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A fallen queen

William's POV

Doris looked like a goddess to his eyes. She glowed and made the world bow to her. She brought down every foe with barely lifting her paw, and then extinguished every bit of fire that tried to turn the village into dust.

When she finally collapsed, William felt himself breathe. He shifted back into his human form and ran to her. He barely registered when a guard had draped a cloak around him, he took Doris into his arms and pulled her weak body against him.

The necklace shined in the moonlight and a spark of rage ignited inside him. What was this doing on her? He tried to rip it off her, but it wouldn't budge. There was no clasp as if it was melted together. The more he pulled on it, the harder it felt. It was as if it was becoming more stubborn the more he tried to get it off her.

"Fuck." William grumbled and let the chain go. She was still in her wolf form which concerned him. Each time she passed out, normally she would change back into herself.

William felt more presence around him. He glanced up to see the villagers crowding around their king as well as his own guards. They looked down at Doris as if she was already their queen and he could only pull her tighter against him. "Will she be okay?" One of the villagers asked. Enzo came to stand near them, he also had a cloak on from one of the guards and he watched the crowd with interest.

"She will be." William said simply. He moved to gather her in his arms. "I need to get her back to the palace."

"She saves us!" Another woman blurred out. "She saved our village! I've never seen power like that!" "She's a white wolf! I never thought I would ever live to see a white wolf." An older man commented. William stood with Doris in his arms and began to walk back to the palace. Still, his people followed.

"Make sure everyone here has a place to sleep tonight." William said as he passed his guards. He ignored the murmuring of thanks behind him and watched his bride try to breathe normally in his arms.

He wanted to be mad at her. He wanted to scream and shake her until she woke up so he could scream some more. She never listened. She never stayed still and allowed him to handle things.

He loved her for that. He loved that she had a heart of gold and chose to follow it even if it meant going down darker paths to do what was right. He loved that she didn't cower from him once she found herself. He loved everything about her and he knew this small space that formed between them had only made them stronger in the end.

The only thing he didn't love was the feeling in his chest. It felt as if his heart was about to break in half. What if the necklace didn't come off? He was told that it tried to suck a person dry if it had the chance. It could suck the life out of her if she wasn't strong enough to resist it.

He would give his own life to restore hers. She would hate him for admitting it but it was true. He would. She was the mother of his child and she was the reason this kingdom had hope flicker in their expression even on the darkest day.

They all talked about how great she was the whole way back. No one questioned if he had sent those Hunter wolves. He knew they could tell the truth and could see he wasn't involved, he didn't have to prove anything.

They spoke about her as if she was already their queen and William would have felt his cold heart warm if Doris hadn't been unconscious.

William brought her to the medical wing and they immediately took action. All the noise was closed behind him until he heard Beth rush in the door. "Where is she? Is she okay?" Beth said, out of breath. Enzo came in behind with Alec in his arms. William checked his son before he turned to Beth.

"They're not sure how to get that thing off." He grumbled and raked his fingers through his hair. "I don't... I tried to break it but it only grew stronger."

"She has to be the one to break it." Enzo said. William gave him a long look and he continued. "She's losing herself. She has to find her way back here and release the hold herself or it will never come off."

William opened and closed his hands at his sides. He was used to using them to get his way. He would be rough and tough and everything would fall at his feet. But now—now he felt at a loss. He felt as if he didn't have it in him to fight when he knew it would only make it worse for her. He just wanted her back.

William left them and went to sit at Doris's side. He raised his hand and the room emptied, leaving William alone with Doris.

He ran his fingers through her hair and looked down at her with a softness that only she could ever bring out of him.

"When I first saw you, I tried to fight the voice that told me how beautiful you were. A part of me hated that from the first moment, you made me want to soften without saying a word." William spoke gently. Doris flinched a little beneath his touch— perhaps she could hear him.

"I could see there was a small spark of fire in your eyes whenever I told you what to do. I knew that beneath all the small flinches and scared behaviour, there was someone stronger beneath. I saw it for the first time in the north and I knew 1 loved you then."

Doris moved her head closer to him. "My entire life I was so sure that I didn't want to fall in love. I didn't want someone that I had to care for and worry about. I resented how much I cared about you. I told myself that it wasn't love, it was just possession. But it wasn't. I love you, and I would have loved you even if you weren't my mate. I would love you even if you left me there in the cold and never came back."

William's fingers touched the necklace and it was hot enough to burn. He quickly pulled away. "You we're always meant to be a queen. And a mother. Come back fo me, Doris. Don't let this take you, you know you're stronger."

A few moments passed in silence. William sighed and dropped his head in his hands. There had to be something he could do—

The bed shifted a little and he shot his head up to see Doris clenching blankets to her chest with one hand, and the necklace in the other.

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Exposing evil

William POV

"Doris—" William breathed as he moved up to take her in his arms. She stared down at the broken necklace with a dazed look.

"Is....everyone okay?" She whispered. Her voice was hoarse and she looked startled to even be awake. Suddenly, she threw she necklace far away from her as if it burned to touch. He wanted to throw it into the ocean but that still wouldn't be far enough away from her.

"Everyone is fine... are you okay?" William asked as he brushed the hair from her face. Besides Alec, she was the only one he ever wanted to be gentle with. No one else mattered as much as she did. He felt her pain as if it was his own. It drummed inside his veins and pushed him to be better.

"Y-yeah... I thought I had died." She admitted. "It felt like my life was draining out of me and—I heard your voice." Doris's whispered. Her eyes were wide as she looked up at William. "I heard your voice through the darkness. I ran towards it. I couldn't stop running until I got to you. I heard everything you said."

Doris gripped his arm hard enough that he leaned forward to kiss her on the mouth. He kissed her slowly, hard enough to remind her she was alive and here with him. But gentle enough to remind her how he loved her.

"I love you too, William." She whispered. Her fingers brushed gently against his jaw before they fell against the bed. "I love every inch of you. Even the complicated ones."

William smiled a little at Doris as she clenched the sheets around her. She looked so drained and tired, William helped lay her back against the bed. "You're here with me. I'll make sure that necklace never gets near you again." He had to bite his lip to stop from lecturing her. He would eventually, but she didn't need that now.

"I think Daemon knew what was coming." She blurted. Just the sound of his name made William angry. He had to swallow the rage that tried to come out along with everything else that was bubbling up inside him. "That was why he left that for me. He wanted to give me the strength to fight it. Don't you think? I can't understand why else he would have left it especially since he also gave me the book to understand it."

"Or he hoped it would drain the life out of you since he knew you weren't experienced enough to handle it." William snapped. Doris closed her eyes and laid her head against the pillow. "He is not worthy of your kindness. He does not deserve you seeing the bright side of things on his behalf."

"I know." Doris whispered. William let out a breath and kissed her head. "I think he is the one that really killed that guard." Doris admitted quietly. William said nothing, but he had thought the same thing.

"Rest. I will be back soon." He whispered before leaving.

"How is she?" Beth asked the moment he stepped out of the room. "Can I see her?"

"You can sit with her. She's resting —make sure she's dressed before anyone else sees her. I will be back soon." William said. He kissed Alec's sleeping forehead before he left down the hall. Now that he knew Doris was safe, he had to take care of something else. His guards fell into step beside him and followed him down the long, dark halls.

"The army is in the village, they're going to help rebuild in the morning. All of the villagers were given a place to stay in the visiting part of the palace." His guard filled in for him.

"Good. I need the royal court woken immediately. We have matters to discuss." William said.

"Yes sir."

Within the hour, the room was filled with tired looking men and women. Their patience could run thin, but William didn't care.

"The kingdom of Eldon has attacked my village and claimed that it was my doing. This is enough to bring a war." William stated. A few gasps rang out around the table but he kept on before anyone tired to put their opinion in. "But I don't think it's necessary. I think we have already won." "What do you mean by that?" Someone asked. William didn't even bother to lift his gaze to see who. "We can't let them disrespect our kingdom like that — "

William dropped down a pile of papers that had been brought to him by his spy. "My messengers are already on their way to their villages to let them know how much money their rulers have stolen from them. They made thousands of their people homeless because of their debt. Many had died from starvation and the cold but none of them cared. They only wanted a cheap fix to get crime lords off their backs."

It was silent for a long moment. "It's true?" "Every word. I have proof that dates back years and record of all the villages they took from. By morning, their palace will be swarmed with angry villagers." William leaned back in his seat as they started to go through the papers and passed them around.

"Those rulers thought this kingdom would be an easy steal. They knew we had no debts like that and that we might be able to win over my people by making them distrust me. I'm sure they had more planned than just this, but it ends tonight."
"We will make sure this is taken care of, your majesty. Don't worry about this."

William stood. "I don't want to hear of their kingdom again unless it's to tell me of their downfall. They are not welcome in my land any longer and will be dealt with if spotted. Let it be known to all who patrol the boarder that they are not to cross."

"Yes, your majesty." The room said. William left before they could say anything else. He had to stop himself from riding all the way to their palace himself to set it ablaze. He wanted to watch their home turn to ash just as they made William's village. They could have been the reason Doris never woke up and—they're lucky she did. If she didn't, their fate would be much worse than some angry villagers.

He hurried down the hall back towards the medical wing. He hadn't been gone very long, but every second away from her felt like hours. When he entered, Alec was asleep in a small crib near her bed and Doris was speaking softly to Doris. Beth smiled at Doris and stood to leave when she saw William. "I'll come by later. Get some rest." "You need rest too, Beth." Doris said gently. William came to sit on the edge of her bed and took her hand once Beth was gone. Doris smiled at him and suddenly he forgot all the anger he ever had. "Are you okay?" She asked him as if she had a right to say such a thing when she was the one in a hospital bed.

William kissed her hand and held it to his chest. " I want to get married tomorrow." He said.

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Wedding preparations

Doris felt like anew woman. Cordelia felt that Doris was ready to take hold of her power after what she did in the village. Even when her body became weak after the necklace was taken from her, it gave her a new sense of strength. One that made her realize she had it inside her all along and she was the one that blocked it. If only she had trusted herself sooner, she would have had the power all along.

"If you can handle that, I know you can handle anything. You're stronger than you think, Doris. Everyone knows that except you." Cordelia said gently. "I am so proud of what you have become and I am here with you every step of the way. Even when it gets unbearable."

Doris closed her eyes and let the words surround her. She had grown up with so many self doubts and people telling her she wasn't worthy. It put a block on her mind that was hard to get rid of, but now she finally believed it. Everyone around her looked at her with hope and amazement.

She wanted to be what they saw. She wanted to be the thing they believed in and the person they wanted to rule their kingdom with their king. Not just because she was a white wolf, but because she was worthy to them. For once, she believed she was. No longer was she part of the shadows. She was something to believe in.

She was a white wolf, an honor to be. One that wasn't easily given to just anyone. To be a white wolf was to be worthy before you were even born. It might have taken Doris a long time to see that, but now she did.

It was the morning of her wedding and all she wanted to do was sneak off and find William to somewhere they could be alone. She wanted to kiss him in the darkness and hear his deep voice against her ear. Only that could bring her comfort from the storm in her chest. He was her only comfort besides Alec—her perfect little family that would one day grow into something bigger. Word came that the kingdom of Eldon was under attack by their own people. They called for aide but no one would come for them. They burned too many bridges and now had to deal with the consequences. William was sure that this would mean that their kingdom would want to be part of this one, but it was too soon to tell.

"Are you ready?" Beth popped her head into the bridal suite and smiled widely at Doris. "I can help you in your dress now."

Doris shook her head to clear her mind and gazed into the mirror. Her hair was set perfectly down her back in beautiful waves. Her makeup made her look like a doll with beautiful skin and liner. Every part of her looked perfect... all she needed was her dress.

Alec was ready in his little suit somewhere with William. She couldn't wait to see him, she couldn't wait to see both of them. The next time she would kiss William, it will be to announce their marriage.

"J... yes I'm ready." Doris breathed and stood. Beth came to take her in a warm hug that gave her a bit of courage.

"I always knew you would marry a Prince. Didn't I tell you?" She grinned at Doris.

Doris laughed and shook her head. "To be fair, William was always the one you thought would never marry anyone."

"I did think that until I noticed how he looked at you every day." Beth bumped her arm against Doris. "He looked at you as if you were his entire world."

Doris swallowed the small lump in her throat. "Do you think I'm meant to be queen? Do you think this is... this is what my life should be?"

"Are you joking? This kingdom is lucky to have you as their queen! They haven't had a proper queen in decades and now they have one that they can believe in. Ever since you saved the village, everyone has been talking about how amazing you are and how they can't wait to see you be crowned!"

Beth bounced a little on her toes with a smile that could light up the sky. She looked beautiful in a golden gown that only a maid of honor can wear. It flowed to the floor beautifully and made Beth look like a princess on her own. Doris didn't need anyone else by her side, just Beth. And Enzo to walk her down the aisle.

"The dress is ginormous, have you seen it?" Doris said and quickly dabbed her eyes before it ruined her makeup. She didn't need a maid coming in to scold her about that.

"It'?s meant for a queen!" Beth said as she went to take off the protective plastic. Doris took a breath and dropped her robe to the floor and allowed Beth to help her into the dress.

Once it was all buttoned up, Doris stood in front of the mirror in shock. She didn't even recognise herself. She looked... beautiful. She looked like a queen.

Beth was wiping away her tears as she watched Doris. "You look so beautiful, Doris. You look how you were always meant to."

Doris smoothed out the big skirt and tried to walk. It was much easier than she thought. Her mind made her think it would be heavy and hard to walk in, but it moved with her like a dream.

A part of her heart ached. A part that she thought she had been over for months and months. She swore she didn't care what her family was up to now or if they were even still alive but... did they ever miss her?

She knew that they would try to crawl their way back in if they had the chance just for money and royalty, but she wished things were different. She wished they loved her enough to keep her when they had her. But now she supposed she was glad they didn't. If they kept her, she wouldn't be about to marry her mate. She wouldn't have Alec and—she didn't even want to imagine a life like that.

Doris took one more breath and nodded. "I'm ready."

"Wait." Beth took out a silver necklace from her pocket. "I was hoping you would want to wear this. My mother gave it to me before I came to the palace and I never had the courage to wear it myself, but I thought it would go wonderfully with your dress."

"Oh Beth... are you sure?" Doris looked down at the simple yet beautiful necklace. Beth smiled. "Yes. You need something borrowed. When I get married, I hope you will do the same." Beth clasped the necklace on her and somehow she felt ready.

"Okay... I think I'm ready for this." Doris whispered.

"I know you are." Beth said as she squeezed her hand one last time.

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Happily Ever After

An entourage of people surrounded Doris when she stepped out of her room. William said he wanted to be married today and that forced everything to be pushed up immediately, and it was done. The only difference was that this wedding would be a lot smaller than the original one since many people wouldn't have enough time to arrive.

It was fine with her. A woman came behind to grab the end of her long trail and another came to hand her a beautiful bouquet of white flowers. Doris felt as if her heart was about the best out of her chest. How was this her reality? She was

about to be crowned queen.

The hall way stretched long in front of her. She held her breath and heard a strange ringing in her ear that made everything silent around her. She glanced at people who were speaking to her but didn't hear a word of it.

Enzo stood at the end of the long hallway by the grand doors that remained closed. Only when she got close enough did she hear the music beyond. It was beautiful... a wonderful melody to celebrate a day like this. Everything was so bright around her, it was hard to believe she ever had a bit of darkness in her life.

"Are you ready?" Enzo asked as Doris stopped in front of him. He took in the sight of her a let out a low whistle. "You look stunning, Doris. William is a lucky man to ever have claim on you."

Doris smiled but she felt her anxiety creep up her throat. She couldn't believe this was about to happen. She knew inside that It was easy, this was easy. She wanted to marry him and they were meant to be together. This was easy. So why did she feel like she was about to throw up?

"Don't let the nerves strangle you before you get there." Enzo said gently. He held out his arm and she took it. Somehow, that anchored her to the moment. She held onto him tightly and her bouquet in the other hand as someone dropped her veil down over her face.

She took several deep breaths before nodding at the guards. In a swift motion, they opened the doors to the main ballroom. This room... the one she had once been accused in. She got flashbacks 0f the day when William watched her with intent eyes and she mistook his glare for hatred. She never would have guessed it turned into this.

The room was breathtaking... she knew the staff must have spent every waking minute trying to get it perfect in time. Vines of flowers dripped down from the ceiling as if it was a forest. The floors were covered in rose petals and elegance. It looked like a dream, she didn't even recognise the room.

At the end of the walk way was her king. William stood with his hands clasped in front of him and Alec had his own little throne right next to him. Her heart fluttered in her chest. This was what she always wanted. This was her future.

Everyone stood the moment the doors had opened and all eyes locked on her. She begged herself not to trip or fall, but Enzo held her up right as he began to walk her down the aisle when the music started.

Doris couldn't help but scan the faces as she passed each row. She was looking for one face in particular and she almost tripped over herself when she saw him. Daniel stood among the crowd with a hat tipped down low as if he didn't want to be seen. She knew it was him. She could tell by the way he smiled at her when her eyes caught on him. No, this was perfect. She had everyone she needed here. She didn't need any other family or anyone else that didn't really want to be here, everyone she loved was right here.

Doris held her head high the rest of the way. The closer she got to William, the more she knew she was doing the right thing. He looked at her with such love in his blue eyes. There was no storms, no second guessing. Just pure love.

Doris let go of Enzo when he helped her up the stairs and took William's hands. Beth stood behind her and it felt as if the rest of the room faded away.

"You look beautiful." William whispered to her. His words were meant just for her, a secret only they owned.

"You look handsome." She said back. The side of his mouth lifted slightly and she felt as if she could melt into him.

"We are gathered here today to make history." The pastor said as the audience all seated themselves. Enzo took his place beside William and stared at Beth the entire time.

"Today, our kingdom gains a new queen. Today, we witness the happiness of our king and the unity 0f love. Our king has found his mate and today and every day after, they will belong to each other officially."

"Your majesty, if you would like to start with your vows."

William clenched his teeth before loosening his jaw. "Doris—my mate and soul. If there was ever a reason to tie myself to you that measured more than the way I feel about you, It wouldn't exist. You were made for me and I was made to love you. You're stubborn, strong willed and beautiful. I love you even when I'm unsure about everything else. I vow to love and protect you until we are both nothing more than dust."

"Doris." The pastor nodded.

Doris felt her hands tremble, he held her tighter. "William... I could write a book on all the things I love about you. Even when I was at my darkest, you loved me and found a way to pull me out of it. I vow to always be here to pull you out of your darkest times and know that my love could never fade."

"Do you take Doris to be your lawfully wedded wife—in sickness and in health?"

"I do." William said instantly.

"And do you Doris—take William to be your lawfully wedded husband in sickness and in health? And with that—do you accept being

queen of his kingdom?"

"I do." Doris breathed. William smiled at her. A real, full smile that could have lit up an entire room.

"Then I pronounce you husband and wife. You may kiss the bride."

The room stood in applause as William moved her veil back. He took her face into his hands and kissed her. He kissed her like the world was going to shatter around them and all he had to do was hold onto her.

Doris wrapped her arms around William's neck as he pulled her closer. She felt someone place a crown on her head but all she wanted was to be in his arms forever.

"I love you." William whispered against her lips before he kissed her again. It was better than any scene she had ever read in her books.

She knew that from then on, they would live happily ever after.