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Venus POV

Dread knotted in my belly. That was the same boat I saw tied at the far end of the deck. Was it Vicky's? When I stared at Gaia to understand the situation, I realized she was shouting Vicky's name. It seemed like Vicky ran away in the boat, not liking that I was marrying Aaron and she must have got into an accident somehow. Breath punched out of my lungs.

"Vicky! Vicky!" She ran across the deck, shouting. "Someone, save her!" She looked so frantic as she rushed towards the end of the deck, picking up her gown. "Please, someone get her!" she sounded panicky.

I could see several guests standing over there, murmuring about the accident. My father also hurried there muttering something about dramas in his life.

Aaron rushed past me and went to the deck. I had never felt his emotions before, but now through the bond I could feel his panic. He parted the guests and reached in the front. "Fuck!" he rasped and without a word, he jumped in the water.

"Aaron!" Alpha Martin shouted to stop him, but

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Aaron was now swimming rapidly towards the burning boat. I went there along with Luna Marie and watched him swimming like a maniac. Other warriors followed. When he reached the boat, he dove under the water to find her. My heart pounded wildly in my chest as I gripped the rail of the deck. A few moments later, he emerged above the surface of the water, and I took a deep breath in, my nerves calming. Vicky was unconscious. With her tucked under one hand, he swam away from the boat as fast as he could.

The guests talked about the incident and I knew that this was again going to blow up in another scandal. But this time, the scandal was going to be worse than what it was during my engagement. Once again, Vicky stole the spotlight and made sure my special days became all about her. But this was a boat accident. I couldn't even say anything.

"What was the necessity of taking that boat?" my father hissed at Gaia, who was howling. "Can't you bloody control your daughter?"

Gaia cried louder. "Patrick, how can you be so cold-hearted? Vicky is suffering, and this is what you have to say?"

My father gritted his teeth. He lowered his voice and talked to Alpha. The Alpha nodded once and directed his warriors to take Vicky to the hospital. Luna Marie took my hand and got me back to the

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room. "I am so sorry about Aaron, Venus. But I suggest you stay here. The function isn't over yet."

I didn't know what to say. Aaron and Vicky were mates, and so maybe Vicky took this extreme step. But I couldn't understand one thing—how did the boat burst into flames, and how was Vicky overthrown unconscious overboard from the boat? She should have jumped out of it, but how the hell did she become unconscious?

I took a ragged breath in as guests came to me with pity in their eyes. They congratulated me nevertheless. Some said that they were sorry about Vicky and hoped that she recovered fast, while some just looked at me like I was in for the worst nightmares. Well, they weren't wrong. My heart wept when I realized Aaron hadn't returned. Had he gone with Vicky, leaving me alone at our wedding?

"Hey sister-in-law?" Eric came to me with a grin.

"Eric!" I breathed.

"The music has started and people are waiting for you to dance."

I chuckled sadly. "Should I dance without my groom?" I had imagined Aaron to be my husband, picturing our wedding taking place in the pack's temple surrounded by the pack members, and a dreamy honeymoon to follow. But though the

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Moon Goddess gave me Aaron, his soul belonged to Vicky.

Luna Marie, who was standing beside me, sensed my hesitation and said, "You can dance with Eric."

I lowered my head, feeling dejected. Luna Marie shifted on her feet. "I don't know why can't Aaron be more mindful? He knows that the press is here and he couldn't make a rational decision!"

"It's fine," I muttered. "After all, they are mates."

"Then it's high time he rejects her!" Luna Marie snapped.

I jerked my head back, but couldn't stop my lips from curling up. She really didn't like Vicky, and only tolerated her because of my father. She looked at me and wrapped her hands around my forearms. "Venus, I am so happy that you married Aaron instead of Vicky. She doesn't deserve him and he doesn't deserve you. But now you are Venus Wolfe and belong to our family."

I swallowed my emotions down my throat. I had officially become Venus Wolfe. The impact of her words brought a shudder to my body.

"Come on, Venus," Eric encouraged me, extending his hand. "Let's dance."

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I took his hand reluctantly, and he pulled me to the dance floor. However, just as he was about to put his hand on my hips, I heard a low, feral growl from behind. "Remove your hands from my bride."

I gasped as Eric looked at him over his shoulder. "So you've finally arrived?" he scoffed.

Aaron took my hand from his hand and pulled me closer against his chest. His one hand rested on the small of my back, and the other entwined with mine. I leaned into him as my eyes became half-closed, his scent washing all over me. As romantic music flowed, he led me. Our feet glided effortlessly across the floor, our movements fluid, in sync as if the world faded away, and only we remained connected by the music. Our gazes were locked as he looked intensely at me.

"Where is Vicky?" I asked. His hand moved lower and my heartbeat increased. Heat pooled in my belly.

"On the way to the hospital," he replied. I lowered my gaze, feeling hurt by his initial reaction. "Venus, I am sorry for leaving you like this, but I guess it is going to take time for me to stop caring about Vicky. But I will try harder to be the man you want me to be."

His words felt like an icy wave crashing through my body, snuffing every beautiful emotion. "It's fine,

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Aaron," I replied. "I would feel the same for my mate."

"Your mate?" he said sharply.

I blinked at him. "Yes, I mean when I find my mate, I might experience the same emotions as you are feeling for Vicky." It was a different thing that I didn't want to find my mate. I wanted to stay with Aaron forever.

Aaron's body tensed against me, and he pulled me closer to him. He continued to dance with me and I noticed others had joined. Several minutes later, he said, "What are you going to do if you find your mate?"

My eyes rounded at the corner because I wasn't prepared for this question. "I guess I'll go to him?"

His jaw clenched and his fingers dug into my skin almost painfully. "I see," he said in a clipped voice. "But you can't just go to him," he hissed. "Especially if I mark you."

Author's note: Do you think Venus should allow him to mark her yet?

