

Chapter 66 - The Avatar

“The world, even the smallest parts of it, is filled with things you don't know.” — Sherman Alexie

Kiya

The sounds of book pages turning resounded through the quiet atmosphere of the library. This book didn't have what I was looking for, so I ditched it and looked in another. I was discharged after a few days, under strict doctor's orders to take it easy. I couldn't strain myself because I was still in recovery.

Fortunately, I was clear to train the pup trainees but cannot assert much physically. It sucked. I felt like half a wolf. Weakness was something I loathe. My healing ability remained, but wolves must take time healing from poison. My friends brought me home, yet Neron was bending over backward to ensure that I wouldn't stress myself out.

It was weird of him to watch my every move. He took my recovery seriously, ensuring that I wouldn't lift a finger around him. Neron became an overbearing mother, fussing over my health. As much as I appreciated the care, I was not helpless. For example, I could walk up the stairs myself, but he was so insistent on carrying me up there.

Any excuse to get closer to me, I guess.

Shaking my thoughts free from the Alpha, I rummaged through historical records, focusing on the timeless existence of werewolves. In this sea of books, one held information on white wolves. I needed to find it. The Zircon Library was a large place in the very back of the pack house. It took a minute to find this place after such a long time.

Using the rolling ladder, I climbed to the top of several bookshelves, eyeing the myriad of titles on book spines. None catch my interest. Werewolf shifting, full moon lunacy, werewolf hierarchy, I didn't care about that.

I needed to know what I was. If white wolves were so rare, there must be other reasons besides being the embodiment of Selene. I wanted to know why I was born a white wolf. Why did Selene choose me as her avatar?

As I was about to part with my search, a particular book captured my attention. Hidden in plain sight, it was the only book without its title on its spine. I jerked the rolling ladder forward, pulling the dusty book from its confinements.

Several sneezes later, at a table, I examined the old, brown, leather-bound book. Nothing about it hinted to the subject within. It was cloaked in mystery. Despite its ancient appearance, there was a silvered lock that bound the book shut. A lock without a keyhole.

"What the hell?" I whispered, searching for a way to unlock the book. But there was none. The one book that captured my attention in the endless sea of literature is the one book I couldn't crack open. "Fuck!" Something in this book was calling to me, urging me to keep this piece of history.

Was it instinct? Was it the weird pull I have to it? Or am I going crazy? My desperation is showing. The desire to learn my identity had never been stronger, and it was affecting my focus. Slumping in my chair, I huffed, my breath flailing my curly fringe in the air.

"The journey of self-discovery is more complicated than I thought." Chuckling to myself, I continue to examine the book. I was so ensnared that my finger got caught in a sharp corner of the lock, nicking it.

"Ow! Shit!" I waved my damn finger in the air, blood dribbling fast from the tiny wound. Some crimson droplets flung from the cut, landing

on the book. One lone drop of blood landed at the sleek squared center, seeping into the metallic.

Click!

My mouth gaped open in shock. Did...did my blood just... “What kind of sorcery is this?”

The book opened with my blood. My blood was the key. Could shit get any freakier?

I cracked open the book—sputtering a little because of the ridiculous amount of dust this thing accumulated—and started flipping through the pages. Page upon page, images drawn by the delicate stroke of a brush.

I see a howling wolf. Two wolves. An infant cradled inside a blanket. Goddess Selene. Many images tell a silent, wordless story. I became engrossed, the book imprisoning my focus into the tan, wrinkling pages. The world around me faded into darkness. For that moment, it was just me and the book.

My breath hitched in my throat when I came across the first page with writing. The calligraphy penmanship was ancient, old as time itself. Small words filled the entire page. Every sword I read sent a droplet of an icy chill down my spine.

White wolves are revered in werewolf society as perfect embodiments of their matron goddess, Selene. She, who treasures her creations dearly, made one creation that would take on her roles on the very earth she and Mother Earth watch over.

The rare and sacred white wolf. The wolf blessed by beloved Selene holds power beyond imagination. They can heal, they grant protection,

grant wishes, and hold the moon mysticism within their bodies. They are the physical embodiments of the wolves' beloved goddess. It is said that those who are granted the chance to see a white wolf would forever live in prosperity and luck.

However, because the white wolf is so powerful, they are hunted by those with blackened hearts. They seek to exploit the white wolf for their selfish, sometimes deadly needs. Many white wolves in the ancient past are killed by their captors or commit suicide to escape their dreaded fates. Selene, hurt by her treasures who stray on the path of evil, vowed to only bless the world with one white wolf every century for their protection.

No one shall know who the white wolf is until they shift after puberty. Even then, they do not hold the immense power history has reverend them to. Only when they awaken, could they channel the true might of the Moon Goddess.

The white wolf is Selene's avatar, her representative and most sacred child. How Selene chooses her successor is and would remain a mystery.

The contents of this book are meant to be protected from the evil eye of those filled with greed. Only the next century's avatar, whoever he or she may be, could unlock the sacred contents of this book.

An engulfing sensation of protectiveness lingered the longer I held the book. This book wasn't meant for foreign eyes except my own. As shocked as I was, I wasn't surprised at why my blood could open it. It was done by ancient magic. Sighing, I closed the book, locking it in place.

Could I trust anyone with its contents? Surely, I could tell my friends, right? They always treated me like an equal. They're the only ones who I'd allow to see this book. No one else.

My mind suddenly went to Neron and the words he said when I was unconscious. Does he care that I was a white wolf? His father insisted on him mating with me to gain power. What happens when a wolf mates with a white wolf? Or an avatar in general? How many of us were out there?

There was Phoebe, but that was it, as far as I knew.

I left the library, hugging the book to my chest. The book was about as large as a school textbook, but the weight of the material didn't compare to the amount of power inside.

'I need to hide this in my room' I thought to myself, beginning my journey back into my room. This large pack house doesn't compare to the house back home, but I digress.

However, near the stairs, the spicy scent of cardamom and cinnamon flowed in my nose. It didn't bring pleasure, it brought pain. The scent alone awoken the deepest and darkest of the horrific memories of my past. Phantom bites on my arm, fists to my stomach and chest, and the blows to my head, I felt them all. One look from this monster and I reverted into the scared child on her first day in the dungeons.

Those damn eyes. The only shade of blue that brought terror in my heart, plucking each heartstring from their bicuspid valve.

I'm staring at the large, bulky, yet aging body of Jonathan Prince, Neron's father, my former Alpha. The ringleader of my childhood trauma.

I wanted nothing more but to smack the deplorable smile off his face.

“I see you found the Legend of the White Wolf book.” His voice was like smooth velvet to the ears of admirers, but to me, they grated against my eardrums. It bound a headache to my skull. “I’m guessing you’ve opened it?”

I said nothing. I hugged it tighter to me, compressing my ribcage. It’ll leave a mark, but I didn’t care.

Fear was an avid emotion. It strikes the soul when it was least expected, but its speed consumes it whole. It could turn the bravest of all souls into a shriveling mess. Fear had incredible longevity; it could last more than a human’s lifespan. Jonathan’s presence was maddening and overbearing. The fear that erupts within me threatens to choke me out and leave me for dead.

With every step he took forward, I retreated backward.

“I won’t hurt you, Kiya.”

“I-I don’t believe you.” My voice came out weaker than expected. A remnant of my old identity weaved itself into my voice, croaking out into the world it left years ago. Hatred billowed in my mind in a haze of red smoke. “Why should I believe anything you say?”

Jonathan shrugged. “Eyes filled with strength, yet so much fear. You can’t fear me after all these years, huh? You’re a renowned Delta, now.”

“It doesn’t erase the fact that you ruined my childhood over a false accusation!” I yelled back, hot tears burning my eyes like a cinder. “I have every reason to be wary of you!”

He looked bored but added an eyeroll to punch me in the gut. “I regret hurting you, Kiya. You won’t believe me, but that’s your prerogative. There was no use living in the past. I had to let my wife and child go. And the heaviness of hurting you. Now, I need to focus on the future, and you have to as well.”

I shouldn't have beat the crap out of my father that night at dinner. Instead, that beating should be reserved for Jonathan Prince. He was not taking responsibility for what he did to me. At least Neron had the decency to admit he fucked up.

"Now, onto the book." He pointed to it. "The last people to have that book were the Prince family ancestors. My father's father always considered a book an antique yet stressed that if our family was blessed to see the next avatar, the book should be given to them. It remained in that same spot in our library for many years."

One step forward. Two steps back. The pattern of my fear and his persistence. It didn't stop until my back hit the wall, and Jonathan's arms caged around me. No matter where I go, or how I've changed, one thing is for certain.

Jonathan Prince still had power over me. He could strike me down with a single swipe of his hand, as he had done countless times to my young, battered body.

"You will mate with my son, Kiya. You'll share your power with Neron and make him a formidable, unstoppable Alpha. Our family legacy would have prosperity for generations to come, and it is only if you get out of your childish ways and complete your destiny."

"With all due respect, Jonathan Prince, fuck you." I spat. "You don't have the right to tell me what to do with my body or my fate. I don't answer to you and you won't force something that'll never happen. My 'childish ways' result from your abuse! Or did you not forget your brutality when you were too busy ignoring the cries of a nine-year-old girl?"

"What I did to you in the past cannot be changed and I won't beg for it to be changed. What matters here is the future of this pack. The longer

Neron stays without a Luna, the more danger is to come. Put aside your anger and do what is right for your pack.”

I growled, baring my teeth, warning him to tread carefully with his next words. “This godforsaken pack will never be mine. My home is at Garnet Moon with my real family.”

“You no longer bear the mark of Zircon Moon, but we will forever be your birth pack. However, let me be clear on my expectations for you.” His blue eyes pierced mine, causing Artemis and I to falter. “Mate with my son. Give him your power. Give birth to future heirs. If this pack falls, believe me, you’ll take full responsibility for it.”

“You can’t escape your fate, Kiya.”

With his parting words, Jonathan left the corridor, leaving me in deafening silence. My chest burned in protest, begging for the air it was deprived of. My breathing was shaky and hot tears slid down my cheeks. He expects me to sacrifice my independence for this stupid pack? Fuck his son to preserve its putrid legacy?

Not going to happen! Destiny was messed up and I would not be its victim!

I bolted towards my room, burying the book inside my closet. The curiosity to read more into it dissipated like ants the moment Neron’s father confronted me. Damn him! I fucking hate him! I want to—!

Pungent odors of decomposition violently assault my nose, raising old memories I wished to forget. A cold sweat came over me as my eyes widened in fear. The next minute, screams echoed through the territory and the warning horn filled the air.

Fuck! The undead rogues were back! But this time...

It was much worse.

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