

"I want to know what the meaning of..." Hope didn't know why all of sudden it became very hard to talk with Kace. She had never felt this way before.

"Of?" Kace prodded, he frowned, became more curious about what Hope wanted to tell him since she had never acted this way before.

"Hmm..." Hope lowered her head.

"Hm?" Kace leaned over even more to see her expression, which was hid behind the curtain of her long black hair. "What? You make me nervous."

If Hope kept acting like this, Kace's imagination would turn wild and he would start to imagine the worst.

"What is... 'mate'?" Hope raised her head only to see Kace's face was only a few centimeter away from her. This made her heartbeat accelerated.

On the other hand, Kace was caught out of guard by Hope's question. Why all of sudden she asked this kind of thing? Or, more important thing was; from whom she knew about this?

Kace was sure, Lana would never mention something like this, let alone Serefina. The witch would always have better thing to do other than talking about 'mate' and everything entail.

Kace's expression turned from curious to be more curious. "From whom you heard about this little one?"

"I am not little one." Hope mumbled under her breath. She disliked it when Kace always thought of her as a small child.

"Alright," Kace didn't lose his serious expression. "From whom you heard about this Hope?"

"I..." Hope forgot to find an excuse for this. "I... Lana told me..." that was the best thing that she could think in this moment.

But, of course it was unbelievable for Kace as he knew his little mate too well, after all he had taken care of her poop and pee since she was only a baby.

"Hope, you know that I know you are lying, right?" Kace was surprised that Hope started to lie to him, but to think about it again, she was a teenager now.

Hope was starting to have her own secret.

"You do not answer my question." Hope tried to cover her nervousness by acting bold, yet Kace could see it through her poor act.

"You don't answer my question either." Kace retorted.

"But, I asked you first." Hope didn't want to back down. Since she had asked about it, then she had to find the answer.

Unexpectedly, Kace answered it. "'Mate' is a soulmate for my kind. Someone who destined to be with you for the rest of your eternity."

"Huh?" this time, it was Hope who was surprised by Kace's bluntness. "Like girlfriend and boyfriend? Husband and wife?" those were the closest example that Hope could imagine.

The sound of guttural laugh echoed through the dining room, as Kace's chest raise and fall rapidly. He had never thought about the mate bond in that way.

Whether it was boyfriend and girlfriend or husband and wife, once you found your mate, you would bound together for the rest of your life, thus those tittles meant nothing for their kind.

"Why are you laughing?" Hope huffed, irritated because Kace found her statement was amusing. Did she say something wrong? Why he was laughing heartily?

"Well, you can say that." Kace grinned.

"But, that didn't answer my question, why are you laughing?" Hope still disliked the fact that she was being laughed. "There is something funny about my statement?"

"No." Kace shook his head. "Of course not. However..."

"However?" at this point, Hope was very curious about their world, this was the first time she was talking about this kind of topic, though before Kace and Lana had explained a few things about their world, but it was only something on the surface.

"Our kind values our mate highly." Kace leaned back against his seat. "Even those terms sound inappropriate."

"What do you mean?" Hope blinked her eyes, trying to discern the information.

"When human said they would die for their partner, most of them would say it figuratively, while in our case we will do it, literally." Kace looked at Hope with a spark in those beautiful blue eyes. "Living our life without a mate is a boring kind of life." Kace added.

By the meaning of 'boring' it was an understatement of what kind of life that Kace had been through before he found Hope.

"Wow..." Hope drawled. "That sounds... romantic."

Kace laughed once again. "I don't know if you find dying is romantic."

"So..." Hope cleared her throat. This was the question that made her more nervous than before. "...did you find your mate?"

"I did." Kace nodded affirmatively.

Hope scratched the back of her head and played with her hair absentmindedly. Even though Kace knew what Hope would ask next, he didn't say anything as he wanted her to say it.

"Lana?" the moment that name left her lips, she knew very sure it was only her finding an excuse to attest her suspicion.

Kace gave her a smile, the one that very warm and not like his goofy smile, which he always showed her all this time. "Hope, if you want to talk about this, I will assume you already know who the person is."

Hope gulped hard as she averted his gaze. "I don't know," she mumbled. Why all of sudden the atmosphere turned very heavy? She had never felt this way every time she talked with Kace before.

"It is you." Kace said it in matter of fact. "You are my mate."

"Huh?" despite the fact her guess turned out right, but Hope was still surprised that Kace admitted it easily.

### **Chapter 457 - FOURTEEN YEARS OLD (8)**

Kace didn't know that he would break this news this way, he had been thinking about the most complicated case, when the situation forced him to explain this to Hope.

Just like what had been nagged by Serefina since a year ago, Kace had to tell Hope about this sooner or later.

Yet, Kace would have never imagined this news was actually brought by Hope herself, she made a way for Kace to discuss this.

"Me?" Hope pointed herself with her forefinger, her expression was incredulous. "But, how?"

"I don't have the answer for that Hope." Kace was all serious now. Hope wanted him to not treat her like a child, therefore he wouldn't treat her like one. "It wasn't me who has the privilege to choose my own mate."

Hope was at lost for words for a few minutes and Kace was very patient to wait for her next reaction.

"But, don't you think I am too young for you?" Hope was still didn't believe it, though there was somewhere in the corner of her heart, the smallest part of her that was relieved to hear that.

"I don't think about you in that way." Kace raised his eyebrows.

Hope blinked her eyes adorably since she couldn't understand Kace's contradictive statement. "You said that I am your mate, but you also said you don't think about me that way?"

"At least not until you had come into the right age to think about that." Kace nodded to himself. Hope was fourteen now, she was in early teenager state, probably they could have this kind of conversation again after three years from now.

"No." Hope didn't know why, but she rejected the idea. "I want to choose my own boyfriend," she said sullenly.

Kace and Hope were staring at each other for more than ten seconds before the former finally broke the silence between them. "Sure." He nodded. "You can choose whoever boy to be your boyfriend."

The sound of Kace's voice was very pleasant, but Hope knew for sure, there was underlying meaning from his words and her guess was right. action

"But if he touches mine, I will make sure he loses his hand," Kace said those words in languid tone as if he didn't mean every words he said when the truth was; he would prove otherwise.

"I am not yours." Hope widened her eyes in disbelief, her rebellious side was triggered. She was raised by Serefina after all, thus in one or two occasion, she would show this self- sufficient side of her. "I am not a thing. You don't own me."

Hope didn't know why she found out the need to defy Kace. Probably because she was still quest her own identity, but all of sudden Kace had claimed her as his.

Hope didn't really dislike the idea, since Kace wasn't bad at all. Damn! He was hot, actually! And Hope was blushing because of this thought.

Honestly, Hope had never seen a man as good looking as him.

However, this feeling was complicated. She felt the need to deny it and didn't want to be claimed that way.

"You are mine, Hope. Just like how I am yours." Kace shrugged his shoulder as his goofy smile returned on his lips. "I think this is enough for you for now. We will talk about this later when you grow older."

"You always talk like that," Hope grumbled.

Kace stood up and kissed her forehead.

Despite Hope had said she refused to be Kace's mate, but it came very natural for her to be kissed by Kace and she didn't mind it at all.

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Hope was biting the tip of his pen when the teacher was explaining about story from the past, the girl was spacing out while looking out of the window until she felt someone nudged her side.

Hope whipped her head toward Ian beside her while glaring and mouthing 'what?'

As a reply, Ian pushed his book over to Hope, on the surface of it was his handwriting that said; 'what are you thinking? You have been spacing out since the first class.'

Hope frowned when she read that. She realized that her action must attracted this boy attention because he was very talkative and most of the time today, Hope ignored him.

Hope took her pen and scribbled under his sentences. 'Nothing'.

Actually, Hope was thinking about her conversation with Kace last night and it felt like she just opened a pandora box. She didn't know how to discern this information.

Kace was... old.

Hope was not sure how old he was, though his face was still the same like her first memory about him, but Hope didn't think she wanted to be with him.

However, in contrary, the moment Hope was with Kace, the interaction that they shared, it felt very natural.

Kace had said that she didn't need to think about this, at least not now, when she was only fourteen years old, but Hope couldn't help it.

And if Hope thought about the days that she spent with Kace... all of those days were filled with her either drooling crying, or throwing tantrum like a baby.

Maybe this was only her self- consciousness, but she didn't think that she had left a good memory for Kace to remember.

Lana had told her that Kace was the one who would change her diapers when he was around when Hope was a baby.

They used to laugh about how Hope had peed or pooped on him in some occasion when Kace was holding her.

It was funny memories and Hope would taunt him about this occasionally.



But, not now.

Those memories were nightmares!

Hope didn't know why her view about Kace changed all of sudden when she heard she was his mate. Wasn't she not like the idea?

If that was the case, she didn't need to feel bother like how she felt right now, right?

"I feel like I am going to die soon." Hope whispered, she covered her face with her palms.

### **Chapter 458 - FOURTEEN YEARS OLD (9)**

"What are you talking about?" Ian whispered back at her. "What? Do you have some rare disease or something?"

Hope didn't hear that, as she was busy to cover her face and whined in low voice.

After a couple of attempts to ask Hope about what she was talking about and got no response, Ian gave up and waited for another fifteen minutes before the bell rang.

Hope looked lethargic when she put back her things inside her backpack and followed Ian out of the classroom to meet with his other two siblings.

"Hey, are you all right? You look terrible." Rossie commented when she met Hope's unsightly expression.

"I feel terrible." Hope nodded at the younger sibling as they walked out of the school building.

Ussualy, Lana's car had been waiting for Hope at the entrance of the gate and she would part way with the siblings before she reached there, because Hope didn't want Lana to know about the three of them.

Knowing how Serefina and Kace, Hope was pretty sure, they wouldn't agree if she befriended with other creatures, though Lana and Kace basically rogue as well, yet the title as a rogue wasn't a good term in their world, apparently.

However, Hope was preoccupied by her own shameful memories and didn't realize it, instead of Lana, it was Kace who picked her up and now he was walking toward her direction.

Hope just realized it, when she heard a sound, like a snarl, from Ethan. However, in the next second his snarl became a whimper.

Hope whipped her head to see what was going on with Ethan, only to see Ethan, Ian and Rossie were having this dreadful expression etched on their face, as if they were seeing their nightmare in this broad daylight.

"What happened?" Hope blinked her eyes in confusion when Rossie moved away from her and hid behind Ethan's back. "What are you afraid of?"

Hope caught Ian's eyes and he signaled her to look ahead and she did. Her line of sight ended on the figure of Kace, who was walking closer toward them.

As a werewolf, the three siblings could sense greater predator, that was why they acted that way the moment their eyes fell on Kace.

Not to mention Kace's strong presence was akin to the feeling of a beggar met their king. Helpless and was at lost. They were forced to submit before him. After all they were just pups.

"What are you doing here?" Hope snapped at Kace irritably. "Where is Lana?"

Rossie whimpered when she heard the way Hope talked to the man in such disrespectful way. She was afraid for her.

Last night when Kace asked her about who had told her about mate, Hope couldn't lie to Kace as he knew very well when she did it.

Who would have thought he would come to her school to meet with the siblings?

"She is out with Serefina." Kace answered without even spared Hope a glance as his blue ocean eyes fixed on the three pups in front of him. "So, this is your friends?"

Hope's body turned stiff, she stepped in front of Ian and Ethan who were shielding their little sister out of Kace's eyes.

"What? What do you want to do with my friend?" Hope became defensive. She still remembered how Serefina had wiped out all the memories of her friends about her.

Did they really expect her to live as a loner? Avoiding all social interactions? Not making any friends? Hope would breakdown if that was what they wanted from her.

Kace shifted his eyes from the siblings to his agitated little mate as he knew what was running inside her pretty little head.

"I will do nothing." Kace extended his hand and tousled her hair. "Relax."

All of the students, teachers and all the people around them set their eyes on the tall man who walked with such strong aura around him. action

Their attention were captivated by him as he was a sight to behold. Kace's blue ocean eyes made them drawn in his charm.

Because Hope was used with Kace's presence, of course, she didn't know this kind of effect on the other people for Kace.

"So, why are you here?" Hope brushed aside his hand from her head as she fixed her messy hair, thanks to Kace.

"Pick you up of course." Kace shrugged his shoulder innocently, yet Hope knew this man was not genuine with his intention.

"Let's go home then." Hope grabbed his arms and was about to drag him away, but he didn't budge.

"This is your friends, right?" Kace smiled at Ian and Ethan who had turned very stiff by now as if they were a thief who was caught red handed with evidence. "Why don't invite them to our house? We can order pizza while watching a movie."

Hope stopped struggling to drag Kace away from there and, instead, looked at the man with curious gaze.

"What all of you say?" Kace smiled harmlessly, but it didn't stop them from shivering. "Hm?"

"Mm... we..." Ian stole a glance or two at Kace.

"Hm?" Kace raised an eyebrow. "I don't take a rejection very well."

"Kace!" Hope glared at him as she pinched at the big bad wolf. She remembered that she used to call him wolf when she was a child. "Don't threaten my friend!"

The pinch on his waist had no affect on him, Kace widened his eyes innocently. "I don't." then he turned his attention back toward the siblings. "Did I threaten you?"

"No." Ian and Ethan answered in unison, even before their mind could process it.

"See?" Kace spoke nonchalantly. "Let's go then."

Kace wrapped his arms around Hope's shoulder as he took his little mate away toward their car, which was parked right in front of the entrance gate.

"What do you want?" Hope hissed at Kace and watched the three followed them helplessly.

"Nothing." Kace grinned. "I just want to know your friends."

### **Chapter 459 - FOURTEEN YEARS OLD (10)**

Six boxes of pizza, soft drinks, other snacks and nice movie, but none of them could melt the icy cold atmosphere.

"What a nice movie." Kace commented.

At least out of five people inside the living room, there was one who really enjoyed this situation. Raine thought bitterly.

During the movie, no one was talking.

Rossie was sitting at the far away position from Kace, next to Rossie was Ian and Ethan sat near Hope, the three of them stuffed in the long sofa.

While Hope was stuck with Kace on the second sofa.

"It is only you who enjoy it." Hope sneered. She didn't know what kind of power that Kace possessed to be able to make all of her friends didn't even complain a single word about this.

"Why? You don't like it?" Kace raised his eyebrows at Hope and shifted his attention to the other three. "Do you want to watch another movie?"

"No, no..."

"No, thanks."

Ian and Ethan immediately waved their hands in panic. They would die because of too much pressure if Kace forced them to watch another movie with him.

Kace was very overbearing for them to handle.

At this time, Rossie tugged Ian's sleeve and whispered something to him, once she was done whispering, Ian looked over at Kace and spoke with trembling voice.

"Actually, we have to go home..." Ian gulped hardly. "Our parents will be very worry if we don't return now."

If the situation was slightly different, Hope would have loved it if for her friends to visit her house. This would be the first time for her friend to come over.

Thanks to Kace, but the ambience was not like what she imagined.

"Alright, I will drive you home." Kace stood up on his feet and stretched his stiff muscles. "Let's go."

"What? No!" Ian and Ethan talked simultaneously as they threw an SOS kind of look to Hope, begging for her grace to save their a\*\* from this intimidating shifter.

"Why? Do you want to turn down my generous offer?" Kace crossed his arms in front of his chest in intimidation.

"No, of course not." Ian replied in panic as he could feel his younger sister was shivering beside him.

"Okay, get up then or your parent will be panic, thinking I kidnapped their children." Kace picked the car key from the table and whistled as he walked out of the living room to turn on the car engine.

"Hope." Rossie sprung to her feet and approached her. "He is very scary."

Scary?

Hope had never felt that way about Kace, even when he fought the devil in his beast form on their previous encounter, she was not afraid of him.

Because deep down in her heart, Hope knew that Kace would never hurt her no matter what the reason was.

Yet, Hope still consoled Rossie by patting her back. "Don't worry he will not hurt you."

"Hope, what is he? An Alpha?" Ethan asked worriedly. He was the coolest among the siblings, but Hope still felt his nervousness. action

"I don't think he is an Alpha. We are same, rogue, like you." This statement from Hope also confirmed their suspicion that Hope was living with shape shifter.

"Impossible." Ethan's brows furrowed deepened. "He was nothing like rogue. We could feel his authority and dominance nature."

"Well, do you see any pack here?" Hope retorted. No pack, no Alpha.

"But, why he has that strong aura?" Ian half- whispered at Raine, his gaze darted at the front door occasionally, afraid Kace would rush into the house and strangled him because of his comment.

"I don't know." Hope shrugged her shoulder. How she supposed to know when she felt nothing except the warm of the tingling feeling that she felt every time he touched her?

Ian and Ethan looked at each other in confusion.

"Hope, I don't think I can take a ride with him." Rossie looked at Hope with her teary eyes, the stress that she felt was way too much and she couldn't handle it well.

"It's alright, I will go with you." this was the best way to handle the situation for the meantime.

"I really don't mind if I have to walk from here to our house." Ian shivered at the thought that the dangerous shifter would come to their house. "I don't feel comfortable for him to know where we are living."

"Like Kace said before." Hope glanced to the door. "He didn't take a rejection very well."

All of them knew that they didn't have a choice in this matter, because if Kace really wanted to know where they were living it was as easy as moving his finger.

The four of them walked out of the house and hopped into the car. It was obvious that Hope would take the front seat and received an incredulous gaze from Kace upon seeing her there.

"What are you doing here?" Kace frowned.

"Make sure you will not eat my friends.???" Hope huffed and even in that state, Kace found her very adorable as he pinched her rosy cheek.

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The car stopped in front of a small house with the front yard was full of roses. It was very beautiful house and the smell of the roses filled the air around them.

Only now Hope understood why sometime she would smell rose scent from the siblings.

Once the car stopped, Rossie immediately got off of the car and looked for the safety of her house.

"Thank you." Ethan said rigidly as he climbed out of the car after his twin brother who didn't say a word as he rushed toward the house because he caught a sight of his mother was tending the roses.

Hope could see it, why Ian was such in hurry, it was their instinct to feel the greater predator around them and also their instinct to protect their family from it.

But, what surprised Hope the most was Kace turned off the car and opened the car door. "What are you doing!?"

#### **Chapter 460 - FOURTEEN YEARS OLD (11)**

Hope widened her eyes in surprised when she watched Kace got down from the car and waltzed through the yard filled with roses.

Well, it a sight to behold when he did that and Hope found herself gawking at his broad shoulder when she supposed to run after him and dragged him back to the car before he frightened the poor family.

When her consciousness snapped, Hope rushed toward Kace, who had stood tall at the terrace of the siblings' house.

Ethan was standing tall before his mother while Ian was standing one step ahead of his twins, protecting both.

On the other hands, Kace was crossing his arms only five steps away from them, in this proximity, if Kace decided to lash out in his beast form, Hope highly doubted that Ian and Ethan would stand a chance against him.

Hope had seen how Kace fought as the beast, he was, by any means, was fierce and brutal, feral even and his beast size was so massive.

"Kace, what are you doing?!" Hope shrieked, she threw herself in front of Kace and hugged his body, hoping this was enough to restrain him if that silly thought of attacking her friend's family ever crossed his mind. "Let's go home!" action

Hope's heart dropped when she watched the way Kace smirked as he tilted his head to catch a glimpse of the woman behind the twins.

He did not spare Hope a glance.

"Stand down pups, you don't know who you are challenging." Kace's voice came out very relax and laced with amus.e.m.e.nt.

"GET OUT OF OUR HOUSE!" Ethan snarled at Kace and this made Hope jumped out of her skin, she had never heard Ethan snarled at anyone before, though he wasn't as friendly as Ian, but Hope didn't think he was someone who would take out his frustration on someone

Kace freed one of his arms from Hope's tight hug rather easily, as Hope thought he would jump into an action because being shouted at, Kace was placing his big palms on the back of Hope's back, caressing her long hair in soothing movement as if he tried to calm her tensed nerves and provide comfort.

"Move boys, you don't talk to our guest like that."

All of sudden, there was a sweet and stern voice from behind Ethan as a woman tried to make her way out from the protection of her sons, but they didn't budge at all.

"Mom, you don't know him!" Ethan tried to hold back her mother, who was glaring at him now. "He is dangerous!"

Kace chuckled upon hearing that. "Well, do you know me mutt?"

Honestly speaking, Ethan and Ian didn't know the man before their eyes. They acted the way they did now just because they felt the immense power and authority that radiated out of Kace and the feeling of being intimidated didn't settle well with werewolf, especially the rogue, as they lived all by themselves and didn't take the hierarchy of their kind.

"Don't talk to my children that way Kace, I will beat you." The woman, finally managed to get out of her Ethan' cage and stood beside Ian.

She looked like a woman in her late twenty, but it would be impossible, because she wouldn't have children who was already as big as the twins.

But Hope remembered, those shifters aged differently.

However, the things that shock Hope wasn't how young the woman was, the fact that the woman talked that way to Kace, startled her.

"Hi, Sophia." Kace grinned from ear to ear as he waved his hand at the woman.

Apparently, it wasn't only Hope, who was in great shock, but Ian and Ethan as well, both of them threw incredulous look to their mother and Kace back and forth.

"Do you know him, mom?!" Ian shrieked with wide eyes.

"Do you know them?" Hope raised her head to look at Kace, ignoring the fact that the big bad wolf was messing with her hair. "Kace!"

Hope was frustrated because Kace was laughing hard upon seeing his little mate stressful expression. "I know her." he finally admitted when he watched the woman walked toward him with sullen expression. "Hi, Sophia. Long time no see."

The woman named Sophia didn't seem please with the way Kace greeted her, she still has this stern expression on her face. "This is how you greet your old friend after years? By insulting their pups?"

Sophia was still upset because Kace called her children mutt.

On the other hand, Kace raised both of his hands. "They offended me first."

Sophia sighed and shook her head. "Still very childish."

"Oh, I can smell you, you brat!" there was a loud voice boomed from inside the house when a man as tall as Kace stepped out of the threshold followed by the scared Rossie, clutching her father's shirt.

Kace let out a guttural laugh as he freed himself from Hope's arms and gave Sophia a hug.

Everyone's eyes were bulging out of their socket and the man growled angrily. "Hands off of my mate you brat!"

Sophia didn't look surprised by the sudden proximity, she just looked annoyed and when Kace moved to hug the man, he stepped away to avoid him.

"Don't touch me!" the man grumbled loudly.

"At least give me a welcoming hug, you heartless wolf." Kace complained as he opened his arms widely, but all he got was only a pat on his shoulder. "You are still very tactless, Sterling." He followed the man into the house, leaving the teenagers' jaw dropped in shocked.

"Mom, do you know him?" Rossie was hugging her mother's arm while looking at her father and Kace, who was walking into the house. Her beautiful eyes laced with concern and curiosity.

"I know him." Sophia confirmed with an affirmative nod. "Ian, stop snarling. Ethan, brew some tea for our guest and Rossie, help me to prepare dinner." Sophia distributed her orders to her children as she grumbled. "This Lycan will gobble up our food storage."