

## CHAPTER 70

70 Ava: Sister Miriam (II) Trepidation and anxiety flow in equal measure through my veins as my mother leans forward, tired of waiting for a clear answer. “Can you sense if Ava is pregnant, Sister Miriam?” o The woman’s eyes glaze, her gaze becoming distant as if peering into another realm. Her voice deepens, taking on a strong cadence that seems to vibrate the very air around us. “An ancient power lies dormant, awaiting the weakest to awaken it. Her womb shall house the strongest, who will inherit the legacy of the Lycans.” And just like that, she’s back, the energy dispersed in mere seconds. She blinks at me, then toward my mother. “It is uncertain,” she answers, still with her eerie smile. “I shall come again before the ceremony. Alpha Renard has chosen well.” “Ah, yes...” My mom’s pathetic agreement only cements her disdain toward me. “Thank you for coming, Sister Miriam.” “What are friends for, Grace?” 12:49 O 1/8 70 Ays Ster Miriam (1) Sister Miriam’s gaze meets mine once again. There’s a glint in her eyes that makes me nervous. “If you ever need me, child,” she says, her voice low and almost melodic, “simply light a candle and call my name. I’ll find you.” I watch Sister Miriam leave, her words lingering in the air like an ominous mist. As the door closes behind her, my mother lets out a shudder, her face twisted. She reaches for a small travel bottle of hand sanitizer on the dresser and rubs the gel over her palms, making sure no amount of skin is untouched, as if trying to scrub away an invisible stain. “Who is she?” I ask, unable to contain my curiosity despite the strange encounter. My mother’s eyes narrow as she turns to face me. “Stop being so nosy, Ava,” she snaps, her voice laced with irritation. “That’s none of your concern.” She looks over my body in disgust. “It’s unfortunate that we still don’t know if you’re pregnant, but I guess there’s little we can do except wait.” I watch my mother closely as she continues fussing with my hair, her movements stiff and agitated. The C 70 Ava: Sister Miriam (II) encounter with Sister Miriam has left her visibly unsettled, a rare crack in her usually composed demeanor. “Is she some sort of prophet?” I ask, unable to contain my curiosity any longer. Mom’s hands freeze mid-motion, her fingers tangled in my hair. She meets my gaze in the mirror, her eyes narrowing. “I told you, it’s none of your concern,” she snaps, her voice laced with irritation. “Don’t ask about things that don’t involve you.” I flinch at her sharp tone, but a part of me refuses to back down. “But she was saying such odd things.” I just want to make sure Mom isn’t going to go telling Alpha Renard what was said here. I’m hoping Mom’s thinking of Phoenix more than she’s thinking of her own status in the pack. If Alpha Renard hears something like that, it doesn’t matter what plan Phoenix has in mind—he’ll keep trying to get me back. Mom’s grip on my hair tightens, and I wince as she tugs at a lock with more force than necessary. “Enough, Ava. You’re not to speak of this again, do you understand?” Her voice is low and threatening, a 12:49 3/8 70 Ava: Sister Miriam (1) warning I’ve heard countless times before. It’s impossible to nod, so I choke out a soft, “Yes,” hoping I look properly cowed. \*\*\* My mind races with a thousand thoughts and a thousand more worries as I pace back and forth in the cramped space of my bedroom, having skipped dinner with the family. Seeing their faces would make it impossible to choke down any food, wondering if at any moment they’d start talking about Sister Miriam’s words. Her cryptic words echo in my head like a haunting melody. How did she know about the power I can’t access? And are her words a vision of the future, or just some cryptic mumbo-jumbo she spewed on the spot? The sound of the door opening interrupts my circular thoughts and I whirl around to see Phoenix entering the room. His expression is grim, his brow furrowed with concern. He tosses a burner phone onto my bed, the device bouncing slightly on the mattress. Excitement wars with caution. “What’s going on?” I 4/8 70 Ava Sister Miriam (II) ask, heart pounding. Phoenix grimaces, running a hand through his tousled hair. “Mom and Dad are freaking out about what Sister Miriam said,” he explains, his grim tone ringing warning bells in my head. My stomach twists, and I want to vomit all the food I’ve eaten from past to future. “Are they going to tell Alpha Renard?” Phoenix shakes his head. “No, they won’t,” he assures me, but his tone is laced with uncertainty. “Look, Ava, while Mom and Dad are loyal to Alpha Renard, they never expected that you would truly be able to bear him any kids, considering that he hasn’t had any luck in so long. Even with you being an omega, Alpha Renard is

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barren.” Confusion has me frowning. “What do you mean? How do you know that?” Phoenix sighs, his shoulders sagging with the weight of some unseen burden. “Dad and Mom said that his previous kids weren’t biologically his.” That can’t be true. “How is that possible?” Phoenix shifts his weight rolling his shoulders in 12:40 5/8 70 Ava: Sister Miriam (II) discomfort. His gaze goes over my head, to my desk, then to the floor off to the side of him. “Mom was his wife’s best friend. She helped cover it up. She told Dad everything.” The implications of his words sink in a little at a time. Alpha Renard, the powerful and feared leader of our pack, has been deceived all this time, his wife bearing children that were not truly his own. They’d been his pride and joy, even if they were weak for alpha—heirs, all of them dying during what would be considered. minor skirmishes with other shifters. The revelation is almost too much to comprehend. They died because they weren’t alpha heirs at all. They were weak. Did she mate a delta? “But why would they do that?” I ask, my voice trembling with a mixture of disbelief and fear. Phoenix’s expression hardens. “Power, Ava. It’s always about power in a pack. She didn’t want to lose her position as Luna, even if it meant betraying her mate.” I sink onto the edge of my bed, my mind reeling. How many other secrets are buried beneath the surface of our pack? 12:49 8/8 70 Ava: Sister Miriam (1) Mine doesn’t seem so bad in comparison. At least no one did anything to cause it. I was just an anomaly from birth. “That’s why Mom and Dad are so worried,” he says, his voice a low snarl of frustration. “If Sister Miriam’s words are true, and you really do possess some kind of ancient power, they know Alpha Renard will stop at nothing to claim you as his own. No matter how many packs he has to war against to get you.” “So, this?” I lift the burner phone. “I take it we’re accelerating the plan?” He hesitates. “Yes.” The hesitation has my gut clenching. There’s something wrong. Something he isn’t saying. “Phoenix...” “No more questions, Ava. Just be prepared. I can’t tell Mom or Dad anything, because we need them to be able to convince Alpha Renard that our family had nothing to do with your disappearance. Tomorrow night, you leave pack lands.” Leave pack lands. 12:49 7/8 70 Ava: Sister Miriam (1) I notice that he doesn’t say anything about where I’m supposed to end up. The paranoia I’ve been honing since I ran away the night of the Lunar Gala flares urgently in the back of my head. “What’s the phone for?” “Oh,” he says, with a vague wave of his hand. “You’ll need to be able to call your alpha lover when you get there, won’t you?” Right. Because Phoenix has always been so kind and generous. “Thanks,” I say, my mouth dry with the knowledge that I’m not supposed to make it to Washington alive. “I appreciate you, big brother.” Comment 12 View All > R Post your first comment! Vote 12 1 Fandom Swipe left to continue > [www.Nove1woRm.com](#)

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