

TLOA Lycan 681

Chapter 681 - RETURN TO THE CASTLE

Although the castle looked close, it actually took four hours to walk back to the castle on foot.

"How about the citizens?" Lilac asked after she drank some water to moisten her dry throat. "I saw there were some people still left in the city central."

"The king has made plans for this. Once we found out something was wrong, all the guards prepared to evacuate the citizens. Maybe what you saw earlier was they evacuating people."

Lilac contemplated. It made sense. That was why there were no people inside the castle when Lilac came with Eaton.

"So, where are the citizens now?" Lilac was sure that those lycans and werewolves who followed them were the guards or the King's warrior.

"The citizens are moving to the southern region with another group of guards. We are here to observe the situation and to make sure no one left behind." Tordoff explained it to her.

"The door..." Lilac frowned. "I am sure Jedrek and I came out from a door, but it disappeared."

"That must be one of the doors inside the secret chamber." Tordoff immediately guessed what kind of door that Lilac had seen. "I have never been there, because that place is forbidden, but I heard there are seven doors that can lead you to different places."

"Hm," Lilac hummed as she contemplated.

Above them, the sky had turned into golden color as the sun began to hide behind the horizon and the people started to light the torches to illuminate the roads.

"Why did Jedrek fake your death?" Lilac asked she glanced at the horde of the lycan and the beast behind him. Theo followed them, but was not close enough to hear their conversation, or maybe he was still able to hear Lilac and Tordoff, regardless the distance between them.

"I don't know," Tordoff shook his head and couldn't help, but recalled what was happening inside the dungeon when he thought his King would tear him apart. "The King ordered me to go to different realm. Human realm. To follow a man named Killian."

"What are you doing by following him? And why are you here?"

Tordoff glanced at Lilac, unsure whether he had to tell her or not. "Killian was hurt, so I brought him back here." He decided to let her know half the truth. Tordoff didn't know if Lilac was allowed to know about what the order that Jedrek gave to Killian.

"Who is this Killian?" Lilac asked, still curious.

This journey back was further than expected and the lycan didn't want to shift and go first to check on Jedrek.

"You asked too much." Tordoff chuckled. "I just came with Killian when this happened."

Lilac stared at Tordoff and despite the smile on his lips, she knew she wouldn't get any more information from him when he decided to shut his mouth. His loyalty still lay on his King.

It took another thirty minutes for them to reach the city center.

And the moment the city came into view, they were greeted with a destroyed castle and a kingdom in ruins.

Lilac's heart grew cold at the sight. She hoped there was no casualty. She walked faster and almost running when something squealed above her head. She stopped and watched as something that resembled a dragon flew above her head, but the only thing that made it look frightening was; there were no scaly skin neither flesh, only skeleton.

"What is that?" Lilac whispered in horror.

"I don't know," Tordoff answered truthfully. He exchanged glance with Theo, as their calm expression started to fade away and began to worry about their King.

It was Lilac who broke the silent and started to run toward the castle, followed by Tordoff and the rest of the horde.

Her heart thumping wildly in her chest as her legs tried to run faster than Theo, who was easily outrun her. It was only Tordoff, who stayed behind to keep her accompany.

When the castle came into sight, Lilac could hear Tordoff sighed in relieve. "Don't worry, the King is fine."

"What? How do you know?" Lilac didn't stop running and when she was getting closer, she was able to see Jedrek, circled by his people.

Standing near Jedrek, it was Eaton and Airin, both of them looking exhausted, but still alive.

Lilac stopped, breathing heavily when she watched they were fine.

"Why do you stop here? Don't you want to see him?" Tordoff teased Lilac, who a minute ago was so eager to find Jedrek, but now the girl looked like she was about runaway.

Lilac scowled. "I am fine here."

"I am glad the King is fine." Tordoff didn't join Theo to greet Jedrek, instead he stayed with Lilac.

"I am glad now that he realized he couldn't avoid a war with devils." Lilac stated.

And from behind the castle, there were another two creatures that looked like skeleton of the dragon, flying high in the night sky. It seemed Jedrek didn't succeed to close the Tartarus gates, but he managed to come out alive with Eaton and Airin, and that was what matter now.

Finally, after exchanged a few words with Theo, Jedrek walked toward Lilac and Tordoff.

"Your grace." Tordoff slightly bent his body to greet Jedrek.

Jedrek looked exhausted, but it didn't cease the dominant aura around him and when he spoke, his voice was as calm as ever. "We head south."

Lilac was about to walk in the end of this horde, trying to get as far away as she could from Jedrek, but the lycan grabbed her hand and entwined their fingers together when he walked.

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It's been a week since what happened to Aeon and Raine still feeling sorrowful about that. Torak knew, but he didn't want to talk about it, since Raine would always avoid the topic.

"We will go to meet Jedrek, but first I need you to find Kace," Serefina said when they were having breakfast in the pack house.

Chapter 682 - I WILL GO WITH YOU

After the battle with the devils in the fulbright city and the crater that appeared there, human claimed it was an asteroid plunged the earth's atmosphere and crashed what become meteor crater.

However, no one could hear anything when it was happening, thus there were more than a handful conspiracy theories about this, which widely circulated in the community.

It was only those supernatural creatures who knew best about the truth behind it.

"Kace?" Torak put more sausage on Raine's plate. "Didn't you say that he has disappeared? And nobody knows where he is."

Raine cut the sausage into small pieces and stabbed it with her fork before she brought it to Torak's lips. The Alpha shook his head, indicating that Raine should be the one who ate that, but the girl insisted.

"I have someone to look for him, yes he is nowhere to be found. But, there is one place that I have not yet checked and I think he is there." Serefina drank her warm water.

There were only the three of them in the dining room while the other Lycan had gone long time ago to do their daily task.

Once the battle had ended in the fulbright city, they returned to the red river city, which they were safer, since it was Torak's territory.

Another reason was because Torak had become the most wanted person in this realm. All of his companies had been through investigation, as they found, inside Torak's burning house in the fulbright city, there were around twenty corpse of police officers, which three of them were high rank police.

Another speculation circulated among people. Some of them said Torak had been killed, but there were some people who saw Torak on the same day and the fact they couldn't find his body, nullified that theory.

Some of them said Torak had killed those police officers, but they couldn't find the motive behind it, moreover, what was the point of killing those people when he had nothing to do with them and more so, set his high- priced house on fire. It was not something a businessman like Torak would do.

This case was confusing beyond words and the person who could clear this up, had been missing ever since.

"Where do you think is he?" Torak asked after he swallowed the sausage that Raine gave to him.

"I think he went to northern coven realm," Serefina answered. She had been looking for Kace for nearly a year now and can't find a single clue of where he is.

Northern coven was the last place that Serefina wanted to visit and it was most likely Kace would go there to avoid her and Jedrek's people, who had been looking for him.

Even though it was not the safest place, but at least Serefina could guess who he was living with now.

"What is he doing there?" Raine furrowed her eyebrows. She knew about a story or two about Kace and couldn't wait to meet the Guardian Angel who was with him.

"Hiding," Serefina replied curtly as she put down her cutlery and pushed her empty plate away.

"What is he hiding for?" Raine frowned when Torak shoved a piece of sausage to her mouth when she was talking. She glared at him, but the Alpha only kissed her temple tenderly.

"Hiding from the world, his responsibility for the upcoming war and..." Serefina halted as she dabbed her lips with napkin. "...his brother."

"Torak?" Raine tilted her head toward Torak.

"Jedrek," Serefina corrected. No matter how many years have passed, his name still had the same effect on her.

"Oh, right." Raine just remembered the reason why Jedrek wanted to kill his brothers' mate. That Lycan despised them. "Has he met his mate?"

"Yes, he has," Serefina answered crudely and stood up. "We will go tomorrow, the sooner we go the better."

"Wait, Serefina." Raine bit her lips. She knew she was not supposed to ask this, but she was curious. "Did Jedrek kill his mate?"

Serefina didn't turn around when she answered her, she just shrugged her shoulder. ???Apparently, no." And walked out of the dining room.

When it was only the two of them, Raine turned toward Torak and with her big eyes she stared at him. "I will go with you."

She was aware that Torak didn't reject Serefina's word, which meant he agreed to go to find Kace to northern coven realm and Raine was dead-set to follow him.

Seeing how his mate was trying to appear dominant made him amused.

"If I say no, will you listen?" Torak kissed the tip of her nose as he chuckled.

"No," Raine smiled. "I will go with you."

"Then you will go with me."

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After Jedrek gave a few instructions to Tordoff and Theo, he went back to the carriage where Lilac had been waiting for him there. There were a lot of things for them to talk about.

However, when Jedrek opened the carriage's door, he found Lilac closed her eyes and leaned her head against the carriage wall.

Yet, the most disturbing thing that Jedrek found was her hair that turned white. He had seen this before when she was put in illusion, it would happen once a month.

And since her hair would return to normal the next day, moreover no one could explain what happened to Lilac condition, then the only person who could explain this was her.

Carefully, Jedrek put Lilac's head on his shoulder and covered her cold body with warm blanket.

"What happened with your hair?" he asked in deep voice. Whether Lilac was asleep or not, she would answer if she heard him.

"I lost my power every once in a month..." Lilac replied softly. She looked so fragile and vulnerable at this moment.

"Why?"

"In exchange for the life given by the goddess of the moon." Her voice sounded exhausted. "You killed me, remember?"

After Jedrek heard what Lilac had said, the journey fell silent, as he kept her warm.

Chapter 683 - YOU HAVE TO FACE IT

It had been two months since Kace stayed with the centaurs after spending a few months to track them down and it was not an easy feat to find them, especially when he didn't have a single clue about where they whereabouts.

Meanwhile, though Hope's health condition progressed a little slowly, but she looked better than months ago when the first time Kace found the centaurs and the people in the village that travelled together with them.

"What are you thinking?" Hope was holding Kace's face with both of her hands, implored him to meet her eyes. She knew there was something bothered her mate since days ago.

They were inside their tent. One of the reasons why it was so hard to track the centaurs was because they kept moving to avoid Beelzebub and her minion, the dark witches and the vampires.

"Nothing," Kace murmured, but his voice was not convincing enough even to his own ears.

"If you want to be a liar, than you should learn it better." Hope frowned and laid back on her pillow, as Kace covered her with blanket.

Kace sighed and lay down beside his mate. "The future. When we can stop running and live peacefully." He put his arms behind his head as Hope crept closer to him. The night was slightly chilly than the nights before.

"Then, maybe we should stop running and face it." Hope tilted her head to look at Kace's disagree expression. "I don't know about this war between your kind and the devils, but I don't think running away is the answer." Hope blinked her eyes sleepily, he got tired very quickly due to his weak condition. "Maybe Serefina can help me."

"She said she cannot." Kace wouldn't run away from the witch if she could do something about Hope's condition, but she couldn't, and instead Serefina was talking about the upcoming war. That kind of topic really irritated him.

"Maybe she could think about something else?" Hope yawned, her eyelids started to drop and she knew this argumentation wouldn't last for long time, thus she said between her drowsiness. "I want to go back home and meet my friends."

Hope didn't have a lot of friends here, or Kace could say she didn't have any. Most of the time she would play with Bree, as the other villagers was older than he or too young to be her friends.

"Can I come? I bring her medicine." Lydia's voice travelled into the tent. The witch had been staying with the centaurs and the villagers since they were separated because of Serefina's order.

Kace had made sure she didn't contact Serefina and reveal he and Hope's whereabouts, although he couldn't do anything if she did it. However, during this time, Serefina had still not been able to find them, which meant she had kept her promise.

"Sure," Kace said softly. He glanced at Hope, who was sleeping now.

There was a rustling sound of the cloth being raised when Lydia entered the tent. She brought a bowl of black liquid in her hand and glanced at the sleeping girl.

"I will give it to her when she is awake." Kace readjusted Hope's blanket and stood up. "I have something to discuss with you."

Kace took another glance at Hope before he let Lydia to go first.

"Are you sure, it is safe for us to go back to Uzu mountain?" The Lycan was standing in front of his tent as the chilly night wind blew against his face.

"I don't know about the Uzu mountain, but I assure you something is happening in the other realms and Beelzebub is no longer there." Despite being stuck here, Lydia had another way to gain information.

"What is happening?" Kace frowned. He had been really reluctant when Chiron decided to go back to the Uzu mountain to retrieve the priestess's body and the other children who had died because of the devil.

However, he knew they had to do that to respect what the priestess had done to them. After all, it was her spirit who had helped Kace and the other when the confrontation with the vampires and witches broke out.

Lydia crossed her arms in front of her chest, lowering her head. She was in deep thought. "I don't know if this is possible."

"What is it?" From the way Lydia was hesitated to tell him, he could feel it, it was something unpleasant.

Lydia raised his head and her eyes met Kace's. "I think the gates to Tartarus is already open."

"What?" Kace furrowed his brows. "That's impossible," he objected it strongly.

"I do think the same," Lydia said. "But, that is what I heard."

This news could only mean one thing for Kace; Serefina would look for him relentlessly, she wouldn't stop until she got him and Hope.

However, in the other hand, Kace realized how foolish of him to run away from this fate. Just like what Hope had said; if they couldn't run from it, the only way left for them was to face it.

When Kace was in deep thought, he felt someone tugged on his clothes and he found Bree, staring at him with her bright eyes.

"I want to see Hope," she said childishly.

"Sure, but she is sleeping, don't wake her up, okay?" Kace tousled the girl's hair.

"I will be quiet," she whispered before ran into the tent.

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"Do you think she will like me?" Raine was crouching down in front of her backpack, tomorrow they would leave to the northern coven, to look for Torak's younger brother and his mate, the guardian angel.

"No one can hate you my love." Torak kissed her temple, as he helped her to packing.

"Coming from you, it doesn't sound convincing." Raine pouted her lips. "I am really excited to meet with the other guardian angel!"

Torak chuckled. He would handle this matter with his brothers and would not spoil his mate's joy, because he knew Kace would not be easy to talk to.

Chapter 684 - HEADING TOWARD THEIR DESTINATION

Serefina suggested for Torak to bring only the people that he needed, and by that meant, the witch thought it would be only a handful people.

However, who would have thought Torak would bring a pack with him?!

Aside from Torak's Beta, Gamma and one warrior named Jack, who would look after Raine, as if Torak would leave her side, which was impossible, there were Alpha Romulus and Alpha Chris.

And each of the Alpha would bring their second in command and their own people, which in all totaled up to two hundred people.

"Have you lost your mind?!" Serefina shrieked. "Do you want to declare a war with your brother?!"

Torak frowned as he opened the door for Raine and the girl gladly crawled inside, didn't interest to hear another argumentation between the witch and her lover.

"We go to talk, why should I declare a war with him?" Torak leaned his body against the car as he faced the fuming witch.

"Don't you see? How many people that you bring with you?!" Serefina felt her head hurt. This, whether Torak didn't know or he just intentionally wanted to give her a hard time. "Your brother is not an Alpha! He doesn't have a horde of people at his disposal like you! If you are going to bring your pack to meet him, he will have fled miles away before you can talk to him!" she was exasperated.

Inside the car, Raine chewed her marshmallow and shared it with Calleb, who was sitting behind the steering wheel.

"How long do you think it will last?" Calleb nodded to the argumentation between Serefina and Torak.

"Hm," Raine swallowed her marshmallow. "Ten minutes."

"I said two minutes. Torak will turn a deaf ear." Calleb plopped a marshmallow into his mouth. "I bet my one month salary."

Yet, after Calleb finished saying his last words, he got a hit on the back of his head. It was Raphael, who was standing outside of the car. He stretched out his hand through the open window beside Calleb.

"Don't teach her something bad!" Raphael glared at the Gamma and Raine chuckled when she heard that.

"D*mn Lycan and their remarkable hearing!" Calleb cursed under his breath, as he rubbed the back of his head.

"You are a lycan too!" Raine chimed in between her laugh.

On the other side of the car, Torak answered to the witch curtly. "He has a centaur with him. I would not risk my mate's safety on the assumption that he would be friendly with me." Torak opened the car door and didn't let Serefina to snap back at him.

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Jedrek watched Lilac hair as it turned back into her initial black color under the sunlight. He touched it and felt the softness of the strands.

Lilac was still fast asleep, she looked exhausted and in her unawareness state, the girl snuggled closer to Jedrek's embrace, searching for warm, when the cold wind came through the open carriage window, which later Jedrek closed it.

The journey to the southern region would take a week.

Actually, it would be easier if all of them shifted and ran in their beast form, but in Lilac current condition, Jedrek didn't think it would be convenient for her, moreover, he needed time to think and being with his mate could calm his beast, helping him to think clearly since his beast would stop to nag at him.

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"The Apricity River froze again," Lydia informed them. "I think we need to prepare ourselves for something unpredictable."

Kace's expression turned grim when he heard that, the last time that river froze was when everything turned into chaos. The death of the shadow warrior, the extinction of the guardian angel and the paramount of that was the war with the devil.

"You know what that means, right?" Lydia glanced at the lycan beside her.

Yet, Kace didn't answer her. He was in deep thought.

"If war breaks out, then the best thing for you is to return to your brother to join forces. The devil won't just let you go. They want your mate and they will get it no matter what. And you don't have power in your hand except the centaurs and a few shifters." Lydia waved her hand to the group behind her.

"I have my own force," Kace spoke grimly, as he watched Hope, who was walking in front of him, talking to Bree.

"What kind of force?" Lydia asked curiously. "I have never heard you ever created a pack on your own."

"No, I don't have a pack." Kace shook his head, his expression was devoid from any emotion when he spoke. "You can say, I have reliable friends."

After saying that, Kace walked ahead, picked up Bree and sat her on his shoulder as the little girl squalled happily, leaving Lydia pondered in her own thought.

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"This is my first time in the northern realm," Calleb spoke to Raine beside him, while Torak and Raphael were talking to the other two Alphas before they crossed the sea to reach the sacred place, where Serefina told them that Kace was there.

In the other hand, Hope didn't really hear what Calleb said as her eyes fixed on a strange creature near them.

That creature looked like horse in the color of white with fat yellow stripes on its stomach.

"Torak bought two sh.i.p.s for us." Serefina approached them, it looked like she had lost another argument to Torak.

The witch hated having to come back to this place and hated it even more when they had to bring so many people that attracted the other creatures' attention.

Torak would say it was for their own safety, because rather than to sneak around inside this foreign land and took a detour, it would save them more time to just go all out and ended this journey as soon as possible.

Raine laughed upon hearing that and rewarded a glare from Serefina. Recently the witch was a little bit cranky.

Chapter 685 - ARRIVED

"We are almost there." Tordoff approached Lilac, who was walking alone while touching every leaves that she could reach.

"Hm," Lilac hummed. "I can feel that. A big city with enormous gates surrounded the place." She could feel it beneath her barefoot.

Tordoff sometime forgot that Lilac has this ability. "Right. This is the second largest city in this realm. Though, the castle was not as big as the other one, but it is still a decent place for a King to reside."

Lilac glanced toward Jedrek's direction.

"Really decent place," Lilac said as they stepped out of the dense forest, which had canopied them for days.

The sun shone brightly and basked on Lilac's body, put her under the spotlight for every eyes to see her beauty. Captivated every soul with her charm.

And Jedrek was not an exception.

He knew Lilac was a rare beauty, but he had never seen her in this way. She looked majestic with the way she carried herself.

She was fierce like a fireball, yet at the same time gentle as a flower. Jedrek realized this from the first time he saw her, accepted the perception during the one year he put her into a deep sleep and the understanding deepened throughout their six days journey to the southern gates.

Meanwhile the certain guardian angel was oblivious with the way her mate saw her now. In her eyes, Jedrek didn't treat her any different. They were barely talking, but she had to admit the tension between them was not as thick as their first meeting.

It seemed they had come into a mutual understanding that they needed each other to win the war against the devil and there was no time to waste on trivial arguments or denial upon the bond between them.

Lilac watched the city below the hill, where she was standing now. A crowded city that was protected by majestic wall that looked like it could touch the sky. This was a strong fortress, which could protect the people inside from attacks from outside.

But, she was sure, this stronghold wouldn't stand against the force that would happen when the war broke out.

"Beautiful isn't it?" Tordoff said softly, yet his eyes were on Lilac instead of the beautiful city under the hill.

"Yes," Lilac agreed. She watched the city shimmered in the sunlight.

Tordoff stared at Lilac when the guardian angel didn't even realize the look that the general gave to her. However, there was one person who was aware with that.

"Tordoff," Jedrek called his general and snapped him back to reality. "I want you to go ahead and announce our arrival."

Tordoff must obey that order. "Yes, your grace," he said and took last glance at Lilac before he departed. After Tordoff shifted into his beast and went ahead of them. Jedrek also continued to march toward the city.

The Alpha King didn't need to inform Lilac about this, but he knew she was following the group, walking as far as possible from him.

Although Jedrek initially had a lot of things to talk to her, but he found himself couldn't utter a word to ask her anything.

He didn't want her, but at the same time, she was all he needed.

And he knew, things would go even worse starting from now.

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"The two gates to Tartarus have been opened, the Apricity River froze for the second time and all the guardian angels are here." Calleb listed all the things that had happened. "Torak is the most wanted person in the fulbright city and now the castle had been destroyed?" Calleb shook his head dramatically. "I don't believe this. Could things be any worse than this?"

However, before someone answered that, the Gamma knew; things would only get worse than this.

Calleb kept babbling as they walked through what must have been a village at some point, but now was only rubbles and ruins. It seemed the witches and the vampires where indeed came to this place and destroyed it when they realized the centaurs and the villagers had fled.

Now, all the lycanthropes and werewolves scattered around the area, looking for something that they could use as a clue to find where the centaurs were headed.

But, if the creatures who responsible for this mess were not able to find anything, how they could find something?

They people who resided there had been long gone, including their scent.

"Should we make a tent, Alpha?" Alpha Romulus asked Torak. The sun was almost set and they should call it a day.

Torak looked around and decided they would be safe enough to make a camp here. "We will rest here."

"Raine, I need you to come with me." Serefina approached Raine and Torak.

"Where will you take her?" Torak asked while narrowing his eyes.

Serefina rolled her eyes dramatically upon seeing Torak's protectiveness, she still had not yet gotten used with the way he treated Raine, despite knowing they were surrounded by his own people and Raine was not a scaredy cat like she was a year ago.

"There," Serefina said as she pointed her finger toward the village square not too far from them.

At the village square, there was a big podium made of white stone, which had cracked and split in half.

"What are you going to do there?" Torak could see there were still traces of blood stuck to the white stone.

"I want to see if she is able to use her power. The war is on our doorstep and she needs to grasp on it quickly," Serefina said.

Raine knew what Serefina said was right, so she tried to comfort her overprotective mate. "It's okay, I will come back right away. You can make a tent for us while waiting for me," Raine said sweetly as she tiptoed and kissed Torak's chin.

Torak was unsure about leaving Raine with Serefina. "I will go with you." He wrapped his hand around Raine's waist as he walked her toward the ruined podium.

Chapter 686 - FIREFLIES

"Sure." Serefina shrugged her shoulder nonchalantly. "Do you think I will bite her?" she asked sarcastically and she followed behind Torak and Raine toward the podium.

"You just want to upset her, right?" Raine elbowed Torak.

"No, I want to be with you," Torak answered her with straight face, he didn't lie when he said he wanted to be with her. Well, getting on Serefina's nerve sounded nice too.

Raine didn't argue with Torak about that.

The three of them walked toward the white podium and stopped under its stairs. From there, they could see what the function of this place was before it was destroyed.

"They used this place to burn dead bodies." Torak walked up the stairs while holding Raine's hand, followed by Serefina, who was observing their surroundings.

"Yes, they were. Among the dead bodies that were burned were the dead bodies of victims of your brother's brutality," Serefina informed them. She heard this from Lydia. Her witch friend told her everything she knew before she sent her away to follow the centaurs.

"Kace slaughtered people?" Torak raised his eyebrows questioningly toward Serefina.

More or less, though Kace would never admit it, but Torak knew how reluctant his younger brother was to end someone's life. Kace and Jedrek had a great control over their beast, but in different aspects.

"I think he was forced to do so since his mate was in great danger at that time," Serefina said.

"Understandable," Torak spoke impassively. He had no empathy for the decisions and actions Kace had taken, because he would have done the same if he was him.

"Come here, Raine," Serefina called for Raine as she crouched down on one side of the crack that had split the podium in half. "I want you to feel this."

Serefina was putting her hands on the dirt of the podium floor and beckoned Raine to do the same thing. Raine followed Serefina's instruction and did the same thing while Torak was kneeling beside her.

"Concentrate," Serefina instructed and put her palm on top of Raine's hand. "Concentrate with what you want to see."

There was a small frown between Raine's eyebrows. How she knew what she wanted to see? She didn't even know what she supposed to see...

In spite of that, Raine closed her eyes, trying to concentrate. She tried to tap on her magic, or whatever it was, since she was not sure she could control this. Most of the time, her ability would come and go without her consent.

Raine tried to concentrate to the wind that blew her hair, or the sound of the cricket around her, or Serefina's warm palms that touched her, yet nothing happened.

The guardian angel took in a deep breath, she tried to focus on the darkness that enveloped her senses.

A minute...

Two minutes...

"How is it? Do you see something?" Serefina asked, staring at her expectantly. However, the moment Raine opened her eyes, she knew the answer right away.

"No," Raine said softly. She stared at the dirt beneath her palms with her brows furrowed deeply.

"Or, do you feel something?" Serefina pressed. She wanted her to make some progress. They didn't have time to be wasted.

"No..." Raine's voice was barely a whisper. "I don't."

Serefina clicked her tongue. There was something wrong. She must have missed something... why Raine's progress was very slow compared to Hope?

After all, Serefina had spent more time with Raine than Hope, since Kace had taken her away to God knows where.

Raine could feel Serefina's disappointment. She disappointed to herself too, if she had to be honest. But, then she felt the spark on top of her head and knew it was Torak, who caressed her head.

"It's okay, you can try later." Torak helped Raine to stand up and wiped the dirt from her hands.

"Right!" Serefina snapped exasperatedly. "She can try later and later and later! Let's see how many 'later' that she has before something really terrible happened!"

"We just arrived! All of us are tired." Torak snapped back at the witch. "She has tried her best and if she has not lived up to your expectations it doesn't mean he is not progressing."

The witch seethed, but didn't say anything when she stomped her feet angrily, walking down the podium and stormed toward camp site to make her own tent with only one swift movement, so the moment she arrived her tent was ready.

Raine watched in amazement. How she hoped she had that kind of magic.

"Let's go back, you must be tired." Torak helped Raine to step down the stairs of the podium.

"You shouldn't defend me in front of her..." Raine mumbled, but Torak could hear her anyway. "What she said is true."

Only if Raine could tap on her power... maybe... just maybe... things would go different with Sunny or... Aeon...

The death of the shadow warrior was still fresh in her memory and sometime Raine would find herself crying in the middle of the night with Torak beside her, calmed her down.

Torak didn't say anything, but Raine knew he was aware about what she felt...

"I need you to be strong," Torak started as he tucked strands of Raine's hair behind her ears. "But, you will not make any progress when you feel depressed or desperate to make any good result. That's not how it works."

Raine lowered her head, she didn't know what to say, but from the corner of her eyes, she saw something beautiful.

Flickering in the dark night...

A firefly.

=====

Hope saw them again. The fireflies that flew freely in this place. They just arrived in Uzu mountain now and not like when the last time they were here, there was no barrier around this area anymore.

It seemed what Lydia said was true, the devil and her minions had gone from this place.

"What are you staring at?" Bree tugged Hope's hand, staring at her curiously.

"Fireflies," Hope answered softly.

But, little Bree didn't see any fireflies around them...

Chapter 687 - I WANT TO GO THERE

"What happened to you?" Jedrek came into Killian's room. He had wanted to visit this mind reader ever since Tordoff picked him up from the other realm.

His last encounter with Kace seemed had exhausted his energy until he found it very difficult to move. Killian was barely alive when Kace left him alone, though Jedrek's younger brother didn't finish him off, but it was still hard for him to recover from the blow, since he was not a shape shifter, which had a remarkable healing ability.

"Kace found out that it was me who followed him, somehow he knew that I am a mind reader. So, he had avoided to think about his mate and didn't come near her even once," Killian answered his King. He was sitting on the edge of his bed. The bandages had removed and left ugly scars around his chest.

"He found out you are a mind reader?" Jedrek raised his brows questioningly.

"Somehow he knows," Killian replied.

Jedrek leaned his body against the table. He was in deep thought. Regarding this matter, apparently he had someone he was suspicious of. It wasn't hard to point out who was the suspect.

"Stay here. Eaton's room will be next to yours." Jedrek had another problem to be handled, thus he needed to gather all of his generals.

"Why his room had to be next to mine? Do you know who told him about me?" Killian protested under his breath. If his power had recovered, he would like to read what was inside his King's mind. It seemed a little bit messy in there... "Your grace?"

"I have my own suspect," Jedrek said, but he didn't elaborate further about this and walked out of the room after saying, "because all the other rooms have been occupied."

And the door was closed.

"That was a terrible lie," Killian grumbled as he lay on the bed. "There are around four hundreds room in this castle, how come all the rooms have been occupied?"

=====

Jedrek stopped in the hallway as the night sky captivated his interest, the pale crescent moon shone like a silvery claw in the night sky, blanketed with stars that stretched to infinity.

And for the first time in his life, he liked the serene of the night with the moonlight basking on the small garden in front of him.

However, it didn't last for long time when there was another thing that attracted his attention, the sweet scent of lilac...

Jedrek knew she was coming to this way even before he could see her figure, but he frowned when he smelled another scent that came with her. His beast growled in displeasure.

Especially when he heard she was laughing upon something that the other man was saying.

Jedrek stood there until Lilac and Tordoff approached him and their laugh died down. Lilac even frowned and looked elsewhere.

"Your Majesty," Tordoff greeted Jedrek and lowered his head.

"Tordoff," Jedrek mentioned his name with hostility. "I am sure all the generals have gathered inside the meeting room."

"I am on my way there, your grace," Tordoff said before he nodded to Lilac and walked ahead.

Lilac nodded at him politely as well and turned around, was about to walk back down the path she had walked earlier.

"I thought you will go this way." Those words left Jedrek's lips even before he considered to say it.

Lilac stopped and stared at him. "I was, but because that is the path that you will walk, I will not go there."

Lilac's voice rang in this empty hallway, but all Jedrek could hear was her strong rejection.

"Walk with me," he said curtly, didn't leave any room for negotiation.

=====

"Can we go to the village?" Hope asked all of sudden when they were sitting on the velvety grass, under the crescent moon. Tomorrow they would start to go to the cave where those poor souls and the priestess rested.

"Which village?" Kace asked, but his eyes fixed on the strands of Bree's hair between his fingers, the little girl was sleeping on his laps when she was tired of playing with her little cat.

"The village where the priestess lived before," Hope said in low voice. She knew it sounded weird, but somehow she had an urgency to visit that place. She didn't know why she had this feeling.

Kace raised his head and furrowed his brows. "Why?"

This was one question that Hope couldn't answer either. "I don't know..." Hope lowered her head. "I only want to visit that village."

Hope watched the flickered of the fireflies around her feet and was confused; why no one could see it? Apparently Kace also couldn't see this little things, just like how no one could see the spirit of the priestess.

Maybe what Ethan said was right after all; those flickering things were indeed the spirit. The dead spirit.

"I don't think we will go there Hope..." Kace stretched out his arm and pushed her head gently, so she could rest on his shoulder.

Hope poked Bree's soft cheeks, as she was in deep thought.

She wanted to go to the village.

"I want to go there," she said softly.

=====

"Do you say something?" Raine tilted her head toward Torak, staring at him with her big eyes while munching on her dinner, a roasted sausage.

"Hm?" Torak looked at Raine and shook his head. "No, I didn't say anything."

"Really?" Raine frowned.

"What happened?" Torak leaned over, concerned about what Raine heard.

Yet, Raine shook her head. She took another bite and contemplated. "Maybe I heard what you were thinking through the mind link?" she said with uncertainty.

"What did you hear?" Torak asked.

"I don't know... it was like a whisper..." Raine frowned.

"And what this whisper said?" Torak pressed this issue. They were in foreign land something strange could happen and he didn't want Raine was implicated by something bad.

"I want to go there," Raine repeated what she heard.

Chapter 688 - THE SAME AFFECTION

The night wind caressed her skin, but the bonfire in front of Raine managed to keep her warm, especially with Torak beside her.

"I want to go there?" Torak frowned, "where to?"

Raine crept closer and Torak put his arm around his shoulder to make his mate feel safe. They were surrounded by his people and Serefina was there too, so there was nothing to worry about, yet Torak still felt protective over her.

They had left the village three days ago and now Serefina led them to mountain Uzu. The witch said, it was the place where she met with Kace in this realm.

In spite of the fact, she couldn't guarantee Kace would go to the place where he almost lost his mate, but it was better than they had to roam around in this foreign land and not knowing where to go.

"I don't know, I have been hearing those words since we left the village... like a whisper... like someone was talking to the wind... like she was talking to me..." Raine lost in her own thought, her eyes enshrouded by curiosity.

"Raine." Torak called out her name before Raine's mind could stray further. "What is it? What are you thinking?" concern was apparent in the lycan's eyes upon seeing her.

"Ah?" Raine blinked her eyes and shook her head groggily. "No, I don't think about anything. Just..."

It needed four days to reach Uzu mountain from the village, so they assumed tomorrow they would reach the place and if they still couldn't find Kace, they needed another plan.

"Just?" Torak pressed.

"I just felt like... something urges me to go..." Raine tilted her head and found Torak's expression, in an instant she knew that she had made her mate worried. "It could mean that we are heading to the right direction, right?" she stretched her hand and caressed Torak's face, soothing her mate with her touch.

Torak leaned over to her touch, yet he mind- linked Calleb. [Tell Serefina to meet me.]

=====

"What happened to the castle?" Lyrus inquired about the recent event. The Beta was completely surprised when he learned the castle was no more and all the citizens had moved to the southern region.

"What happened with you when I told you to return right away?" Jedrek asked in cold tone that could make Lyrus grimaced, forgetting his initial shock.

When his mission to come to Torak's territory had done, Lyrus should comeback immediately and gave his report to Jedrek, yet the Beta didn't return and it was only his men, who reported to him about what had happened.

"My apologize, your Majesty." Lyrus lowered his head, knowing his mistake. "However, I am back with important news for you to know."

Lyrus went straight to Jedrek's chamber once he arrived in this castle, ignoring the warning that the other generals gave to him about their King didn't want to be disturbed at the moment.

However, here Lyrus was, standing under the furious glare of his King.

"You have to wish this is important enough for me to consider not punishing you." Jedrek sat down on his chair while his Beta was still afraid to raise his head.

Jedrek was rarely having an outburst when he was angry, but the air around him would change, the atmosphere became thick and his dominance aura was suffocating. Moreover, to the people who could sense it through the mind- link.

Lyrus gritted his teeth when he raised his head to speak. "Torak has a mate," The Beta said it with knitted brows. "I know that this sounds hard to believe, but I watched the way he saw the girl... it was different and the girl is the guardian angel."

The Beta kept explaining about how he could come to this conclusion. In his mind the Donovans were the cursed Lycanthropes who wouldn't get their own mate, punished by the moon goddess herself because of the abomination that they had committed.

But, in the end, Lyrus realized one thing; Jedrek didn't give the respond that he expected. The Alpha King was sitting there calmly, as if he was waiting for Lyrus to finish his nonsensical prattle.

"You don't believe me," Lyrus concluded. However, his accusation didn't seem right, thus he changed it. "You had known about this. You know that Torak had a mate."

"I know." Jedrek responded.

"The guardian angel is his mate?" Lyrus frowned. "How about the curse? How could the guardian angel be his mate?"

There was silent that fell inside that chamber when Jedrek didn't explain about the curse that was no longer valid for them, but somehow, Lyrus managed to put the pieces together.

There would be three guardian angels. There were three Donovans. The curses. The mates.

And also the way Jedrek insisted to kill the guardian angel, yet he kept the guardian angel, who came straight to his door. He was keeping her safe. Even after Tordoff's attempt to bring the guardian angel away, Jedrek forgave him. Both of them.

Moreover, he knew Maximus was away to look for Kace, but it was not only to catch him, but also the guardian angel, who was with the younger Donovan. Why Kace cared about the guardian angel?

Lyrus was not aware about this before, but when he thought about this again, though it was slightly different from the way Torak displayed his affection toward his guardian angel, but it seemed Lyrus could see the way Jedrek was staring at Lilac, those eyes filled with the complexity, yet the same affection.

"Is that possible?" Lyrus's eyes widened with surprised. No, he was flabbergasted with this revelation. "The guardian angels are the Donovans' mates? The curse had been lifted?"

Jedrek's silence confirmed Lyrus's statement. However, it was still hard to believe.

"Is that true?" The Beta still needed for his Alpha to say it.

However, instead of answering him, Jedrek asked another question. "What else the information that you got? Where is Torak now?"

"Torak is with Serefina to find Kace in the northern coven," Lyrus answered.

Chapter 689 - THIS TOO SHALL PASS

"Torak is with Serefina to find Kace in the northern coven," Lyrus answered. He wanted to confirm his statement, but just by looking at Jedrek's expression he could tell, that this King didn't want to answer that question.

However, it might sounded bizarre, yet Jedrek's silence confirmed what Lyrus thought was absolutely impossible.

Meanwhile, Jedrek was not interested in anything when he heard her name...

Serefina...

The witch...

How long when the last time Jedrek heard someone mentioned her name? Was it years? Centuries?

All the memories flooded back in his mind and it needed more than a strong will to hold them back, kept them in place, which was on the back of his mind. The dark place where he had sworn, he would never touch it ever again.

Yet, here he was, holding onto his last fade to appear nonchalant upon the mention of her name.

Serefina...

Her name echoed in Jedrek's head again when he listened, half- heartedly, to the information that Lyrus tried to tell him.

There was only one thing that shook his entire being, which was the fact that he would meet her again.

"...for now, Alpha Torak and his people are in the northern coven, but the last information that I had, was them crossed the sea to the sacred place, which is in different island." Lyrus ended his long monologue and watched Jedrek's expression.

And this was the first time Jedrek looked like this...

"Your Majesty, are you okay?" Lyrus asked with concern laced in his voice. "Do you need something?" The Beta walked over to approach Jedrek, but one look from him, stopped Lyrus in his track.

"Yes," Jedrek answered curtly.

"Please, what is it your grace?" Lyrus knitted his brows, he was at lost when he watched the apparent pain crossed Jedrek's expression.

"I want you to leave," Jedrek said through his gritted teeth.

Unfortunately, Lyrus didn't catch the urgency behind Jedrek's words when he did not immediately do what Jedrek had said.

"LEAVE!" Jedrek roared and this snapped Lyrus back to his senses as he nodded his head and walked out of the room right away, leaving the furious King alone.

Jedrek grabbed his crystal glass and crushed it into pieces. The pain from the sharp shard that pierced his palm, comforted him to stay sane.

He knew Serefina would come along with his two brothers and their guardian angels. He could read what this witch was up to. Went missing for centuries only to return to rally them to another war with the devils.

"What are you doing... Serefina?" Her name fell from his lips and he craved more for her presence.

Jedrek felt that he needed the drink that Maximus had been giving him, a drink he had not consumed for a long time, to numb the dull ache that seemed so hard to get rid of, no matter how hard he tried.

When Jedrek was struggling with his own feeling, he heard someone opened the door.

"SCRAM!" He roared even more viciously than before.

However, she didn't slow down her step or even flinch when she was yelled at.

Jedrek realized who it was even before he raised his head to see her figure, as her strong scent, though he hated to admit it, slightly calmed his nerves.

"What do you want?" Jedrek asked through his gritted teeth.

"You are hurt," Lilac said softly. She stopped walking right in front of Jedrek, so now it was only the table between them.

Jedrek scoffed. He raised his hand, which he used to crush the glass, but the deep cut had healed, leaving only some blood on his palm.

Lilac looked at him sadly. "Not there." And she pointed her finger toward Jedrek's chest. "There."

Jedrek gripped the edge of his wooden table until it cracked under his strong hold, yet it didn't scare Lilac away. "Scram, when I am still being nice to you."

Yet, the guardian angel didn't heed his warning. She looked bitter and heartbroken.

"Do you want to hear my advice?" Lilac asked in her toneless voice, yet she didn't wait for Jedrek's consent to continue. "Don't get too deep into this pain, because there will be more pain you will feel in the future."

"I need you to leave," Jedrek said in the same toneless tone that Lilac used. He straightened his back and glared at his mate with his dark eyes.

"You may not like me as much as I do, but we are bound in this bond of soul mate and Selene won't listen to our complaints. So, why don't we get along and win this stupid war by fulfilling our respective roles?" Lilac could feel her heart was thumping badly against her chest. She tried to appear strong, but was not sure how she looked like now.

"I said, leave." Jedrek clenched his jaw tightly.

But, like before or the days before this, the guardian angel didn't listen to what he said. "Mate or not, we are not going to spend our life together."

There was a silence that fell between the two of them and Jedrek became impatient because Lilac didn't explain what she said further. "What do you mean?"

"You already know for sure that in order to win this battle you must sacrifice the Guardian Angels." When Lilac saw Jedrek was about to talk, she beat him to that. "The guardian angel went extinct in the first war, so in the second war the same thing would happen."

"No. They died because they were sapped from their energy before went to war." Jedrek rejected the idea.

"The story repeats itself. After all, the three of us should have died by now if it weren't for the second chance that was given to us." Lilac bit her lips when she looked at Jedrek sadly. "Let's carry out our role."

=====

Serefina looked up at the stary sky, staring at the moon with her lips shut tightly, but her heart howled to the goddess above.

If this had to end tragically, she hoped all this pain would one day go away.

This too shall pass, right?

Chapter 690 - THE URGENCY

"Serefina," Calleb called the witch, "Torak is looking for you." Serefina turned around and Calleb raised his brows upon seeing how pale she was. "What happened with you?"

Serefina tilted her head and stared at the Beta questioningly, yet didn't say anything.

"You look so pale, are you hungry?" Serefina was being sick was absolutely not the reason that could register into his mind, thus the only thing that he could think of was that lame words.

This time the witch glared at him. "It is because of the moonlight, you stupid pup!" Serefina snapped at him.

Being called pup again and again was truly upset the Gamma. "Watch your mouth witch! I will claw your head at the first chance I got." He snarled.

However, Serefina just rolled her eyes and didn't give him snappy answer in return like usual, the witch just walked away.

"Don't you think she is a little bit weird today?" Calleb asked Raphael who approached him. "She looks like she didn't want to be here, but lead our group to this place persistently, nonetheless."

Raphael hit the back of his head. "Mind your own business Cal. Why? Are you worried for her now?"

"Worry? To her?" Calleb shuddered. "Nice joke, Raph!" He tried to hit Raphael, but he dodged it swiftly.

=====

Serefina walked toward Torak and Raine's tent, but before she could enter, Torak had walked out of there and almost bumped onto her.

"So, you were looking for me?" Serefina crossed her arms in front of her chest, as her usual boring expression returned.

"Raine has been hearing whispers ever since we arrived at the village." Torak didn't beat around the bush when he voiced out his concern. "What do you think is that?"

The witch frowned and looked at the tent. She was sure, Raine was sleeping now, or else, Torak wouldn't be here and talk to her without his mate. This Alpha's protectiveness had reached another level ever since they were in this northern coven realm. He didn't let Raine out of his sight longer than necessary.

"What this whisper said?" Serefina asked with concern, she was sure that this area was clear from black magic or curses. However, she had to admit there were magic that she didn't know.

In this northern coven realm, where witches, fairies, vampires and other unknown creatures lived together, Serefina was not sure she could recognize all of their magic. This was one of the reasons she hated for being here.

"She couldn't catch most of the whispers, but one that was clear for her to hear was; I want to go there." Torak repeated what Raine told him.

"What is that mean?" Serefina frowned.

"Do you think I will ask you if I know?" Torak asked incredulously.

"Look." Serefina rolled her eyes dramatically. "I know most things, but not all of them." And then she added. "But, one thing for sure, she was not under any black magic or curses." She knew what concerned Torak the most.

"How can you be so sure about that?" Torak was squinted his eyes.

"I was the one who put the horn of unicorn on her. It can ward off curses and black magic." Serefina added more to her explanation exasperatedly when she watched Torak was still not convinced by her. "She is growing stronger than before, so the function of the unicorn's horn also gets stronger along with her power."

Torak stared at the tent before his eyes. "So, what do you think is that?"

"I don't know for sure, I need to talk to her." Serefina was about to enter the tent when Torak held her back.

"She just fell asleep." Torak pulled her back. "You can talk to her tomorrow." The whole journey was exhausting for his mate, after all she didn't have stamina as strong as the shifters, even though Raine didn't complain, but Torak could tell only from the look on her face.

Once again, Serefina rolled her eyes and threw her arms in the air. "Fine!?? she said, annoyed. "We will leave before the sun rise, make sure your sweet angel has enough sleep."

The witch walked away and Torak entered his tent again, but Serefina was barely taking her four steps when she heard vicious roar erupted from inside the tent, pierced the serene night.

It didn't take another second before the Alpha stormed out of the tent, shouting orders to all the lycans and werewolves around them. Put them in alert that something horrible had happened.

Among this chaotic situation, Serefina went into the tent and found no one there.

Raine had gone missing.

However, there was no trace that someone had broke into this tent or any suspicious witchcraft that she could sense, thus there was only one explanation.

"This girl should learn to control her power right away." Serefina clicked her tongue, peevishly.

=====

Hope woke up with a start. Her black eyes turned blurry, as if she was staring at unfocused object in front of her.

"Hope? What happened?" Kace sat down immediately when he felt Hope's body was trembling and she was slightly hyperventilating. "Bad dream?"

Kace helped Hope to sit down and gave her a glass of water, which she drank half of it.

"Kace, I need to go," Hope mumbled as she jumped to her feet and ran out of the tent, Kace, who was about to grab her wrist, couldn't reach her in time.

"Hope!" Kace called to his mate and managed to grab her wrist outside of the tent, there were a few centaurs and hunters, who were on the night duty, watching them curiously. "Where do you want to go in the middle of the night?!"

"There is someone there." Hope pointed at the direction where the fireflies flocked together above the shadow of the trees.

"There is no one there!" Kace didn't let go of her, though Hope tried very hard to free herself.

Hope couldn't explain it, but she felt this urgency to go and find out who was there.