

Chapter 41 – The Mystery

"Have you ever met someone for the first time, but in your heart, you feel as if you've met them before?" — JoAnne Kenrick

Kiya

I shook Kwame's hands, smiling small as the recognition twinkled in his eyes. I sent a silent message through his eyes to not say anything before shaking his mate's hands. Her smile made her adult face much brighter and cuter, sending my heart fluttering. Lorelai is so beautiful.

I notice Darien neglected to shake Odessa's hand. Even Odessa looks uncomfortable in his presence.

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"Let us take you to your rooms," Neron announced as the pack parting to let us through. I didn't miss the stares burning through the fabric of my shirt, undoubtedly from the Alpha and Beta Female. I ignored it and watched as Valerian guided us to our rooms, passing through the foyer.

My curious eyes noticed the subtle changes to the interior. We passed by the common room, noticeably bigger with young wolves playing Resident Evil 3 on the PlayStation 4. Cooked food wafted through the

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hallways and Omegas were dusting and cleaning. I smirked as I watched them do the work they forced me to do.

Some stopped to eye us, watching as we passed by. My eyes caught the milky blue orbs of Samantha, now five years older. A twinkle of remembrance shined through her eyes, her pale skin paling impossibly further. Shooting her a knowing smirk, I paid attention back to the pathway towards our rooms on the third floor of the packhouse.

“Tonight, we are hosting a party to officially introduce your warriors to our pack,” Neron spoke to Anthony. “Your attendance would be most appreciated.”

“Ah, thank you, Neron. It would be a pleasure to meet your members in your soiree. You didn’t have to throw a party on our behalf.”

“Nonsense. It’s an occasion noted for celebration.”

I gagged. As if I want to dance and mingle with this godforsaken pack. I’ll do it for Anthony’s sake, but afterward, I’m flipping everyone the bird.

Each of us was given a room, several doors apart on either side of the corridor. I didn’t waste any time

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walking into my room and slamming the door behind me, expelling the breath I didn't know I was holding.

I couldn't believe I got out of that unscathed.

I press the back of my head against the door, my bag slumping to the ground from my shoulders. The earlier confidence I had back at the lawn vanished, anxiety bubbling up in its place. Why does this always happen to me? Why am I now feeling terrified of these monsters when I should strut through these halls with my head held high? My head in my hands, I groaned softly, my frustration lancing me through the chest and stomach.

I thought this would be easy. But I've bitten off more than I could chew. The traumatic memories cloud my vision, playing in my mind like an old movie. I see Neron's fist hurtling towards my face, I hear Raina's cackles as she pushes me down the stairs, Odessa's snarky comments while she hacks out chunks of my hair, and the echoes of the pack members' insults bombarding louder than my heartbeat.

I wanted to puke. I wanted to leave. I thought I was strong enough, but I was wrong. I was still a weak bitch underneath this muscle. Underneath this warrior is still Halima, the pitiful slave that couldn't

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defend herself. Hot tears mimicked waterfalls, falling rapidly down my bronzed cheeks as choked sobs erupted from my throat.

Worst of all, I could feel my powers beating at my defenses, demanding freedom. I grunted, fighting hard to keep them at bay. It is like pushing against a door that threatened to shatter from the sheer force of a battering ram. We were pushing for dominance over the other, wanting the ability to control this body.

One breath. Two. Three. My lungs expand and shrink with every intake of oxygen, adding strength to my side of the battle. It pushed against the unstable force that is the moon's power, keeping it tamed as it should be. After a minute, I panted heavily, my energy expanded. I was being tested, and it is not fun.

Goddess, why the hell am I so—

“Shut the fuck up!” Artemis roared in my mind. The sharp volume added with the unanticipated yell made me jump. **“You are not weak, Kiya! You never were! Don't you dare fall into that pit of misery we've spent years digging ourselves out of. We will not go back into that hellhole in the middle of this hellscape that used to be our home.”**

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I remained silent, allowing my tears to fall further.

"Get up and go to the mirror."

"What?"


"Get your ass up and go to the mirror, or I'll make you."

Not wanting my wolf to forcibly take control of my body, I trudged towards the full-length mirror that stood next to the double-doored closet. *"What do you want me to do?"*

"Look at your reflection." I did, and I could have sworn I see a reflection of Artemis' large body behind me. **"You are not weak. The person reflecting at you is not weak. She is a warrior, a fighter who has been through hell and emerged victoriously. She is a woman who fought for her life because she believed that the future is worth living for. She is a woman with an unimaginable power that no one could take from her. She is a woman that proudly shows off her scars, for they hold no power to ruin her. She is a woman who fought her way through the ranks to become one of the best Deltas Garnet Moon had ever seen."**

I listened in silence as my tears continued to fall.

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“That woman is you, Kiya. Do not ever doubt your strength. Standing here, alive, and well, is a testament that the abuse they put us through did not break your spirit. You are different now. You’re confident, an unstoppable machine. They cannot and will not hurt you anymore. We are immune to their threats because they could no longer affect us. You are powerful, and you could do anything. We’re stuck here for the next couple of months, we cannot change that. But we will not bow or look away. We will march on, look at our demons straight in the face and say, ‘You will never win over me again’.” 

“Now, wipe your tears. You shed more than enough during your lifetime. You won’t shed anymore.”

Trauma is a festering demon that liked to tear down walls if one lets it. I let the demon tear down my walls enough. I was tired of it having power over me. I cannot let years’ worth of therapy go to waste. I cannot let my parents’ words go to waste.

I will turn my pain into power. I will turn my anger to power. Use it to better me, as I’ve done back home. My progress doesn’t end because I was back in my childhood hell.

I have people who support me in this house and

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back in California. Reminding myself that I was constantly supported was a hassle because there was that deep part of me that still believed the dark whispers from my past. But I think the reminders are a good thing. They help rebuild that foundation that crumbles little by little, reinforcing the notion that I always deserve better.

I deserve better, no matter what.

I'll show them. I'll show Zircon Moon that I am strong. Better than any of them would ever be.

I will make them regret everything they've done to me. I swear it.

Neron

Onyx was restless.

He rose from his resting place, coiling, and trotting around like a mad dog. He still won't speak to me, but him pacing around in my mind is becoming increasingly bothersome.

The Garnet Moon members emit dominant power and resilience. The moment they stepped on my

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territory; I knew they did not come here to play games. They are a group on a mission, and they will see it through. Even the human among them radiated with the mightiness only a select number of humans could achieve. The preparations for tonight's party were underway, but oddly enough, I was not excited. I'm worried. Scared, even.

Why? When the Garnet Moon members walked past me to enter my home, it felt as if someone doused me with ice-cold water. The chill pierced my heart, knocking the wind out of me. I never felt so unsteady on my feet when someone brushed past me. I almost buckled over when that mass of curly hair walked near me.

I couldn't see her face. She hid it from me and refused to look me in the eye. My inner curiosity propelled me to find out more about that woman and why she had this effect on me. Her deep bronzed skin, her full lips, and corkscrew-like hair seared itself into my mind, pulsating that image of her I managed to catch for a moment.

I didn't smell a scent on her. She was a werewolf, and she should carry a scent, but why doesn't she have one?

It bothered me. *She* bothered me. She made my heart pound and my sweat glands secrete. Why did I feel

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that urge to seek the woman out? My fingers ached to run themselves through her hair, and I desired for her lips on mine. I wanted to touch her supple skin, to taste it. Goddess, how could I be wanting another woman when I have Odessa at my side?

Speaking of Odessa, she hasn't been herself. Ever since the members took themselves into their designated rooms, she has been very snappy. She snapped at several Omegas for merely standing in her way as they cleaned the hallways. Something was bothering her, and she couldn't tell me. Instead, she holed herself up in my room, refusing to talk. I noticed the same mannerisms in Raina. She became fidgety, her normal vibrant energy was non-existent.

Something was going on with the three of us, and I want to know what.

From the window in my office, I spot Valerian giving the group of warriors the tour of our land and training grounds. My eyes found the mass of curly hair obscuring the face I was desperate to see. She crossed her arms underneath her large chest, her posture strong despite her short height. Onyx battered himself against the forefront of my mind, clawing his way to usurp control of my body. His growls grew in volume and ferocity, clawing at the walls between him and what he demands to have.

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"Onyx!" I roared. "What the hell do you think you're doing?"

"Give me control, now!"

"And why the hell should I do that? You shut me out for days and you expect me to relinquish control over my body without question? Why are you like this?"

"As if you care. I see what I want, and I know what I want, and I will get it no matter what!"

1

The vagueness of his demand did nothing to calm my growing anger. Like hell I'll give him control! I don't know what the fuck he plans to do, and I was not in the mood to find out. Growls rumbled deep in my chest, pushing my wolf back to where he came from. My hands grip the arms of my chair, nails sinking deep into the wood.

Onyx and I fought. Hard. He refused to answer my demands, providing responses filled with vagueness and mystery. Does this have to do with the Garnet Moon crew? In my last act of offense, I shoved my wolf away back in his cage and doubled down on my mental walls. I still feel him clawing his way through the psychic barriers but relents after a while. 2

Throwing my head at the spine of my chair, I panted,

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feeling my energy dissipate from my pores. Fighting against your wolf was like fighting against an immovable object. Sometimes, wolves like to snatch control away from their humans, governing their bodies for their allotted time. It's done out of intense anger, sadness, or desire.

Desire fits the bill, here. The desire to get closer to the curly-haired mystery woman.

Chapter Comments

POST COMMENT

Phenyo Mashudu
oh they definitely mates



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Angie G. de Muñoz
Arty is badass biotch. I love her.
Wish I had a wolf who would s...



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