

## TLOA Lycan 541

### Chapter 541 - I AM HELPING YOU!

Lidya raised an eyebrow at Hope's comment. "Everyone wants to be at the top of the food chains," she bickered. "That makes the competition became tight."

Hope frowned, but she managed to see Kace rolled his eyes.

"But, those people are humans." Ethan, who rarely talked, caught up with them after being pushed by the crowd.

They were walking through a place that seemed like a market, since Hope could see many stalls were selling various kind of groceries—meat, fish, vegetables and many more.

"Hunters are basically humans. Originally, they were poor babies who were kidnapped by fairies." Lana helped Lidya to explain their situation since she had the knowledge.

"If, all the people here are humans, who were kidnapped by fairies when they were babies, why do they have scent?" The beast chimed in, annoyed by the people who kept bumping at him, if it wasn't because of Hope's effort to stop him, he would have killed one or two people there.

The beast remembered what Lana told Kace, these people not supposed to have any scent, unlike those people that they had met in town. action

"I don't know." Lana shrugged. "I have never been here and this is the first time I have ever seen hunters. Before, I thought their existence was only rumor."

"The priestess is a pure spiritual being. I think by only being close to her, she'd be able to cure the fae's magic from these people, who managed to free themselves from the slavery, either from the witches or the fairies." though Lidya was unsure with what she said. But for now, that explanation was more than enough to keep their sense of curiosity fulfilled.

"But, most of the habitants here are humans." Ian joined the discussion.

Ethan pondered for a moment. "Or maybe the inhabitant here are those weak creatures who sought for asylum?"

"Where exactly is this sacred land where the priestess lives?" Ian dodged two women who were carrying baskets on their h.i.p.s. The women giggled as they walked past him and Ian gave them a sheepish smile. He earned a slap on the back of his head from his twin afterward.

While the twin and Kace stared at Lana and Lidya, the last two people looked at Hope intently.

"I don't know exactly, that's why we looked for the candlemaiden first," Lana professed. "The thing that the candlemaiden had given to you, what did it say?"

"It doesn't talk," Hope mumbled as she fished out a small white candle, which as big as her thumb, the wick still blazed with blue flames. "And the flame is still blue." She showed it to the other before she put it back on her pocket jacket.

The candlemaiden only instructed them to go to this land and said that the flames would turn red when they reached the sacred place or the priestess nearby. Great! That was really helpful...

Kace scoffed. "And you said we would be able to go back before the festival when in reality, the ship only comes once a week and now we don't really know where this damn priestess is." He glared at Lana.

"If I didn't say it the way I said it, then you won't come, right?" Lana retorted rightfully, yet didn't dare to look back at the beast.

There was a vicious rumble from within Kace's chest when he heard Lana's justification. How dare this female werewolf fooled him that way?!

"So, where should we go now?" Hope was glad that she decided to come with Lidya here, or else she wouldn't be able to see Kace for... how long? A week? Two? A month? Who knew?

They were walking out of the bustling market and were in a quieter street, where there were only two or three people walked past them.

They were giving this small group of people a second glance, as though no one noticed their gesture.

"I... I don't know..." Lana answered while looking flustered under Kace's hard look. "What else Serefina told you?" she turned to Lidya.

"Why do you ask me?" Lidya crossed her arms. "This was originally your job."

"But, Serefina told you to come and help us, right?" Lana retorted.

"Keep walking," Lidya answered, unsure. "This land is not that big. It will not take a long time before we find the priestess or, at least, come close to her."

Lana grunted. She couldn't imagine if she really went to this place alone just like how she originally planned, probably she wouldn't be able to come back even after months.

Hope could only sigh helplessly. When the twins busied themselves looking at their surroundings, Lana and Lidya bickered at each other, while Kace didn't even care where they were as long as he had his mate in his arms, he already felt contented.

When they walked deeper into this quiet street and away from the market, the sounds of nature greeted them and this brought peace to their ears.

Well, aside from the stress and their current confusions, there was at least something that they could enjoy at this moment.

However, this peace was disturbed by some loud of footsteps and everything went very fast.

First, Hope could feel Kace's body tensed up and a loud snarl from Lana, Ethan and Ian, while Lidya screamed something incoherently, which laced with urgency.

The next second, something blasted in front of Hope with a bright blinding light. Her eyes forced to shut as a shriek came out from her mouth.

In Hope's blinding state, Kace's hand disappeared from her h.i.p.s and in his place someone dragged her away to a different direction.

The absent of the spark from this touch, telling Hope that this person was not Kace.

"Let me go! Kace!" Hope could hear a loud howl from afar as she was being carried over this man's shoulder.

Hope kept struggling by hitting the man's back and when her eyes could adjust with her surroundings again, she caught a sight of a dagger on that man's h.i.p.s. Without a second thought, Hope took the dagger and stabbed it on his back.

"Damn!" That man threw Hope to the ground. "YOU STAB ME WHEN I AM HELPING YOU ESCAPE FROM THOSE BEASTS AND WITCH!?"

### **Chapter 542 - HE IS COMING**

He roared angrily at Hope.

The girl crawled away from him until her back hit a tree behind her. When the sight of this man loomed in, Hope recognized him as the man from the bar. He was the one who stared back at her then.

Hope wanted to stand up, but fell back to the ground with a grunt. Apparently, she hurt her ankle.

The man didn't bother with her as his veins bulged out when he clenched his jaw tightly to ready himself from the pain that was about to kick in, as he pulled the dagger out of his arse.

He wailed in pain when the dagger, that was drenched with blood, managed to get pulled out. He tossed it aside and stomped a couple of time, in hope that the pain would stop.

In another time, Hope would apologize to him. She didn't think straight when she stabbed him in that place, but for now, her mind was reeling to find a way to escape from this man.

Even now, Hope could still hear a loud snarl and howl from Kace's beast along with the other three, who must be Ethan, Ian and Lana.

Even from this far, Hope could still distinguish Kace's howl. It sounded very powerful and filled with wrath.

But, what was holding him back? Why he had not found her yet? Hope was trying to stand up again with the support of the tree behind her. Winching in pain, Hope tried to take a step.

The sharp pain made her shut her eyes and willed herself to ignore it. But, it was so hard when Hope had to take the second step and the third step and being grounded again.

"Where do you think you are going?!" the man held her on the ground by straddling her.

Hope fl.u.s.tered with this suggestive position, but the tense of the situation helped her to get her mind straight.

Was not able to use her leg to kick this man away, Hope pounded his chest with her bare hands. Even though, that wasn't a good idea either since this men's chest was as solid as rock.

"STOP IT! OR THEY WILL FIND YOU!"

"LET THEM FIND ME! WHY ARE YOU TAKING ME AWAY FROM THEM!?"

"I HELP YOU TO ESCAPE FROM YOUR CAPTORS!"

Only then Hope realized there was something the matter with the situation. Apparently, there was a misunderstanding between them.

"What?" Hope stopped struggling as both of her wrists being held by this man, only used a single hand. What a show off for strength!

That man panted lightly, glad this little girl stopped attacking him. "I am helping you to escape from them, I am not here to hurt you!"

Hope blinked her eyes a couple of times, trying to discern his intention.

"Why do you think I need your help?" Hope didn't feel like she had ever asked him or his men to help her. In any case, she was afraid of them.

"You stared at me when you walked out of the bar." He knitted his brows upon hearing her question.

Hope didn't know whether she had to laugh or cry, but this whole situation was totally a big misunderstanding.

"No! I wasn't asking for help!" Hope sighed exasperatedly. "I stared at you because I was afraid of you."

"Afraid?" That man was growing an even more confusion in him. "You were afraid of me?" He scrutinized Hope's expression and when the girl below him nodded, he let out a wry laugh. "You were afraid of me instead of those beasts?"

"They are my friends!" and mate... but Hope wouldn't let him know about that, there was no point of letting him to know this information. "Now, get off of me!" she pushed him away, but the man didn't budge.

"Werewolf and Lycanthropes don't befriend with humans. They kill us. They kill those who are inferior to them." The man's eyes flickered with hostility. "Don't be a fool."

"First of all, can you move aside please? I am not comfortable with this position." Hope wiggled her hands. "You're hurting me."

That man's tight grip would leave some ugly marks on her wrist and if Kace's beast saw this, things would turn out of control very fast.

"Sorry,?? he grunted with his guttural voice as he moved away from Hope and helped her stand up.

"You hurt your ankle?" action

He watched how Hope grimaced when her left legs touched the ground as she couldn't stand straight.

"Thanks to you for throwing me to the ground like a piece of garbage," Hope spoke sarcastically.

"Thanks to you for stabbing my arse, now I have similar problem like you," He countered her with the same tone and Hope had to admit her wrongdoing.

"You attacked us and separated me from my friends!" unfortunately, she was not willing to back down yet.

"You call them friends? Did they do something to your brain?" That man was about to touch Hope's head, but she swatted his hand away. "Maybe the witch casted a spell on her," he talked to himself.

"Enough, I will go back to my friends." Hope couldn't find any further reason for her to stay longer with this man as she could hear Kace's beast cry for his mate from afar.

"Wait! You can't go to them! You will be safe with us!" That man stopped Hope's movement, simply by holding her shoulder and with her injured legs, this was enough to stop her. "Just because you are wearing this cloak, you think I won't know you are a human?"

Hope slapped her forehead. She forgot about this cloak, that was why Kace couldn't pin point her position.

Since she couldn't move and this man was stubbornly holding her back, the only thing that Hope could do was to remove her cloak and let the beast knew her location.

The cry from afar stopped for a while before the ground was shaking with a loud roared. The beast could smell her.

"You better let me go now if you don't want to get hurt." Hope smirked. "He is coming."

#### **Chapter 543 - CARNAGE**

That man narrowed his eyes, he looked at Hope quizzically. "If he wants to come, let him come," he said calmly and put his fingers on his lips then he whistled.

As if it was on cue, there were around fifteen people came out from the bushes and behind the trees, wearing the same cloak like the one that this man wore. Those people were his henchmen.

They circled Hope and that man with spears in their hands.

Hope wanted to tell them that their mortality and spears wouldn't be able to hold back the white beast, but then Hope realized, a metal was tied on the tip of the spear. It was not an ordinary metal, but silver.

Apparently, these hunters knew their opponent pretty well and Hope began to worry.

"If you took me because you think my life is in danger, rest assured, I am more than happy to be with them rather than in here to be with you," Hope blabbered. She was looking around her and realized they were ready for a battle.

Hope definitely didn't want to see they hurt Kace, yet she also didn't want to see them being clawed and butchered by the beast either.

They didn't have an ill intention to begin with, but they used the wrong way. In Kace's state now, the beast wouldn't know how to have a civil discussion.

"I am warning you, you better leave this place now." Hope clenched her jaw when her ears caught the sounds of the roaring beast.

In matter of seconds, Hope could see the flashing of the white fur among the bushes and trees.

"GET READY!" That man marked a signal to the fifteen men around him as they raised the spear in their hands, waiting for his cue.

"No!" ignoring the pain in her ankle, Hope walked forward and was about to stop him when that man made such a big mistake by holding her wrist and pulled her closer to him.

The white beast dashed as quickly as a strike of lightning, easily dodging trees as he shot through the pointing spears from the hunters around Hope and that man.

In that second, Hope could see the beast's eyes no longer black, they were red and all it wanted was blood.

A lot of blood.

Hope could feel the chills ran down her spine when she realized what was about to happen next.

The beast leapt very high with his elongated canines that was as sharp as a blade, was on full display, ready to tear everything.

The beast roared and that man, who was holding Hope, pushed her away. Too strong for her. Not to mention holding her ground, the girl was having difficulty to stand.

Hope could feel her body, literally, flew in the air and was only two seconds away before she collided with the tree trunk behind her, if it wasn't because of the white beast's fast movement.

In his rage, his mate was still his priority. The possibility of Hope was getting hurt made the beast shifted his first concern, this also saved the man from being killed.

Hope closed her eyes, readied herself for the impact, but all she could feel was a soft landing and the spark that erupted to her entire body.

Slowly, she opened her eyes as her voice came out very hoarse. "Kace...?" it was him. Hope let out a sigh of relief.

However, it was a perfect distraction.

Hope barely caught her breath before one hunter jumped from behind, raising his spear, ready to stab the beast with the silver metal.

The white beast couldn't dodge it in time either. It was because of the old wounds on his back that slowed him down or because if he moved recklessly, the spear might get the wrong target and it could be Hope.

Pain flooded the beast's system, a roar erupting from his throat as he swiped blindly at his attackers.

The old wounds and the spear marred his back with newly gushing blood. Apparently, the spear dug into his calf, cutting through the artery and spurting blood everywhere.

Not only the beast was weakened with the old wounds, but the silver was another excruciating pain for him to bear.

Whenever the beast made a small move, it felt like a set of barbs latched onto him, yet he stubbornly kept his mate behind his back. Pushed her away so she would be away from any possible harm in this one-beast-against-sixteen-men battle.

Spears and daggers slashed the air onto the white beast's flesh. Since it was made of silver, he couldn't be healed as fast as ordinary wounds.

The sixteen men, took turns to attack the beast, one stabbing him and the other did their best to keep him incapacitated.

The fact that those hunter managed to corner the white lycan, was a proof that this was not their first battle with supernatural creatures. They knew how to handle him and were knowledgeable of their weaknesses.

"NO! STOP IT! DON'T HURT HIM!" Hope watched in horror when the beast's fur sopping wet and the blood turning him from white to scarlet.

There were a few injured men that were being dragged away by their fellow hunters, but the rest of them were still way too much for the beast to beat alone.

Hope couldn't believe it. The powerful Lycan was losing. She had seen how Kace fought in his beast form before and it wasn't like this.

She never would have thought that his injuries were this serious.

Blood. There were blood everywhere. It stained the rock and grass in front of her feet.

When the beast managed to bite one of the hunter's hands and he spat the arm from its bloody mouth like it was a garbage, the blood splashed against Hope's shoes and pant leg, she could feel her stomach lurched. action

She wailed. "STOP! PLEASE STOP!"

Where is Ian? Ethan? Lana and Lidya? Where are they?!

It was a carnage.

Hope couldn't watch any longer, her chest caved in with fear as her head spinning. Instinctually, her body started to move forward when one hunter sneaked behind the beast and raised his spear.

### **Chapter 544 - WHERE. IS. HE?!**

Hope threw herself between the enrage beast and the knife-edge, lethal spear. No one expected she would do this to protect the beast.

The hunters were still thinking that this girl was somehow under some kind of spell that made her to be willing to travel with those insidious creatures.

However, to see how furious this beast to get the girl back and protected her at all cost, even though the beast himself was bleeding badly—the blood that was covering the grass, ground and trees, was enough to drawn one man to death. But it didn't stop the beast to fight them with all its might.

Meanwhile, Hope, who was meddling in between the stabbing line of the hunters, got what was predicted. She had never experienced an excruciating pain like this before when the sharp tip of the silver blade stabbed her shoulder blade.

She could feel the air was sucked out of her lungs and left her body breathless when it fell on the bloody ground beneath her feet.

The impact of her fall was nothing to be compare with the pain that she endured now. She bit her lips when the numb feelings crept from the tip of her fingers and bit her lips to keep herself awake.

But, the temptation of the darkness was like the only consolation for the unbearable pain that she felt.

The last thing that Hope could hear was the cry from the beast near her. It sounded like a wounded animal that thundered her eardrum.

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Hope woke up dizzy and as soon as her mind worked, it forced her to remember everything.

Currently, she was lying on the bed, but she could feel the entire place was shaking as if she was inside a vehicle or something, yet, it definitely was not a car. She had not seen one since the first time she entered this Northern Coven realm.

This place was like the Middle-Agesera filled with many supernatural creatures, magic, and also those hunters...

When finally Hope could open her eyes, they were brimming with a genuine wonder.

She pondered for another two minutes before she decided that she was inside a carriage. The same type of carriage that she rode together with the others to go to the harbor just a few days ago.

She wanted to jump from the bed, but the movement on this carriage made her head incredibly dizzy.

"You are awake?"

A guttural voice sounded from the behind the curtain that divided the carriage from the coachmen seat, before a man that Hope had seen before came out from behind it.

He was the same man who had kidnapped her from Kace and, cowardly, together with his fifteen men, surrounded the wounded white beast.

"Where is he?!" Hope was slightly glad when she heard her voice didn't shake when she said that, so the other person could see how serious she was now.

Despite her dizziness, Hope's main focus was to know how Kace and the other's condition. action

"You are really under the witch's spell, aren't you?" That man was still holding onto his own conviction.

"Where is he?" Hope didn't budge from her initial question. She wouldn't say anything else except this question until he answered it.

"There is no way you will act like this if you are not under that witch's spell," he mumbled to himself, holding his chin and staring at her.



"WHERE. IS. HE!?" Hope lost it. She wanted the answer and she wanted it now.

However, after she strained her vocal, a sharp pain shot from her back to her dizzy mind made it clearer, but at the same time the pain made her gritted her teeth and clenched her fist as the memory flashed in from that time when she was being stabbed reappeared.

"You need to calm down," that man took a flask from his h.i.p.s and gave it to Hope, yet she swatted it away until the water splashed both of them in the process.

"Answer me!" Hope bit down her lips. She was frustrated. Why did this man say nothing except nonsense? Why didn't he let her know where her friends and mate were?"

"I have been trying to be nice to you!" his voice was stern so did his expression, it seemed like he almost ran out of his patience to handle Hope's temper.

"I don't need you to be nice to me when you are the one who had caused this!" Hope exploded. "Your man almost killed me! Do you think you were saving me? And just because I stared at you at the bar, you assumed that I was asking for your help?! No, I don't need your help! I want my friend back!"

This sounded very stupid and this misunderstanding was fatal.

That man narrowed his eyes at Hope. He remembered and witnessed it clearly, if it was not because of the beast pushed away his man, who couldn't stop his movement to stab the beast, Hope would have died by now.

The spear was not only made of silver, but it was also coated with poison. At that time, he thought the beast would bite her off and killed the girl, but instead, it turned out the beast licked her wound. He knew what meaning of that.

As if to answer Hope's question, the carriage suddenly stopped and there was a loud commotion that could be heard before a man opened the carriage door and reported their situation.

"The beast went berserk again!" he shouted to the man with urgency.

No need for him to tell, even Hope could hear the howl and snarl from Kace's beast, though the sound of it tore her heart, but at the same time she was glad, Kace was alright... that at least, he was alive.

"Damn! This is already the third time that the spell didn't work on him." That man grumbled and jumped out of the carriage, didn't even bother with the girl anymore.

Of course Hope wouldn't just sit there obediently and continued her beautiful nap, ignoring the pain, Hope followed him.

And the sight that she saw was heart-wrenching.

### **Chapter 545 - TAMING THE BEAST**

Hope actually had to face the beast inside a big cage. There were three spears on his back and blood had turned his white fur to crimson color.

The sight of it alone made Hope trembling in fear as if she could feel his pain. However, despite of that, the beast seemed oblivious with his condition, as he kept banging his body against the metal bars, barring his canines when thunderous roar split the air.

Though the beast was inside the cage, but the hunters who were outside had the same worry look when they approached him.

"Sedate him again!" That man, who seemed like the leader of these hunters, who had misunderstood Hope's gesture that led to this misunderstanding, ordered the hunter near him with stoic look.

"No!" Hope tried to get down from the carriage when she said that, but her ankle was too weak to hold her body and the pain on her back didn't help either. "Let me do it!"

That man sighed irritably when he helped her to get off of the carriage by holding her waist. "You will not be able to calm him."

Hope freed herself when her feet touched the ground and she could find her footing steadily. "So, do you think your method would do a better job?" she spoke mockingly.

Hope didn't wait for his permission, she didn't even know what she was going to do, yet she was sure the beast was looking for her.

When she walked ahead, two hunters stopped her from moving forward. Hope was ready to have a tough argument when she heard the same man spoke in his guttural voice.

"Let her." He dismissed his man. "I have helped you enough, if you insist that the beast will not eat you, go ahead and try to calm him." He used his hands gesture to emphasize his words. "I will only watch if the beast claws the stubbornness out of your head." He was upset because Hope didn't listen to him at all.

Yet, at the same time, he was unsure if that was what the beast would do, after all it had done nothing except protecting this mysterious human girl.

Hope glanced at the man over her shoulder. "Watch me," she said cynically.

Hope proved her words, she walked ahead and approached the furious beast a step at time, her ankle had not healed yet, but it wasn't her top concern right now.

When Hope was getting closer, she could see another cage, the same size like the one that held Kace's beast inside.

The other cage was filled with three people, they were Ethan, Ian and Lana, each of them was in their human form.

Hope slightly relieved when she spot them, though Lana was lying on it floor, but her shallow breathing told her that she was alive.

But, where is Lidya? Hope couldn't see her anywhere. Is she fine?

"Hope! You have to stop Kace, or else he will kill himself!" Ian shouted at Hope from behind the metal bar. The three of them were in the middle of the cage, they seemed didn't dare to move freely and Hope would know why. "The metal bars are made of silver, he will not able to stand it any longer!"

That answered the question why the three of them huddled together in the middle of it.

Hope walked past a few hunters, who were looking at her as if she had grown a second head. At this moment, all eyes were fixed on her, yet her beautiful eyes only set on the enraged white beast before her eyes.

Behind her, that man followed her movement closely as well, though the girl walked limply because she hurt her ankle, but there was no doubt in every steps that she took.

He could see what the beast had done to her, after she got stabbed, it had an effect on her.

Normally, with wound like her, she wouldn't be able to walk right now. He was also worried that his man would kill her accidentally. They didn't kill human or those weak creatures, which had been used as guinea pig, they protected them, but lycanthropes, werewolves, and witches were not one of them.

Those supernatural creatures were on the top of food chains. Therefore, he was flabbergasted when he knew Hope got along with them pretty well.

That must've been because of the spell, right? He knitted his brows when he couldn't find the answer. Meanwhile, Hope was getting closer to the beast.

The cage was being held by eight people with four ropes in their hands to prevent the cage didn't topple over when the beast went berserk inside.

"Open the cage," Hope spoke to the person nearby when she was only a few meters away from the beast.

On the other hand, the beast stopped banging the cage, as its snout smelled the air. Among the scent of blood that coated its fur, he smelled his mate scent and found her figure not too far from him.

"We can't do that." The man shook his head after he got a 'no' from his leader.

Hope didn't argue with that as she expected that answer. Well, she asked because, just in case their leader could be more lenient to her somehow.

For now, the beast had stopped completely, his red eyes stared at his mate intently and there was a whimper and growl when he watched how Hope walked towards him with her limp foot.

"Kace..." Hope called him. Her voice was shaking, flooded with emotion by seeing the scene of his current condition. She stretched out her hands through the metal bars and touched the beast's snout as he snuggled his big head towards her opened palm.

It didn't take that long until Hope's hand covered with the blood on its fur. But, the spark helped to calm the both of them.

The beast lowered his head and closed his eyes as he purred, his breathing became even and started to calm.

Hope could hear a lot of gasps from the hunters who were watching, when she managed to tame the beast.

### **Chapter 546 - WRECK HAVOC**

Hope could see how the silver had hurt him. Under his bloody fur, she could see the burned scars littered on the surface of his fur. It looked awfully painful, just like the rest of his wounds. Even Hope could smell the scent of metal in the air.

Yet, the beast calmed down for only a minute before he started to bang the cage again.

"No, stop!" Hope desperately stretched out her arms to touch him, to calm him, but the beast didn't stop.

The cage rattled loudly when the beast whacked its head against the metal bars, as if this was only some ordinary metal bars and not made of silver that could hurt him whenever he touched them.

There were more hunters who came forward to help those eight people, who were holding the ropes to keep the cage steady, but in the end, it was just another futile attempt to stop the beast.

The cage was swayed heavily by the force of everything that the beast did.

"Watch out!" the man from before, who was being asked by Hope to open the cage, rushed towards her and pulled the girl away before the cage was being knocked down and hit the ground hardly.

Dust were everywhere when the big cage cracked, it only needed a last blow for the beast to break and freed himself while the hunters were watching in horror at what the beast was more than capable to do.

Was that even possible that the silver bars couldn't hold him back!?

"Get ready!!!" the leader of the hunter roared his command and the men around him grabbed their weapons once again. Ready for another battle.

"No, no, no... not again..." Hope mumbled while shaking her head, she felt terrible as her legs were trembling uncontrollably.

The scene that unfolded before her eyes was like another nightmare of the day... maybe Hope just slept for four or five hours now, since the sun just started to fall on the horizon and casted their shadow longer.

However, bathing under the twilight, only set off her fear and uneasiness about the dreadful thing that might happen next.

It was like a slow motion movie when the beast wrecked havoc inside the cracked silver cage that confined him.

The moment it freed itself, the beast didn't think for another second before he lunged his body to the man near Hope and bit off his head fiercely.

Another blood spurted from the headless body onto Hope's clothes. Now, the girl was confused, which one she feared the most.

Whether she feared the hunters would hurt the beast or the beast would kill all of them. Either way, she didn't want to know the result as she felt her stomach churned uncomfortably. action

"Hope! Don't look!"

From afar Hope could hear someone was calling her name. Ian? Or... Ethan? In normal situation she would be able to distinguish their voices, but there was nothing normal about the situation now.

"HOPE! LOOK AT HERE!" Ethan shouted again when he watched Hope's whole body was trembling, she didn't even dare to move a finger.

The sound of those hunter met the end of their lives was something not everyone could handle, even Ian was lost for words.

The older twin didn't want to see what he saw, but he was not able to look away either, as if there was a strong force that made him to comply to witness all of these horrible things.

Thankfully, Ethan slapped his face so hard until his tears stung his eyes, "Don't look you idiot!" Ethan pushed his brother's head down, so he could only stare at Lana's sleeping face. The female werewolf still had not regained her conscious yet.

"Hope! Look at me!" Ethan resumed calling for the girl, which sitting on the ground, trembling and on the verge of mental breakdown.

"HOPE!" Ethan snapped at her and finally got her attention as she startled and turned her head toward him. "Look at me and cover your ears," he instructed. "Look at me and cover your ears." He repeated his words when Hope just stared at him blankly.

The sound of bone cracking and earth-shattering wailed in agony, slowly faded when Hope raised both of her hands and pressed her palms against her ears to prevent any sounds to come into her mind.

Overall, there were not only sixteen hunters there, there were more of them. Probably, during the fight earlier, some of them engaged the battle with the three werewolves and the witch and the rest took care of Kace.

But, now when the beast had severely injured and had to fight the number of hunters tripled from the last time he fought, the beast could manage.

Added that to the spear made of silver and coated with poison that still stuck on his back. Where did he get this strength from? Kace's condition became very confusing.

"Good, keep looking at me," Ethan cooed at her, as he stared into her eyes intently. He didn't wish to see the bloody scene too. This was too much for him. The battle last longer than they thought and it felt longer than it should be.

When the sound of it had decreased, the beast leap in front of Hope and he was bloodier than ever. He stalked towards her as his canines in full display.

Hope gulped down hardly, she felt there was a big rock was shoved down her throat. Her hands, which had grown numb, fell on the side of her body while their eyes met each other. Red to black.

"Ka... ce..." Hope called his name throatily.

The beast's body was trembling and from his fur, blood was dripping, creating traces on the ground as he approached his mate.

Tears escaped from Hope's eyes, she didn't know what this tears for, but the sight of the beast made her heart ached painfully.

Despite her fear earlier and the fact there were dozens of dead body strewed behind her back, who were the victims of the beast's brutalism, Hope stretched out her arms shakily and hugged the beast's neck when he was close enough to her.

### **Chapter 547 - THROW UP**

The huge white Lycan's body trembling in Hope's embrace. His four legs gave in as he rested his big, bloody head on her laps. His breathing became shallow and his red eyes dimmed.

"Kace... wake up..." Hope stammered. Her hand shakily scratched the back of the beast's ears and made him purr lightly, yet his eyes shut close.

Even in her fear, Hope realized there was something more frightening compared to the horrible scene that surrounded her.

Her mind worked so fast, as her eyes blinked rapidly to get rid of the tears that made her vision become blurry.

Hope turned her head towards Ethan's direction and shouted as loud as she could, putting aside her turmoil emotion. "What... what should I do?" action

Ethan didn't have any idea what suggestions he had to give to Hope. "He is still breathing." He could see it from the movement on the beast's chest. "It's good, maybe he is just asleep."

Hope stroked the beast bloody fur until her hands were covered with blood. And only with that sight, made her head spin. She didn't have to be a shapeshifter to smell the thick metallic scent in the air since there was a lot of blood pooled around her.

"Hope. Hope," Ethan called her again until the girl gave him her attention. "Help me to get out of here."

Hope didn't move for two seconds before her mind discerned his words. "Oh, right..." slowly, she put the beast's head on the ground and earned a small grunt from him. The beast disliked the absence of her presence, but Hope had to do something now.

"I will be back soon," Hope whispered to the beast's ears and gave him a last stroke on his scruff before she got up and walked towards the second cage, where Ethan, Ian and Lana were.

The cage was locked with, at least, ten padlocks, which each of it was as big as her palms. The metal bars were also thicker than the usual one.

When Hope looked into this closely, she wondered how the beast could break it, even on his current injured condition. It was impossible in any case for it to happen, yet the beast did it.

"How am I supposed to open this with?" Hope looked at the padlocks helplessly. Those werewolves inside couldn't even touch it since it was made of silver.

"You have to find the key," Ethan said firmly, but his expression turned unsightly.

"How?" Hope knew the answer even before she asked.

"You have to find the key..." Ethan gulped down, "Maybe... the key is somewhere inside the pocket of one of those hunters..."

Hope was on the verge of crying when her guess was right. She didn't want to look at the scene behind her back, she really didn't want to turn around at all and, let alone going on a thorough search mission around this particular area only to look for some small keys.

"I am sorry," Ethan really meant his words, if he could, he wouldn't ask this from her. This was too cruel, even for him.

"What happened to Lana?" Hope was trying to adjust her emotion by asking questions, maybe she was also buying time for herself, before she really had to go and do it.

"She... is fine... she got stabbed with spears a few times, she just needs some time to heal." Ethan nodded at Lana while his brother was quiet. This was the quietest that Ian had ever been in his entire existence.

"Where is Lidya?" Hope couldn't see her anywhere. If she was here, she could do her magic to open this cage without keys, right? Or, she could come up with a spell to retrieve the keys somehow for them.

"I don't know..." Ethan shook his head lightly. "The hunters separated us and the last time I saw her, she was fighting ten of them."

"She could be anywhere..." Hope mumbled, refusing to believe something bad happened to Lidya. "It needs more than ten hunters to take her down, right?"

"Right," Ethan agreed. It was easier to convince themselves rather than went with whatever worse scenarios inside their mind.

There was a moment of silence afterward.

"Hope..."

"I know... give me a moment."

"Okay," Ethan didn't say anything again for another moment.

"Is the scene behind my back really THAT bad?" Hope tried to ask this as casual as she could, but was not able to hide the shaking in her voice.

"From one to ten?" Ethan was unsure how to describe it.

"Give me a number, Ethan, what number?"

"Nine...?" Ethan grimaced.

"That's bad." Hope mimicked his expression.

"Well, everyone has different standards." Ethan tried to light her up, to make their situation less horrible, yet failed miserably.

"I don't think I am above your standard." Hope took a deep breath. "Alright... let's do this."

Actually there was no 'us' in this finding key mission, there was only her, who had to roam around the dead bodies in their hideous unidentified form, after being mutilated by the beast.

"Can't we take this cage down like what Kace did?" Ian finally spoke with his 'brilliant' idea.

"You cannot even touch it," Ethan said this pronouncedly. "Not to mention break it."

"But, he did it..." Ian nodded at the beast not so far from them.

Ethan narrowed his eyes and spoke in a defeated tone. "He is more of a beast than all of us. The kind of beast we would never ever surpass in terms of power, even after the three of us joined force."

Ian moved to the side and stretched out his hand to touch the silver bars, but retracted his hand as soon as he touched them.

"I told you..." Ethan said.

Hope clenched her fists beside her body and, slower than ever, turned around to face the reality. She had prepared herself for the worst. She remembered all the gory scenes from all of the thriller movies that she liked so much.

It wouldn't be that horrible, right? She had seen something similar like this, though it was only from a movie screen and she knew those were all fake.

The moment Hope caught a sight of the scene behind her back, she threw up. Her legs gave in as she crouched down beside the cage to empty herself. Emptied her stomach until there was nothing left already.

### **Chapter 548 - WORSE SITUATION**

"Hope, are you alright?!" Ian asked frantically, he and Ethan moved closer to her, but not that close to touch the silver bars. "—it's okay, take it easy... take it easy..." he cooed her.

Both of them didn't know what else to say except some empty encouraging words.

"Are you okay now?" Ethan asked again when Hope had stopped throwing up.

"No..." Hope brushed away her hair from her sweaty forehead. "I am not okay," she said sullenly. Her hands and whole body was trembling.

"I am sorry Hope, you have to do this..." Ethan and Ian grimaced, saying the same thing.

Hope didn't say anything, she wiped her sweat and tears before she took a deep breath to calm her thumping heart and raging stomach, in case she would throw up again after seeing the gruesome scene for the second time.



Slowly, Hope turned her head and, first, spotted the white beast, who was lying on the ground. Despite he had not yet moved an inch since he closed his eyes, the rise and fall of his chest was the only indication that he was still alive.

Stilled her heart for the heart-wrenching battlefield that caused by the same beast, Hope's eyes moved from the beast to the scene after him.

Hope thought, no matter how many times she watched this kind of scene on the movies, she would never get used to this in real life. Her legs threatened to give up when she tried to stand up. Then, her back hit the cage behind her, and the siblings patted her shoulder through the bars, risking themselves touching the silver.

"Take your time Hope, take your time," Ethan spoke in his best reassuring tone. They couldn't rush her or else, she would have another mental breakdown at that very moment.

"I couldn't believe it... Kace had done this..." Hope stammered. She forced herself to see, to see the massacre before her eyes. She swallowed hard as if there was a palm size stone was shoving down her throat.

"He did it to help us... it's his natural instinct to protect you..." Ethan gave an understanding to Hope.

"I know..." Hope nodded slowly. She knew the reason behind the beast's act, but knowing it didn't reduce the fear that gripped her heart.

"How about Lana? She is not awoken yet?" Hope glanced at the female werewolf, who was still lying unconscious. action

"No, she is not." Ian frowned. "It would take a longer time than we expected for her to regain her consciousness I guess..." Lana's condition alone was weird.

When the siblings had woken up way long before, the girl still didn't give any sign that she would wake up anytime soon.

Hope needed another ten minutes to calm herself and mustered her courage to take one step at time.

Seeing this from afar was already a challenge for her quivering heart, not to mention she had to walk among this disturbing scene to look for the key, which she didn't even have any idea where to start to look for it.

Hope licked her dry lips and clenched her fist, she approached the first man that Kace had killed. The man who stood next to her when the beast set himself free.

Hope covered her mouth when another wave of nausea hit her as she closed her eyes upon seeing the unsightly dead body. Poor man...

Biting her tongue, Hope opened her eyes and they were blazing with determination. At this rate, the sun would have set before she could find that key and by then there would be nothing to illuminate her surroundings. She had to move fast.

The orange light from the twilight sky was the only light that could help her in this almost impossible mission. Thus, she didn't have time to whine or being scared, their situation didn't allow her to do so.

She needed the siblings out from that cage and helped her to bring Kace away, to get themselves out of this situation, real fast.

With that new courage, Hope moved from another appalling dead body to the other. Tried to not think too much about this and just moved as fast as she could.

Yet, that key was nowhere to be found.

"Where is that key!?" Hope was mad to herself, she was getting frustrated when there was only a little bit of light left from the sunset behind the horizon. "I CAN'T FIND THE KEY!" Hope shouted at Ethan and Ian out of her desperation.

Every time she looked at her hand, she was akin to someone who was wearing red gloves, they were trembling as if she was a ninety-nine-year-old grandma.

Ethan and Ian looked at each other and grimaced. What could they do from that cage except encouraging her?

"Keep looking, you will find it in one of that men's pocket!" Ian said.

"Try to look inside the carriage!" Ethan said suggesting that maybe they put it there. There were three carriages there, one of them was the carriage where Hope had been sleeping on.

"Oh." That idea had not crossed her mind. Didn't want to waste any more time, she rushed towards the first carriage near her. Hope's figure disappeared behind the carriage.

"What should we do now?" Ian shifted his eyes from the massacre and looked at Lana, "Why hasn't she regained consciousness yet?"

"I don't know..." Ethan sighed, but his eyes still focused on their surroundings and at the beast, which hadn't move after he killed all those hunters. Finally, the wounds and the exhaustion took a toll on him.

"Do you know where Lidya is?" Ian asked randomly.

Ethan rolled his eyes. "How am I supposed to know that?" he was annoyed.

"I know, I know... I just need something to talk about. I can't take this silent well." Ian shivered when the night wind blew past his body.

"Oh, no!" Ethan's breathe hitched as his eyes widened in fear. He thought that the situation would not get worse than this, the universe proved him wrong.

"What? What happened?" Ian immediately turned his body. At first, he didn't know what Ethan was seeing, but then he saw it too. "Oh, crap!" he cursed under his breath.

"Hope! Get out from there!" Ethan shouted frantically.

### **Chapter 549 - COME HERE AND SEE IT!**

From the carnage before their eyes, they could see there was actually someone, who managed to survive from the beast brutalism.

He caught blood a few time, only to add more blood on the scene. In this dark road where the light of the moon was covered behind the trees, the man shook his head and rose on his feet.

He threw a hard glare toward Ethan and Ian, who were shouting to inform Hope.

A killing intent shrouded him upon realizing that he had lost all of his men. His hands trembling and his body almost collapsed again, yet he managed to stand still by holding a spear stuck near him. He looked down and found his fellow hunter was dead in a gruesome condition.

Anger spread through his being and when he caught a sight of the beast that had killed all of his friends, he only saw red.

Anger that bubbled up inside his chest only made him more determined to finish off the beast, who seemed too exhausted to even move a finger.

He stalked toward him with spear in his hand.

"HOPE! GET OUT FROM THERE!" Ethan shouted again, he didn't know if this was wise to ask Hope to face this hunter, who apparently wanted to slash Kace's beast, but if they did nothing and let the hunter got his way, Kace would die for sure.

"GET AWAY FROM HIM, YOU MONGREL HUMAN!" Ian hollered, his eyes widened in fear when that hunter took one step after another to approach Kace's beast, dragging his bloody body with the help of spear in his left hand while his right hand hung lifelessly beside his body.

Meanwhile, inside the carriage, Hope was very upset to herself because she couldn't find the key no matter how hard she tried to look for it.

She was about to look inside the last cabinet when she heard Ian and Ethan called out his name, telling her to get out from the carriage immediately.

What happened?!

Hope didn't have time to think when her body took over upon hearing the urgency in the way they called her.

Ignoring the pain on her ankle and her back that felt like the wound almost split opened again, Hope jumped from the carriage's door and spotted the hunter, who was approaching Kace, right away.

"No, no!" Hope muttered to herself as her legs started to run. That man wanted to kill Kace!

In normal occasion, with her size and strenght there was no way she would be able to stop him, but this time there was nothing normal. Moreover, that man was greatly injured.

No matter how much Hope wanted to ignore the pain in her ankle, it turned out slowed her down, as she couldn't run as fast as she wanted.

With the distance between them, there was no way Hope could reach him before he managed to stab his spear on Kace.

Therefore, out of frustration, Hope looked around and grabbed whatever thing that she could throw to the hunter.

Fortunately, there was a stick, originally it was a spear which had been split into two, without thinking twice, Hope threw it with all of her might, hoped it got to him.

Yet, the reality was not always as expected. Losing its momentum, the stick dropped to the ground pathetically.

Hope groaned frustratedly when she watched how that man was getting close to Kace. He only six more steps to get to him while Hope was still a distance away from them.

Who would have thought there was a survivor from this carnage?! Hope overworked her brain to think of the solution, as she couldn't reach him in time!

Paying no attention to the screaming siblings, who tried to irate the hunter and divert his attention, thought that was a futile attempt, Hope looked around her with knitted brows while chanting to herself; there is no time to be scared!

When she found what she was looking for, the hunter was only two steps away from Kace, he had raised the spear in his hand and was about to stab the beast to his death.

"IF YOU KILL HIM, I WILL KILL YOUR FRIEND TOO!" Hope shouted fiercely. She was holding a man's head on her lap with a spear head in her other hand. "TOUCH HIM AND I WILL SLIT HIS THROAT!"

The thing that Hope was saying managed to make the hunter stop on his track. He turned around to look at the girl and the man on her lap. He didn't know if there was another survivor aside from him.

The hunter narrowed his eyes, he couldn't tell whether the man that Hope held as hostage was alive or dead since his face was facing the girl.

"He is dead! The beast killed him!" the hunter roared after sometime he couldn't see any movement from the other man.

"No, he is not!" Hope objected stubbornly. "He is still alive! He is still breathing!" she held the head of the spear near the man's neck. "He is unconscious, but still alive!"

The hunter didn't trust her immediately, from where he was standing that man was as dead as the other.

But, what if...

"Stay away from him!" Hope became bold when she watched that hunter was considering her words. "You can still save him if you treat his wound immediately!" she added.

However, the truth was; the man on Hope's lap was, indeed, dead.

Before, she only looked for a corpse which still in good condition to deceive him. With the distance between them, the hunter wouldn't be able to tell whether she was saying the truth or not. The darkness also helped Hope to cover the truth.

This was a horrifying experience for Hope to hold a dead body so close like this, yet the situation forced her to do this and she didn't have many choices left.

"NO! HE IS DEAD!" The hunter barked in anger.

"COME HERE AND SEE IT YOURSELF!" Hope retorted in the same way.

### **Chapter 550 - DECEIVED**

That man looked hesitated for a while, but his eyes hardened when he made his decision. "No," he said coldly. "You will not kill him." He was very sure with his words.

It didn't need a long time for him to know this girl that she even wouldn't be able to hurt a mosquito. She looked very delicate with soft personality. At least, that was the first impression that he got when he saw her for the first time.

Hope gulped down, though her expression didn't show her shock, but her trembling hand was visible to see for Ethan and Ian understood the whole situation.

Hope was only bragging about the fact that man was being alive and now, since the other hunter thought the girl wouldn't be able to hurt the dead man, it was up to Hope what she was going to do next to convince the hunter.

"Are you sure?" Hope's voice was slightly trembling. She hoped, she didn't have to do this. "Do you really think I will not be able to kill him?"

The hunter was about to turn around and ignored her when the corner of his eyes caught a sight of the girl's movement and out of instinct, he turned around with wide eyes in shock.

"Forgive me..." Hope whispered to herself and the corpse on her laps. It wasn't necessary to apologize, after all, the dead man wouldn't be able to voice out his complain.

Actually, Hope didn't want to hurt the dead body, but what choice that she had when that man didn't believe her? She had to do everything to make the hunter stay away from Kace.

Hope stabbed the head of the spear on the man's neck and glowered at the hunter while fresh blood spurted from the new wound.

"Make another move toward him and I will kill him right now!" Hope said in menacing tone, at the very least, the dead body wouldn't feel any pain with whatever the girl would do to him.

Hope could see fear mixed with anger flashed on that man's eyes. If he could, maybe he would kill Hope first.

It was because of the girl that his fellow hunters were dead now. This girl and her despicable friends!

"I came with the intention to save you! But, you do this as return?!" the hunter moved closer toward Hope while dragging the same spear that he would use to kill Kace. "Your beast killed all of my fellow hunters! And now you are threatening me!?" he asked incredulously.

"I have never asked you to save me! I have told you that all of this is your misunderstanding! I have told you to run while you can!" Hope was slightly relief that the hunter walked away from Kace, "But, you chose to ignore me and play hero!" action

She was saying the truth. Hope had warned them to release her and stop provoking the beast, challenging him. If only they listened to her and stopped their crazy idea that Hope was asking to be rescued, the situation wouldn't turn very wrong like this.

"Bulsh\*t!" The hunter bellowed. He was very angry as he picked up his pace and was standing in front of Hope in no time. "Stay away from my friend!"

And Hope gladly did. She rose on her feet and took a step back. Now what?! She had managed to make this man to not kill Kace, at least for the time being, but it was impossible for them to have a discussion to sort out this situation.

Once this man knew that Hope lied to him. He, probably, would kill her instead. Now, it was her life that was in danger as that man crept closer toward the dead body that he assumed was still alive.

Hope moved secretly, positioned herself behind that hunter.

On the other hand, the hunter was approaching his man while calling his name, even without seeing his face and with the lack of light, he could still recognize his comrade.

"Bern," he called his name. "Bern, are you alright?" he asked while rolling his body, so he could see him clearly. "Bern?" the new wound that Hope had stabbed still bleeding, the hunter placed his palm to cover his neck, in order to stop the blood from oozing out.

However, he realized something as his body turned stiff and he whipped his head toward Hope. The girl had stood behind him while holding the spear in her hand, pointing the sharp metal to his face.

"YOU KILL HIM!?" He thought Bern must have died because Hope stabbed him.

"No!" Hope shook her head, her hands were shaking while holding the spear. "He was dead before I even stabbed him." The hostility in the hunter's eyes forced Hope to take another step back.

Upon hearing Hope's words, the hunter finally realized that he was being fooled by her. "YOU!?"

"HOPE, KILL HIM!" Ian shouted from behind the bar. "KILL HIM!"

Yet, Ethan shoved him aside. "Do you know what are you talking about?! You ask her to kill someone?! Are you out of your mind?!"

"So, will you prefer that he killed her?!" Ian retorted.

That was right, at this point, there was no room for discussion, but how Hope could kill someone else when her whole body was shaking uncontrollably?

The furious hunter hollered to the dark night. Not only he had lost all of his men, but he was being fooled too!

"Go away and I will let you live!" Hope was still trying to put some air, but that was only an empty threat, which the hunter could see it right through her eyes.

"Do you think you still can fool me for the second time?!" forgetting the wounds that littered his body, the hunter moved very fast toward Hope and snatched the spear from her hands.

The sudden forced and her injured ankle didn't do Hope any good as she tumbled and sat on the ground with the Hunter raised the spear above his head.