

## **Chapter 82 - The Mission**

*"Put on your war paint! The war is won before it's begun, release the doves, surrender love." - "The Phoenix" by Fall Out Boy*

### ***Third Person POV***

The sun gradually rose over the horizon as the golden light marked the early start of a brand-new day. Commotion and chatter echoed across the front lawn of Zircon territory, wolves, and warriors alike, gearing themselves up for the mission ahead. The charred earth was not enough to damper the enthusiasm and determination. With both Alpha Neron and Alpha Anthony leading the charge, it would prove to be the mission of a lifetime.

Alpha Anthony requested a group of his finest warriors to aid in him. Kiya and Phoebe proved to be irreplaceable members of Garnet Moon, motivating the fighters to join in on the rescue effort. Cars and vans carrying the strongest warriors of California rolled in, joining the militia in preparation. The numbers grew to one hundred.

Grit proved to be the key to Neron's healing because the large wound on his stomach disappeared overnight. No longer needing the gauze, he was free from the imprisonment of pain. His mind focused on Kiya and how he would stop at nothing to reach her. Standing on a boulder, he looked over the land. He allowed only his best and healed warriors to take part. He could not risk any more than what he already had. Some needed to stay behind and defend the territory in his absence.

The journey to the location would take hours but would be cut in half in wolf form. It was the mere difference in those hours that would decide if the women would return or remain captive. Deep down, he admired the

sight of two packs working in unison to rescue women they considered valuable.

On his left, he watched his Beta and Beta Female speak with Abigail. With his enhanced hearing, he picked up a conversation about the woman looking after Adonis. The little boy's green eyes twinkled with wonder and worry as he looked at his beloved parents.

"Take good care of my son, Abigail." Raina shook her uninjured hand. With a broken arm, her friends insisted that she stayed. Beta Jacqueline was not letting her anywhere near this fight.

"I will." She smiled warmly, patting the five-year-old's shoulder. "Adonis and I will have fun together, right?"

"Yes." He nodded. "Mommy, Daddy, are you bringing Auntie Kiya back?" Neron's heart throbbed painfully. From the distance, he saw the love the little boy had for Kiya.

"Yes, we will." Valerian smiled, ruffling his hair. "We're going to bring her back and you get to play with her again. Maybe you could show her your toy plane collection."

"Okay!" He hugged his parents tight, wishing them luck. Neron prayed for the Moon Goddess to cast her protection on Raina and Valerian. They must return safely to their son.

There was no telling what they'll encounter. Weapons? Magic? Anything and everything were possible for the risk of a violent ambush, and each wolf must remain on their toes. Both Alphas hoped that they'll return with all their warriors, but deep down, they feared casualties.

"Alpha Neron." He turned to see Lyra with a serious look on her face. "I want to speak to you in private."

“Of course.” Both walked towards a tree that miraculously survived the inferno. “What is it?”

“How do you feel about my daughter?”

“I love her, and I want her to be safe and sound,” Neron replied without hesitation. “I made mistakes. Huge mistakes that I cannot take back, no matter how hard I pray. I know you know what I did to Kiya, and it was true. I did horrible things to her and I’ll never forgive myself for it. I seek her forgiveness, but I know I’ll never get it and that’s okay. I deserve your hate, Lyra. I deserve it all. But know that I’ll never stop caring for Kiya and I’ll be the first one to rip the bastard apart who took her from us.”

Lyra stared hard at Neron for a solid minute, eyes detecting for any lies. Neron could see how much she deeply cared for her adoptive daughter just by her eyes alone. She was her true mother. A mother who lived and breathed for protecting her child, blood or not. Even with the obvious rift between her and Ashley, he could see Lyra’s love as pure. She helped Kiya to recover, and he couldn’t repay her for being a woman blessed with a golden heart.

“See to it you keep your promises, Alpha Neron. I have no problem ripping out your intestines if you ever think about harming my daughter again.” She growled warningly at him. “My husband and I will aid you in this fight. Phoebe and Kiya are my children, and I love them dearly.”

“Understood.”

“Oh, and one more thing.” She whispered low with eyes full of contempt. “Keep your father away from Kiya. Call it a mother’s intuition.”

Lyra departed from the trees to join her husband. His father would not be joining in on the rescue effort, not that he cared. He preferred his father to keep his distance from Kiya and him. Neron loved his father,

but he was beginning to bother him. Something wasn't sitting right in his heart.

“*Hoo!*”

The Alpha looked up to see the white owl perched on a branch, staring down at him. Gold in blue. The owl gave him a warm, fuzzy feeling. Strange coming from an animal Onyx would eat. He watched the owl fly from its branch and circle in the sky above the wolves. Many didn't notice, but he did.

What did this mean?

“Neron.” Alpha Anthony walked over with Endo at his side. “It's time. Are you ready?”

“Yes.” He firmly nodded.

“You'll need this map.” Endo handed him the rolled-up parchment. “The blood will shimmer the closer you get to their location. I won't be joining you, but I'll be here when you return with the women.”

“Sounds like you have confidence we'll succeed.” Neron smirked, taking the map in his hands.

“Don't flatter yourself, Alpha. I see how everyone here is willing to put their lives on the line for two women. It's remarkable.” The witch smiled. “I'll leave you to it. I wish you both luck on the mission. Stay safe and stay alert. Who knows what's out there?”

Endo couldn't be any more correct. Both Alphas shared a look. Neither of them expected to be teaming up in a fight like this. Anthony still held contempt for Neron after how he treated his sister, but he was willing to push that aside to save her.

Sooner than later, both Alphas addressed their joint army. A sea of men and women with hardened faces and fire in their colorful eyes listened and digest every word their respective Alpha spoke. it was like listening to a speech from the top commanders in a war. Each fighter joined this mission with one thing in mind, to rescue their missing. Jacqueline, Galen, Darien, and Sapphire were itching to shift and bolt to save their friends.

They felt they needed to redeem themselves for failing to protect their precious companions. They couldn't help them when they were taken, but they were determined to be the ones to bring them home. The orchestrator of their abduction was as good as dead.

Once the empowering speech was over, the warriors cheered with power and resolve. They're ready for the challenge.

And it was time for the departure.

Jonathan watched as the combined army marched out of the territory, their footsteps growing quieter the further they got. He knew they would find Kiya. That's all he cared about because losing her meant losing power, and he couldn't afford that.

Diana, the owl, tailed behind the army with her majestic white wings gliding through the air.

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### ***Kiya***

Osiris must have done something to my memory because I remembered nothing between the time of Raina speaking in my head to when Nadia woke me up.

I wanted to kill that bastard, but I couldn't. I needed to save Phoebe and Violetta and get the hell out of here. But the question was, how do we

get out of here? When we escape, where would we go? We don't know where we were or how far we were from home. I don't even know if it was day or night.

The facility was like a run-down asylum. Huge and unfriendly. I had to act like a zombie around the hybrids that passed by Nadia. It was all to keep face. I was still unsure whether I could trust this woman, but I had to. If she held my ticket out of here, then I had to take it.

Artemis was weak. The damn wolfsbane in my system continued to burn, but it didn't dampen my other senses. So many hybrids were here. I smelled a mixture of witches, werewolves, shapeshifters, and so much more. How many hybrids were truly out there? How many fell beneath the cracks and fell victim to this dark society?

Yet, it doesn't excuse their actions. They kidnapped me and my kind. They'll pay for what they've done.

Nadia had a plan. I don't know what, but it had better be a good one.

The plan was laid out for me when we made it to the far side of the facility, Nadia quickly pulled out a syringe and injected a corrupt witch in the neck. The witch plopped to the ground like a sack of potatoes. Since the door was no longer guarded, I barged through, smelling Phoebe's scent wafting from the cracks.

I saw my good friend unconscious on a metal slab. Various needle holes and other markings were present on her pale skin. Anger boiled within me at the thought of what Phoebe must have gone through, I jumped to action to help her regain consciousness.

"Phoebe," I whispered, patting her cheek. "Phoebe, it's me. Please, wake up."

After a minute, she came to. There were those purple eyes I love so much! “Kiya?” She groaned, propping herself on her elbows. “W-What happened?”

“There’s no time to explain,” Nadia announced from the door. “The longer we wait, the more we are at risk of getting discovered. We need to keep moving and rescue others.”

I helped Phoebe on her feet, catching her when she lost her balance. She was a little weak, but still could move. Nadia removed the enchanted cuffs, and we went forth on finding Violetta. We found her chained up in a distant room guarded by two men. Phoebe and I made quick work to subdue them through a series of hitting pressure points or with blows to the back of the head.

Damn evil hybrids!

Violetta was pissed at the treatment she got, no one deserved to be manhandled and chained because she refused to obey. The weird injection from the previous day, I think, wore off since she was back to being feisty.

“Let’s go, girls,” Nadia demanded as the four of us ran down another of the plethoric hallways in these parts. “There’s one avatar we need to free, and he’s the key to your escape.”

“Sounds good,” Violetta replied. “What could he do?”

“He’s the avatar of Huracán. His might over wind and fire is what we need.”

“Wait...” I paused, blinking. “You mean...”

*“I’m planning on burning this place to dust so Osiris can’t hurt anyone ever again.”*

## Chapter 83 - The Rescue

*"Seasons come and go. But I will never change. And I'm on my way" -  
"Written In the Stars" by Tinie Tempah*

**Kiya**

This was a fight for freedom.

I never thought I would be in this position again, battling for the right to see the daylight, to see the outside world. Same situation, different challenge.

Once Cadmael, the avatar of Huracán, was freed, the haunted asylum became the grounds of a battlefield. Hybrids of all shapes, sizes, and genders spilled from all corners, determined to hunt us down. Savages, they'd call us. Savages that needed to be controlled.

I refused to be acquiescent. A vow I made the night of my bonding with Garnet Moon came to my mind as I callously punched a hybrid into a wall. Never again a slave. Never again a follower. Never again a meek girl without a voice.

That promise echoed through the chambers of my mind like a siren song, pumping my blood with adrenaline. The deplorable conditions my fellow avatars were living in summoned a roar inside me. I've been here for a short while. Who knew how long they imprisoned the others?

I learned their names and who they represent. They're avatars of Thor, Loki, Yemoja, Krishna, The Morrigan, and more. Some were my age, some a little older, and some were just teenagers. These bastard hybrids even kidnapped a seven-year-old girl! For what?

All for power.

People like this made me sick.



Chaos ensued as we free all the avatars. The hybrids pulled out all the stops to ensure our submission, even harboring weapons in case things went awry. I've never stared down a barrel of a gun before, especially one that reeks of silver. But it didn't scare me. What scared me more was that the person holding the gun wasn't a hybrid.

She was a full werewolf. Just like me, and she looked like someone I know.

"On your knees, bitch." She demanded. The little girl behind me, who I come to know as Femi, the avatar of Bastet, hid in fear. "Or else I'll put a bullet in the brat."

Something about her infuriated me. The brown eyes, the brown hair, the cupid-shaped face. Everything about this woman awakened Artemis from a volcanic pit of rage. Did she think she could put me down with a mere silver bullet? I kept forgetting who had the true advantage here.

She was a mere werewolf with a gun. I was an avatar of the goddess she once followed. How dare she do this! How dare she do this to her kind?

My body moved on its own. I fought the woman, using the sole advantage I had. I was fighting for others, while she fought for dominion over others. She would never win. I was proved correct when I used the gun to bash her on the head, knocking her out cold.

"Come on, Femi," I instructed. The sweet girl with two puffs in her hair grabbed my hand, and we ran as fast as we could. Gunshots, screaming, faded commands, and more mixed into the thick ether. It was going to take a lot for us to escape unharmed.

"Are we going to die, Miss?" Femi asked.

"Not today," I answered back. None of us were dying. We ran downstairs, walking over the unconscious or dead bodies of hybrids. I

expelled a breath of relief when there wasn't a dead avatar. Phoebe, Violetta, Nadia, and Cadmael met up with us.

"The hybrids and their allies have sealed up all exits throughout the place," Cadmael growled, running a hand through his brown hair.

"They don't want us to escape," Phoebe muttered. "I-I don't have enough energy to teleport so many people out of here. It took a lot just to get to your place, Kiya."

"We can't put you at any more risk," I muttered. My eyes found Nadia's. "What could we do if there's no way out?"

"They boarded up the windows and doors all around this place, but they missed the top floor, as always. There's a large window. You can escape that way."

"But this place is five stories high!" Violetta pointed out. "What if we don't make the landing?"

"We're right next to a large river," Nadia explained. "If you land in the water instead of the ground, you should be okay, but I need Cadmael's fire. This is our only chance and the other avatars are also fighting for their way out."

"We have to take it, you guys," I advised, squeezing Femi's trembling hand. "If that is our only chance, we don't have any time to lose. I assume you'll light this place up once we get out of here?"

Nadia nodded. "Yes. The fire would spread through the natural gas pipes, but you all should be gone before the fire starts. Once Cadmael does his job, he'll escape the same way."

"Sounds like a plan to me." The bigger man shrugged. "I've been wanting to burn these motherfuckers since the moment that brute took me."

Holy shit, I forgot about Cerberus! Who knew where he was right now? He could very much bring us back to Osiris and his goons without a second thought. Suddenly, a faint scent curled in my nose, carried by the distant wind. It grew stronger by the second, and its potency was powerful enough to seep through the walls of this asylum.

It was a scent I was all too familiar with, but there was more. Many more. My heart pounded at the hope that hugged me like a weighted blanket, sparking the light of renewal into this dreary situation.

“Phoebe, I smell them!” I hopped. “They’re here! Our pack is here!”

“Wait, you can smell them?” Phoebe wondered in astonishment. Light glittered in her amethyst eyes, happy tears pooled in her tear ducts, “They’re here to rescue us!”

“Wait, who are you guys talking about?” Cadmael asked, confused. “What do you mean ‘smell them’ or ‘pack’? I smell nothing but sweat and blood.”

Cadmael didn’t know I was a werewolf. Even Femi shot me a confused look. Nadia smiled as bright as Phoebe. There had to be a way to let the pack know we were here. The joint scents of both Garnet Moon and Zircon Moon continued to grow stronger, albeit slowly.

Anthony came! And Neron too? Holy shit, he’s alive?

*“Artemis, I know you’re weak, but I need your help.”*

**“I know exactly what you’re thinking. Yes, I’m feeling sluggish, but that won’t make me any less useful. Are you ready?”**

*“Always.”* I turn to everyone. “Cover your ears.” Everyone did so, even little Femi. I had to howl. Wolf howls were known to help other wolves find their location; it was a better tracker than scent. If I howl loud enough, I could lead them here to save us.

I stood strong and tall, Artemis now at the forefront of my mind, present and ready. I prayed to Selene to help me, to allow my howl to reach the ears of all the wolves who had come to save Phoebe and me. To show them the path of light. To lead them to victory. And at that moment, it was like I could feel her cool hands on my shoulders.

Urging me to be the beacon.

I howled. Strong and loud. It shook the walls of the asylum, no doubt ringing through the ears of good and evil alike but that was fine. I didn't care. We would deal with them as they came.

I howled again, somehow twice as loud as the first time. This one was full of feeling, it was saying, 'We're here! Find us!' and I knew it worked. Because the scents of many wolves on both sides became more pungent.

We heard a powerful crash two floors below us.

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### Neron

The journey took hours. We left when the sun barely peeked through the horizon. Now she showed herself with her bright morning light. The red dot on the wrinkled map shimmered brighter the closer we came to the location.

Joy couldn't be the right word to describe the encompassing feeling within my heart. Joy was too weak to describe its strength. I was growing closer. The path was clearer now, and I knew at the end, I would be able to hold Kiya's hand once more.

"We're growing closer to the women," I told Alpha Anthony as our warriors stopped for a very brief break. A smile cracked on his face as he looked to his parents, saying something to them in Spanish. Whatever

he said brought the same contagious smile on their faces before turning back to me. “How much longer until we get there?”

“It’s hard to tell,” I muttered. “But we’re heading in the right direction.” I knew we were. I have faith. *Don’t worry, Kiya. We’re almost there.* “We should move. We can’t waste any more time.”

“Right.” My fellow Alpha agreed. Just as he was about to announce the move, we all froze. Froze at the sound of a distant howl. It echoed around us; the volume carried with the wind. Within me, Onyx stirred and grew restless.

“**Mate!**” He boomed. “**It’s our mate! We must go to her! She needs us!**”

“Oh, my Goddess, it’s Little Bit!” Beta Jacqueline announced, stirring the entire army. “Get your asses up!”

“Rest time is over. Move it!” Alpha Anthony announced with authority. On cue, human glamour faded to reveal wolves. Black, grey, brown, red, yellow, and more. We knew the direction we’re heading and just how far. The women were close. My mate was close. Immediately stripping down and shifting into Onyx, Anthony and I led the charge.

We didn’t stop. We ran for what seemed like forever. Kiya’s howls echoed once again, this time louder and longer. It pushed Onyx to the max, his thunderous paws beating against the pavement as he ran.

We all ran. Together as a solid unit. Stray animals and bugs around the trees hid as the apex predators of Mother Nature passed through their habitats. Nothing was stopping us from completing our mission.

Something dark grey came into our view, clearing up to show an isolated and large facility. It reminded me of those asylums I’ve seen on television and read in books. A plethora of scents bombarded my nose,

too many to count and too many mixed to narrow on a specific one I needed.

I needed a whiff of her sweet scent. Honeyed strawberries and vanilla. I needed it more than I needed air!

Like a battering ram, we burst through the front gates and doors, spilling into the dank interior. Immediately, we're met with adversaries armed with guns and magic. Bullets whizzed in the air and shouts echoed against the walls, but it didn't damper our resolve.

No mercy to the motherfuckers who stole the women. None!

“*Spread out!*” I announced through the mind-link. “*Destroy anyone who stands in your way! We won't rest until we find Kiya and Phoebe!*”

“*Yes, Alpha!*”