Cursed Luna

Chapter 2 | Cursed Luna

↓

~Senua~

Between Sirsha and Ida, they help me up and take me to the wall where they stand me and strip me naked. Sirsha carefully lifts my hair, and then Ida pours water over my back, washing away all the blood.

The cold makes my body shake, but it is soothing and stings at the same time. I wish Delia had just finished the job and taken me out of my misery.

“Senua…” The voice I always hear calls out to me. Like always, I ignore it. I started to hear it when I turned eighteen. When my corrupted wolf’s soul came to me. I sometimes wonder why the moon goddess allowed me to be born. What was my purpose but to suffer?

After I am cleaned and patched up, they help me put on my dress. As they button it up from behind, I look down, admiring the beautiful embroidery and the texture of the blue fabric. It feels so soft. But the dress feels heavy on me. I am not used to wearing this much fabric.

“Silk,” Sirsha whispers, touching the fabric of the dress.

After Sirsha fixes my hair once more, Ida takes the silver mask Sirsha told me of. She holds it up to me. The mask resembles a wolf. It has the outlines of a wolf’s ears in delicate silver embroidery.

“Is it real Silver?” I ask.

“It is but the inside is Iron, so it won’t hurt you unless you try to take it off or touch the outer parts.”

When Ida turns to get something from a bag, Sirsha takes a small tube from her pocket and then smears it on my lips. “There. Now the look is perfect.” She takes her small mirror out and quickly shows it to me. I have never seen myself like this before.

I touch the mirror and then my red lips. “I look…”

“Different?”

”Real.” I whisper.

Ida gasps. “Damn it Sirsha. What did you do? You are going to get us in trouble.”

Sirsha rolls her eyes. “When does that not happen?”

The last thing I am made to wear is shoes. They are uncomfortable. I am not used to wearing shoes because I am always barefoot. I hate them.

“There…all done.” They take a few steps back, looking at me.

“Wow. You look so beautiful, Senua.”

Delia walks in just in time. She looks at my dress, but when her eyes land on my face, she scowls. “That is not appropriate! But there is no time to fix it. Don’t do it again, Sirsha! I know it was you.”

Sirsha turns away, rolling her eyes.

Delia rummages inside her pocket and takes out a small key. She carefully moves the hair away from my neck and then unlocks the metal collar, letting the heavy chains fall to the ground.

It is such a relief not to have that extra heaviness on me. I feel light, and I swear I almost lost my balance just because of this.

“We must go now. We don’t wish to be late.” She opens the door and heads out first, but she waits at the door for me to follow. I walk behind her as she leads me out with Sirsha and Ida behind me. I see a guard next to my door. It is rare when I get to see anyone other than the caretakers.

The dumbfounded guard quickly turns away from me, looking afraid. As we continue through the dimly lit hall of the dungeon, we come upon a flight of stairs. Arriving at the top, I am taken aback by my view. White paneled walls with gold trims. Beautiful, glistening floors. The most distinguishing thing for me is the smell. It smells so fresh, so clean.

“Keep up!” Delia scolds me.

I scurry behind her, almost falling. I am not used to the shoes or the floors. As we approach two huge white doors with golden trims, following the decorative pattern of the whole house, I notice what I can only assume are servants. They pass us by, but they gasp and almost run, trying to get away when they see me. Ignoring them, Delia stands in front of the doors and takes a deep breath.

“Senua…ready for what awaits you?” She asks.

I am confused by the question, but nonetheless, I nod.

“Ida, stay out here. You too, Sirsha. Your parents don’t want you to be a part of this.”

They both nod. “Yes, Priestess.”

Delia turns to the doors and opens them so abruptly that everyone inside turns to look at us. Quietness is the only thing that stirs when, just a second ago, you could hear people talking.

Sitting on the table are all strangers to me, but for two people. The Mother Priestess and a woman whom I once called my mother. She is the first one to look away, but all other eyes are on me. Delia steps out of the way for them to get a better look.

“Welcome, Delia. This is her?” A woman at the head of the table speaks.

“Yes, Luna. This is Senua, the Accursed.”

“You did well in masking her taintedness.” The Mother Priestess speaks. She puts on a big smile and nods approvingly.

I feel Delia’s hand behind my back, pushing me towards a man. Tall, broad, and pleasant-looking. I have not seen many men, to be honest, other than some male priests, but they are usually covered up with robes. This man wears blue attire that sticks to his big body. He has ashy brown hair and deep brown eyes.

“This is her?” He asks.

“Yes, Alpha.”

He stares me down, his eyes going down my body and then to my eyes.

Delia gets close as the man inspects me. “This is Alpha Farkas.”

He leans in. “Can she take the mask off?”

Delia hesitates. “Uhm…”

“No. There is no need for you to see her face.” The Mother Priestess speaks.

He sighs, moving a chair to the side. Then he stares at me as if he is waiting for something.

“Sit,” Delia whispers, giving me a push.

I sit, and then he pushes the seat in. He sits next to me, but I am too nervous to look at him. Delia begins introducing everyone to me, motioning with her hand to each person. “Our Mother Priestess, you already know. This is our Alpha Nikolas and Luna Amalia.

Your parents, Maeve and Beta Theron. And this is Ruby, the Luna, and Alpha's daughter. Next to you is Alpha Farkas, eldest son to Alpha Nicolas, and next in line to be Alpha of our pack." For some reason, she emphasizes him more than everyone else in here. He turns to me and gives me a smile. I don't know what to do. How am I supposed to act?

I turn, still feeling his eyes on me, but I stare straight at Maeve. Only because she is the only one not looking at me. I hide my hands under the table, shaking. I hate it here already.

"You never said she was so… beautiful," Farkas mutters.

"I thought she'd looked like a hag," Ruby says in a mocking tone and laughs.

"Yes, she cleaned up nicely." The Luna says.

"Maybe we should do all this now. Why wait?" Farkas says. His eyes have not yet left me.

"Because we must." The Mother Priestess says. "We will not be ruled by impulse."

What are they speaking of? I am beyond confused.

"You did good, Delia. You may leave." As Delia leaves, the Mother Priestess lifts her glass. "Today is a celebration of the five-night start of our cleansing ritual. Starting with tonight's union, of course."

Union?

She motions to me. "You have been invited to dine with us tonight as a show of benevolence to our Goddess, that she may see how we accept even those who are corrupt to share in our benevolence and find us worthy…"

Worthy? Of what?

Union?

They all sit, and that is when food is brought to us. The Luna starts speaking.

"Two unions to be exact." The Luna cheers. "Not just for the ritual, but our Ruby will be mating with Alpha Lucius of the Blood pack."

The mother Priestess nods with a big smile. "A great feat indeed. Having the Blood pack on our side instead of against us will strengthen our holy grip on all other packs."

Alpha Nikolas sighs. "I am not so sure this union is fitting."

“Dad, I want this,” Ruby says. “I’d be Luna of a powerful pack. Alpha Lucius is strong and feared. His pack is one of the oldest ones, practically royalty.”

“He is also said to be unkind.” Theron—the beta—speaks.

“He won’t be to me. Werewolves are different with their mates.”

I did hear this from Sirsha.

“Don’t you want to find your fated mate?” Nikolas asks.

“Can you assure me that my fated mate is not going to be anyone better than Alpha Lucius?”

Alpha Nikolas doesn’t answer.

“Guess that’s a no. So no. I am set on him. Plus, I hear that he is good-looking, and it is said that his bloodline possesses power.”

“Rumors only,” Theron says.

“Rumors that have been confirmed by another old pack line in the regions of the North. The Dark Fang pack, the Chevalier line.” Mother Priestess adds.

Alpha Nikolas shakes his head. “Even if the rumors were true, the power is rare even among the bloodline. And if Alpha Lucius had it, we all would have known by now.”

“Well, it doesn’t matter to me. Besides, he asked for me specifically.” Ruby almost sings.

“Yeah, and that is what worries me. What are his real intentions?”

“I hate that fucking pack.” Farkas reacts to the conversation.

“Yeah, I do not agree with this union either. There is bad blood between us. “Alpha Nikolas agrees. “But we have to be ready. From this Dark Fang Pack, a female Alpha has risen with this unknown power. We must be prepared in case they decide to come to our region. They are known to be ruthless beyond belief.”

The mother priestess spits. “Bah! A female Alpha of a pack! What blasphemy. This is why these two unions will be a blessing. Our packs would be able to rival theirs.”

“Tomorrow, we must tread carefully when Alpha Lucius and all other Alphas arrive.” Alpha Nikolas speaks. “Having a Mating Ceremony on top of our Grand Ceremony—which we must keep hidden from all of them—will be challenging.”

“Indeed, it will.”

The conversation is too complex for me to follow. I have no idea of anything they speak of. So as they were speaking, I finished my meal. I had never had anything taste so good. Even the drink was something I had never had.

When they are all done, Farkas speaks. “May we begin? I do not wish to wait any longer.”

The Mother Priestess looks at me. “Did you eat all of your food?”

I slowly nod.

She smiles. “Good.” She rises from her seat. “Yes. It may be done.”

Maeve abruptly gets up from her chair and leaves the room. “Darling…” Her mate Theron follows after her.

Farkas gets up and takes my hand, pulling me up with him. Then he suddenly twirls me around. I stumble, but he holds me tightly against his chest. His head on my neck and mine on his. I can feel something is not right. I want to pull back, but I am afraid I will get punished.

Why is this man so close to me? Holding me like this?

“You are so beautiful,” Farkas whispers.

Suddenly, he starts kissing my neck. My body stills, rigid and scared, unable to move. His lips move up to my cheeks until he presses his forehead against mine, looking into my eyes.

“Mark me…” He whispers.

I want to ask “What?” but the words won’t come out. Instead, I suddenly feel like I am in a trance. He moves his face to my neck, giving me way to his.

“Bite me.” He says again.

I feel this urgency to do as he tells me, though I want to refuse. But the moment I think of refusing, my head hurts.

“Don’t fight it, child. It is Alpha command and will only hurt you if you fight it.” The mother priestess says.

I open my mouth and latch it onto him, my teeth draw blood, and suddenly, my fangs come out as he pushes my head forcefully towards his neck. I try to pull back when I feel pain in my own neck.

A sharp sting that turns into something far worse, fire. My body feels like it's burning. Unimaginable pain goes through my neck as he sinks his fangs into my neck. I scream, and my legs give, but he holds me in place.

I suddenly wake up from the hazy dream state that I was just in, aware now of all that has just happened.

What is this?! What is he doing?! This can't be it. This can't be what I think it is. Why?!

When his lips detach from my skin, all I see are black spots. My vision slowly comes and goes. He lets me go with no care as if I were a bag of trash, and I hit the floor hard. I see him smile as he wipes my blood from his lips and then says, "Mine."

"Senua…" The voice in my head speaks.

"Now that she is mine, do I get to fuck her too?" Farkas asks with a smirk.

He made me mark him and…he…marked me. Why? How?

"Farkas!" The Luna shouts.

"Sorry, mother, just thinking out loud."

"No, you are not touching her in any other way." The Mother Priestess says.

"But don't we need the bond to grow?" He asks. "So that she doesn't run."

"It will."

"Too slow."

"It will be enough."

"Hm…you better keep your end of the bargain then," Farkas says.

"Oh, we will."

Why? That's all I can think. Why take this from me, too? I am so angry that I don't really listen to anything they are saying.

"Senua…" The voice comes again, drowning all other voices. "Senua, Senua, SENUA!"

My vision darkens, and then there are shouts and screams. The next thing I know, I am running through a forest, but it is as if I were watching from someone else's eyes, not able to move my body myself. The urgency and the fear grab onto me as I hear running behind me. I am about to get caught, but then a bright light seems to stop it all.