

## **TLOA Lycan 621**

### **Chapter 621 - FERAL**

"What should we do now?" Chiron stood beside Serefina, who was crouching down next to Hope's body.

The aftermath of the two hours battle, leaving them with only five centaurs and three hunters as the remaining survivors.

That battle wasn't for them to win after all. Not until the white lycan entered the battlefield and raged blindly to whatever was in front of him. The beast didn't care for the world, whether it was a friend or foe, everything within his reach would be destroyed brutally.

Thanks to the strong Alpha blood in him, an ordinary spell or some kind of magic didn't really have any effect on him.

For the centaurs and the hunters who had no more hope to come out from the battle alive, of course, they could sigh in relief when they watched how the angry beast was running rampant among the vampires and the witches.

However, their relief didn't last for long, because once all the enemies had died or fled, the only creatures that could satisfy his bloodlust were only them.

Now, after they managed to escape the nightmare from the vampires and the witches, they had to face the reality where an enraged beast was staring at them with his terrifying red eyes that were clouded with rage.

This time, there was something wrong with the beast, totally wrong! The beast had gone feral!

He was a living destruction, but at the same time, he was about to destroy himself, and cease his own existence.

His white fur had turned red from the witches that he had decapitated, blood dripping from his snout as his canines elongated dangerously.

Aside from the fact that the beast was staggering when he prowled towards them. Just with the look in his eyes alone, could send chills to their bones. He looked so dark, just like a creature that just resurrected from the deepest part of hell.

The beast let his animal instinct take control as he ran towards the survivors behind Serefina, ready to kill or be killed.

The last bloodshed was about to unfold.

They heard it, an ear-splitting roar, followed by a powerful impact when the beast charged straight towards the shield that Serefina had conjured and was forced to draw back. They could feel the earth shaking beneath their feet, and the shield trembling because of the second attempt.

The beast roared again with blood in his fangs.

"The shield will not last for long," Chiron voiced out his opinion, even though his usual calm demeanor had long gone. He looked at the beast with wide eyes, terrified about what he was capable of doing.

"He will not last for long too," Serefina admitted, sweat forming on her forehead as she glanced at the dead body before her eyes, the dead body of the feral Lycan's dear mate. The Lycan would tear them apart once the shield was broken. "The only thing keeping him going is his animal instinct."

They could see, with so many battles and injuries, the beast was barely able to stand, yet he was forced to break the shield with everything he had, just to get it done.

He would kill them in the process of killing himself.

That was the real cost of losing a mate for a lycan, everything was no longer coherent as all of his senses turned numb and all he wanted to do was to destroy this numbness and ceased to exist.

"We have to stop him," Serefina stated the fact, but the question was; how?

How could they stop him without hurting him? It was an impossible task to do at this moment.

The witch's eyebrows knitted together when she watched how her shield crumbled. With his injured body, how could the beast still manage to have a brute force like that?!

That was a question that left them speechless, yet it wasn't the time to linger in that quest.

Serefina stood up with Chiron and Delta beside her and the rest of the centaurs and hunters circled them.

They watched with gritted teeth when the bloody beast let out an earth-shattering roar and dashed like an arrow with his insane eyes locked on the witch.

At the same time, Serefina raised both of her hands and sent a big fireball that set fire to the beast's fur, rendered him to stop and snarled, yet even with flames that were still burning, the beast kept staggering forward.

It was a magic fire that couldn't be put out so easily.

"You will kill him," Chiron knitted his brows when the beast couldn't pick up his speed anymore, but stubbornly still tried to take a step at a time.

Serefina clenched her fists as her long nails embedded onto her palms. That wasn't her intention. With a flick of her fingers, the fire went out and the beast fell on its stomach, breathing unevenly.

Serefina walked towards the beast with a tentative step, ready to defend herself if it was needed.

However, seeing how the beast's condition right now, it seemed he had reached his limit.

With the sound of snapping bones, eventually, the beast returned to his human form, supporting his body with his elbows and knees.

"Kace?" Serefina called his name carefully.

However, Kace didn't hear her as he raised his head and locked his eyes on the motionless girl on the ground. He was breathing heavily.

It took everything in him to just move his limbs and started to walk towards his lifeless mate.

Serefina stopped in her tracks and let Kace to stumble and stagger towards Hope, blood dripping from his opened wounds, which littered all over his body.

His every step left bloody footprints on the velvety grass beneath him.

Once Kace was beside Hope, he crouched down and, ever very carefully and gently, cradled her in his arms, running his fingers on her soft black hair and her pale cheeks.

The beast nuzzled her hair and nudged the side of her face, waiting for her to respond to his touch.

Yet, nothing happened.

A solemn tear fell down his cheek, the beast looked calm compared to his feral earlier. Then he buried his nose on the crook of Hope neck, the spot where her scent still lingered.

### **Chapter 622 - THE START OF SOMETHING**

Kace closed his eyes, relishing the electrifying tingles that emanated from their touch. The spark was still there, though it was very faint and could hardly be felt.

"Kace," Serefina tried to come closer, the beast had been hugging his dead mate for almost an hour now.

But, within seconds, Kace growled ferociously, he was guarding and protecting his mate from anyone who dared to come close. He snarled dangerously through his extended canines.

His body had half shifted again, but he couldn't pull through to the last form of his beast. He was too tired to do so, too wounded to muster enough strength to do that, yet he still looked very feral even in his half-shifted form like right now.

Serefina stopped coming closer. Kace wasn't in his right mind now. No one would be in their right mind after losing their mate.

In the far distance, Leon and Abby stood still, while looking at things that just unfolded, didn't even dare to say a word. They had never seen Kace like this. The man that they had known for more than decades was someone who wouldn't kill his enemy without batting an eye, if he had another option. But there they were, not too far from them was the evidence of his brutality. It was weird, but to see him like this was more bizarre.

Meanwhile, Lydia was too afraid to see her old friend, Serefina. She wouldn't come out from this disaster in one piece. After all, she was the one who brought Hope here. The witch was standing behind the siblings with a troubled expression, too afraid to even breathe.

Hope's unconscious body laid there, not moving, with no signs of life at all as the beast hugged her body. Letting the blood from her chest, tainted his already messy clothes. He suffered horrendous pain and this was the one kind of pain that destroyed every piece of his soul, stripped him off from reality.

Suddenly he was brought to that time in the past. The scenes flashed before Kace's eyes, the one when he killed those poor creatures' mate long ago, the sound of their voice wailing in pain rang in his ears.

How those creatures watched helplessly at their dying mate right before their eyes without anything they could do.

He felt it now.

His mate. His hope. The one person that perfectly crafted for him was gone, and all Kace could do was watch her as she slipped away into the nothingness.

Concurrently, Kace could feel their bond becoming weaker.

His love, his salvation, his hope...

The beast in Kace's head was frantic, he was clawing, whimpering and howling, but maybe... it was he. It was him in his desperate state. On the brink of craziness.

And gradually, once magical tingles were now nothing more than a soft dull prickle. He was losing her for real.

But then, Kace heard that... the most angelic voice that he adored the most, the only voice that he was willing to give up everything just to hear it again.

'Kace, don't give up on me...'

Kace raised his head as his eyes fell on his mate, but Hope still didn't move. Not even her lips.

However, when Kace looked at his surroundings, he was alone. There were no Serefina, no the centaurs, not even the hunter or the siblings.

He was with Hope alone.

'Kace, don't give up on me...'

Her voice again, whispering on the wind to his ears.

But Hope didn't move. She was still. Motionless and dead.

"Hope?" Kace's voice was like a rickety door, hurting the one who heard it, as if he had not used it in a long time.

'I can feel your sadness...'

"Hope where are you?" Kace hugged Hope's body even tighter, but his eyes scanned his surroundings frantically.

It was her voice, Kace was certain that it was her voice. However, where did her voice come from?

Kace was not in the same forest as before, and in his muddleheaded state, he was certain with this.

And then, there... Kace watched her, as transparent as a white smoke, Hope's figure was crouching down beside her very own body, staring at Kace sadly.

Kace stared at her with wide eyes as his hoarse voice pleaded, "don't leave me..."

A pure translucent tear fell on her cheek, when she leaned over and kissed Kace's lips. It felt like there was a breeze that caressed his lips softly and prompted Kace to close his eyes.

'Mark me...'

With that being said, the softness of her lips was gone, yet the feeling lingered a bit longer.

And when Kace opened his eyes, he was back to the same forest with Serefina and the other creatures around him, concern etched on their faces.

Lowering his head down, Kace's blue eyes met with his mate's face.

Mark me.

Her words echoed in his head, in spite of his calm expression now. There were raging questions inside his head.

What did that supposed to mean? Mark her? Did Hope just say he had to mark her? But, what if it's just an illusion?

Her spirit...

"Kace...?" Serefina called his name again, as she took one step closer gingerly. "What are you doing?"

They were gasping in horror when Kace's canines extended.

Serefina froze when Kace tilted Hope's head gently and licked to clean her sweet spot from her blood.

Kace's blood rushed in his system as his heart hammered inside his ribcage painfully. And when he inhaled sharply, his canines clamped down hard on Hope's neck, his sharp fangs pierced through her skin, adding more blood in the process.

"No!" Serefina was about to rush towards the lycan, who was currently marking his dead mate, yet Chiron's arms held her back steadily.

"Let him finish it," Chiron said in a deep tone, his eyes fixed on the scene before him.

"But," Serefina was about to retort back when Chiron cut her sentences.

"Whether his action will give a different result, the girl passed away nonetheless." Chiron stated. "He is her mate,"

Nothing happened in the first ten second. But then, Hope's body twitched between Kace's locked jaws, with his veins nearly drained of blood, what was left escaped and splattered with every jolt and jerk.

### **Chapter 623 - WE WILL RETURN**

Hours or maybe days had passed with Kace stared silently to his motionless mate, who was laying on the bed.

The horrendous and terrifying feeling about losing his mate still lingered in every inch of Kace's memories, reminding him about the kind of agony and pain that he had to endure if he lost her.

Kace refused to talk, to eat, to sleep for days.

If it was not because of Serefina's stubbornness, the lycan probably would have died before his mate would.

The only thing that he did was staring at Hope, holding her hand while looking for any possible signs of her that would indicate if she would wake up any time soon. He did all that, only to be disappointed again and again.

Yet, it didn't stop his unbreakable hope.

Occasionally, Kace would put his finger under Hope's nose, just to make sure she was still breathing. From time to time, he would rest his ears gently on top of her chest, just to hear Hope's faint beating heart.

No matter how faint it was, the sound was the only thing that could assure the lycan that he had not lost her just yet.

Serefina entered the room, carrying a tray that filled with food and fruits, behind her, Lana followed suit.

It had been four days since Kace placed his mark on his mate and brought her back from the spirit world. Magically retained Hope's life.

The witch couldn't understand how the lycan did that, and Chiron's explanation didn't help her much to understand the situation as the centaur's reason involved many subjects that Serefina had no interest in hearing. It involved things such as, the stars, and prophecy.

Serefina had had enough with everything that involved prophecy.

The last prophecy that the witch heard was this thing that had put her in a bunch of messed up situations between those Donovans and their mates.

"She is healing," Serefina said in a low voice as she put the tray on the table near the bed. But, like usual, Kace didn't respond to that as he resumed staring at Hope.

Apparently, the marking process did not only bring back Hope from her death, but also healed Kace's wound, though it still left some scars behind his back, but the scar was healing gradually as the result was visible over the time.

Serefina witnessed it herself, how the wounds on his back, his opened skin slowly closed, melding into itself. The deep tear skin was one of the evidence of battles. Although the damaged tissue was all repaired, it still left behind some dark purple scars, where the openings had sealed shut.

Kace would have those horrendous scars for the rest of his life, but he's healed and that's what's important now.

"You just need to give her some time to wake up," Serefina spoke again as she sat down on the edge of the bed, opposite from Kace.

Serefina too, her complexion looked well now, after she teleported all of them to the village, she passed out for a day.

Fortunately, at the same time, Lana had recovered and awakened, only to find herself having an obligation to care for Serefina and Kace. While Serefina was easy to handle, it was different for Kace. He didn't even budge to whatever words Lana said to him.

"This village won't be a safe place for long," said Serafina, despite the silent treatment that Kace gave to her, she still updated him with the information. "Chiron and Delta have a plan to move all of the villagers."

Losing one or two underlings was not a problem for Beelzebub. But for Kace, it was him who had killed half of them, and that gave a great impact to The Gluttony's plan.

The attack on this village faced a setback, because of the white lycan's enraged that killed most of the witches and vampires.

But, that didn't mean Beelzebub wouldn't try something more any time soon.

"It's either we follow them to the safety place, or we return," Serefina continued. "With my current strength, I can't teleport all of us straight to Mystic River Village. Therefore, we could still go with the other option we have. Which is, taking the same path you took to get here."

The problem was that Hope's condition was very concerning. The journey back would take days. But to follow the centaurs and the hunters was not a good option either.

There was no guarantee if there would be no danger on their way to the safety place.

"They will abandon this village tomorrow," Serefina finished her sentence as she stared at Kace. The lycan needed to make a quick decision, because this concerned his mate.

"We will return," Kace said tersely.

Serefina waved her hand at Lana, who silently walked out of the room. She would inform Chiron that they wouldn't join them.

However, before Lana could close the door, Kace spoke clearly. "I need to talk to Chiron, tell him to come here when you meet him."

"Alright," Lana nodded and closed the door behind her.

When it was only the three of them inside the room, Serefina sighed deeply when she had to face Kace's silence.

"I think I need to go now," Serefina rose from her seat and walked out of the room, leaving Kace alone with Hope. "Don't forget to eat your meal, you need all the strength for our journey back."

Once it was only the two of them, Kace stretched out his hands and caressed Hope's pale cheeks silently.

He traced his fingers along her jawline to her soft lips and felt her warm breath under his finger. Kace was afraid if Hope suddenly stopped breathing. Only the thought of it alone would send chills down his spine.

He couldn't lose her again.

Carefully, Kace leaned over and kissed Hope's soft lips carefully, the kiss lasted for a long time as it carried the beast's nervousness, sadness and his yearning to see her smile and hear her voice again.

Kace was aware that he had sapped some of Hope's energy when he marked her. That was why his wounds were healed, to the point where he managed to stay awake until this moment, despite the tiredness and exhaustion for everything that he had been through.

Kace despised himself for doing that. Maybe that was one of the reasons why Hope still had not yet woke up.

## **Chapter 624 - SEPARATE WAYS**

Chiron entered the room not long after Sereфина left, and his eyes directed to the tray filled with food for Kace, which he didn't touch at all.

His hooves tapped the ground softly when he walked closer.

"I heard you will return to your realm," Chiron started. His eyes fell on Hope's pale face, the girl had not yet woken up ever since that day.

The centaur did not know how she came here, but apparently the witch named Lydia had brought the girl here, and that fact alone had incurred Sereфина's wrath. Well, she taught her fellow witch a good lesson the first thing she did when she woke up.

Now, she sent Lydia to escort the centaurs and threatened her that she would hunt her down if Lydia dared to do otherwise without her permission.

The mighty witch Sereфина was truly scary when she showed how she meant her threat. Not even her old friend was spared.

"That's not even my realm to begin with," Kace spoke softly, as his blue eyes fixed on Hope.

Just like the centaur, the realm where the humans lived, had never been the place where he belonged. Both of them were forced to leave their realm because of their circumstances.

On the other hand, Chiron didn't argue with him about his statement as he took Sereфина's place before, and gazed down at Hope.

"I think she will be fine, when she is strong enough, she will come back to you," Chiron said as he placed fresh daisies beside Hope. "Beautiful flowers for a new beginning."

Kace looked at the flower and nodded. "Thank you," then he added. "She will love it."

"How is the wound on your back?" though it was Kace, who asked him to come, but since the beginning it was Chiron, who tried to engage the conversation with him.

"It heals," he said tersely.

Kace was reluctant to talk about his wounds, because it reminded him about what had happened and how it almost cost Hope's life.

"Good to hear that," Chiron nodded.



There was silence between them. Meanwhile, Chiron no longer talked and Kace had not started to speak about his intention to call the centaur.

"I am sorry," Kace finally broke the silence between them. His eyes shifted to the centaur before him. He looked exactly like the leader of the centaurs from centuries ago, whose mate had been killed by him.

This was not the first time Kace apologized to Chiron about what he had done. But this time, the apology came from the experience that he had to go through. Just to know how much agony it cost him that he had to pay for almost losing his mate.

Kace knew how it felt now.

"It happened," Chiron said with a straight face, it was unsure whether he forgave him or not. Maybe the centaur had been treating them extremely well, but forgiveness was a complicated feeling.

It was akin to someone, who was able to smile brightly in front of the person that they hate. Hypocrites? Yes. However, sometimes we did that multiple times.

In Chiron's case, the centaur just thought that no matter how much he hated Kace, it would never bring his mate back to life. Not to mention, the cause of death of his mate was not entirely Kace's fault

"I am glad you still have her, there are no creatures who deserve to go under such pain," Chiron said wisely, but it was like a salty water that was poured on Kace's wounds. "You should cherish her."

"I will," Kace replied with an expression devoid of emotion. "And thank you for everything that you have done for us." It was the most sincere gratitude that Kace showed to him.

Chiron studied the beast in front of him, but he was not the arrogant beast that he met before. Neither was he the young man that despised himself most of the time. The man before him was like someone who had learnt something, and whatever it was, Chiron hoped it would ease his burden.

After Chiron felt there was nothing that they needed to talk about, he excused himself.

It was indeed a very short conversation with limited words, but the feeling of that brief moment was what counted the most.

"Don't forget your meal, Serefina will throw some tantrum if you skipped it again," Chiron reminded him lightly. "The journey ahead was very long."

Kace didn't respond to him, but at least the centaur knew that he was listening.

When Kace was alone again with Hope, he took off his shoes and climbed on the bed. Carefully, he cradled her in his arms as he fell asleep with her unique scent lingered his senses. It gave a calm effect for his tense nerves.

It didn't take a long time before Kace gave up to his tiredness and his eyes betrayed him.

=====

When the morning sun illuminated the village, the first thing that one could see was two parties exchanging their farewell, in front of the entrance gate of the village.

Lydia had to go with the centaurs or else, Serefina's would release her wrath and finish her off without a second thought. But before that, to appease the angry of her old friend, Lydia told her everything about what Hope was capable to do.

Hope was talking, and able to see the spirit of the dead. It could only mean that the girl had awakened her own abilities without the guidance of others. It was still a mystery for Serefina about how those angels could revive their power.

Maybe life and death experience, and also extreme circumstances could provoke their strength to come to the surface?

Serefina had an idea to try this on Torak's mate as well...

"I think this is a goodbye," Chiron smiled with Carina beside him, looking at the other parties solemnly.

"We will meet again," Kace said. Somehow, he knew they would meet again.

"I hope so," Chiron nodded politely, he called their name one by one before he excused himself and his small group, leaving that place.

"Let's go." Serefina didn't want to stay any longer in that place too.

## **Chapter 625 - ON THEIR WAY**

Hope felt a warm light that streamed across her closed eyelids. But not bright enough to hurt her eyes, as another spark danced on her left hand.

Hope groaned softly when sudden pain shot through her neck, tears pooled in her eyes. It hurt so much...

Hope tried to raise her hand to touch her neck, but someone held her gently and a soft voice whispered in her ears.

"Ssstt, it's okay Hope, you are okay..."

Hope whimpered faintly. Her neck hurts.

Then, Hope felt there was something cool, and wet pressed against her throbbing neck. It gave a little comfort, but she couldn't help but cry even though she didn't open her eyes. It hurt so much. Hope sobbed.

"It is okay, Hope, calm down, don't cry..." though his voice sounded gentle, but it laced with panic when he shouted to the door. "SEREFINA!"

Hope didn't want to stop crying, she wanted to curl into a ball until the pain on her neck and chest went away, yet her body was too impossibly heavy to move, and her chest felt like she had just been stabbed, which was true.

Hope cried harder.

"Don't cry please... tell me which part hurts?" his voice sounded more desperate now.

Her aching neck, and chest throbbed painfully again, and she sobbed even harder.

"SEREFINA!" he shouted again, and in the next second, Hope could hear the door swung open and several footsteps entered the room.

Hope couldn't talk, it felt like her voice failed her, and her throat was very dry.

"Drink this." Kace helped Hope to sit down by carefully holding on her waist and supporting her back. But the bandage on her neck made his gaze turn dark. He hated it when he saw Hope was hurt, especially when it was because of him.

This was not the way Kace wanted to mark her, but then, he didn't have any other option left. Kace could just be grateful that he didn't lose her.

Something touched Hope's bottom lips and then a soft, cool liquid brushed against her tongue as she slightly opened her mouth.

As a wave of cold relief washed over the dryness in her throat, her breathing was at ease. Though the pain had not dissipated yet.

"Hurt..." Hope whimpered with her eyes closed when she found her voice again.

"Which part is hurt?" Kace's panicked voice could be heard, he tried to hold her as gentle as he could. But he was also trying to calm himself from his worry.

"My chest... neck..." Hope replied ever so softly, her eyebrows wrinkled in discomfort.

"Serefina, she is in pain," Kace said through his gritted teeth. Hope could only imagine how his expression was right now. Because her eyes still closed, unwilling to cooperate with her.

And then, Hope felt someone touch her hand. Serefina? Most likely it was her.

In the next second, Hope's breathing eased as a relief washed over her being, and Kace put her back into the soft pillow.

"You will feel better when you wake up again," Serefina said and Hope was half way back to her deep slumber.

=====

The second time Hope woke up, she opened her eyes, feeling dizzy because her surroundings suddenly swayed along with the whole room.

Raising her hand, she touched her aching neck where she felt the thick bandage placed. But the notion made her head throbbing in dizziness.

And then, Hope's eyes caught a small window in the room, which was a porthole.

She was on a ship.

Her eyebrows furrowed, but then, she heard a faint snoring sound from beside her. And there she found Kace next to her, sleeping with his head rested on his arms while his hand held hers.

At that time, every memory came to Hope's mind like a force.

Hope remembered the severe pain that she felt when she watched an arrow pierced through her chest. And how her blood dripped, and also the horror in Kace's scared expression.

Hope touched her chest carefully and felt the dull pain there. It seemed her wound had closed. However, what about her neck? The pain was almost the same as the one on her chest, yet she didn't remember that she hurt her neck.

Or maybe, someone had shot an arrow at her neck as well? The thought of that sent chills down to her spine.

Maybe because of Hope's sudden move, the man, who was sleeping peacefully beside her, suddenly raised his head, his blue eyes flashed in alarm, scanning the room for the possible danger.

Kace had been like that since Hope lost her consciousness. He couldn't really put his guard down. Every time there was a movement, he would jolt awake.

But, when his blue eyes fell on Hope's face, they softened. "Hey, my little angel..." he greeted her with his voice as he reached for a glass of water.

Hope blinked her eyes and let Kace help her drink by supporting her back.

"How are you feeling? Your chest and neck are still hurt?" Kace put aside the glass when Hope drank half of it.

"...little bit..." Hope's voice was barely a whisper when she spoke.

"Are you hungry?" Kace smiled when he could hear her voice again. It had been a long time, and Kace really missed her.

Hope nodded faintly.

Now that Kace had mentioned it, Hope could feel her stomach grumble as if there was a horde of horse inside.

Definitely, Kace could hear that too.

He laid her back on the soft pillow and walked towards the door, but he didn't leave the room as he talked to someone there.

From the voice who replied to him, it seemed like it was Lana that he was talking to.

Hope wanted to ask where they were, but she felt very lethargic.

"We are on the ship, we are on our way back home," Kace replied to her unspoken question, and sat down beside Hope again.

It was strange that Kace somehow knew what she wanted to ask. But Hope was too tired to find out, therefore, after she finished her meal, she went back to her deep slumber.

## **Chapter 626 - HOME SWEET HOME**

The third time Hope woke up was when Kace piggy backed her again.

Hope mumbled softly near his ears, and her voice drew Kace's attention as he tilted his head and stopped walking.

Hope was still lightheaded when Kace said something to Lana. And then Lana gave her some water to moisten her dry throat and chapped lips.

After getting over her thirst, Hope snuggled down her head on Kace's nape again, continued her sleep with thousands of fireflies flying around her.

If only Hope was well, and could open her eyes like normally, and if only she could put her attention for a while at her surroundings, she would find this wonderful sight of the fireflies dancing in the night like joyous memories in her dream. The flickering light from their small being radiating into the starry night as buzz of excitement could be heard from these tiny glimmers of light.

Unfortunately, Hope was too tired to witness it and fell back to sleep right away after she got her water.

The warm from Kace's body, and his unique scent lulled her into deep slumber.

=====

After a long journey to go back to their house in Mystic River Village, finally they were there, and arrived at their house at midnight.

Leon and Abby went separate ways once they were out of the northern coven realm. Or else, Serefina's limited patience couldn't stay tested to keep up with the witch siblings any longer.

Their journey back was smooth sailing, despite Serefina's dislike of that realm, but at the very least, she was the infamous witch, the last pure blood witch, thus no one wanted to mess up with her.

And for Beelzebub, though the devil didn't chase them to the mainland, nor mobilized her underlings to capture Kace or Hope, they still couldn't put their guard down.

The fact that the devil had resided there for such a long time was another concern for Serefina. The mainland of that realm was not only the habitat for the witches, but there were also other supernatural creatures among them.

It was such a complicated community there. But if Beelzebub managed to gain complete control, it was not good news for their side.

Meanwhile, the moment they reached their house, Lana called Sterling to pick his sons up, and the man came straight away to Serefina's house in his beast form.

His veins bulge in anger. If it wasn't because of Serefina's words, the angry werewolf father would flip right there and then.

"You can kill your sons outside, don't make a fuss inside my house," Serefina waved her hands with knitted brows when he watched the werewolf fuming mad, and dragged the siblings out of the house.

About what Sterling would do to his sons, it wasn't her problem anymore. Because she had had enough trouble in her hands at the moment.

Two guardian angels that had their own circumstances, was simply too much for Serefina to handle. Moreover, this was not a task that she liked. Not even in the slightest.

"You better take a rest," Serefina mumbled to Lana as she watched Kace enter Hope's bedroom.

Lana nodded sleepily as she walked towards her bedroom and closed her door.

In an instant, the house fell into a pit of silence. Even the witch could hear the rattling sound of branches against the window and the night winds.

Serefina trudged towards her room, she clutched her chest and her breathing became shallow with every step that she took. Her face contorted, as if she was under great pain.

Once Serefina reached her room, she locked it and slid down to the floor with her back facing the door, her breathing uneven.

From her trembling lips, she chanted a spell in an ancient language, over and over. The witch had to stop a few times to catch her breath when the immense pain gnawed in every inch of her skin.

It was the time.

The moment when once in every month she had to endure this suffering.

Her raging breath was the only sound that echoed in her empty room, and when she had completed her spell a loud scream escaped her lips as her body collapsed on the floor.

Beads of sweat formed on her forehead as she writhed in agony, clutching her chest and her head, screaming on the top of her lungs and cursed under her shallow breath.

Cursing to the Moon Goddess above. Cursing to the damn second life that she had to live. Cursing to her loved one, the person that couldn't be hers. Cursing to everything that she had to go through just to see him for the last time. Cursing for the love that she couldn't have...

Lonely tears fell on her cheek, wetted her red hair as the pain became more and more unbearable.

She hated herself for choosing this path for herself.

She hated herself for being so weak...

The arrogant witch cried for the entire night, enduring her penance, alone.

No one could hear her screaming except herself in this empty room.

She trapped herself there with her strangled voice and her lonely soul...

=====

Lana woke up when the first light of the sun kissed her face and yawned sleepily. She rubbed her eyes and stretched her aching body.

It felt so nice after their journey to the northern coven. Though things didn't go as they expected, at least Kace was fine now.

His wounds healed with a great cost.

Stretching her body for the last time, Lana got off of her bed and walked towards the kitchen. It was very silent this morning, apparently everyone was too tired to wake up early.

Lana walked towards Serefina's room after she made breakfast for the four of them, but her room was locked.

Assuming the witch didn't want to be disturbed, Lana went to Hope's bedroom.

Hope's bedroom door was slightly ajar, and when Lana pushed it slightly, she witnessed how Kace cradled Hope in his sleep, wrapped his arms around her body protectively.

And then Lana's eyes fell on the tender flesh on Hope's neck, where Kace had marked her.

### **Chapter 627 - WHAT IS SHE TALKING ABOUT?!**

Lana took a step to enter the room, she stood there for a while, staring at the mark on Hope's neck. Grimaced.

Her eyebrows knitted together when she watched the two of them sleep soundlessly. Even Kace was not aware of her presence as he cradled Hope in his arms. Too tired to notice Lana.

Without thinking, Lana took another step towards the bed.

This time, her eyes fell on Kace's black hair, which had fallen over his face. She was not sure of what was in her head then, when she stretched out her hand and brushed Kace's hair aside gently.

Kace looked frail. Vulnerable.

Normal Kace would show the world his bright side, grinning with an intimidating gaze once in a while if he was not in a good mood, and if someone annoyed him. But he would never turn into the brutal beast he was, like for the past few days when they were in the northern coven realm.

However, everything just messed up, and too many things happened in a short amount of time.

Kace now didn't look like his usual self and Lana felt sorry for what he had been through. The always confident and cheerful Kace, now became quiet.

It had been a long time since Lana saw his carefree smile.

Because his mate was in her current condition, Kace was almost like punishing himself for letting this happen to Hope.

No words could calm his anxiety, and somehow, Lana could feel she was mad at Hope for making Kace like this.

It was wrong. Lana knew, yet she couldn't help it.

Lana let her gaze roamed over Kace's face, admiring how perfect he was. If only Kace wanted to start his own pack, he would be a great Alpha, just like his two older brothers. Yet the youngest Donovan didn't want to go down on the same path like them.

Lana really wanted to touch Kace's full lips, which parted slightly as he breathed deeply, low and slow.

However, Lana stopped herself when she watched Kace mumble in his sleep, his eyebrows knitting together.

Seeing Kace was about to wake up, Lana took two steps back and cleared her throat.

"Morning. Your breakfast is ready." Lana felt stupid to say that.

And before she could hear Kace's reply, she had rushed out of the bedroom.

On the bed, Kace rubbed his sleepy eyes. He heard the door was being closed, but the first thing that crossed his mind was not Lana, who told him about the breakfast or the fact that she was inside the room for who knows how long. The first thing that Kace did was to check on the girl in his arms.

Kace put his fingers under her nose, but her shallow breath didn't put him at ease. He slid his body slightly lower, and rested his ears on her chest to hear her beating heart. And only then, the lycan could sigh in relief.

Kace looked at Hope, who seemed to not have enough energy to open her eyes, too tired to even breathe properly.

For the past five days, Hope's consciousness had been in and out. Most of the time she would sleep like this, woke up only for a few minutes before she took another rest again.

Serefina told Kace that she was recovering, but the lycan didn't see any sign of her getting better. Probably, it was only him, who had been overthinking on everything. But he just couldn't shake off his anxiety that he felt.

"I will come back," Kace whispered softly to her as he leaned over, and kissed her temple.

Gingerly, Kace got off of the bed, and pulled the blanket for Hope. So that it covered her fragile body perfectly. Only when he thought it would be fine to leave her for a while, Kace walked out of the bedroom.

Inside the kitchen, Kace met Lana, but he couldn't find Serefina anywhere.

"Where is Serefina?" Kace asked as he sniffed the air to find only the faint scent of the witch that lingered in the air. It was either she was still inside her room, or she had just left to go to Fulbright City, taking care of his brother's mate.

The thought of that vexed Kace. His mate needed help as well!

"I think she is still inside her bedroom," Lana mumbled while drinking her tea. She averted her eyes, but Kace's mind was in disarray to notice that. "Her bedroom is locked!" she added hurriedly when she watched Kace strode towards the witch's bedroom.

Yet, Kace kept walking, ignoring her words, and Lana could do nothing about it.

"Serefina." Kace slammed his fist on the door, waiting for a while. But, there was no answer from inside. "Serefina, are you there?" The lycan slightly raised his voice, but still, there was no answer. "Serefina!"

All of a sudden the door swung open, and revealed the witch with her red hair, glowering at him.



"What?!" she snapped at him. "I need my beauty sleep you know?!"

Kace knitted his brows and spoke in his serious tone. "You look horrible."

Serefina didn't appreciate those words at all. "You don't look any better," She retorted, closing the door behind her, and leaned against it as she faced the lycan. "If you want to ask about Hope's condition, I have to tell you that I don't have any idea about that." Serefina had told Kace about this several times. "But, she will recover, no need to worry."

Kace didn't like the way Serefina brushed off this topic. "Don't you know something that would help her to recover faster?"

Serefina gave him a look. "I am a witch, not a healer." Then she added. "I can feel her spirit is getting stronger, it is only a matter of time until she's fully recovered."

"Actually, I've been wanting to ask; should we move away from here, since the devil is nearby?" After all, Beelzebub was nearby.

Though Kace had changed the topic, Serefina was still talking about the same subject. "At the end, we need Hope to recover faster... the war with demons is drawing near."

"Pardon me?" Kace's voice was very rigid. He almost lost his mate, and now she's talking about war?

## **Chapter 628 - JUST YOU AND ME**

Kace couldn't believe his own ears, what was inside this witch's mind that made her think it was the right time to talk about war?

Hell no! Kace wouldn't be part of that!!!

Serefina must have lost her mind to think that Kace would welcome such a topic right now.

"You are talking about war with the demon, when not long ago, I almost lost my mate?" Kace's eyes hardened as his jaw clenched tightly. "You must be kidding me," Kace chuckled, but there was no humor in it.

Serefina's expression turned serious. Though her face was still pale from what she had gone through last night, the importance to make Kace understand their situation was much bigger than her suffering.

"You know the true purpose of the guardian angels being resurrected," Serefina's tone was as rigid as his. "Don't tell me you have forgotten it."

Kace took a step closer, so he could look into Serefina's lime green eyes directly, "But, I never said that I agree with that."

The difference in height between them, made Kace look both dominant and dangerous. Yet it didn't stop the witch from saying her part.

"You can't deny it. That is the purpose of her life." Serefina gritted her teeth. "She can't run from her fate, and neither can you!"

If the witch could add more, she was also in the same position. She didn't have a choice but to live this second life that was given to her. She had been pondering her choice back then. But even now, the answer was still the same. That if she could turn back time, she would choose this kind of life over again.

That's how pathetic she was. And the witch couldn't help but mocked herself.

But, before Kace could give her any response, Lana appeared on the corner, curiously intrigued by the conversation between the witch and Kace. Because she heard the way the two of them were talking to each other, but their voices were too low for her to comprehend their conversation.

"Everything is alright here?" Lana approached them, her eyes were staring back and forth between Serefina and Kace.

There was a brief silence, and an awkward moment when Kace and Serefina didn't even move, or avert their eyes from each other.

"Or, maybe I will go back later after both of you finish your staring contest," Lana spoke stiffly as she took a few steps back. "I will check on Hope."

"No need. I will do it," Kace said curtly. He moved away from Serefina, but before he could turn around and walked towards Hope's room, he ensured one more thing. "You said, you don't know how to improve Hope's condition, right?"

Serefina knitted her eyebrows, she didn't know what Kace wanted to say by asking that same questions over, and over again. "Yes."

Kace nodded slightly before he strode toward Hope's bedroom.

When it was only the two of them, Lana faced the witch. "What is it?" she crossed her arms in front of her chest as she stared at Serefina. "You provoke him again? In times like this?"

"I just corrected his way of thinking, and said what he should've already known," Serefina didn't look sorry for what she said, but there was a flash of uneasiness in her eyes. There were tons of things that were bothering her.

"You know what? I don't understand you." Lana shook her head. "I feel like I want to curse for every statement that came out from your brilliant mind."

Serefina raised an eyebrow at her and spoke mockingly. "Thank you. But, you don't need to break a sweat for that."

Lana sighed. She had been dealing with Serefina for almost half of her life now. It was a fact that she grew up with her, under her care and order. But she still couldn't fully understand the witch.

"Maybe you can use a different approach next time Serefina, I know you meant well." Lana tilted her head. "You just let out your frustration to every single person that you met, trying to make them feel bad because you don't feel good about yourself. That's irritating and immature, especially for someone who has lived long enough like you."

Unexpectedly, Serefina chuckled. "So, should I pretend to be a good girl, and sneak around just to stare at the man that I have a crush with?" she directed her green lime eyes at Lana. "Like you did?"

Lana grinded her teeth, as she clenched her jaws, her face turned red because of Serefina's remark.

The witch knew.

"We have our own way to deal with these shitty feelings. Just because I don't do what you do, doesn't mean you are doing the right thing." Serefina spoke mockingly and she turned around to enter her room after saying her last pieces. "And I need you to go somewhere."

=====

"I will go for a few days," Lana told Kace when she ran into him in the kitchen, before she left to carry out Serefina's orders.

"Hmm," Kace hummed when he made a glass of warm milk for Hope.

Lana hesitated, "I know sometimes Serefina is very annoying. Don't mind her words."

"Where is she?" Kace didn't bother with Lana's comforting words.

"She already left this afternoon." But, the witch sent her away in the middle of the night...

"I see," Kace replied, but then he didn't say anything more.

Seeing Kace was not in the mood to talk, Lana sighed. "Okay, I will go now."

"Be careful."

And then that was the last thing that Lana heard from him before she headed outside.

When Lana was no longer there, Kace walked towards Hope's room with a glass of warm milk in his hand. His expression was devoid from any emotion. He was too calm...

Kace opened the bedroom door, and a soft smile appeared on his lips when he watched Hope was awake.

"Hai, my little angel." Kace approached her, and kissed her temple, "How do you feel?"

"...Good," Hope mumbled weakly.

Kace then cradled her in his arms, as he helped her to drink the warm milk. "I want to take you somewhere—" there was a flash of determination in Kace's eyes. "—just you and me."

## **Chapter 629 - ORDERS TO KILL**

Day turned into evening twilight when the dark surface of the moon gradually stole the brilliant light from the sun.

Everywhere people could see, the sunny spots became crescent in form, as the reflection of images of the now narrowing sun.

At the beginning of this, people still could hear insects still chirping in the grass. Birds sang and animals quietly continued their grazing. But a sense of uneasiness seemed gradually to steal over all life.

Birds' songs diminished, as those poor creatures flew anxiously for a moment, and sought for safety. Insects fell quiet, and the landscape grew darker and darker.

The blue sky changed quickly into duskier, and a death-like daydream seized upon everything earthly.

The crowds of people in the street were awed into silence. Trivial chatter, and senseless joking died down. The world fell into a pit of silence.

Behind the thick cobblestone walls, there was an imposing castle that held more history than any living thing that had walked on the surface of the earth. Standing there tall and proud, was the Lord of that place, gazing out to the dark day from one of the dozen windows inside his chamber.

He dressed in his regal clothes, the kind you only saw on someone, who you wouldn't want to mess with. Everything about him screamed danger, even his presence alone was an enigma. He scared the other people without giving an effort. That's just the way that man was, born as the first born of the strongest Alpha.

Jedrek took in his chamber with a single sweep, as his dark blue eyes settled on a man who was standing near the door, bowing his head solemnly.

"My Lord," Maximus greeted him. "Your brother just ran away."

"And I wonder why you are here instead of dragging him back?" Jedrek's voice was neither loud nor stern, but the other people knew how dead serious he was.

"Some people chased after him, but he had gone to the other realm before we could take him back. Now, I will lead some people after him," Maximus replied. His voice was as calm as his bearing, but then he added. "I think he went to meet her."

Jedrek's eyes darkened a few shades, he knew what Maximus meant by 'her'. It was no other than Serefina.

Her name was a taboo topic to mention in front of him, but every once in a while, Maximus would faintly remind the Alpha King about that. Not straightforwardly, but tactfully.

"Drag him back," Jedrek said his order viciously. He didn't say anything about Serefina.

"Right away, my Lord." There was a faint smirk on the corner of Maximus's lips that didn't go unnoticed by Jedrek.

But, before Maximus left the chamber, there was a voice that echoed in Jedrek's head.

[He went to meet his mate.] The voice was very rough, and scratchy just like someone who had not touched any water to moisten their dry throat. [You know what you have to do.]

"Maximus," Jedrek called him back before he closed the door.

Maximus stopped and turned around to face his Alpha. "Yes, my Lord?"

"Kace will meet his mate, kill the infant." Jedrek didn't even bat his eyes when he ordered the killing of an innocent newborn.

Maximus's eyes glowed with evil intent. "Will do, my Lord."

With a soft click sound, the door was closed, and the room fell into silence once again before an angry voice boomed inside Jedrek's head.

[YOU DIDN'T DO WHAT I TOLD YOU TO DO!]

It was the same voice that spoke to him before. He used a mind-link to talk to Jedrek. Meaning, he was close enough to reach him, but was in a hiding place because no one could see him inside that quiet chamber.

[WHY DON'T YOU LISTEN!?!]

But, the Alpha blocked him before he could talk any further.

=====

Maximus shifted back into his human form when he stood in front of a well-crafted door that was decorated childishly. He scowled at the selected pink color.

The house was very quiet, probably because it had passed midnight. Thus no one was around.

Maximus stretched out his hand, and pushed the door open as the smell of fresh lilac invaded his nose.

The room was spacious, and dominated with soft purple and pink color. Inside a cradle, there was a three month old baby, covered with a white blanket.

Maximus stood beside the crib with his aloofness to the world, watching as the newborn greeted him with a smile as sweet as newly bloomed flowers. Her tiny fingers curled into a small fist when she raised her hands.

She was very small, smaller than Maximus expected with her brilliant eyes stared at him. The newborn looked so delicate and smelled so divine.

He couldn't believe how tiny new humans were and how vulnerable they were.

Yet, all of the pureness that Maximus witnessed from the baby couldn't touch his black heart and shake off his sinister intentions.

The lycan smiled viciously at the newborn. She blinked her eyes a couple of times, then her lips curled in an attempt to cry, looking for the safety of her mother.

The baby was too young to understand, but still, she was sensitive enough to feel uncomfortable under the murky gaze of this stranger.

However, before she could cry, Maximus had stretched his right hand, aiming to her soft neck. The baby stifled her last cry before her breath left her.

It was an easy job. Maximus thought. There was no challenge, no blood, no scream, were all the parts that he liked the most when it comes to murdering. Unfortunately, he just didn't get to experience all those things. Not for this one.

Maximus tilted his head as he heard soft footsteps approaching the room, and the door was being opened at the same time he shifted back into his grey beast form, grinning derisively when he watched the mother of the baby check on her newborn.

However, when she realized there was something wrong with her daughter, she screamed on top of her lungs.

And that's what part Maximus loved the most.

### **Chapter 630 - THE MOON GODDESS**

Moonlight shone brightly inside the room that was filled with heart-wrenching cries from a woman. Inside that room, the woman was crying beside the empty cradle where her beautiful newborn baby girl was sleeping a few hours ago. But now the baby was no longer breathing.

The mother cradled her daughter close to her, as tears streamed down her face like a river during a heavy rainy season. Beside her, the father didn't look any better as he rubbed his face roughly, whispering words of encouragement to his wife and himself as well. Meanwhile, the people around the grieving parents were sobbing silently, feeling their pain.

Doctor who lived next door had been called to check on their little angel. But, nothing he could do to help her.

Nevertheless, they already knew it the moment they saw an ugly mark around their daughter's neck, they knew that they had lost her...

In front of them, a woman with a divine beauty was standing just a few meters away from them. Yet, no one was aware of her presence.

Her long flowing hair was adorned with a crescent moon crown. She was wearing a silver dress, as her body radiated the hazy moonlight.

She was Selene, the Moon Goddess. Her brilliant eyes dimmed slightly when she watched the infant in her mother's arms.

She was standing there all night. Watching those human mourning for the passing of the innocent soul. Her expression was unreadable, but her eyes never left the newborn.

When the horrible night passed, and the first light of the sun illuminated the gloomy room, the baby was finally left lying alone in her cradle while the people busied themselves preparing for her funeral.

The parents needed some time to calm themselves as they wondered and pondered what had happened to their beautiful child.

The light from the sun kissed the baby as the Goddess walked towards her. She ran her fingers on her pale cheeks, and caressed her puckered lips. The baby's little fingers curled up helplessly.

"My poor child," Selene whispered.

And then, minutes later, when someone entered the room, they couldn't find the baby in her crib anymore.

She was gone.

=====

"I killed the baby," Maximus reported it to the Alpha.

Outside of the window of Jedrek's royal chamber, the moon shone brightly. But he didn't appreciate its beauty, not even a little bit.

"But apparently the baby was not your brother's mate," Maximus added with his head slightly lowered in shame. He just found out about this information six months after the night when he killed the baby himself. "For Alpha Torak, we are having a hard time entering his territory. Your second brother doesn't seem to want you to interfere in his business there."

"Leave him," Jedrek spoke tersely.

Afterward he didn't say anything, or gave his thoughts about the information of his other brother. He just stared at the red liquid inside his crystal glass between his fingers.

"Any order, my Lord?" The awkward silence from his Alpha made Maximus feel uneasy. He feared his Alpha the most when he didn't talk like this.

Jedrek tilted his head, spared him a single glance before he returned his attention back to his glass. "You know your order," he spoke rigidly.

Of course, Maximus knew. After all, he had been chasing Kace for these past six months. That damn lycan was too good at running away. Not only that, Maximus didn't expect Kace knew pretty well about the human realm.

The youngest Donovan, who always appeared unreliable, and careless, was actually good at something and had a decent survival instinct.

"Leave," Jedrek waved his hand to dismiss him.

Yet, Maximus took reluctant steps when his eyes fixed on the glass in Jedrek's hand. "You need to drink that Alpha, so you can feel more relaxed."

Jedrek gave a side eyes look, yet he raised his glass, and drank all the liquid inside it.

However, once the door was closed. He spit all of that, and crushed the glass in his hand, the sharp shard stabbed his palm and blood was oozing out before the wound healed in a matter of seconds.

Jedrek didn't even flinch when it happened, but his eyes looked dull, and dangerous.

His mind reeled on the information about the baby that was killed half a year ago.

If she was not Kace's mate, then the possibility was that the baby was either Torak's mate or his...

The chance was fifty percent that he had killed his own mate.

Which was...

Good.

=====

It was another lazy evening when a young teenage girl walked in the garden filled with purple lilac flowers, humming a song that only she knew, just to kill her time.

Her skin was as fair as jade with her long black hair tumbling over her shoulders, and falling freely down her back. Her hair reached all the way to her h.i.p.s, swaying gently in the evening breeze.

She was a beauty and no one will argue with that statement.

However this evening, her cheerful demeanor couldn't be seen. And instead, her expression contorted in a disagreement.

She knew this time would come, but she had never agreed since the first time Selene told her about that story.

The story of the Alpha King who killed his mate.

She wanted to be anywhere, but near that kind of person, or... that kind of lycan in this case.

"My answer is still 'no'," she said, pouting her lips as she turned around to face the Moon Goddess, who appeared out of nowhere. She could feel her presence, thus she knew that the person she had been waiting for, finally graced her with her presence.

Selene walked towards her, and every step that she took left sparkling dust in her wake, just like always, the Goddess looked heavenly.

"Unfortunately, you don't have a choice for this," Selene stared at her softly. "It is the time. Today you are turning seventeen, you can't deny the responsibility any longer, Lilac."

All the lilac flowers around the two women slightly withered.

"Why do I have to go to the man who wants to kill me?" Lilac couldn't understand.