

## **TLOA Lycan 511**

### **Chapter 511 - CHRISTAL**

"Are we ready to go now?" Kace tossed the wrapper of the sandwich to the dustbin and stood up.

At this time, Lana had finished her own sandwich and was drinking a glass of water unhurriedly, she peeked at Kace and took a big gulp.

"Yeah," she said, putting down the glass and grabbed her backpack.

Both of them went to the reception desk for returning the key, along the way there, many people, which Kace knew as witches and vampires, turned their head and let out a small grunt through their sharp teeth whenever Kace ran into them. action

They knew what Kace and Lana were, and though Lana's scent slightly different from any other werewolf, but the fact she wasn't from this realm couldn't be hid.

Mostly Kace would ignore them or return their glare if he started to feel uncomfortably from the intensity.

When they reached the reception desk, Lana gave the key room to the young man from last night as she smiled a little.

"You shouldn't be here," the young man said as he retrieved the key from Lana. "Both of you shouldn't be here when the festival happens."

"Thanks for your advice," Lana mumbled as she walked away from the reception desk toward the entrance of the inn.

Thought the inn was quite lively in the morning, but the street was still gloomy even when the ray of the sun illuminated every dark corner of this town.

The feeling of dampness hung in the air as they walked along the nearly empty street. Maybe the day was too early for people to go out.

But, this street didn't give any comfort for both of them to walk around recklessly, somehow, either Kace or Lana, both of them felt as if there was someone else who kept their eyes on them.

Though when they turned around and couldn't find anything at all.

It took them another four hour before they reached to different parts of this mysterious northern coven realm.

This realm was not like other dimension that Kace been before, thought there was some part where Kace found it was quite normal, but the rest of it was akin to a ghost town with barely people that they could see.

"Where are we heading?" Kace glanced at his surroundings, this place was quite creepy as Lana led them to the narrow alley where there was less people there.

"The house of the candlemaiden," Lana answered.

They were walking under the shadow of the building flanked them from both side.

"She has a house in this town?" Kace asked incredulously and Lana threw him a questioning look. "No, I thought this candlemaiden person would live in forest or mountain since she sounds like a holly person."

Kace's lack of imagination made Lana rolled her eyes as she thought this lycan was being ridiculous.

"Of course she has a house, she is a resident of this town." Lana then stopped in front of a shop with the sign next to its door. It read:

Christal.

Candlemaiden.

Kace raised his brows upon reading the sign. "That's it?" he would have never thought that the house of the candlemaiden would be so blunt like this.

This person called candlemaiden was living in a shop and put their name on the sign, as if announced what they were.

This kind of place reminded Kace of the place of the fortune teller. Was the candlemaiden also same like a fortune teller too?

Kace was not sure with the answer neither he wanted to know.

Lana walked closer to the shop's terrace with Kace followed behind her, she looked through the windows. It didn't seem like anyone was in.

No lights were on inside. Lana then tried the handle, but the door wouldn't move.

"Do you want to barge into this shop?" Kace asked her, thinking this girl was being ridiculous to actually expect the door wouldn't be locked.

"Do you have any idea?" Lana crossed her arms in front of her chest, trying to look calm with her heart beating so fast. She just became awkward around him.

Sometime, when you felt very nervous, you would end up do something out of ordinary and dump, just like what Lana did just now.

"Why not use a more polite way?" Kace stood in front of the door and rapped his knuckles against it sharply.

There were a few sounds of movement before the door opened. "Who's there?" a voice, as sweet as nectar sounded from inside.

After that, a beautiful young girl with black hair opened the door, she was almost as young as Hope with the same figure like his little mate.

"Who are... you?" she didn't open the door widely for Kace and Lana to go through, but just enough for the two to see her figure behind slightly opened door.

Lana stepped forward and stood in front of Kace, so she could face the young girl in front of her. "We are looking for the candlemaiden," she said firmly.

The girl didn't move a little bit, but her slightly frown expression told them that she didn't like their visit.

"The candlemaiden will not see people from outside of our community,???" she said in low and soft voice, but Kace could feel there was hesitation in the way she talked. "Please leave."

And everything happened way too fast; the girl was about to close the door, Lana realized what she was going to do and held the door with her bare hand, trying to stop the girl from shutting the door right before their face.

"No, stop! Argh!" Lana let out a grunt when her hand was being squeezed against the door and its frame.

Kace didn't have time to think about what he was doing when he pushed the door opened, it flew from its hinges and made the young girl flung a few meter away, her body skidded on the floor.

The commotion was very loud and this attracted another person inside this shop attention.

### **Chapter 512 - ASKING FOR HELP**

"What is happening here?" a hoarse voice stopped the commotion that Kace and Lana had created and from behind an antique cabinet a woman stepped in.

The two shape shifters were flabbergasted when they saw this woman, especially when the girl, who was splayed on the floor, quickly stood up and sprinted toward the second woman.

"Christal!" she screeched, hiding behind the woman named christal's back.

Kace furrowed his brows as he shot the woman before his eyes a puzzle look. If this woman was the candlemaiden, then she was far from what he imagined.

Since the title of candlemaiden sounded like a call to a girl, thus Kace thought he would meet with someone as young as Hope, or at least just the same age like the girl, who he had pushed away from the door before.

However, his expectation didn't meet the reality when he watched the candlemaiden named christal, even Lana couldn't hide her surprised as well, it was clear to see this was her first time to see her.

Christal was not a young delicate girl and didn't seem like someone who has a strong spirit whatever. She was a wrinkled old woman who walked with a limp and hair that had turned all white. Her eyes were hazy as if there was fog that covered her vision.

At first Kace thought she was blind until her grey eyes shot him a hard stare. Christal didn't talk and resumed that way until she opened her mouth.

"Both of you are shifters. What are shifters doing in the land of the witch?" her voice slightly shaky and crude, but she spoke with power and confidence, as if by provoking the two predators there, she wouldn't endanger her own life and the little girl behind her back.

"We are here to look for the candlemaiden," Lana spoke, broke the staring contest between Christal and Kace, apparently both of them engrossed to analyze one another. "And if you are the person that we are

looking for, then we need you to tell us where the priestess is." Lana didn't have time to beat around the bush as she blurted out what their intention.

"The priestess?" Christal sneered as she raised her eyebrows, staring at Lana as if she grew three heads now. The kind of look that Kace despised the most.

The way Christal was looking at Lana was the similar way how the vampire looked down on the shape shifter.

Kace disliked this old woman in an instant.

"Why do you think I will let you meet with the priestess?" Christal crossed her arms in front of her chest, despite her fragile figure she looked imperious and overbearing.

"How about this?" Lana fished out a candle from her backpack. This was an ordinary candle that Serefina had given to her, which Kace had seen it too. action

In Kace opinion, there was nothing special with this, but Christal's reaction showed them otherwise. Her arrogance's attitude started to fade away as both of her arms dropped beside her body.

Christal's body was shaking, as if she was about to cry. "How can you get that?!" her long finger pointed at the candle in Lana's hand. She looked very shock to say the least.

However, before Lana could answer that, Christal had already known the answer.

"This must be Serefina, right?!" she talked trough gritted teeth. "That witch!" Christal screamed in exasperation. Her breathing became erratic and the girl behind her back took initiative to get a chair for her.

"Calm down, my lady." The girl was panic, but she still found a chance to shoot Lana a dagger look. It was because of her that the lady she was served became like this.

Meanwhile, Lana could only pout her lips, frowning. She did nothing, but why she was the one who received this old woman's hostility?

From the look of it, Kace and Lana were very certain that Serefina had tricked this poor Christal, so the witch could gain her candle, which was very important to her.

Knowing the nature of Serefina was likely that their guess was correct. The witch was indeed a double dealer with a sharp tongue.

"That witch said she would borrow the candle for only a moment! But, it has been fifty years!" Christal bristled. "If she didn't help me back then, there was no way I will give the candle to her!"

Long story short, the young Christal almost died because of her encounter with those wasted creatures near the border between two worlds.

Kace and Lana concluded that must be the same creature that they met in the same place before they entered this realm.

Out of gratitude, Christal allowed the witch to borrow her candle for a few days, yet this candle only returned to her just now.

"So, what do you want?" The candlemaiden crossed her legs and resumed her arrogance attitude as she looked at the two shape shifters in disdain.

Regardless the way she treated both of them, the fact she asked and willing to help was enough for Kace, he didn't want to waste another moment here.

Found the priestess, healed his wounds and then he could go back to his little mate. Period.

Kace took the candle form Lana's hand, he took to step closer before he stretched his arm, offered the candle to the rightful owner.

"We want to meet with the priestess, how can we find her?" Kace kept his voice as polite as possible.

Christal looked at the candle in Kace's hand for a brief moment before her old eyes traced back to the Lycan's face.

Instead of taking her candle, she grabbed Kace's wrist while furrowing her eyebrows. Her voice came out as a whisper.

"Your spirit is asking for help."

With that was being said, the candle in Kace's hand lit up and its flames turned its surrounding into a pitch dark rapidly.

All of this happened very fast and when Kace realized, he had turned into his beast.

### **Chapter 513 - HE IS DYING**

Kace had turned into his beast, the white Lycan, but he had no power over it. This almost felt like Kace was an onlooker who was watching the beast howling to the dark night.

The white beast's howl continued and it sounded very disturbing, as if the beast was calling for someone, as if the beast was asking for help.

Maybe the candlemaiden was right, even Kace could feel the distress in its outcry. After all, the beast was being suppressed for such a long time by its own owner.

But to whom was he asking for help?

As an onlooker, Kace was standing right beside the white Lycan, he looked at his surroundings and realized he didn't know this place, he had never been in a place like this before.

Kace felt the tranquility of this place, as if the velvety grass, vivid flowers and a single tree behind him were breathing, alive.

This was a beautiful courtyard with torch- lit surrounded him. The source of the light aside from the moon above and his beast kept howling into something that he couldn't see.

Kace was startled when he heard a familiar voice that he loved. She called his name...

"Kace?"

Hope appeared out of nowhere and stood a few meters away from the white lycan while Kace could only stared at her beauty, captivated by the way she moved and the bewilderment in her eyes.

Hope knew his beast, thus she knew it was him. However, she couldn't see the man, who was standing next to the white lycan as her eyes focused on the other part of him. His soul. His spirit. His beast...

"Kace, is that you?" Hope took a few steps closer when she heard the beast whimper and lower its head, even Kace was flabbergasted by the way his beast acted in front of their mate.

The confusion in Hope's eyes vanished, upon seeing her surrounding, the moment she caught a sight of Kace's beast.

Apparently this little mate of his was also surprised with this place, this also left a question for Kace; how she could get here?

This place was not Northern Coven realm and this wasn't a human realm as well.

When Hope was close enough to the beast, she stretched out her hands to pat its head and the beast responded by nudging her hand, encouraged her to do more while wagging its bushy tail.

On the other hand, Kace smiled bitterly. His beast almost like a lap dog...

But then, the tranquility in Riane's eyes shifted as she watched in horror the four lines gashes on the beast's back. Definitely the same wounds that Kace had.

She was petrified, after all the ugly wounds looked very obtrusive against the beast soft white fur.

"What happened? You said, you will take care of the wound?" her voice was barely a whisper and her eyes started brimming with tears.

"I do, I am taking care of my wounds, but I don't know why I end up here." Kace couldn't see the sadness in Hope's eyes, her fear for him. "How can you be here?"

Kace stretched out his hand, was about to pull Hope into his embrace, yet he couldn't touch her, as if he was made of smoke, his hand passed through her body.

Not only that, Kace just realized that Hope was not able to see or hear him.

"What the hell?!" Kace cursed under his breath, looking at his own hands, but there was nothing strange about them.

However, why he couldn't touch her?!

At this point, Kace was not aware that both of them were in different dimension. This place was not exist.

Kace's eyebrows furrowed deeply, trying to comprehend this whole situation and then he came into a conclusion that all of this had something to do with the candlemaiden and the candle that she had lit before Kace was here.

Since he could only watch his beast was interacting with Hope, Kace could only wish there was nothing bad would happen, as if the beast went feral or something...

Thus, when Hope was trying to touch its wounds and the beast growled, Kace was terrified.

"No! Step back Hope! Don't come closer! Don't touch him!?? Kace made a futile effort to warn Hope when the latter didn't even seem to notice his existence there.

The beast could bite off Hope's head within second, killing her as easy as breathing, just like what it had done centuries ago. A killing machine, a bloodthirsty beast.

Kace could only relax a little bit when, apparently, the beast recognized their mate and, just like Kace, he didn't want to hurt her. This understanding was enough to put him at ease.

However, all of sudden, everything around them turned into thousands of flickering light. Those lights floated in the air and upon closer looked, one could see that was a sea of fireflies...

The scenery was so breathtakingly beautiful, this was almost like the moment when Kace was in the land of the dead.

The fireflies flew in the air before they were taken care by the wind that blew them away to the night sky.

Small gasp, which escaped Hope's lips, telling Kace there was more happening and when he turned around to look, he witnessed how the white beast joined the light as it turned into fireflies itself.

What was happening?!

The beast closed its eyes and let out the last whimper, and just smoke, its image turned blurry...

It wasn't only Hope, who didn't believe by what she was seeing, even Kace couldn't comprehend what the meaning of this.

Kace blinked his eyes and everything was gone and now he was back to the old shop, standing in front of the old candlemaiden.

"What was that?" His question was coming out very hoarse.

"Your beast is dying," Christal said in her deep voice. "You don't even trust your own beast."

"What?" Kace took a step back.

"Your beast is asking for help to your mate."

#### **Chapter 514 - HOPE WAS UPSET**

"Stop sighing like that, I could hear that even from hundreds meter away," Rossie chuckled as she walked next to Hope with a tray full of food in her hands.

"The festival will be held in three days and they still haven't returned. Something must have happened to them." Hope came up with this conclusion since two days ago when she realized there was no sign of Kace or Lana from coming back.

They had lunch break and were in canteen when they talked about Hope's concern regarding Kace and Lana whereabouts.

"Maybe they are just late," Rossie nudged Hope's arm when they was about to walk toward their usual seat. "He dated someone right after you dumped him."

Rossie pointed at Oliver with her sharp chin, giggling.

"I was so stupid," Hope just realized now how immature she was for dating Oliver just because Kace disappeared for years without any news.

Not because the silly reason she had to wait for him, but because Oliver was totally a jerk. At first he seemed like a good guy, yet after what had happened, it was Hope to be blamed for choosing him.

He started to spread some nasty rumor about Hope was being in relationship with the new teacher.

Well, that was true in some way, yet when no one knew about this and he just ran his mouth as he wished, Hope could feel the mixture of disdain and resentment for him, especially when he added the story here and there... like a typical jackass.

And now he showed off his new relationship with Norah, one of busybody girl who helped to fan the rumor.

Thankfully, with Hope's track record the aftereffect not really bad for her. Those people were still worried to rub her in the wrong way. They wouldn't want to end like the other students, who tried to provoke her.

However, it didn't mean they don't talk behind her back.

"You were stupid," Rossie agreed with Hope as they walked past Oliver and his friend's table.

Hope was restless to know nothing about Kace and Lana. It almost felt like those three years when he left her, but this time, this feeling was amplified.

Hope was very tensed up lately.

Unfortunately, when Hope felt like she needed a platform to vent out her frustration, someone offered it.

Norah was, actually, trying to get her attention by talking out loud, enough for Hope and Rossie to hear that when they walked past their table.

"I know you will not serious with a weird girl like her," Norah leaned her body to Oliver beside her as her eyes fixed on Hope. "She is very nasty, right? Having an affair with a teacher? Someone way older than her."

Hope sneered, this girl would have a heart attack when he knew how old Kace was. But, Norah didn't stop playing with fire.

All the people there knew better to not provoke Hope, as they wouldn't win any argument with her or they could lay a hand on her, it had been proven, but Norah seemingly turned blind eyes for that fact.

"Not only she has weird personality, she has a strange family as well. I wonder where is her father? I think her father was not able to stand both mother and daughter..." Norah continued in mocking tone.



If this was some other day, Hope wouldn't mind her statement about her family at all, as she didn't care much about this concept of family, moreover, Serefinia was not her mother just like how the people here thought she was.

It was ridiculous and was a waste of time to get angry over something like that, because Hope wouldn't be able to explain how 'special' her family was.

However, Hope turned around and approached the busybody girl, not because she was upset, but it was more likely because she needed something or someone to vent out her irritation of her situation right now.

"What did you say?" Hope put her tray on the table, right in front of Norah. "I have a weird family?" she crossed her arms and smirked.

Norah didn't see it coming, she was startled, but composed herself quickly. "Yes,?? she said it out loud. "That's why Oliver broke up with you!" Norah stood up and mimicked Hope's gesture, she raised her chin defiantly.

Unexpectedly, Hope was laughing when she heard that. "You told her that's the reason why we broke up? Because of my weird family?"

Norah was baffled to face someone like this and Oliver's jaw hardened as he gritted his teeth. It was embarrassing enough to meet with Hope after the last time, but since Hope didn't pay attention to the rumor about them, he became slightly arrogant. action

"Of course..." Norah was about to talk something nasty when Hope beat her into it.

"Is the 'thing' between your legs is all right now? Because I can make it worse if you keep trying to challenge my patient, stop it while I am still nice." Hope grabbed a chicken thigh from her tray and bit it slowly.

"Hope!" Oliver fumed. "Don't talking nonsense! You are only angry because we broke up!" his face turned red and this amused Hope as she kept chewing on her chicken thigh.

At this moment, they had become a center of attention there. No one could eat their meal and was enjoying the scene before their eyes. It had been a long time since Hope was having a fight like this.

Even Rossie didn't stop her, she knew that Hope needed this. Actually, to see Hope work up with her frustration this way was better than have to hear her whining all the time.

"And for you," ignoring Oliver, Hope fixed her attention on Norah. "You like my secondhand that much? Why don't you take this? Maybe you like it."

"What..." just like before, Norah didn't have a chance to talk.

Without warning Hope had shoved the remaining chicken leg in her hand to Norah's mouth.

## **Chapter 515 - AN AUNT**

Hope was very upset. Despite of being upset, she enjoyed the look that was given by Norah, Oliver and the rest of the people, who watched this. There was a feeling of satisfaction that she felt.

Norah immediately spat the chicken leg and rubbed her mouth with her sleeves harshly, "Hope!" and screamed exasperatedly.

Behind the girl, Oliver glared at Hope because of what she had done to his new girl, his chest rose and fell, filled with anger. And yet Hope didn't care at all of how he felt about it.

"You can't do that to her!" Oliver pulled Norah behind his back, attempting to protect her from Hope. But that attempt only made Hope laughed. How ridiculous.

"Why can't I? I just did." Hope shrugged her shoulder nonchalantly. action

"If you're angry..." Oliver wanted to act heroic in front of everyone and showed them how wicked Hope was. He ended up being cut off icily and not being able to finish his words.

"Angry? Oh, please... you overestimated yourself." There was a glimpse of sinister smile dancing on her lips when she said this.

Before this confrontation was going south, someone came to Rossie and whispered something to her and stepped back. She was too afraid to talk directly to Hope at this moment.

"Hope." Rossie grabbed her by her sleeves to get her attention. "Your aunt comes to see you."

Hope turned around and spotted the confusion in Rossie's eyes. "My aunt?" she knitted her brows, the same confusion reflected on her eyes.

Because both of them knew, that Hope didn't have an aunt to begin with.

Who is this person?

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"Are you sure, you will meet her?" Ian asked her when they walked in the corridor, with Ethan and Rossie followed behind them. "You know that you don't have any aunt or relatives, right?"

"Of course I am aware." Hope rolled her eyes, Ian has been bothering her with this since they left the canteen. "There is no way all of a sudden I have an aunt."

"Then you don't have to meet her, she could be someone dangerous." Ian furrowed his eyebrows, still objected the fact that Hope wanted to meet with this mysterious woman.

"My curiosity wouldn't let me sleep tonight if I don't find out." Hope refused to mind what he said. Besides, she couldn't reject this meeting. After all the woman came here and asked for her, the teachers would come to fetch her if Hope didn't show up.

"You have to be careful," Ian grabbed Hope's arm to stop her before she could push open the door to the room, where the woman had been waiting for her.

"Of course," Hope said lightly. She patted Ian's shoulder and glanced briefly at Ethan and Rossie.

"We will be here," Ethan let her know as he leaned his tall build against the wall across the room.

"You don't have to do that, you have class to attend." Hope smiled sweetly. "But, I appreciate that."

After saying that, Hope pushed the door open and walked inside. She could still hear Rossie talked to her brothers, assured them that Hope would be fine before she closed the door and met her visitor.

This was a small room and was only used for counseling purposes or parents meeting.

There, sitting with her legs crossed on a brown sofa, was a woman with a beautiful smile on her lips. They were bright colored red that one would mistake them as blood.

The thought of it alone made Hope shivered, for some reason, this woman gave some similar dangerous vibes like Serefina when she was pissed.

"Hello, Hope." The woman leaned her back against the sofa and tilted her head. She was wearing a knee-length yellow lacy dress, with pearl necklace around her slender neck. "Nice to see you again," she took off her sunglasses.

"Do I know you?" Hope stopped behind the sofa and stood there, she felt it was necessary to put some distance between them. Just in case...

Apparently it was a good idea to have the siblings waiting for her outside, at least she knew if this woman was up to no good, she could always scream and they would come to help her.

Hope had been warned, since the festival was around the corner, there were many supernatural creatures came to this village. She had been avoiding roaming outside after the sun set.

Not only that, afraid of what would happen to her, Sterling and Sophia suggested her to skip the school just a day before the festival. Hope agreed to that.

"I don't think you know me, but I do know you." The woman waved her hand as a gesture for Hope to take a seat next to her. "Don't worry, I don't bite," she chuckled when Hope didn't budge.

"I'm fine here," Hope ignored the mocking tone in her voice, since she was too absorbed with her gut feeling regarding the woman in front of her eyes. Hope felt like she had seen her somewhere. "Tell me, what do you want?"

The woman didn't seem offended by Hope's rude behavior, rather she looked at her with amused curiosity. "As expected of someone who was raised by Serefina."

"Do you know her?" Hope narrowed her eyes. The fact that the woman knows Serefina had failed on making Hope at ease, she could be a foe, since the witch didn't get along very well with many people. Hell, she didn't get along with other witches, let alone people, or shape shifter itself. But, still she was respected.

"Of course. In fact, we are friends." The woman smiled sweetly.

"Serefina doesn't have a friend." Hope glanced at the door behind her and was about to run if this woman made a sudden move to approach her, yet she looked rather relax, even Hope's wariness didn't bother her.

"She has, I am the only friend of her." she shrugged, "I know she doesn't get along with many people, but don't you think it is rude to assume it out based on that?"

"I am done here," Hope didn't want to stay there longer, if this conversation was going nowhere.

"But, I am not."

### **Chapter 516 - COME WITH ME**

Hope turned around and was about to walk out of the room when she heard that woman's reply. Ignoring her, she kept walking only to find herself was not inside the same room as before.

Hope was startled, but didn't panic as Serefina had done the same thing a few times before when she was too lazy to look more like 'a human'.

"You're a witch," Hope turned to face the woman, irritation filled in her voice when her eyes met hers. "What do you want?"

The witch was still sitting on the same seat like before, but the room had disappeared and was replaced by a beautiful garden with a fountain of seven dwarves on her left side. A big tree canopied both of them and velvety grass beneath her feet.

In another occasion, Hope would appreciate the scenery, but not this time. She was too upset for being transported without her consent.

Hope knew she was trapped there, and there was no way she could get out from whatever place she was in now, without the willingness of the witch herself, but Hope refused to show anything that could be assumed as fear or weakness to the witch.

"Actually, I am here to help you," the witch shrugged her shoulder nonchalantly and then stood up graciously. "But, I need something in return." She smiled at her.

"I don't need your help, and I will not give you anything," Hope was glad her voice was not shaking.

"Are you sure? Even if I say I can help you to meet your mate?" she smiled triumphantly when Hope's expression slightly changed. "Haven't you been anxious all this time because Kace had not yet come as he had promised you?"

"How did you know?" Hope's question was barely a whisper, she squinted her eyes, trying to figure this woman out, but there was nothing she could find.

"Serefina told me. I have told you earlier, I am a friend of that witch, remember?" She closed the distance between them, but Hope relieved she didn't force herself to be extremely near her, which made her uncomfortable.

Yet, a second later Hope remembered something. "I think I have seen you." When she said this, the feeling was amplified and now she was certain this witch was the same woman from that day. "You are the woman who was standing across my school weeks ago."

"That would be me." She nodded, satisfied. "I am glad that you remember me, even though you were pretending to not see me at that time."

"Then, you supposed to know I want to keep it that way." Living with Serefina and facing her peculiarity had its own benefit. It made threatening the girl to be an uneasy job, even in a disadvantage situation like this.

The woman contemplated, but amusement was clearly seen on her hazel eyes. "I have never met a guardian angel as fierce as you before..." she murmured.

"Why do you think I will trust you?"—and how do you know that Kace is my mate? But, Hope didn't say the last question out loud as she stood there, trying to figure out, whether this witch was a friend or a foe.

There were not many people knew about Hope's identity as Kace's mate or a guardian angel. Probably, Serefina indeed had told her about that? Hope was unsure.

"I don't need you to trust me, I want to make a deal with you," she said in such a thick, straightforward manner. Her reason for being there to meet the angel not for gaining her trust, but to get something from her.

"I know better not to make a deal with a witch." That was a basic knowledge after she knew what happened to Lana. The girl was bound for life because of the agreement she made with Kace, thanks to Serefina for that.

"Hm," she hummed, nodding her head in agreement. "Serefina taught you well."

And after she said that, their surrounding around them changed again. Now, they were in the previous small room, in Hope's school and Hope was standing only one step away from the door.

"Don't give me that look," she chuckled when she watched how Hope curled her eyebrows showing her deep distrust. "Don't tell me that you are upset because we are no longer in the garden again. You have class to attend and moreover, I don't have intention to restrain you."

"Thank you for your understanding," Hope responded sarcastically, but when she was about to open the door, that woman talked again.

"Think about my offer again if you really want to meet your mate," she said languidly. "I have nothing to lose. After all, Serefina had me promised her to help if Kace and Lana still didn't return even when the festival began."

This woman knew too much for Hope liking. It felt almost like Serefina, indeed, had told her everything about it. However, Hope never heard Serefina mentioned someone as her friend or maybe because Hope didn't know much about her. action

"Why they still hasn't return until now?" Hope couldn't help, but asked her. She was no longer able to hide her worries about what happened to them.

"I don't know, that's why I will go there to find out."

"You will enter the pine forest? The Northern Coven realm?" Hope asked in low voice, but she couldn't hide her surprise.

"There is no need to be surprised. Just like what you have found out now, I am a witch. It is only natural for me to join the festival, right?"

"And you will take me there to join your witches kind and vampire?" Hope smirked. "No, thanks."

"Find me in the festival, where the torch is lit, THAT if you change your mind." She didn't look upset or offended by Hope's rejection, as if she had known how her reaction would be. "If you care enough to find your mate."

Hope opened the door harshly and slammed it shut, she didn't even give a damn to her last words, though it has lingered in her mind since that very moment.

### **Chapter 517 - HOPE'S DECISION**

Days had passed and in a blink of an eye, today was the third day since Hope met with the witch in her school, meaning tonight was the festival.

"But, I'm very sure that I didn't hear anything from inside the room." Rossie put on her uniform while Hope was still lying lazily on the bed, since today was the festival, she was told to stay inside the house and couldn't take a single step outside. "See, I told you that's strange."

"There is nothing strange about that, she is a witch after all. She is able to do that." Hope yawned and curled herself into a ball while hugging her pillow.

"Maybe." Rossie shrugged her shoulder. "The only witch that I have ever seen is Serefina, though we live, practically, near one of those witches, yet I have never seen Serefina did her magic."

"You wouldn't want to see, it is not something you want to experience." Hope told them about what the witch had offered to her, but didn't say anything about being transported to another place. They would become irrationally freaked for nothing.

"If you said so..." Rossie mumbled, combing her hair with her fingers while looking at her reflection on the mirror. "You will not go out there and meet her, won't you?" she asked casually, but from the way she was staring at Hope through the mirror showed her concern.

"I won't, why would I?" Hope closed her eyes. "People have told me not to go, even Kace made sure of it, so that I won't have the slightest chance to go. So with all that in mind, I don't think I will risk my life for someone that I don't even know."

Hope's reason made sense, yet the way she talked about that, almost sounded like an advice to herself. She shut her eyes closed, so she wouldn't meet Rossie's sharp one and the more she thought about it, the more restless she became.

What if that woman was telling the truth and she was, indeed, a friend of Serefina? And Serefina had ordered her to help Kace and Lana if something happened to them.

Something must have happened to them. They should have returned by now.

But, even if something REALLY happened to them, having the witch there, wouldn't help with anything right? She couldn't turn into a powerful beast or could perform the kind of magic like Serefina did.

Yet, why was that woman insisted for Hope to come with her? And what exactly she wanted from her as the bargain?

Hope sighed.

"Let's go eat breakfast." Rossie slapped Hope's back and laughed when Hope grunted. It was hurt. "Lazy, get up!"

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Since Hope was not allowed to go out of the house, she could only stayed inside Rossie's bedroom while reading a book, which she was not able to finish the first paragraph even after an hour had passed.

Her mind wondered to the possibilities that could happen if she decided to trust that witch, shaking her head and tried to get rid of that idea, but then a few seconds later, she found herself was wondering the same thing again, and this repeated the whole time.

A little part of her trusted that woman's words blindly and wanted to go out to meet her, asked the witch to take her to the Northern Coven realm, but the other part of her, which the rational one, knew that was not even an option.

She was not only endanger herself, but also risked the safety of everyone here by disobeying Kace and Serefina's warning.

What if that witch was a dark witch and she was only playing tricks on her? Serefina and Lana had told her, how evil those dark witches were.

"Argh!" putting down her book, Hope was staring at the clock, it was two in the afternoon, meant the festival would be held around five more hours from now.

"What should I do?" Hope bit her finger and pulled the blanket to cover her face, trying to sleep.

Sleeping was the best escaping way to get rid of this anxiety, but the problem was, how could she fall asleep when her eyes couldbarely close properly?

Honestly speaking, Hope really dying to meet Kace. To make sure with her own eyes that he was fine. Hope didn't want to wait any longer since the due time had passed.

"Kace should be here by now, unless something bad happened to him," Hope mumbled to herself and frowned when she imagined Kace and Lana were facing trouble now. "But, even if I go with that witch, what can I do?"

At this rate, Hope really wanted to know what else the guardian angel could do. She regretted it that she didn't have time to ask about this.

"I couldn't fly," Hope kept mumbling to herself, it helped her to sort her thought out. "But, my blood could harm a devil, but they are witches and vampire, not devil! Ugh!" she ended up became more frustrated than before.

But then, the image of the white lycan appeared before her eyes, the way he whimpered and how he responded to her touch. The gashes behind his back...

"What does it mean?" Hope turned her body and stared at the ceiling, "Was he trying to ask for help from me?"

It looked like that.

And the fireflies...

The white lycan turned into thousand fireflies, though the scene was breathtakingly beautiful, but it was also pained her heart. Hope felt like she had been through a lifetime of agony.

Maybe it was only her, looking for justification of her action. But, this was all Hope needed to make her decision.

She bit her lips as her body tensed and her adrenaline peaked. It would be dangerous, but the thought of the white beast was waiting for her and needed her help was enough to make her jumped from her bed and thought about the way to get out from this house.

Hope was sure, almost ninety percent sure that the beast needed her and that vision was not only an empty vision.

## **Chapter 518 - HER HOPE**

"There's a torch in the festival?" Hope asked while washing all the dirty plates after their dinner with Rossie, who was cleaning the table. All the men were in the living room while Sophia was preparing some cookies for them.

"Yes, there is. The festival will start when the torch is lit." Rossie put another dirty bowl in the sink. "You have never been in the festival, have you?" she stated.

"And I think, I'd never will." Hope pouted her lips, trying to act normal, which was hard to do if you lived surrounded by those supernatural creatures, who was able to sniff your lies.

Fortunately, they didn't pay attention to Hope and as long as she wouldn't do something strange, Hope thought she would be fine until she could execute her plan. Hopefully everything would be fine...

"Tell me how the festival is, you had been there the last time it was held, right?" Hope dried her hand with towel and turned around to face Rossie. If she was going to go there alone, at least she had to know how the situation there.

Her plan was simple; fled from this house unnoticed, went to the festival, looked for the torch and met with the witch. Sounded like a simple and nice plan, yet Hope was unsure she could go until the final steps run smoothly.

Meanwhile, here she was, trying to gather any information that could help her to escape.

Hope knew, her reason for doing this was inexplicably ridiculous, yet she couldn't help but felt the beast was asking for her help. Kace needed her.

Though, it would be too risky, but it would worth a shot.

"The festival is a masquerade, where people from this village wear beautiful masks and dresses." Rossie shrugged her shoulder. "There is also this role game during the festival,"



"What kind of game?" Hope was clueless about it all because she had never been there and was never put any interest on finding out about the festival.

Rossie then explained about the role game. Apparently, three people would be chosen as witches, and each of these witches are tasked to bring a small golden balls, and hide them behind their dress or shirt, so no one would find out. It was the task of other villagers to find out the witches among them.

Also each witches had to snatch one flower that was previously put behind everyone's back.

That was why, they must be more vigilant and trusted the right person to watch their back.

The game would last until the torch was completely burned off or until the identity of the three witches were revealed.

It sounded like a game that Hope would love to play and she would definitely join if she wasn't in this kind of situation.

"The story behind this game is quite ironic," Rossie said as they walked to the living room, where the rest of the family were watching the football match from the TV, "It is said that this game was created to banish all the witches away and all their allies too, because witches are associated with something evil and could make someone ran out of good luck."

Hope started to see the ironic part of it.

Those villagers thought they were chasing away the witches out of their land. But, Hope and all the supernatural creatures aroundknew that this village stood still where it is now, all because of the power of the witches. action

This place was the nearest to where human and witches' realm was located and yet, the villagers held this festival.

"Hm, I think so..." Hope mumbled while nodding her head, agreed.

In the next hour, Hope stayed together with the family, watched football and laughed with them. But, when the clock hit eight, she stood up.

"Where are you going?" Ian asked, seeing Hope was about to go.

"Take a bath," she replied curtly.

"At this hour?" Rossie turned her body and stared at Hope.

"It's hot, I'm soaked with sweat..." Hope frowned as she fanned her face with her hand. "Be right back."

No one asked anymore questions, as they knew Hope would often do something peculiar like this and Hope was indeed taking a bath. They could hear the water running in bathroom and weren't suspicious at all.

Actually, Hope needed a bath to lessen her scent, because it was definitely impossible to get rid of her own scent completely, but at least this will slow those with remarkable noses in the living room, on tracking her down once they noticed her absent.

This was important because realistically speaking, there is no chance that Hope would outrun those beasts.

Hope scrubbed every inch of her skin until it turned red, after that, she wore a t-shirt, jacket and jeans in which pocketsstuffed with flowers that she picked from Sophia's garden. All that, just to cover her scent.

Finished with that, Hope made sure that no one was nearby, that everyone was still in the living room. And apparently they were. Hope could hear everyone's voice there.

Using a small window beside the bathroom, Hope lifted herself with the support of a wooden chair. It was hard to fit herself in that small window, but at the end she managed to do it after five minutes of struggling.

Hope landed on the soft ground with her hands covered her head, as she fell upside down.

However, Hope didn't have time to complain about her arms that got hurt from falling, as she stood up hastily and rushed toward the dark of the night.

It wasn't hard to know which direction she should take, since the festival itself was easy to spot, and then Hope could see the bright light of it from the distance.

All Hope could do was to run towards that direction before anyone noticed and caught her in the middle of her escape plan.

Another wish; she hoped her decision this time was the right thing to do and was not going to cause another problem to her and many people.

### **Chapter 519 - WHERE IS THE WITCH?**

Hope ran with all of her might, she was too afraid to slow down and kept looking behind her shoulder to see if there was someone or a werewolf who ran after her, but to her relief there was no one there.

The almost empty street wasn't look that scary for her now, since she had another thing that needs to be aware of.

The area where the festival was being held was in the heart of this village, almost everyone werethere, gathered at the event.

The closer Hope to the festival, the more people she saw wearing beautiful mask to cover their faces.

There was noisy sound from people chattering and music welcomed her when she was there, out of breath. She would dare to slow down her pace and took a deep breath, only when she was surrounded by people.

Hope had never run like that before and she didn't think that she wanted to do it again in any time soon.

"Mask?" a stall keeper, which was a man in his early forty, passed her a white mask since he saw Hope didn't have it. "Masquerade without a mask is not nice," he said with a grin. action

"Alright," Hope took the mask from that man and gave him the money, along with that, the flowers that she had stuffed inside her pocket was handed over too.

"Wow, thank you for the flower—wait, I have not given your change yet," the stall keeper shouted at the girl who had ran into the crowd, as if he heard her answer.

"You can keep it!" and with that her small body disappeared, mingling with the crowd.

Hope was too anxious to be bothered about the change, because what she needed now was to go to where the torch was, and it was hard to move with all the people went from every direction, surrounded her.

Hope was glad with the mask that covered her face, but also anxious to see this sea of people whose face couldn't be seen in front of her.

Hope wouldn't know if there was a witch or vampire among them, but again, she would never know unless those creatures did something peculiar.

The torch was placed on a higher stage and was surrounded by people who were dancing while circling it. However, Hope was not able to see the woman.

She was getting nervous.

Licking her dry lips several times, Hope moved toward the stage.

The festival was packed with masks and happy smiles everywhere, if Hope wasn't in her current situation, she would drowned in nothing but joy.

However, now it wasn't the right time to think about that.

Her mind raced along with her legs, forcing her way forward, yet even when Hope had joined the dancing around the stage, she still couldn't see the woman.

Has she already left?

Hope could feel the twinge in her heart telling her that she had lost the opportunity to meet with Kace and knew about the reason why he wasn't here yet.

She cursed herself under her breath for her stupidity.

Hope craned her neck to see around her, but since her height was not taller than some people around her, it was hard to have a clear view.

"Hey, lady..."

A husky voice greeted Hope's ears as cold breath fanned her neck. Startled, Hope turned around only to see a man wearing a red mask, smiling at her creepily.

"Are you looking for someone?"

Hope's hand was tangled with him, since they were doing the dancing circling the stage. This man was on her left side while a slender woman was on her right.

"It's none of your business," Hope hissed, she acted arrogant to cover her fear, there was something from this man that made her wary.

Is he one of the supernatural creatures, who came to join the festival? No one could answer that question and Hope couldn't ask.

"Hmm," He hummed and tightened his arms around Hope's while moving, following the rhythm and the movements of the music and all the people there. "Let me guess, waiting for your shapeshifter partner?"

With that question, Hope jerked away her hand, yet he tightened his grip and chuckled, "Don't worry, I will not do any harm on you. We have that stupid treaty between our kinds, remember?" he said it with humorless tone.

That treaty was the only thing that kept both creatures from killing each other every time they ran into each other, but it was also considered as a joke for some of them.

Since both creatures were too strong headed, a little friction was enough for them to forget all of that at once.

"You better stay away from me," Hope whispered harshly at him.

It wasn't a new thing for Hope for being mistaken as a shapeshifter. Even Ian thought of her as one of their kind the first time they met. And now, since Hope had been living with the siblings' family for more than a week, she was sure, it was even harder to distinguish her scent as human, and not even with the flowers on her pocket could help.

"Wow! You are fierce." He feigned surprised. "Why don't you enjoy the festival, since it is rare to see your kind around this village?"

"Let go of my hand!?" Hope gritted her teeth, though she was angry at—whatever creature he was—this man, her eyes still focused on the surroundings, trying to find that damn woman.

Now her frustration had turned into anger. How could she promised to offer her one thing, but didn't keep her own word?

"Let her go!"

There was another voice from behind Hope and his voice was very familiar in her ears, without even seeing who it was, she knew who this person was.

"Ethan!" Hope screeched, she was thrilled and grateful, but at the same time her mind had pictured another trouble which coming on her way.

If Ethan was here, then, she was not only had to run from this annoying man, but also from the siblings!

Where is that witch!?

## **Chapter 520 - SHOULD WE LEAVE NOW?**

"Oh, is this the shifter that you have been waiting for?" the man released Hope's arm immediately as Ethan pulled the girl to stand beside him, out from the circle of dancing people.

"You better back off!" Ethan growled and glowered at him. He pulled Hope to his back as he sent the man away only by his glare.

"Wow, easy shifter," he said mockingly, raising both of his hands in the air, giving a surrender-like gesture, yet there was no trace of fear in his brown eyes. "Or should I call you a rogue? You smell like one." He shrugged his shoulder before disappearing among the crowd with his laugh echoed along the loud music.

Afterward, there were only the two of them, standing out of the circle, Ethan grabbed Hope's wrist and dragged her away from the crowded people.

"What are you doing here?!" He hissed viciously at the girl in front of him.

They were standing beside a hotdog stall under a pine tree, away from the crowd and the stage—where the torch was lit up.

Hope grimaced upon realizing that Ethan could look scary too.

Ethan narrowed his eyes with suspicion, as he talked to her in low voice, but enough for Hope to hear the clear distress behind it. "You're here to meet that woman, right?" He guessed it correctly.

Hope's silence was a solid answer for Ethan's question. action

Bamboozled, the boy widened his eyes in disbelief as he talked with high pitch voice. "I thought we agreed that the woman was only talking nonsense! You said it yourself!" he said exasperatedly. From afar he could see his twin was approaching them, apparently managed to find their secluded location.

"Well, I changed my mind," Hope mumbled, feeling slightly guilty because she had run away from them.

"Listen—"

But, Ethan cut her off. "No, you listen to me and stop making trouble for yourself. We will go back home now."

"No!" Hope shook her head disagreeing. "I can't go back now." She forced to free her hand from his grip. Ethan's grip was very tight, she felt like her wrist snapped into two.

"So, do you think all that woman said is true?" Ethan crossed his arms, he stood still with emotionless expression. "Oh, Hope! You know better not to trust a witch! They are wicked creature! And you are being deceived!"

"I was raised by a witch," Hope dropped that fact firmly.

Despite the fact that witches were the most cunning of all creatures, but Hope couldn't ignore the fact that she was raised by one. She was fully aware of Serefina's cunningness, but to put it in a bad term, somehow, Hope couldn't accept it. Instead, she was rather slightly offended whenever someone badmouthing her. Even though that wasn't what Ethan's true intention at all.

"Serefina is different case," Ethan retorted.

However, before their bickering could go further, Ian had approached them, slightly panting. "Hope! Damn girl! Don't ever do that again!" he was out breath. "We had been running for twenty minutes without stopping, looking for you!"

"I'm sorry about that, but I am not going back with you guys!" Hope crossed her arms, stubbornness was written all over her face. She had decided what she truly wanted, and had done so much efforts to escape from their house.

And she would stay there until she met the witch or, at least, until this festival ended. So far she had seen, nothing seemed dangerous enough for her to get hurt from. The man from earlier, actually, didn't hurt her.

Probably, Kace and Serefinia were exaggerating the real situation. Knowing Kace, he was most likely would do something like that.

The thing is, Hope was too nervous and anxious, desperately wanted to know what was happening to Kace and Lana. Thus, if she was given a chance to know their condition and situation now, she was more than willing to take the risk.

"You are being unreasonable!" Ian glared at the girl before his eyes and stood beside his twin, at this time, both of them really looked exactly the same, as if there was a mirror in front of one of them.

"My vision," Hope's voice softened, she hated to argue with Ian and Ethan, especially Ethan, since he was being too soft to her all the time. "I had a vision previously about Kace! There must be something about it, and I'm sure of it! Besides, looking at the current situation, that both of them are still missing—don't you think it was some kind of a sign?"

"What kind of sign do you think it is? That Kace and Lana are in danger?" said Ethan bluntly. "You should stop this, you will not help them at all by creating such a ruckus like this!"

"Go home with us and wait for them to return, that's all you can do Hope. That's all you can do to help this situation." Ian added. Though he was slightly concerned about Lana and Kace, and also realized that Hope probably was right; after all they were mates and they shared a special bond between them.

However, Ian didn't want to take the blame from encouraging Hope for doing this.

"No!" Hope rejected the idea immediately, her expression hardened because of their words. She knew, compared to them, her chance to help was near zero, but to hear it brutally being said directly by them, was still annoying.

"Who said she couldn't help?"

All of a sudden the woman that Hope had been waiting for appeared behind the twins, she walked comfortably with a can of coke and a hotdog in her hands, munching happily. Her attitude was different from the last time Hope had seen her. Now, she looked more casual and laid-back.

"I won't ask her to come with me if she couldn't help me," she said, while walking straight towards Hope and stood beside her.

"Where were you? I have been looking all over for you!" said Hope with irritation.

"I'm sorry, I thought you will not come. You seemed very determined when you rejected me."

"Well, I changed my mind," Hope murmured.

"So, should we leave now?" that woman took the last bite.