

Alpha's Regret: Begging For My Luna Back – Chapter 151

Faith's Pov

I was heading toward the main living area in the packhouse, needing to talk to the Beta about patrol schedules, when I heard it.

“Oh look, the banished one's mate,” one girl sneered.

I paused instantly. Banished mate. That meant Kimberly. Who now happens to be the one person around the pack that I trust with my kids.

I pushed the door open. Four women were standing over Kimberly, who was huddled on the couch, her face pale and her eyes red-rimmed.

“Honestly, Kimberly,” another girl, Jenna, said with a falsely sweet voice, leaning down close to her face, “you must be the dumbest wolf in this pack. Didn't you get the memo? He's gone. He's never coming back. You're just trash now, mate-less trash.”

Kimberly flinched as if she'd been slapped, pulling her knees up to her chest.

That was it. The anger I was feeling lately had me stomping there as fast as I could. I didn't remember walking across the room, but suddenly I was there, standing between Kimberly and the four bullies. The air thickened around me, the Luna command came naturally, freezing them in place.

“What in the hell do you think you're doing?” I asked, my voice low and dangerous.

Jenna tried to recover quickly, plastering on a fake smile. “Luna, we were just joking around.

Kimberly knows we love her, right?”

I fixed my gaze on her. “You think abusing a pack member is a joke? You think taunting her about losing her mate, about being humiliated, is funny?” I didn't raise my voice, but the sheer force of my control made them tremble. “I didn't hear a joke. I heard pure cruelty.”

My eyes swept over all four of them, holding their gaze until they dropped their heads.

“Let me make this perfectly clear,” I enunciated every word slowly, letting my Luna authority press down on them like physical weight. “I do not, and I will not, tolerate abuse of any kind here. Not in my pack. Not ever again.”

I thought of the years I spent being tormented, the countless times I was made to feel small and worthless. I won't let that filth touch anyone else.

"If I hear a single word about any of you bullying Kimberly, or anyone else, I will not banish you. I will reassign you to omega duty for the rest of your lives. Get out of my sight. Now."

They scattered like frightened rabbits, tripping over themselves to escape the room.

When the door slammed shut, silence fell. I slowly turned to face Kimberly. Her shoulders were shaking, and she looked up at me with wide, tear-filled eyes.

"Faith," she whispered, her voice tight. "I... I am so sorry."

I tilted my head, confused. "Sorry for what?"

"For everything," she choked out. "For being one of them. For laughing when others hurt you years ago. I was awful. And today, you were the one who defended me. I don't deserve it."

I sat down next to her on the couch.

"You're right," I said simply. "You were part of the problem. But right now, you are being hurt, and nobody should have to go through that."

She wiped her cheek with the back of her hand. "Why? After what I did to you?"

"I defended you because I was abused worse than you ever were," I told her, the memory tightening in my chest.

I leaned in, meeting her gaze seriously. "But here is what you need to understand, Kimberly. They can only bully you when you let them. You sat there and waited for me, or someone else, to be your savior. That stops now."

Her face went blank with shock.

"You shouldn't have to wait for me to defend you," I insisted. "You are a strong woman. You need to defend yourself. You need to look those morons in the eye and make them back down. If you don't stand up for yourself, they will never stop, no matter how many times I chase them away."

I stood up, feeling the need to put my words into action. "I have things to do. Next time I walk in here, I expect to see you standing, telling them to kiss your butt. Understand?"

She nodded slowly, a small flicker of fire finally returning to her eyes. "I understand, Luna."

I left the Packhouse and headed for the dungeons.

After she was taken back from the hospital, I made it clear that while she was confined, there was to be no hard torture. It wouldn't serve any purpose. I needed her alive, sane, and ready to face the consequences of her actions.

Being there was I terrible memory of where I lost my child but I took a deep breath and did what I needed to do.

I reached Alice's cell. She was sitting down leaning against the cold stone wall, reading a book.

I stood there for a moment, gripping the bars, unsure what to say. Usually, I went in with a wall of cold anger but today I felt nothing for her.

Alice looked up. She didn't look scared or manipulative. She looked tired.

"Hello, Faith," she said softly.

"Faith, I know you won't believe me, and you don't have to. But being here has made me realize how truly wrong I was. I was a horrible person. I am a bad person."

My skepticism flared immediately. This was a classic manipulation technique.

"Save the drama, Alice," I warned her, my voice turning hard. "Don't try to play the repentance card to get yourself released."

To my absolute shock, Alice let out a genuine laugh. It wasn't a mocking laugh, it was a sound of acceptance.

"Release? Faith, please," she shook her head, still smiling faintly. "I deserve everything coming to me. After what I did to you, after the life I stole from you, I know I deserve this cage."

"Then why are you laughing?" I asked, completely thrown.

"Because for the first time in a very long time, I am telling the absolute truth, and it feels strange," she admitted.

I sighed, running a hand through my hair. I didn't have time for her soul searching. I had a specific reason for being here.

"I'm not here for your confession, Alice," I stated, my heart feeling heavy. "I'm here because it's time Isabella knows the truth. She needs to know her life has been a lie. And I want it to come from you,"

Alice looked utterly dejected, the laughter gone, replaced by sadness. She nodded slowly.

"I know that telling her the truth will not bring back the years I took away from her and from you, the years I took from being with her real mother," Alice whispered, her eyes shining with

unshed tears. “But at least... at least Isabella will know. And maybe, just maybe, you can finally be mother and daughter. The way it was always supposed to be. She deserves that.”

I turned to leave because I fulfilled the sole purpose of my visit but I still had one last thing to say.

“I want you to know something. I don’t hate you.”

She looked up at me, surprised. “How can you say that?”

“Because instead of abusing my daughter, like how I was abused by your mother, you loved her. You truly loved Isabella. That is something I will always respect.”

I took a deep breath.

“But respect doesn’t mean I forgive you,” I clarified sharply. “It means I will let you live. Because it would be unfair for me to tell my baby when she grows up that I killed the woman who raised her until she was five years old. I will not do that to her.”

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I stood outside the dungeon. I wasn’t trying to spy, not really. But that door had Alice on one side and my daughter on the other.

And I didn’t trust Alice as far as I could throw her. Isabella is only five years old. She’s tiny, and her heart is the size of a planet, and she believes everything grown-ups tell her specifically if it’s her mother.

Alice knew just how to twist the truth after all she created misunderstandings between me and Astor for years.

My wolf could pick up on everything that was said.

“...and you must be a good girl, Bella,” I heard Alice say, her voice sounding sickly sweet—too sweet for my liking. “Mommy loves you and I miss you very much.”

My stomach knotted up. Mommy. She doesn’t get to be mommy.

Isabella’s little voice piped up, sounding serious. “But why did you do the bad thing mommy? Why did you make Auntie Faith cry?”

There was a long silence, and I held my breath. This was the moment. Was Alice going to lie and blame me, or just admit she was evil?

“Sometimes, honey,” Alice finally whispered, sounding like she was fighting back tears, “grown-ups make mistakes because they are very, very confused. I confused myself right into a big problem.”

That was the biggest understatement but I sagged in relief. At least she wasn’t telling Isabella any lies. She was admitting some fault. But still, the way she spoke—it made her sound like a victim of bad luck, not the woman who tried to steal my life.

A few more minutes dragged by with Alice apologising and justifying herself. Then, I heard a chair scrape back, followed by a slight sniffle.

“I have to go now mommy,” Isabella said firmly. “Mommy Faith is waiting.”

That sound, Isabella choosing me, naming me as her safe person was like a shot of warmth straight through my chilled bones.

A second later, the big iron door creaked open and Isabella burst out. She didn’t look left or right. She didn’t look back at the dark cell. She looked straight at me, standing there pale and anxious, and she ran.

“Faith!”

She launched herself right into my waiting arms. I almost stumbled backward, but I caught her and wrapped my body around hers, burying my face in the soft, sweet-smelling curls of her hair. I squeezed her so tight I thought she might pop, but I didn’t care. She was here, she was safe, and she chose me.

She pulled back just enough to look me right in the eye, her beautiful brown eyes were wide and serious.

“Faith,” she started, her voice very soft and wobbly. She put her little hands on my big cheeks.” Mommy told me something.” Here it comes.

“What did she tell you, sweetie?” I managed to whisper, bracing myself.

She leaned in close, her breath warm on my chin. “She said you are my mother, too. Is that true? Are you really my mom?”

Tears welled up instantly, blurring the edges of her sweet, chubby little face. I looked at the tiny, innocent soul in my arms. I looked at the dark dungeon door behind us, representing years of pain and Alice’s awful lies.

I didn't use big words. I didn't need to. I just nodded my head hard, a big, shaky, wet nod.

"Yes, baby," I whispered, kissing her forehead. "Yes, I am your mom. And I always have been."

Isabella didn't cry. She just smiled a gap-toothed, relieved smile. She brought her hands up and smacked a loud, wet kiss right on my cheek. I closed my eyes, savoring that moment. The simple, undeniable acceptance.

I'm glad I didn't need to explain anything to her and she just understood and I was worried about doing this before Astor came back but it worked out well.

Then, she got serious again. She pulled back and wiped a tear away from my face with her thumb.

"My mom Alice says she did a big bad thing. But she said she was confused, not bad. So I told her I forgive her."

I stared at her, stunned. Five years old. Forgiving the woman who caused all of this destruction.

"She's not a bad person, Faith," Isabella continued, lecturing me sweetly. "She just did a bad thing. And you should forgive her too because she was sad in the dungeon."

I swallowed hard, trying to process this wave of pure, uncomplicated empathy. I didn't feel like forgiving Alice. I felt like burning the whole dungeon down. But I nodded anyway.

"You are the smartest girl in the world, Isabella. And so very kind. If you can forgive her, then I will try, too. Alice made a big mistake, but you are right, she isn't a bad person." I don't have the heart to tell her that forgiveness doesn't work like that but I will reassure her and make sure that she never carries the burden of whatever happens between us.

I pulled her close again, breathing in the relief that flooded over me. The relief that she was safe, that she knew the truth, and the small, slightly mean relief that she would never again ask.

"Where is my mom, Faith?" Never again would she use that word for the woman who tried to steal her. That chapter, thank God, was closed.

The walk home was quick. Ma and Pa and my parents, were sitting at the kitchen table, watching us with worried eyes, and Marco, my little boy, was playing with blocks on the floor. Neither Ma nor Pa knew the full, story yet. I just hadn't had the words to explain the kidnapping, the deceit, and the awful truth.

The moment Isabella spotted Marco, she leaped out of my arms and ran straight to him.

"Marco! Marco!" she shrieked, coming to a stop beside his blocks.

Marco looked up, annoyed that his tower was interrupted.

“What?” he grumbled.

Isabella knelt down, her face bright with a world-changing revelation.

“Guess what!” she announced, loud enough for the whole room to hear. “Guess what, guess what, Faith is my mom now And Marco, we are twins!”

Marco dropped his block. His eyes got wide, going from confused to extremely excited in half a second.

“We are?!” Marco shouted, scrambling to stand up. “You mean you have two moms? Wow! Nobody has two moms!”

I groaned internally, burying my face in my hands. Five-year-old logic was a beautiful, terrifying thing. In his mind, since Alice was her mom, and I am also her mom, she now has two moms.

The silence that fell over the kitchen was thick and heavy.

I looked up. Ma and Pa were staring at me, their forks frozen halfway to their mouths. Pa’s eyebrows were practically touching his hairline. Ma looked like she might faint. Their faces were a perfect mix of shock and confusion.

I managed to give them a weak and tired smile. I walked over to the table and gave Ma a quick kiss on the cheek, then leaned down to whisper to them very quickly.

“I know,” I breathed, shaking my head. “It’s complicated. I promise I will explain everything to you later, tonight, when these two are asleep.” For now, I just had to watch my twins jump up and down in happiness.

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Faith’s Pov

It felt like one of those perfect, quiet days. The ones I don’t usually get.

“Mommy” Isabella squealed being chased around by Marco.

Mommy. She was calling me Mommy now, the word was soft and pure coming from her lips. It was a melody I could listen to forever.

Marco was laughing the whole time he tried catch her. My ever-loving boy. He was my rock, my first true joy.

A bittersweet pang hit me then, a familiar ache deep in my soul. Astor wasn't here. My wolf howled softly within me paining for her mate, I don't want to admit it to myself but I do miss him and it's easier to be angry with him when I know he's somewhere around the Pack.

But today, the sadness was just a bit far away. Today, I chose peace. I chose to focus on the laughter and the love of my family.

My mother sat across from me, her usually stern features softened by a rare, gentle smile as she watched Isabella. Beside her, my father Connor, actually seemed just as enamored with the kids.

Ma and Pa were in the kitchen, the smell of fresh-baked bread beginning to fill the air. I miss having something baked by them because they are the best bakers in the world so they decided to make me some muffins which I will devour alone.

It was a perfect day. Too perfect, maybe. It felt like a dream. I wanted it to last forever. I wanted to freeze this moment and live in it always.

But nothing, absolutely nothing, when it came to my happiness, ever lasted forever.

Suddenly I was being mindlinked. It was George. His voice was filled with an urgency that sent a shiver down my spine. "Luna one of the scouts reported suspicious activity around the territory. It might be Kyle."

My breath caught in my throat. Kyle. The name alone was enough to make my blood run cold and to snap every nerve in my body to attention. An attack. On my pack.

"Kids!" I said, my voice sharper than I intended. "Everyone. We need to go to the pack house. Now."

My mother's gentle smile vanished, replaced by a familiar look of understanding. My father, too, straightened, his easy demeanor gone. Ma and Pa hurried in from the kitchen, their faces etched with worry.

"What is it, Faith?" my mother asked, her voice low.

"Kyle," I said simply, the single word enough to convey the threat. "Suspicious activity. We can't risk it. Everyone, to the pack house. All of us. Now." My heart hammered against my ribs. If anything happened, I wanted them close, where I could see them, where I could protect them.

The pack house was already buzzing with activity when we arrived. Warriors were assembling, their faces grim, weapons being distributed. I left Marco and Isabella with everybody in the living room and practically ran to the office.

Liam was already there, his usually jovial face set in a hard line, maps spread across the table.

“Luna Faith,” he started, “we’ve got guards doubled at every perimeter point. Every warrior who can fight is armed and ready. We’ve got patrols out, looking for anything out of place.”

I nodded, my mind racing. “That’s good, Liam, but it’s not enough.” I walked around the table, tapping a finger on the map of our territory. “Every pack Kyle has attacked so far has been strong.

They’ve probably been just as ‘ready’ as we are right now. But he always takes them by surprise.

He finds a weakness, an unexpected angle. We need to do more. Something... different.”

Liam and George exchanged a look. “What do you suggest, Luna?” George asked, his brow furrowed. “We’re utilizing every known defense, every tactic.”

“Continue doing everything you’re doing,” I told them, my voice firm, “and I’ll take care of the rest.” I didn’t wait for questions. I knew what I had to do so I left them there.

I found my mother in the main living area, trying to keep Isabella distracted with a toy. “Mother,” I said, my voice low but urgent. “We need to talk. Now.”

I pulled her away from the watchful eyes and ears, into a quiet corner near a rarely used fireplace.

The stone walls seemed to absorb the sounds, giving us the privacy we needed. “Mother,” I whispered, “you said that with my power I could create a barrier over the Pack that nobody who isn’t a member cannot enter.” I asked because it did come up on one of our lessons and I want to know if it’s true and how I can do it.

She looked afraid and I’m guessing she’s afraid for me because she’s made it clear that my powers are dangerous to me as well. “Yes, Faith. You can. But it would require immense concentration. And most importantly... it would probably drain most of your power. You would pass out if you did it.”

My heart pounded. “For how long?”

She hesitated and I could tell that it meant bad news. “I don’t know for how long. And maybe you might even do more than just pass out. You might fall into a coma. This would be the first time you’ve used your powers to that kind of magnitude. It’s a huge risk, Faith.”

“None of that matters,” I said, my voice raw with conviction. “If there’s already suspicious activity around the pack, it means Kyle could attack at any moment. He could be here now, watching us. My kids...” My voice broke. “My kids might get hurt. I will never, ever let that happen. Not again. I lost Isabella before I could even see her, I lost my dad and I lost my baby. I can’t lose anymore.”

To be honest I really didn't need her permission the only thing I want from her is to teach me and she saw it on my face because she sighed in resignation. "Then you must concentrate, Faith. Concentrate with every fiber of your being. Imagine it and Feel it."

I nodded, taking a shaky breath. I went outside and stood there. I closed my eyes, picturing our territory: the pack house, the surrounding homes, the training grounds, the forest path, the river. I saw every tree, every stone, every precious life within. I stretched out my hands, palms facing each other, then slowly, deliberately, began to expand them outwards.

I felt a familiar hum of power awakening. An invisible energy pulsed, vibrating the air around me. I felt the earth beneath my feet rumble, responding to my will.

I imagined an impenetrable shell forming around the entire pack territory. It wasn't just a thought, it was a desperate plea, a command, a primal scream from my very soul. The power surged, pushing against my limits, burning through my veins like fire. My vision swam and dots danced before my eyes but I didn't give up.

I focused harder, pouring every ounce of my being into the task. I could feel the barrier solidify, thickening, reinforcing itself with sheer, unyielding force. It was like pulling a vast, heavy, invisible blanket over everything I loved, tucking it in tight, making it safe. My body trembled, every muscle screaming in protest.

The last of my energy drained from me and I felt a sudden, complete emptiness that left me hollow and cold. My knees buckled.

Then, there was nothing.

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Astor's POV

War is brutal and unfair. Watching bodies of kids just under the age of 5 or even older being gathered around has to be one of the most humbling moments in life.

Because at every second and minute I pray that I never have to find my child like that and it's hard especially when I'm this far away from them.

I turned back to look at the map again.

"It's not just a werewolf attack, my King," I said, bracing myself against the table. The Alpha King barely looked up. He was tired, just like the rest of us. And we're not just tired physically

because of what we've had to do in terms of burying all of these people but because it is also emotionally and mentally tiring.

"Well we all know that his father liked to experiment with black magic and it means that he has been following in his father's footsteps."

"No, you don't know the full story," I insisted. I leaned closer to the map, pointing to the burned-out remains of SilverStone's outskirts. "I spoke to the few survivors, the ones who were attacked here and the ones who survived the assault on the Eternal pack."

I pushed a stack of reports toward him. "Kyle was not here. His scent was nowhere at SilverStone, and he didn't show up when the Eternal Pack was being slaughtered. This confirms he is sitting back, commanding, letting others do the dirty work."

That wasn't the worst of it, though.

"The first thing every victim felt was the same," I continued, making sure my voice was loud enough to cut through the general despair in the room. "Not fear. Not pain. They felt numb. They couldn't move their muscles. They were paralyzed. Then, all of a sudden, they were being attacked."

"Numbness that fast? Before the attack?"

"Exactly." I confirmed. "Wolfbane doesn't do that. It doesn't instantly paralyze dozens of strong wolves without physical contact. And even if he did come to contact with black magic this is different. This is a witch spell designed to neutralize a werewolf before the fight even begins."

The room went silent. A witch working with an alpha wolf, it was a combination we had feared for a century.

"So what? We fight magic with claws?" the royal beta asked, his tone heavy with defeat.

I shook my head. "No. We fight favors with better favors. We talk to the witches."

The silence that followed was deep and loud.

"Astor, you know what you are suggesting," the aloha king hissed, his voice dropping to a dangerous rumble. "Werewolves do not ally with witches. It is forbidden. It goes against everything our ancestors fought for. If I approach the nearest coven, I will be seen as a traitor to my own people."

I knew the rules. I respected tradition. But tradition was currently letting innocent families get slaughtered.

"My King, the witches are clearly getting something from this deal. They wouldn't help Kyle unless he promised them a massive favor. Witches always help for a price," I argued, my

frustration boiling over. “If we approach that coven and offer them more than Kyle is currently giving, they will drop him instantly. It leaves Kyle defenseless, vulnerable, stripped of his greatest weapon.”

He stood up, towering over me. “I will not betray our kind for a gamble, Astor. I rule the werewolves, not the magic covens.”

The air felt thick, the tension unbearable. I spent days reading reports of dead children and ruined packs. I have been sacrificing sleep and spending time with my kids because I want this done and he thinks I give a f**k about traditions.”

Something snapped inside me.

“With all respect, you haven’t come up with a solution in days!” I challenged, my voice rising and my wolf agitated. “A lot of packs have paid the ultimate price because we have been sticking to tradition.‘ If you want to prove to everybody that you are worthy of being the Alpha King, then you will find a solution that works, not just one that follows ancient rules”

“Do not talk to me like that Alpha Astor”

I instantly backed down because I could feel his wolf rising to the surface.

“I apologize, my King,” I said, forcing the words out. “I am frustrated. More frustrated than I have ever been. I want to be home right now. I want to be home with my kids, raising them without having to constantly worry that somebody is going to attack them in the night.”

My explanation seemed to take the fight out of him. He sighed, a loud, weary sound that echoed in the room.

“Astor, I want the same. We all do,” he said, rubbing his temples. “But this is a bad idea. We don’t know what Kyle has offered them. It could be something we can’t match.”

“Then let’s try to talk,” I said. “We just need to open the conversation. Let’s see what their price is.”

He opened his mouth to argue again, but before he could my phone started ringing and it was George.

My heart immediately dropped to my stomach because George only ever calls me if it’s an emergency.

I held up a hand to the King. “Excuse me.”

I answered the call, my voice tight. “George? Is everything okay?”

The way I asked made it clear I knew the answer was likely no.

George's voice, usually steady and calm, was strained. "No, Alpha. It is not. We had a real scare."

My vision narrowed. "What happened? Is it the pack? Are the children safe? Is Faith hurt?"

"They're safe now. But the scouts reported seeing wolves, a lot of them hanging around the edge of our pack territory."

"And you fought them off?"

"No, sir. We reported it immediately to Luna Faith. She told us that she would handle it."

I felt my wolf start whining like he could feel that something was wrong.

"What did she do, George?" I demanded, fear clawing at my chest.

George hesitated, sounding stunned even over the phone. "We don't know exactly, Alpha. But there is a shield. A massive, clear force field around the entire pack lands. It's huge. It's clear that Kyle will not be able to breach us."

Relief lasted seconds.

"And Faith?"

"She passed out, Alpha," George said with concern. "Right after the shield settled, she dropped.

She's unconscious. We have her in the clinic, but the Healers don't know what to do. She's stable, but she won't wake up."

My legs felt suddenly weak. I leaned hard against the table, the image of my beautiful mate, pale and still, flashing behind my eyes,

Faith had never used her power to that magnitude. Never close. Every single time she had used a them, there has been consequences to her health, passing out, days of severe headaches and nausea.

This shield, this wall that George described, was ten times the power she had ever wielded. Ten times the power needed to protect an entire territory.

Ten times.

That wasn't just a consequence. That could be fatal.

"I'm coming home," I told George.

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Faith's Pov

The first thing I saw when I woke up was a light. It hurt my eyes, but in a soft, dreamy way.

I blinked hard, trying to clear the fuzzy feeling from my head. I was lying down, and when I sat up I gasped.

I was surrounded by flowers. Not just normal flowers, but flowers that glowed in every color imaginable blue, burning reds, and soft, ethereal whites but they all had this glittering shine to them.

The air was thick and warm and smelled like everything beautiful you could ever remember. It felt perfect, almost too perfect to be real. It felt like a memory I hadn't made yet.

A deep panic settled in my stomach. I was alone.

"Hello?" I called out, my voice sounding weak in the vast, silent field. "Is anyone here?"

I jumped to my feet, spinning around. Where was I? What happened.

"Please! Help me!" I screamed in panic. Where am I, where were my children? What is happening"

I started running, pushing through the glowing petals. But no matter how far I ran, the flowers just kept going. There was no sky, only endless, brilliant light. My breath was ragged, and tears started streaming down my face. I was trapped.

Just as I was about to fall to my knees from exhaustion, I saw him.

He was standing maybe ten feet away, perfectly still, looking right at me. He was tall, dressed simply, and his presence felt like a whisper of warmth. But it wasn't his height or his clothes that stopped me cold.

It was his eyes.

They were the exact shade of brilliant emerald green that I saw every morning when I looked in the mirror. They were my eyes.

He didn't move, just watched me with a soft, knowing smile.

“Hello.”

I took a stumbling step closer, wiping my face with my sleeve. The fear was still there, but now it was mixed with a strange familiarity. I felt like I knew him but I’ve never met him.

“Who are you?” I demanded, trying to sound brave, but my voice trembled.

He only smiled wider. “You have grown up into such a beautiful young lady, Faith.”

My confusion skyrocketed. How did he know my name?

“What?” I shook my head violently. “Who are you? Do you know me? Because I don’t know you.

Where is this place? Tell me where my kids are!”

He took a slow step toward me. The light seemed to gather around him, making his green eyes shine even brighter.

“Do you truly not recognize me?” he asked, a hint of sadness in his tone.

I stared at him, trying to remember something. He felt like home, but he was a stranger.

“No,” I whispered. “I don’t. Please, just tell me.”

He lowered his gaze for a second, then looked up, his expression full of regret and love.

“I am your father, Faith.”

The world tilted.

In that instant, everything shifted. The shared green color of our eyes, the shape of his jaw, it was all there. The recognition wasn’t in my memory, but in my soul. This was the man I had never met, the man whose absence had defined so much of my life.

My eyes burned with fresh tears. “My... my father?” I choked out. The first, terrified question leaped out before I could stop it. “Am I dead? Is that why I’m here?”

He laughed, a warm, rich sound that echoed among the glowing flowers. “No, my dear. You are very much alive. Come with me.”

He turned and started walking deeper into the shining garden. I followed him instantly, unable to pull my gaze away. He moved with a quiet power.

We walked for a long time, the perfection of the place calming my panicked heart. Finally, we came to a clearing where a white bench sat under a beautiful colorful tree.

My father sat down and patted the space next to him. "Have a seat."

I lowered myself onto the cool stone beside him. He turned to me, his hand hovering over my shoulder.

"Faith," he said softly. "May I hug you?"

My breath hitched. This was my biological father, the man I had only dreamed of meeting. I have been hearing bad things about him but that doesn't change the fact that he's my father.

"Yes," I whispered, tears flooding my vision again, but this time they were different. They were happy tears. "Oh, yes, please."

He pulled me into a hard, strong embrace. It felt safe. It felt like everything.

When we pulled apart, he wiped a tear from my cheek with his thumb.

"You are not dead. You cannot die yet. You have a purpose, Faith. You must fulfill your destiny."

I frowned, the happiness fading slightly, replaced by the weight of the word destiny. "What is my destiny? What are you talking about?"

He looked into my eyes, searching. "Deep down, you know the answer."

I shook my head, avoiding his gaze. "No, I don't. I don't know why... why it has to be me. Why do I have to be the one to destroy my own brother?" My voice broke.

He sighed, the light around him seeming to dim just slightly.

"It is not Kyle's fault how he came to be," my father said gently. "But it is mine. It is my cross to bear for being the man I was. I brought the darkness into this world, and that legacy has twisted him."

I felt the immense burden of what he was saying. "But I'm not strong enough," I argued, remembering what he said to me that day. "He has proved that to me time and time again. I can't stop him."

My father took my hand, his grip firm. "You are the only one who can do it, Faith. But to do it, you must first believe that you can. You are the balance. You are stronger than you know."

"Is it true?" I asked, desperation making my voice small. "Will I either save the world or destroy it?"

And will I die?"

He smiled, a look of profound love warming his face. "I am taking good care of my grandson. And I promise you, I will make sure nothing happens to you. Your other grandchildren need you. But the more you let Kyle continue what he is doing, the more you put all of their lives in danger."

He squeezed my hand. "My actions are the reason why you had such a difficult childhood. If I could change everything, I would, I single-handedly ruined my children's lives. None of that is fair to you or Kyle. But what happened, happened. I can't change the past."

He looked directly at me. "But the future, Faith, is entirely in your hands."

He leaned in, his voice dropping to a whisper. "Don't think of it as killing Kyle. Think of it as saving him. You are saving his life and his conscience. Because when push comes to shove, when he truly realizes the destruction he has created, he will not want to live in it."

The tears came again, heavy and overwhelming, but this time they were tears of understanding, not fear. I knew he was right. I knew what had to be done.

I leaned my head against his shoulder. "I wish I could stay here with you forever," I sobbed. "I love you."

He wrapped his arm around me one last time. "I love you just as much, my daughter. More than you will ever know. But for now, you have to go. You have to fulfill your destiny."

The light around us suddenly became too painful. It felt like fire against my skin, pulling me away.

The smell of the perfect flowers turned sharp and distant.

"Wait!" I cried, reaching out for him.

He was already fading, his beautiful green eyes being swallowed by the overwhelming white light.

"Be brave, Faith," his voice echoed, sounding far away.

The shining, perfect garden vanished.

I woke with a violent gasp, choking on air, my body rigid. Something hard and cold was pressing against my back.

Alpha's Regret: Begging For My Luna Back – Chapter 156

Faith's Pov

My eyes snapped open, not slowly, but unlike every usually day. I remembered exactly what happened and who I saw.

I shifted slightly, and I felt a heavy weight pressed into my left and right side.

Looking down, my breath caught.

Marco was sleeping curled against my chest, his small face buried in my nightgown. Isabella was tucked against my right side, her head resting on my arm. My two beautiful, innocent children.

I reached out and gently touched Marco's cheek. My fingers brushed against a sticky, crusty line, dried and tight against his soft skin. I touched Isabella's cheek next. Same thing.

My children had been crying until they fell asleep and it broke my heart.

I lifted my eyes and met Astor's gaze.

He was sitting in the armchair beside the bed, leaning forward, elbows resting on his knees. He hadn't been asleep. He was watching me. His dark eyes were bloodshot and haunted.

The moment our eyes locked he looked relieved.

"Faith," he whispered, his voice rough.

"Hi," I managed, the word feeling dry in my throat. I looked back at the kids. "My stomach hurts. Did I scare them badly? I usually just pass out for an hour or two."

They've never seen me pass out nor have they ever known that I do so today must have been difficult for them.

Astor leaned closer. He didn't touch me, but I felt his but I felt his presence.

"Why?" I asked, confused by the strange, controlled anger radiating off him. "Why are you looking at me like that?"

He swallowed hard, rubbing his unshaven jaw. "You've been gone for four days, Faith. Four full days."

The number hit me like a solid punch to the chest.

Four days?

“No,” I whispered, shaking my head. “That’s wrong. I can’t be ”

But the evidence was right here. The tightness in my joints, the sudden, overwhelming thirst, the deep, heavy sleep I had just woken up from. Four days of silence. Four days where my kids didn’t know if their mother was going to wake up.

I started to panic, but before I could speak again, the movement of my shock disturbed the children.

Marco sniffled once, then his eyes opened. He blinked when he saw my face, and his features crumbled immediately.

“Mommy!”

He launched himself forward, wrapping his arms around my neck with a strength I didn’t know he possessed. He wasn’t just hugging me, he was clinging to me, burying himself into me.

“Oh, sweetie,” I murmured, clutching him tight.

His sobs started immediately, loud and uncontrolled.

My own throat tightened.

Marco’s hysteria immediately woke Isabella. She sat up, saw Marco crying, and then, understanding the situation, she let out a heartbroken wail and threw her arms around my waist.

“Don’t leave me again” Marco cried out, his voice muffled by my shoulder. “Don’t go away!”

“Shh, shh, I promise. I am here. I am right here,” I whispered, rocking them both. “Stop crying, my sweet boy. I’m okay. See? I’m right here.”

But he just kept shaking his head, repeating, “Don’t leave. Don’t leave me!”

Isabella was sobbing silently now, her body shaking against mine. Tears started to stream down my own face. It was impossible not to cry when they were crying like this. Joy at seeing me was mixed with the trauma of nearly losing me.

As I held my two sobbing children, the simple clarity I had woken up with transformed into cold, hard resolve.

My children are so young. They don’t deserve this sorrow. They didn’t deserve to have a life full of fear that their mother might disappear forever just because she used her powers to protect them. This endless cycle of fear and danger had to stop.

If Kyle lived, this grief and terror would be their legacy.

I squeezed them tighter. “I am not going anywhere,” I said, my voice thick with unshed tears. “I promise you both. I am not going anywhere, ever again.”

Astor rose from the chair and moved to the side of the bed. He reached out and wrapped his arms around us.

The Mate Bond between us flared, suddenly overwhelming.

It wasn’t just worry I felt from him, it was a crushing and agonizing grief. He had been sick with worry, consumed by the terror that I would never wake up. He lived these four days worried that his kids would never see their mother again, I felt his anger, deep and sharp, directed at me for putting myself in danger, for leaving him.

And just as quickly, all the lingering anger I might have held against vanished. It felt childish, insignificant. I was loved. Fiercely. I was needed.

I was everything to these people. And they were everything to me.

I looked up at him, my vision blurred by tears.

“Don’t you ever do that to me again, Faith,” he breathed, his voice an absolute plea. “I was worried stiff. You can’t. You can’t leave me like that.”

My heart ached for him. “I won’t,” I whispered. “I’m sorry. I didn’t know.”

After another minute, the kids finally started to calm down, hiccupping occasionally, but their hands were still clamped onto my clothes.

“I have an idea,” I said, trying to make my voice cheerful despite the emotion choking me. I gently pushed them back so I could look at their faces. “I want to freshen up but when I come back, who wants to spend the whole day, just the four of us, doing exactly what you want?”

“No work?” Marco asked, rubbing his nose.

“No work. No grown-up stuff. Only fun,” I promised. “But I need ten minutes in the bathroom first.

Can you be brave and wait for me?”

They looked at each other, still reluctant.

“Promise?” Isabella asked, giving me the serious look she inherited from Astor.

“I promise.”

They finally let me go, though their eyes followed me as I carefully slid out of bed.

I swung my feet onto the floor, stretching muscles that felt stiff and unused. Just as I took my first step toward the door, Astor was there.

“I’ll help you,” he said.

I wanted to snap at him. But I looked at his exhausted face and remembered the Mate Bond connection—he needed to be close to me right now. He needed to prove to himself that I was real and safe.

So I bit back the sharp reply.

“Okay,” I said simply. “Thank you.”

He followed me to the small adjoining bathroom. As I looked in the mirror, I saw the pale, exhausted woman who had just fought to the edge of death and back.

Astor turned the shower on for me, testing the heat, then stood silently by the door.

I went through the motions washing away the dirt of four days of sleep. When I was done, Astor handed me a fresh towel. The gesture was small, but the tenderness in his eyes was palpable. He was silently waiting for me to talk, but I knew today was not the day for strategy. Today had to be about healing.

“The kids are waiting,” I said, drying my hair quickly.

When we stepped back into the bedroom, the energy in the room had shifted. The kids had dragged pillows and blankets from the storage trunk, creating a big, messy nest on the floor. Astor must have had someone come and set it up while I was in the bathroom and there was a white sheet pinned to the wall like a makeshift screen, and a small projector sat on the dresser.

Marco and Isabella cheered when they saw me, forgetting their previous fear and that’s what I wanted.

I didn’t hesitate. I crawled right into the middle of the soft pile of blankets. Marco snuggled immediately against my side, and Isabella stretched out, resting her head on my thigh. Astor settled in behind me, putting his arm around my shoulders, anchoring me securely within our little circle.

He started the movie.

The opening credits of Frozen appeared on the sheet, the snow swirling peacefully.

I closed my eyes for a moment, listening to Marco giggling and Isabella humming along to the music.

I was safe. I was warm. I was loved. And my family was right here, wrapped around me.

Let it go, I thought, letting the tension seep out of my body. For today, I would let go of the worry. Tomorrow, the fight would begin again. But today, I was just Mommy.

Alpha's Regret: Begging For My Luna Back – Chapter 157

My eyes slowly opened. I was waking up from a nice dream which is something I needed after the past couple of days but most importantly last night was very special for me and my kids.

The room was dark and very quiet. It was late at night or maybe early morning. For a moment, I just laid there, enjoying the quiet and warmth around me.

A tiny hand was on my stomach. Its fingers were gently curled. Another soft head was under my chin. My kids were sleeping close to me in our bed. They were both pressed against my sides.

I felt very, very happy. It was happiness that filled my whole heart. This was everything to me. This is why I fought.

I gently leaned down. I kissed Isabella's messy hair. Then I kissed Marco's forehead.

Very carefully and quietly, I started to move away from them. I moved the blanket and I took my arm out from under Isabella's head, careful not to wake her. Then, slowly, slowly, I sat up. The bed made almost no sound. I held my breath and watched their sleeping faces. I made sure they did not move. They stayed fast asleep.

My feet touched the cool wooden floor. Then, eyes opened next to me. It was Astor.

I'm glad he respected my boundaries even though we all fell asleep in the bed I'm guessing he decided to move to the couch.

"Where are you going?" he whispered. His voice was low in the quiet room. His eyes were sleepy but suddenly awake. I quickly put my hand on his mouth. My eyes were wide with a need for him to be quiet. "Shhh!" I whispered, not wanting to make a sound. Then I mindlinked him 'Come out with me. Be quiet.'

He nodded. His eyes showed he understood. He moved quietly out of bed. He followed me, the floor was cold. But I couldn't waste time complaining about it.

We walked softly into the living room. Astor sat next to me when we got there but I moved away. made a distance between us. It was like a silent wall.

I took a deep breath. The words felt heavy on my tongue. "I know how to kill Kyle," I said. My voice was very quiet, but strong enough to show how important this was.

Astor's eyes opened wide. Hope and shock showed in them. "How?" he asked. His voice was rough and confused.

"I can't explain it but I can just feel it but for it to happen, I need to go to the Fallen Pack," I went on.

I have never truly felt connected to that place. I need to go there. I need to connect with my roots.

Then I can get my full strength."

He frowned and thought about it. Then he nodded slowly. "Okay," he said. His voice was stronger now. "But I am coming with you." He said it firmly. He was set on it.

I shook my head. I looked at the window, where the moon was shining. "If both of us go, Kyle will find a way to attack our pack. He always looks for a chance. And I don't know if the shield I put around the pack will stay strong if I am not here. If I'm not physically connected to it." My voice couldn't hide the worry.

"I can't let you go alone, Faith. It's too dangerous," he said and he reached for my hand, but I gently pulled it away. The air between us felt heavy. It was full spoken and unspoken words.

"I am not going alone," I told him. My voice was firm. "You can send anyone you want with me.

Liam. He's strong and loyal. But it's important that I go. And I need to go now, before the kids wake up." My voice became a little softer when I thought of them. "I passed out for four days. That really hurt them. They think I will leave them forever and I don't want them to feel like that." My chest hurt when I remembered their scared little faces.

As I spoke, a strange calm came over me. Even though what we talked about was serious, I felt a warm feeling spread in my chest. It was a soft hum from our mate bond. Invisible sparks seemed to dance on my skin. Butterflies flew in my stomach.

It felt peaceful, comforting, and dangerous. I felt myself pull away from that feeling. I can't let it stop me from thinking clearly, not now.

He saw it. He saw the change in my eyes. He saw how I pulled back a little. “Faith,” he said. His voice was soft, but full of strong feeling. “It doesn’t matter how long you’re angry with me. It doesn’t even matter if you never forgive me. You will always be the love of my life. I will always keep you safe, and I will always love you. And the most important thing is that you are not going anywhere.” His words were a promise and a threat.

I didn’t answer. I couldn’t. My heart hurt and it was torn between his true words and my own pain that was not yet healed. But I knew what I must do. This was not about us. It was about them, about our future, about everything.

I stood up. “Liam,” I said again. My voice was steady. “Tell him to be ready. Now.”

A few minutes later Liam was here and I was ready

We moved fast and quietly. We went out of the packhouse and into the cool night air. The stars were bright above us.

We only walked a short distance from our pack land. We were just past the trees that marked our home’s edge. Then, a person stepped out from the deep shadows. He appeared like a ghost rising from the ground. He blocked our way.

I stopped breathing for a moment.

Kyle.

His eyes were cold and smart. They looked only at me. A mean smile came to his lips. A cold, sharp shiver of fear went down my back. It seemed the hunt had already started.

Alpha’s Regret: Begging For My Luna Back – Chapter 158

My blood went cold the second my eyes met Kyle’s. A sharp, icy fear tried to climb my throat, but my wolf stopped me from reacting.

‘Don’t show it,’ she warned me deep inside. ‘He feeds on it.’

She was right. I could see him looking at me from up to down trying to sniff my weakness but I didn’t cower.

Then, shadows moved away from the ancient trees. One by one, more wolves stepped into the light. Their eyes glowed as they formed surrounding Liam and me. Liam tensed next to me, a low growl rolling in his chest. He was ready to attack.

“Liam, stop,” I whispered, keeping my voice low but firm. “Don’t do anything.”

He hesitated, his gaze locked on Kyle, but slowly, he stood back. He stayed ready to move, but he trusted me, even in this danger.

Kyle’s nasty smile grew wider, a cruel line on his face. “Well, well, Faith. I didn’t think you’d ever leave the Pack, especially not alone. What are you planning?” His voice sounded poisonous with suspicion.

I met his gaze, my face a simple mask. “You accused me of taking our father’s murderer’s side. You said I didn’t understand. So, I want to understand him better.” My voice was even, betraying nothing. “And the best way to do that is to go to the Fallen Pack. To see everything. The damage that was done.”

His eyes narrowed, searching my face as if trying to find a lie. He tried to read me, but I gave nothing away. My emotions were locked down. For some strange reason, as the silence stretched, he seemed to believe me. A look of respect, almost, crossed his features.

“Fine,” he finally said, cutting through the quiet. “We’re going with them.”

I gave a short, bitter laugh. “Oh, really? I thought kidnapping or killing me was one of your top goals.”

He scowled. “I would never kill my sister.” The words felt like a lie even as he said them. “But teaching her a lesson? That is something I would do. Especially since you seem intent on taking others’ sides instead of mine.”

And so, our twisted journey began. We shifted, our bodies changing, fur, bones reforming.

My white wolf was powerful, but I have never pushed her this hard. For four hours, we ran, a silent, grim line through the dense forest. My muscles screamed, my lungs burned, and every beat of my heart was dull and throbbing.

My wolf was strong, but I wasn’t used to this kind of prolonged strain. By the time we finally neared our destination, my paws felt like lead. I was totally spent, utterly tired.

Then, we stopped.

The air got heavy, thick with a coldness that wasn’t just physical. It was a spiritual chill, a crushing feeling of deep despair. Even after 2 decades, the state of the Fallen Pack was terrible.

It wasn’t just old ruins; it was a gaping wound in the earth, a monument to a terrible m*****e. Buildings were just burnt, broken frames, etc.

“Can you feel it?” Kyle’s voice was a low growl beside me, pulling me from my daze. “The darkness? The coldness of this place?”

I didn't need him to ask. There was something sinister here, something that seeped into your soul.

The shadows clung too long, the silence was absolute, and the wind whispered forgotten screams.

"The people you're protecting," he said, his voice hard, "are the ones who did this."

He turned me gently but firmly, forcing me to look. It was now a graveyard. Numerous tombs, not proper headstones, but crude mounds of earth, marked where bodies had fallen. The ground was blackened, burned down to ash and scorched earth.

"They turned a Pack into a graveyard," he stated, his voice devoid of emotion, but I could feel the tremor of it beneath the surface.

I didn't want to say it aloud, but he was right. This place wasn't just destroyed; it was wiped out. To a point where, even after two decades, you could still feel how bad it was. How much agony, how much terror, had been unleashed here. The air itself buzzed with residual pain.

Tears burned my eyes until they started falling down on their own accord. My heart felt like it was being crushed. It was heartbreaking. Truly and utterly heartbreaking.

I put out my hand, my palm open to him.

He looked at me with skepticism, his stared down on me like he was looking through my soul. "If you are trying anything, Faith," he warned, "it won't work. You will never be strong enough to harm me."

My breath caught. "I know," I whispered, the memory a fresh cut. "I killed my father-in-law the last time I tried to kill you." I'm guessing he doesn't know that I was exonerated from the crime because if he knew then he wouldn't have taken my hand after I said that.

"None of what you did is your fault," I began, my voice choked with emotion, but I forced the words out. "The people who killed our biological father? They started this whole thing. All the hatred, all the revenge. But the most guilty person of all..." My voice cracked. "...is our father. For doing the evil things that led to everyone in this pack dying with him."

He tried to deny it, a low growl rumbling in his chest, but I pressed my fingers into his hand. "Stop," I commanded, my voice firm despite the tears. "Just stop."

I looked into his eyes, my own filled with a sorrow so deep it felt like an ocean. "I hope you know," I said, my voice barely a whisper, "that I wanted nothing more than to be the best sister to you." A fresh wave of tears streamed down my face. "It is such a pity that you went too far. And we can never go back after this."

With those words, a finality settled over me, cold and absolute. I closed my eyes.

My wolf stirred in me, not with rage, but with a stark, terrifying purpose. A surge of energy, pure and blinding, erupted from deep inside me. It wasn't hate that fueled it now, but something colder, sharper, a necessary end. My white wolf's unique magic flowed through my extended hand, through our joined grip.

A soundless scream tore through the air.

Kyle's body went rigid. His eyes, fixed on me, were wide with shock, then sudden, horrible understanding. He gasped, a sound cut brutally short, his grip on my hand tightening for a brief, desperate moment.

There was no struggle, no fight. No time. It was instant. He didn't even have a chance to defend himself against something so swift, so devastating and unexpected.

He just stopped.

He was gone.

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My knees hit the cold earth hard, but I didn't feel it. All I could feel was the shaking in my hands, the icy dread in my stomach.

Kyle.

He laid there, still and silent. I leaned over him, my vision blurry with tears that wouldn't fall. My fingers reached for his neck, pressing against the skin trembling. No pulse. Nothing.

"No," I whispered, a raw, broken sound. "No, no, no."

It was over. I did it. I stopped him. But looking at his blank, peaceful face, my heart shattered into a million pieces. He was my brother. My blood. His whole life was just... hate.

A quest for revenge that consumed him, ate away everything good until there was nothing left but a shell. He never got to know peace. Never got to enjoy a day, just live and be happy. And I was the one who ended it. The realisation ripped through me, a pain sharper than any claw. He never had a chance. And now, he never would.

I knelt there for what felt like an eternity, tears finally spilling down my face. My brother. Gone.

Then I felt movement behind me and I slowly lifted my head, wiping my eyes with the back of my hand. Kyle's wolves. The ones who followed him here, stood watching me.

Slowly, one by one, they began to sink. Not falling, but lowering themselves with a strange respect. Their powerful bodies bent, their heads bowed low, until they were all kneeling on the ground in front of me. Their eyes were fixed on me, and then, a low rumble came from them, a sound both deep and soft.

"Alpha," they said, almost in unison. "Our Alpha."

My jaw dropped. My heart pounded. Alpha? Me? I turned to Liam, who stood a little apart. My eyes pleaded for an explanation.

"Liam? What... what are they doing?" I asked, my voice barely a whisper.

He stepped closer, his gaze kind. "It's the way it works Luna. When an Alpha is beaten, the one who bests him becomes the new leader. You fought Kyle. You defeated him. You are their Alpha now."

I stared at him, then back at the kneeling wolves. Me? An Alpha? It felt like a dream, a bad one, a crazy one. How could I lead them?

But I pushed the thought away. There was something more important, something urgent. Kyle. He needed to be buried.

"Later," I said, my voice shaky but firm. "We can talk about this later. Right now, we need to bury Kyle."

I looked around at the broken, scarred land. The grounds of the fallen pack. This was Kyle's home, in a way. This was where his ancestors laid. And he died fighting for this place, fighting for the memory of what was lost. I knew I couldn't take him back with me. Kyle killed Sanders.

The pack, they wouldn't want Kyle's body anywhere near them. And I understood that.

"Here," I finally decided, looking at Liam. "He fought for these lands, for his people's memory. He should be buried here. Near his family, his forefathers."

With Liam's help, and even the silent, new wolves', we dug a grave. I placed him gently into the earth, smoothing his hair one last time. I knelt beside the fresh grave, the earth still soft.

"Goodbye, little brother," I whispered, my voice thick with unshed tears. "I wish... I wish things had been different. I wish you had found peace in life. Maybe in another life, if that is possible... I want to be born your sister again. And this time, we'll make it right. We'll find peace together."

I paid my respects, then stood up, feeling a strange mix of emptiness and resolve. It was done.

The journey back home was quiet. The remaining wolves followed us, a silent, watchful shadow in the night. It felt strange, like the world had shifted on its axis, and I was still trying to find my balance.

We arrived home in the deep middle of the night. But Astor was still awake, waiting for me. The moment I saw him, my shoulders dropped, all the tension and pain of the day rushing out of me.

He was there. He was safe.

He rushed to me, pulling me into a fierce hug. His arms felt like the strongest, safest place in the world. He kissed my hair, my forehead, my lips, again and again. "You're back. You're safe," he murmured into my neck, his voice rough with relief.

"I'm home," I whispered back, clinging to him.

The first thing I did once we were inside was head straight for the shower. I needed to wash away the dirt, the blood and the memories.

Afterwards, wrapped in a thick towel, I went to check on Marco and Isabella. They were sleeping soundly in their beds, my little angels. Astor came in behind me, wrapping his arms around my waist.

"How were they?" I asked softly, my heart aching with guilt for leaving them. "When they woke and I wasn't here?"

He sighed, resting his chin on my shoulder. "They threw tantrums, Faith. Oh, they were so upset.

Cried for you. But I told them you were coming back. I told them mommy was okay, and she was strong, and she'd be home soon."

I kissed Marco's forehead, then Isabella's. They smelled sweet and innocent. "Oh, my babies," I whispered, tears pricking my eyes again. "Mommy got rid of the monster. He won't hurt us anymore. Mommy's here. Forever."

I turned to Astor, and we walked into the living room, sitting close on the couch. The house was quiet, the only sound the soft hum of the night.

"What happened?" Astor asked, his voice low, his eyes searching mine..

I took a deep breath. "Kyle is gone, Astor. Forever. He will no longer be a problem in our lives."

A visible wave of relief washed over his face. His shoulders relaxed. He closed his eyes for a moment, then opened them again. "Good," he said, the word coming out with a quiet force. "You did good, Faith. But... I wish I could have done it. Taken revenge for my father." His voice held a hint of sadness, of unfulfilled vengeance.

I shook my head, reaching for his hand and lacing my fingers through his. “No, Astor. If you had been the one to do it... if you had taken his life... I don’t know if I ever could have forgiven you. Or myself. It was better this way. Quick. He didn’t suffer.”

He looked at me, a long, thoughtful look. He knew I was right, even if it was hard to accept. He gave a reluctant nod. “You’re right. Maybe. Okay.” He squeezed my hand. “Atleast everything is okay now?”

I looked into his eyes, a heavy truth settling in my chest. “No, Astor,” I said, the words heavy and real. “Not exactly. Because... I am the new Alpha now. Of his wolves.”

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Astor was gone when I woke up. A sigh escaped me. It stung a little because we never got to finish our conversation last night because I was too tired and we both didn’t know how to react to what I told him.

I brushed my teeth, then I stepped into the shower. The warm water was a soothing

And I let the steam fill the small bathroom, trying to clear my own head.

Once I was done, I was feeling fresh and much more awake, I pulled on some comfortable clothes. Today wasn’t about formal wear. Today was about my kids.

When I pushed open the door to their room, Marco, usually sprawled like a starfish under a his blankets and Isabella was tucked in cutely and peaceful.

“Wakey, wakey” I sing sang.

Their eyes blinked open, slowly at first, then widened when they saw me. “Mommy” Isabella squealed, sitting straight up, her hair was wild around her head.

Marco rubbed his eyes, a sleepy smile spreading across his face. “You’re here!”

I laughed, rushing to their beds and pulling them into a tight hug, inhaling their sweet smell. “I am.”

“Where were you yesterday?” Isabella asked, pulling back slightly.

Marco’s face, though still happy, hardened a little. “Yeah, where were you? You’re never here anymore.”

My heart lurched. Guilt, sharp and sudden, pierced through me. He was right. So much had happened, so many responsibilities had pulled me away. My smile faltered. “Oh, sweetie,” I murmured, stroking his hair. “I had... something very important to take care of. But listen to me.

That’s all going to change. Everything. From now on, I’m going to be here. Every single day. We’re going to play, and laugh, and do all the fun things you want to do. I promise.”

His eyes, those beautiful, honest eyes, searched mine. When he saw the seriousness in my gaze, the promise reflecting back, a wide, genuine smile broke through. “Really?”

“Really,” I affirmed, hugging him tight again. “Now, who wants a bath?”

Their enthusiastic “Me!” was music to my ears. I bundled them into the bathroom, filling the tub with warm water and bubbles. They were full of laughter telling me stories about their day yesterday.

“grandma made us pancakes” Isabella announced, holding up a rubber ducky.

“And Pa told us a really funny story about a grumpy old man” Marco added, splashing a little too much water.

“That sounds like a lot of fun. I’m glad you had such a good time with Ma and Pa.” A small part of me felt a pang, wishing I’d been there, but mostly, I was just happy they’d been cared for and loved.

After their bath, I made them breakfast eggs, toast, and milk.

Just as Isabella was telling me about an imaginary friend of hers, I felt something on my mind.

‘Faith please come to the Pack House it’s urgent.’ It was Astor. His tone was tight, demanding.

My shoulders slumped. Not now. Not when I was finally having this precious time with my children. “Astor,” I mind-linked back, trying to keep my voice even, “can it wait? I really want to spend time with the kids today.”

‘No. It cannot wait. It’s really urgent. Come now.’

I sighed, a long, quiet breath. “Kiddos,” I said, forcing a cheerful tone. “Seems like Mommy has to go to the Pack House for a little while. But! You get to come with me! How about that?”

They looked up, surprised, but then their faces brightened. “Yay!” Going to the Pack House was always an adventure for them.

I quickly got them dressed, grabbed a few toys, and ushered them out the door. My mind was already buzzing with annoyance. Urgent? What could be so urgent? And why couldn’t Astor have just come here?

When we arrived at the Pack House, the grounds were bustling, I spotted a group of kids playing near the training field. “Alright, you two,” I said, bending down to their level. “You go play with the other children, okay? Mommy will be inside, but I’ll come get you as soon as I can.” They hugged other children, okay? Mommy will be inside, but I’ll come me goodbye and ran off, eager to join the fun.

Taking a deep breath, I pushed open the heavy oak door. The familiar scent of wolf and wood smoke filled the air. I walked with purpose, heading straight for Astor’s office. The door was slightly ajar, and I could hear voices inside. As I approached, I realized it wasn’t just Astor.

I pushed the door open fully and stepped in. And then I stopped, my breath catching in my throat.

Astor was there, standing stiffly by his desk. Beside him, looking grim, was Ove. then my mother and father, seated with worried expressions. But the person who commanded the room, who made my blood run cold, was seated at the head of the large conference table. The Alpha King.

My eyes darted between them all, a knot forming in my stomach. The Alpha King was here? What was going on?

Astor motioned to the empty chair beside him, on his right. I walked over, my movements stiff, and sat down. The silence in the room was heavy, thick with unspoken tension.

“Is there... something wrong?” I asked, my voice barely above a whisper, looking at Astor first, then at the Alpha King.

The Alpha King’s gaze, sharp and assessing, landed on me. He was an imposing figure, even seated. “Faith,” he began, his voice deep and resonant. “I will forever be indebted to you for getting rid of the problem.”

My brow furrowed. The “problem“? Kyle. He meant Kyle.

“You don’t have to worry about the Crescent Pack,” he continued, his tone authoritative. “I am going to take care of it.”

“Take care of it?” I asked, suddenly wary. “How are you going to take care of it?”

He leaned forward, his elbows resting on the table. “Almost everyone in that pack is just as guilty as Kyle was. They blindly followed him, aided his actions, or stood by while he plotted. So, some of them will be banished, made rogues. Some will be stripped of their ranks and made omegas. Others will face lesser, but still severe, punishments.” He laid out their fates, one by one, with absolute certainty.

My head snapped up, my voice rising. “Punishment? For what? For blindly following their leader?”

The injustice of it hit me like a physical blow.

The Alpha King sighed, a dismissive sound. “Luna Faith, do not be emotional about this. It is the right thing to do. They have to pay for what they allowed to happen.”

“Nobody has to pay for anything!” I retorted, rising slightly in my seat, my hands gripping the edge of the table. My voice, which had been quiet, now rang with sudden steel. “The only guilty person died. And that was Kyle. He was the Alpha. And since I am the one who killed Kyle, I am now their Alpha. And I will decide what to do with my pack. Nobody,” I emphasized, looking directly at the Alpha King, “can tell me what to do.”

“Faith, stop it” Astor’s voice was sharp, laced with alarm. He reached out, grabbing my arm. “There is no way you will be able to be the Alpha of the Crescent Pack.”

I yanked my arm free, turning to face him, my eyes blazing. “And why not, Astor? Am I too weak to be an Alpha?”

He flinched, shaking his head. “It’s not about weakness, Faith. It’s the fact that you are the Luna of the Eternal Pack. You can’t be an Alpha to another pack. It’s against tradition”

“If that is a decision, then it’s a decision only I have the right to make!” I shot back. “The fact that you all had a whole meeting, discussing the fate of my Pack without even asking me, without my input, is an insult!”

The Alpha King’s patience seemed to wear thin. “Someone has to pay for everything that happened, Faith.” His voice was firm.

“Somebody already has” I countered, my voice cracking slightly with emotion. “But most importantly, who has paid for the m*****e of the Fallen Pack? Because everybody knows what happened there and you did nothing. To be honest, Kyle had every right to want revenge on men like those who destroyed his pack. It’s a pity he decided to kill innocent people in the process, but his initial rage was justified”

A shocked gasp went through the room. My own parents looked like they wanted to disappear.

“I have respect for you, Alpha King,” I continued, my voice now low but clear, every word deliberate.

“And I hope that I will be able to get the Crescent Pack to a point where they are worthy to be part of your alliance. As Alpha. But you have no right to tell me what will happen to that pack. Because I am their rightful Alpha. And I will decide what to do.”

With that, I pushed my chair back and stormed out of the office. I could feel every eye on me.

I didn’t stop, didn’t look back. I just walked away.

“Faith! Faith!”

Finally, a hand clasped my arm, pulling me to a stop. “What are you doing? What was that in there?”

I turned to him, my eyes cold “I’m not ‘up to anything, Astor. Rather, I have decided. I will be the Alpha of the Crescent Pack. And I dare anybody,” I said, my gaze hardening, my voice a low, dangerous growl, “who tries to touch that pack or do anything to them.”