

Alpha's Blind Luna, Chapter 46

Chapter 46

The next two weeks went by and were uneventful. The Alpha King stayed far out of my way and I appreciated the man knew when to not poke a sleeping bear. I found myself over the days getting more and more curt, more and more anxious. Normally I would have liked to reach out to Morgan. Between not having contact within the castle and also not knowing if he would even answer his phone, it didn't matter. I was on my own to figure out if I could weather this so called treaty talk.

Cyra probably was the only one who soothed my anxiety. Truthfully, for the past 200 years, we had a friendship that had evolved into what the kids called friends with benefits. Since she joined the council, we didn't have as much freedom but whenever I started to come to the meetings, she would meet me in my room every night. She wouldn't talk to me about the meetings, she couldn't but she at least knew how to pacify me and make me forget for a moment.

Now, I was standing in front of the mirror, cursing at the third time I failed to tie my tie. Taking a few needed deep breaths, I tried again. This time with my eyes closed and when I opened them my tie was done perfectly.

"Thank the gods." I let out a sigh.

Striding through the hallways, I was already running a little late for the meeting and so I didn't dilly dally through the halls. Opening the doors, the meeting room was nearly as big as the ballroom we gathered in the evenings. The outside ring of the room was made of seats. Four rows of plush red high- back chairs ran along the outer rim of the room. There was a short 4ft wall that then ran around the middle of the room. Cutting off the rows of chairs to the long table that was featured in the center. It had much larger high- back chairs but instead of the red, they were gold. It was where the High Council members sat.

Since this was a little different than just a discussion, the table had been moved landscape from the door and now faced a group of chairs that had been set out. Most likely for the BloodHunter coven to sit. I headed to the left and the furthest row back against the wall. I positioned myself near center of the room, a good view of both the High Council and the BloodHunter seats.

I leaned down, Young was sitting in the seat below me, his right hand man sitting next to him. "I'm gonna need you to stop me if anything happens."

Young turned to look up at me, smiling. "You mean if I don't join you."

I chuckled and leaned back in the chair. I tried to look relaxed but I know my face look strained and I kept moving my hands around, unable to find a comfortable position to rest them. More and more people seemed to filter in and fill out the surrounding chairs. No one sat within three chairs next me or Young and his second which I was grateful for. I didn't want to make small talk. I was in no mood.

Suddenly, the bell tolled 2pm and the High Councilor's came in, taking their seats. I watch Cyra glance around the room, eyes settled to me for a moment and she gave me a quick smile.

"You guys still fucking?" I heard Young whisper.

"Shut the fuck up if you know what's good for you." I whispered under my breath.

He chuckled. "That's a yes."

But High Councilor Oran held out his hand, hushing the room.

"Today we are starting the last article of business we have for this meeting. I know many of us have feelings in regards to the coven in which we are speaking to today. I ask for everyone to keep their comments and personal opinions to themselves. This is the first time in over 300 years they have agreed to come before us and see if we can work out a mutually beneficial arrangement between us."

He paused and looked around the room. "This is very important for the survival of our races to be in harmony with one another and make sure we keep each other in check at all times. There will be a time for conversation depending on the agreements that are spoken. Until then, notate your feelings."

I saw Young readjust in his seat. A lot of vampires had a distaste for the Bloodhunter Coven. More-so than any of the other races. For me though, it was so much more personal. I clasp the armrests of my chair and I could hear the wood underneath groan.

"Please bring the BloodHunter Coven in." This time it was High Councilor Cyra who motioned for one of the attendants to go.

Everyone settled in their seats and waited. The room was quiet, dead quiet. Everyone staring at the doors. Finally, the doors open and a group of vampires walked into the room. It wasn't just vampires though, there were some humans among them as well.

"Slaves." Young leaned over to whisper to his right hand man, who seemed to have asked a question.

They filed in and started to fill out the chairs. A couple of them pulled their humans into their laps in the chairs, but most of them sat down, smiling at the High Council. I noticed one of the humans who didn't sit in the lap of the vampire who was obviously her master. She sat, eyes closed, on her knees next to his chair.

"Shit, that's a werewolf." Young looked back at me for a moment and then pointed her out to his companion.

Her hair was black, tied up in a high pony tail and it was so long that it pooled at her bare feet. She was wearing a red silk dress that clung to her in a way that left nothing to the imagination. But she was thin, toothpick thin. Her bones showed everywhere, even the ribs were prominent against the red fabric. The only way you could tell she was a werewolf though was the amount of silver on her. She had a silver collar with a thick silver chain then ran down the front of her. It was maybe 3 feet long but with her sitting on her knees, it pooled in her lap. Equally as chunky wrist and ankle braces were also attached to her. There were no chains on the ones on her feet but there was a good two foot length of chain on each of her wrists.

I leaned forward, my elbows resting on my knees. Clasping my hands together, I rested my chin on them. I looked to the man who was sitting next to her. He didn't pay much mind to her. He leisurely leaned against the chair, his legs crossed and he had his hands clasp together. He was young and handsome looking but there was something twisted about him. Either his eyes or his smile or his aura made you could feel the man was evil.

My eyes settled back on the werewolf girl. She was young but utterly broken. If he shifted, so did she. At one point, he put his hand on her head and she leaned into it. He stroked her head and she didn't move, didn't make a sound. I felt bad for her. I thought at what torture, what sick twisted things he had

done to actually break a werewolf. My thoughts wandered to Auri as I looked at the she-wolf. She would have risen up and killed every single one of them if she saw this. High Councilor Oran clapped his hands drawing my attention away from the bloodbath I was imaging and the meeting began.

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Chapter 47

Two days had passed. Two days of meetings that everyone had hit an impasse. The BloodHunter Coven wanted territory where they could do with what they wanted, the High Council refused the lands that they wanted. It went back and forth. Some were pack lands, some where too many humans, too less humans. Killing was limited to a certain amount a month. It was disgusting watching the back and forth.

Everyone decided that today would be a rest day. There would be a gathering this evening of everyone where we could relax and drink. Then we would be back to the meetings in the morning. So again, I found myself in the ballroom, this time a bourbon on the rocks in hand, staring out into the crowd. The BloodHunter Coven had also been allowed to attend.

"Staring daggers at them isn't going to kill them." Young came up and clinked his glass against mine without me moving. He quickly downed everything in his glass. "I think I have some stakes in my trunk if you wanna..."

"Young Kim, I'm gonna pretend I didn't hear that." High Councilor Cyra came up behind us.

Young coughed and smiling, I hit his back a few times too hard.

"Yes, thank you Councilor for you understanding." Young gave me a quick smile before he sulked off into the crowd.

"You've been very good." I looked down at her as she commented on my behavior and grimaced.

"I don't want to be. I mean a fucking werewolf slave, it's disgusting." I took a swig of my drink.

She smiled sadly and took a drink of her champagne. "Micah is a piece of work."

I looked at her, shocked. "High Councilor, are you not supposed to be impartial?"

Looking up to me, a smirk played on her lips. " I'm impartial when it comes to my thoughts on making a treaty with the BloodHunter Coven. Not when it comes to individuals." She paused. "The man is sick, twisted, and evil. He lives for causing others pain and breaking them. Any and all torture is acceptable to him. Whatever he feels is necessary."

I looked over to him in the crowd. He was wearing an all back suit with a blood red shirt. It was unbuttoned about halfway down and he was speaking enthusiastically to a bunch of vampire women. He was charismatic, even during the meetings. He had a charisma that you realized he was the head of this little group, even if he wasn't in the center of the group. His werewolf slave was standing behind him. This time wearing a white dress, it was now sickening to look at her. The spaghetti straps only accentuated her bones that stuck out from her skin. Her black hair braided down her back still reached her feet. She kept her head down, the chain around her neck looking like it was weighing her down. Her hands were clasp together, the chains from those swaying and knocking into each other. I looked away and took another drink.

"It's disgusting."

Cyra nodded to the corner of the room. "At least it settled down the Alpha King."

I looked over and sure enough, the usually boisterous and obnoxious king was talking quietly in a group of Alpha's.

"His pride has been hurt. Seeing a werewolf be broken b a vampire. Wouldn't be surprised if he tried to kill the girl before they leave." I looked up at Cyra, surprised. "Pride Max, is a dangerous thing."

She cleared her throat though and changed the subject, "But thats not what I came over here for. Will you play for us? For me?" She added the last question after my mouth turned into a frown involuntarily.

"Crya..."

"Please Max. I haven't heard you play in a while. How long has it been?"

I looked down. "Since Auri died. I haven't touched a piano."

She gave me a sad smile and lifted my chin up with her finger. "It's time."

I groaned. She knew I couldn't say no to her. I never could. "Fine Cyra, fine."

She beamed at me and I hated it. Finishing the rest of my drink, I grabbed another one as I headed to the back of the ballroom. She followed behind me and I flashed Young a smile and shrugged as we passed.

"You managed to talk him into it?" Young whispered to Cyra.

"It wasn't hard." Cyra chuckled it.

Young cursed. "Must be nice."

Ignoring both of them, I made my way over to the grand piano. Tonights music was a handful of string musicians in the far right corner and so the piano was closed. The bench was pushed in. I ran my hands over the piano and sighed. The only thing I could think of was the final set I played that Auri had recorded for her mate.

Young pulled out the seat for me and bowed mockingly and I swatted him away as I sat down.

"High Councilor Cyra, correct?"

We all slightly jumped as Micah showed up next to the three of us. I locked my jaw and balled up my hands.

"Yes and you are Micah Smith. We haven't formally been introduced." She held out her hand to shake his but he took hers and kissed the top of it.

"It's wonderful to hear my name from the lips of a beautiful woman." He smiled as he looked over to us expectantly.

"My name is Young Kim, I am head of the Tiger Coven in Seoul. This man..." he put his hand on my shoulder "...is Maximillion Cattaneo, right hand man to Morgan Russo and pianist extraordinaire."

I couldn't even manage a fake smile. I just tilted my head in acknowledgement.

"Well, Maximillion, my little bird here loves to sing. She can accompany your playing, isn't that right?" Micah pushed forward the young werewolf girl who

was trailing him. She stumbled forward a bit, her chains clanging together. My throat caught and I could feel the grimace on my face. She didn't say a word or look up. Micah smiled though, seemingly enjoying our discomfort. "She doesn't have much opportunity to perform and I always feel bad about keeping her caged in."

His words made me want to throw up and Young, who was still resting his hand on my shoulder, gripped it tighter.

"Well..." Cyra was the first to speak up. "If she enjoys singing, then I'm sure Maximillion wouldn't mind the accompaniment."

"Perfect!" Micah clapped his hands together.

I looked from Cyra to the werewolf girl. I didn't even know if she could sing, if she knew any songs, if she even would be able to even speak. I hated this. I hated looking at this poor girl and now I was supposed to play with her. My discomfort must have showed because Young cleared his throat.

"Does..." Young looked at Micah for a name.

"You may call her little bird. She had no name." He smiled, patting her back and pressed her forward a little more.

"Does little bird have any specific songs she enjoys most? So that Maximillion can play something she knows."

Micah leaned down and whispered in her ear, even too low for us to hear. There was a slight shake of her head. He stood back up and smiled.

"No, no preference. You play, she will sing." Micah surprisingly stepped back, leaving his slave with us as he went to join the group that had been waiting for him.

We all looked at this little werewolf girl, who still hadn't raised her head.

"Don't disappoint me little bird." Micah called back as he walked further away from her and we watched as she tensed.

"Shit." Young took a deep breath. "Let's just get this over with."

I agreed with his sentiment and turned back to look down at the keys before me. I pressed a few keys and I was intrigued with every key I hit, she seemed

to visibly relax. Her back straightening from its hunch, her shoulders drawing back, her head straightening. She still had her eyes closed but I looked at this thin twig of a girl and my heart hurt as I thought of Auri. Of how much this girl reminded me of Auri.

"Maximillion, the floor is yours." Cyra had stopped the other musicians and some eyes turned to us in interest as the music that was playing in the background stopped.

Shaking my head, I played a cord and then another. My fingers nimbly brushed the keys of the piano. Without meaning to, I played one of Auri's favorite songs. Closing my eyes, I let the music take me away. I let my whole soul, or what was left of it, dive in and forget everything else around me. At first, it was just my piano, just the notes filling the air. Then suddenly I heard her, heard Auri singing with me. My heart clenched and I continued to play, wanting to continue to hear the woman who had weaseled her way into the hearts of half the hard-ass Italian mafia.

I couldn't take it anymore, I opened my eyes to look at the werewolf who was making me hear Auri and my hands fumbled against the keys. Micah's little bird was looking at me, her eyes open, grey eyes looking back at me. Her voice didn't sound like Auri's, her voice was Auri's.

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Chapter 48

My eyes went wide as I somehow still managed to keep up with the song. This broken little twig of a werewolf was Auri. She was alive, barely. So many things were running through my mind as I jumped into the second song. Morgan would have torn the whole hall apart but he wouldn't have lived at the end of it. May not even have been able to free Auri in the process. She was a slave. A broken doll to Micah. However, Micah would have never brought her over if he knew who Auri was, not with the close relationship we had with Auri. Had she not revealed anything about her but just broke?

I stumbled again over the keys but her voice didn't waver once. There was no passion though, no emotions in her singing. She sounded beautiful but it was hollow and soulless. How could I free her? How could I even get a damn message out of here? If she left this place with them she would be gone again, probably forever.

The Bloodhunters popped up when they wanted to and otherwise you would never know where they were.

I was brought out of thoughts by Auri coughing and my eyes snapped to her throat, which was straining against the silver collar. It was maybe three inches wide and a half an inch thick. I couldn't image the pain the silver caused her. Micah came up after the second song and pulled her face toward him.

"You're okay to do one more, right little bird?"

She nodded. Opening her mouth, Micah slammed his mouth on hers, tongue in first. I watched disgusted as he savagely kissed her. Never once did she move, standing like he was kissing a marble statue. He pulled back and I smelled the blood. She was bleeding inside her mouth from singing. Out of his jacket pocket, he pulled a small little vial and dropped two drops into her mouth.

"One more song, little bird. Then we will leave Maximillion alone. I don't think he likes us very much." Micah flashed a smile at me before retreating back.

I looked back down at the keys and stared to play again. Another one I knew she knew. Another one I knew she couldn't resist to move or feel. She would always let herself be swept away by the music. Sadly, she never came back. Beautifully but emotionlessly she sang with me. My heart hurt. Morgan had had them confirm her death. Confirmed that she was gone. Hell, even Alpha Logan had felt the death of his mate.

How was she here now? Had she been in his clutches the whole time? I didn't want to imagine so, but I knew better.

Finishing the song, I let the last note play out longer than needed, not taking my finger off the key. Micah clapped first, followed by the rest of the people in the room. I just stared at her. Her head went back down to looking at the floor and I wanted nothing more than to hold her to me.

"Maxamillion, pianist extraordinaire is an understatement. That was fantastic. Lovely with my little bird singing." Micah came up and put his hand around her.

Before he pulled her away I stood up, too quickly, and made the bench scot back loudly. "How much?" I coughed out, my mind going miles a minute. The only thing a could think was don't let them go. Do something, anything.

Micah raised his eyebrow, surprised. "How much?" He repeated questioningly.

I stammered. "Her voice. How much for her voice?"

Micah cracked a smile, wide and maniacal. "Well now! Maximillion! Here I thought you didn't like the idea of slaves but you're asking to purchase my little bird!"

"I almost gave up the piano recently because it all sounded, the same. But with her..." I did my best to look her up and down like a piece of property, a piece of meat. I had to sell this bullshit. "With her in my home, I wouldn't mind coming home to play the piano again."

"The fuck Maximillion?" Young came up next to me. Micah looked from Young to me.

I glared at Young, who stepped back a half a step. "Step off Young, you're not even half my age and you have Gianna. I don't have anyone, anything. I've had women but they do nothing but serve to annoy the shit out of me until I kick them out. Maybe its time I try something new. Something..." I looked at Micah and then at Auri. "...more tamed."

Micah threw his head back and laughed, it echoed through the room and turned some heads over to where we had been talking. "Maximillion, my boy, I know exactly how you feel. Being vampires can be a lonely existence but you also lose patience very quickly." He smiled and nodded to me. "How about this? After the next meeting, let's have a chat in the garden. We can discuss details."

I nodded. "Thank you."

He pulled her away. Auri stumbled after him and when he went back to his group coven, she took her place just behind him. Hands clasp and her head bent down. They soon headed out just after that. Young grabbed my arm and pulled me out one of the side doors and basically threw me against the wall. I heard the stones crack behind me.

"What the fuck Max? What the fuck was that?"

"That was Auri. Fuck. Young that was her."

His anger dropped immediately and he whispered. "What do you mean?"

"Her hair was dyed, but fucking shit. That was Auri, her voice. That was actually her."

"Max, Auri is dead."

I shoved him back. "Don't you think I know that! But then here she is, a fucking shell, a fucking slave. I know her voice Young. If anyone knows her voice, it's me!"

"So that..."

I put my hands on my head and paced the hallway we were in. "I'm no Morgan. I can't plan for shit. I'm not good with stealth and I also don't have an arm or the balls to attack someone in the damn castle of the High Council. It was the only thing I could think of. It literally just spewed out of my mouth."

"What? Buying her?"

"Yes! I mean, a voice like hers is rare. It's worth a lot to a musician. I had to sell it. I don't do slaves. Young, I have to save her. I have to do something." I choked out sobs. "Fuck. I need to talk to Morgan."

"Well, you can't. Not while you are here. So we need a plan. A plan for tomorrow." He gave me a quick nod. "I might be half your years, but I'll help where I can."

"I'm sorry, I was worried you were gonna fuck it up." I sighed.

"I'm glad you did if it means you get Auri back." He ran his hand through his hair and leaned his back against the opposite wall. "Fuck dude, I can't imagine the hell that girl has gone through. To act like that and to break like that."

I smiled. "She's not completely broken."

"What makes you say that? You saw her, on her knees, never looking up."

"Because Micah doesn't know who she is. He would never have let her near me if he knew. He would have done is research. Even if there was a chance Morgan came this time instead of me. Morgan probably would have recognized her immediately." I kicked myself for that. How did I not know? How could I not see?

"Well, that's a little light but you can't beat yourself up. She...probably hasn't looked like..."

"Like they removed everything but her skin and bones."

He nodded and we stayed silent for a few minutes.

"Well, let's make a plan."

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Chapter 49

Young and I went over the different scenarios that could happen. I had access to my own wealth, which was pretty sizable considering my age but I knew Morgan wouldn't mind me dipping into the funds of the mafia if it meant purchasing Auri. That was if Micah would let her go. He seemed proud of her. Proud enough to parade her into a High Council meeting.

"You ready?" Young leaned over while we were in the meeting room.

The meeting had gone pretty much the same as the other two days. Each side volleying wants and the other side saying no.

"No. I feel like I'm gonna pass out and throw up at the same time." I was not built for this kind of stress.

"Well, suck it up."

I had to lean into the lonely vampire, lonely musician persona. Mafia Italian bachelor who was sick and tired of women. Sick and tired of their bullshit and ready to have someone obey me at every turn. I had to sell it because Auri's life depended on it.

The meeting ended in a huff of voices. The High Council was not happy, the people around not happy but the Bloodhunter Coven seemed to expect this pushback and didn't look perturbed at all. They all filtered out of the room and I went to my room, dressing in something a little more casual. I kept my slacks on, but I put on a white collared shirt, rolled up the sleeves and left the top three buttons undone. I put on a few small gold chains. Young and I agreed to play up the rich, Italian mafia captain attire.

There was a knock on the door and I looked down to one the attendants. "Mr. Smith is ready for you in the garden."

I nodded and grabbed my gold Rolex watch, putting it on as we walked down to the garden.

Normally, the garden was saved for outdoor activities during the spring but the summer had been mild and the flowers still bloomed. There was a table set up within a gazebo on the far end of the garden, overlooking both the flowers but also the lake that spanned just past a field of grass.

"Maxamillion! Welcome!" Micah had a woman on his lap, Auri on her knees next to him. There were also a few other BloodHunter vampires with women also enjoying the shade of the gazebo.

"Come, sit. Would you like some tea or coffee or ..."

I smiled and pulled out a chair. "Iced tea would be lovely." I pulled up my leg and rested my foot on my knee, trying to look as casual as I could be.

Micah waved at an attendant and they hurried off. "Frankly, I'm a little surprised. I thought I sensed some serious hostility towards me."

I shrugged. "While I may not agree with all your practices, your ability to..." I looked at the woman in his lap and then down at Auri. "...tame, I admit, I felt you might be able to provide me with something I needed."

He chuckled. "It's a lonely existence. We have to find ways to amuse ourselves outside of keeping the business up and running."

"Next time I let a bitch toy my heart, will be the day I finally decide to just burn down the Vatican."

Micah barked a laugh. "When's the last time that happened?"

I smiled. "When High Councilor Cyra was sworn in."

He whistled. "Well well! Maximillion fucking the High Councilor. Don't worry, I won't tell."

"Little bird..." He paused as she stood for him, keeping her head bowed.

"...keep Maximillion here company would you. He values your voice little bird, why not give him a taste of your body too."

My foot slipped off my knee and I waited, stiffly, as Auri walked over to me and sat in my lap. I spun her around, so she had to straddle me in the chair. Roughly, I took hold of her chin and pulled her face up to look at me.

"She isn't the prettiest thing but her voice is enough for a musician. I don't need to see her to hear her." I kept my voice as matter-of-factly.

"It's true. Not to mention she's a werewolf, so she isn't useful for a midnight snack. Deep down she's a mutt though. Mutts can be trained to do anything."

I put my hands on her hips and adjusted her closer, looking into her eyes. "So she's blind?"

"Yeah. Previous to my acquirement of her. Though doesn't seem to slow her down too much. New places she takes a few hours to orient herself but she's good after that. Cleans up after herself. I train them right. I take pride in it. Once you break them, they are a blank slate."

"Voice isn't something you can train though." I lifted her up and turned her back around, so she was sitting forward on my lap. "That's why to a musician's ear, a genuine singer is worth some... defects." I paused, chewing on my last word.

He smiled. "She's a bit of an achievement of mine. It's long since I've had a werewolf so obedient."

I nodded, running my hands through her hair. Pulling it up to my nose, I sniffed. It smelled like Strawberry shampoo and hair de. I wondered when the last time she had felt the forest around her. This girl on my lap didn't know me. Didn't even care. Didn't feel. I wondered if Auri would ever come back. If she was still somewhere in this shell.

"I know you wouldn't part with her for an menial amount."

Micah kicked the woman off his lap and signaled for the vampires around him to leave. They quickly took off. Leaving him, Auri on my lap, and I in the garden. He paused for a moment as the attendant brought my drink and scurried off.

"I don't normally speak about personal business in front of them. It has nothing to do with the coven and they have no need to know what flows in or out of my personal accounts."

I nodded. "I feel the same in regards to my business."

He leaned back and out of a jacket he pulled a case of hand rolled joints. He offered me one and I took it, only leaning back only for him to light it for me. Taking a drag, I blew out the smoke. I paused for a moment and then took another drag. I didn't let it out right away and I yanked back on Auri's collar chain. Her head snapped back and I exhaled into her nose and mouth. She breathed in and out. Not a single sound or cough out of her.

Micah chuckled. "You work for the Italian Mafia, correct? You recently shut down some vampires trafficking drugs to humans?"

"Yeah. Their drugs fucked with the humans in ways that was calling attention to the drug and what was in it. It also made their blood undrinkable, rendering the humans worthless. Doesn't matter if you're vampires, humans, or werewolves. You cross the mafia and try to make money out of businesses we have our hands in without permission, shit happens." I took another drag and fed it to Auri again, her head still back as I held her chain tight. I had to fucking sell it and I hated every minute of it. She was starting to relax in my lap. Instead of being stiff, her legs now draped against mine.

"Well shit. Good riddance then. Though, I would be interested in seeing some of the product."

I nodded. "That can be arranged."

He smiled. "Maximillion, it seems you are a little more openminded than your boss."

"Morgan Russo is a hell of a leader and a damn good boss but he's so busy with making sure he's not on anyones side that he runs himself into dead ends somethings." I looked at Auri and let my eyes roam over her body. "I'm not one to limit myself."

I let go of her chain and she fell against my shoulder, the potent smoke making her limp. I looked at Micah who was amused and he smoked.

"What do you want for her?" Finally I asked, not waiting to keep this charade up more than I needed to.

He rubbed his chin, thinking. "Truthfully, before this chat, I wasn't willing to part with her. But if there is anyone who I feel could keep little bird, put her to good use, it seems like you, Maximillion."

"Max. My friends call me Max."

This made him smile. "I will say, my personal business is expensive and a lot of times doesn't turn a profit. But a man like you, I'm sure you could help me with that."

I nodded. "I can definitely help with that. Untraceable and clean. I don't like getting the mafias money mixed with mine. Especially when I don't want my boss asking why I have a receipt for a slave in the laundry."

He laughed. "Touche. Alright then, twenty million."

I tsked. "I can't drink from her, she isn't all that pretty, she's blind, and she has these..." I gestured to the scars on her body. "...and you want twenty million?"

"Got a better offer?"

"Ten million. Transferred today from my personal account."

He leaned forward. "Now now Max. You know as well as I do that her voice is worth much more than that. Eighteen and I still get it today."

"Fourteen, you get it today and I'll throw in some of the drugs we confiscated as a gift."

This time he leaned back, chewing on my offer. He nodded, slowly at first and then more sure. " Alright Max, you got yourself a deal." Holding out his hand, I took it and we gave it a hard shake.

Micah whistled and an attendant came over. He scurried off for a second and came back with two phones on a tray. I picked up mine and unlocked it. He provided me with an account number and I pulled up my personal account and transferred the fourteen million to his account. He waited and as soon as he confirmed it, he put the phone back on the tray. I followed suit, making sure to close the tab and lock it.

"Pleasure doing business with you, Max. I'll have one of my men get in touch with you for the location for the gift." He smiled and came over. Pulling Auri up by the chain, he faced her. "Little bird. Nod if you understand and you heed my command."

Her relaxed slouch snapped up into a straight back, she nodded.

"I, Micah Smith transfer command of little bird to Maximillion Cattaneo. He is your master now. You will do, say, act, and obey all his commands and words."

I was going to be sick. He smiled and handed me a little book. It was handwritten and I looked at him, confused for a second. "She's all yours. The book is notes on keywords or phrases to use with her to follow your command. You can learn to weave them into sentences over time. There are also some notes in rewards and punishments that work best with this one. It always varies. See you around, Max. Enjoy!" He tossed the last word at me as he left me alone with Auri sitting on my lap. She didn't follow him, if anything she was standing to attention waiting for me to give her a command.

"Kneel." I growled as I stood up. She half fell and half clamored to her knees when I leaned over the side of the gazebo and threw up. Spitting out the taste, I took a drink of the iced tea they brought me, swished it around my mouth, and then spit it out over the side. I looked down at her, she was shaking slightly as she was on her knees. I was elated. Somehow it worked. It cost me fourteen million but I fucking did it. Now what do I do?

Alpha's Blind Luna, Chapter 50

Chapter 50

I didn't give a shit about the rest of the meeting. I didn't give a shit what the Bloodhunter coven did or the High Council did right now. I needed to get Auri far away from here. I spoke to Cyra and told her something had come up and to give me the details once they were done. She was still little pissed at me, having overheard the request I made of Micah, as well. I was not going to explain it to her though.

"Follow." I told Auri as well left my room and walked down the hall. I still hadn't gotten used to the command list. At first, I had tried to not use it. She was unresponsive to the point where she didn't eat for hours and realized I was in way over my head with this.

I kept a quick pace and she struggled to keep up with me but I yanked my phone off the table as we walked out of the castle. The valet was already pulling my car around. I threw my suitcase in the trunk and I opened the passenger side door for Auri. She stood there, waiting.

"Get in." Her hand reached out and touched the door, and climbed into the seat.

I slammed the door after her and got into the drivers side. As I peeled away, I connected my phone to the car. I scrolled through the menu until I quick dialed Morgan. Ring. Ring. Ring. I tapped the steering wheel, anxious. The phone went to voicemail.

"Fuck." My outburst started her and she shrank back into her seat, her hands holding the chain from her neck.

I leaned over and grabbed the seatbelt, pulling it over her and locking it in. I looked at the collar and cursed. As soon as I made it back to the room, Young and I had tried to take the damn thing off of her but she started screaming and thrashing against us. I didn't want to hurt her and as soon as we stopped she calmed down.

"Get comfortable, little bird. It's gonna be a long trip."

She relaxed a little and repositioned herself in the seat.

I tried calling Morgan again. Ring. Ring. Ring. Nothing. Sighing, I just switched to music.

"You can sing with the music if you know it, little bird."

She nodded but didn't say anything.

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We drove for three days before we finally crossed into Italy. This meeting had been in Germany and I had no paperwork for Auri to be able to fly. We only stopped for food, gas, and restroom breaks. She had loosened up enough to hum to a song or two that came over the radio. But she hadn't spoken or said a word. The music stopped and the phone rang over the car speakers.

"Hello?" I answered without looking at the caller ID.

"Max, why the fuck do I have 51 missed calls from you?"

I growled. "Fucking Christ Morgan, answer your god damn phone will you. I've been trying to call you for DAYS." I paused, switching gears. "There is a package with your name on it. I need you to come inspect it."

We didn't know when or where we might be getting listened to. So it was automatic for us to switch to code for anything important.

"Look, I'm not gonna be back for at least another month. You are gonna have to deal with it."

"NO!" I looked over at Auri who had jumped, nearly spilling her drink on herself. She quickly felt around to make sure none got out. "Morgan, this package smells real bad. I need to here NOW. It got delivered to the beachside property."

"Max, I can't..."

"Morgan Russo, this isn't up for debate." For the first time in a very long time, I stepped out of my role as underling. "You need to be at the beach house within the week. This package needs to be taken care of and I'm not one that can. So you will wrap whatever the fuck you have been doing for the past four months and get you ass over there. Is that understood?"

There was quiet over the line before Morgan answered. "Maximillion, we will discuss this when I get there."

"Fine." I mumbled and hung up the phone.

I pulled the car over and just stared at the steering wheel. I never liked being in over my head. I didn't like this feeling of helplessness. Morgan pissed me off. A hand touched my arm and I looked over. Auri was facing me. This was the first time she initiated any sort of contact. Putting my hand over hers, we just stayed like that for a minute.

"Auri." I looked at her face but there was no spark of understanding, of acknowledgement.

I moved my arm and put the car back in drive. She dropped her hand from my arm, sitting back in her seat. Hopefully I could make it down to the southern tip of Italy before Morgan showed up or he would be even more pissed. I did call

some of the guys and request that they restock the house as well as pick up clothes for Auri. A woman at a register who had clearly dyed her hair multiple times recommended a color stripping cream and I had them pick up 5 bottles just in case.

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The next two and a half days it took to get down to the southern tip of Italy went by smoothly. When I pulled up to the house, the sea crashed against the rocks. The house was on an outlet that was surrounded by the sea. It was actually my permanent residence that was my first purchase when I started working for Morgan. I didn't use it often anymore but it was there for me when I needed a break. It was where I went when I said I was going back home.

It was a three story mansion that sat on the edge of the water. While there was no sand, you could jump in the water from three sides of the house. I had Auri follow me in as I grabbed my suitcase from the trunk. She walked in after me and I flipped through the book Micah gave me. It was gross and disgusting but right now, it was the only thing she knew and listened to.

"Explore and memorize, little bird."

I looked up and she bowed to me before I watched as she quietly padded through the house. Her arms slightly out as she navigated the new space, feeling each of the furniture pieces. Meanwhile, I turned to the bar where the men had left the clothing and items I requested. Jackets, shirts, underwear, pants, and a couple dresses, all size small. I didn't know what size she was but as she was now, she was thinner than was humane. They also had a separate bag full of toiletries and the boxes of hair dye remover.

My head whipped up as she knocked into a table but she didn't say anything as she continued felt around the table and chairs. One thing I hadn't been looking forward to was bathing her. In the notes, it was a reward. It meant that she would go without bathing for long periods of time if she wasn't rewarded. She also didn't bathe herself anymore.

I grabbed the clothes and bag of toiletries and went upstairs into the biggest of the spare bedrooms. Setting out the clothes, I would let her choose which ones she wanted. She didn't have any pajamas so I figured I would grab a couple of my shirts for her.

I walked down about halfway down the stairs. "Little bird, come."

Immediately, she walked over from the path she had come, not knocking into anything. She came up the stairs and I took her hand, pulling her up the rest of the way. I took her into the room.

"Kneel." She did so immediately. "Little bird, I'm going to take the chains off now. Okay?"

She started to shake her head furiously and the panic that I had seen before started to come through.

"Little bird, listen. The chains, not the cuffs or collars." I took her hand and I placed it on the chain that was hanging from her neck. "Just the chain, little bird."

Her hand climbed up to the top of the rung that was attached to the collar and tapped it.

"Right little bird. Right there. The ones on your wrists too."

She nodded, calmed down a bit more, and held out her wrists for me. I grabbed the bolt cutters I had brought up with me and made quick work of the ones on her wrists. They fell with a thud and she waved her arms around a little, feeling them without the extra weight. The collar was harder. I wasn't able to get a good enough angle on the top link so I had to leave one as the rest fell away. She touched the link and nodded.

"Little bird deserves an award."

Her face lit up and she smiled. I was glad at that moment she was blind. I felt sick, visibly disgusted. Every time I used the words I felt more and more like I wanted to dip myself in holy water. Getting up, I turned the bath water on. I heard her pad into the bathroom and she was completely naked as she kneeled down next to the bathtub.

Looking up at the ceiling, I gulped. I knew werewolves had no issues with being naked as when they shifted they would end up tearing their clothes. I was not a werewolf nor had I ever thought I would be seeing Auri like this. I clearing my throat, I told her to get in. She felt the sides of the bathtub and stepped in, sinking into the warm water. Grabbing the washcloth from the closet, I soaped it up and began washing her. She closed her eyes, breathing steadily, relaxed.

She was so thin. It hurt to see her like this. I didn't want to make quick work of it, knowing this was how she was rewarded but my throat was having a tough time swallowing. Finally, once I had finished washing her, I took out the bottles of dye remover. It wasn't bleach but she said it might not work as well on hair that was really light with a really dark color. I was into bottle three when I could actually see streaks of her old color. Auri was patient, arms wrapped around her knees in the warm water as I scrubbed through the color in her hair.

By the time I was done, I had used all 5 bottles, shampooed and conditioned her hair. It was more of a silver grey rather than her original color. It was better than the ugly black. I handed her a towel and she wrapped it around herself. I brought her back into the room and let her touch all the clothes on the bed.

"Choose little bird."

I left real fast and headed up to the third floor where the master suite was. I dug through my dresser and grabbed some old large shirts and took them down. She had put on some underwear and one of the bra's when I came back down.

"Is little bird tired?"

She nodded.

"Sleep, little bird." I handed her one of my shirts and she pulled it on. I tucked her into the bed. " Goodnight Auri." I kissed her forehead, truthfully out of habit and she stiffened for a minute but didn't move.