

Chosen 221

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She took her time carefully planning until she was sure about who she was going to capture. Capturing one from here would have been stupid, however, she had a plan. Skillfully leaping through the trees to put some distance between her and the rogues, she fired an arrow straight at one of them, missing her target's ear by an inch.

There was barely a stir amongst the rogues as the arrow that had been shot went almost unnoticed. Her target, getting very scared by what he heard searched for the arrow and retrieved it. Fearstricken, he rushed to another wolf that was patrolling, "Hey man, there is a hunter hiding out in the trees," he tried raising his case.

"Ugh, not this again... Every time something spooks you, you start to blab on about hunters lurking up and about," his comrade responded, smacking the scrawny-looking wolf on the back. "Man up and stand at your post."

"I don't know, Clyde. Maybe he's onto something. Send him out and see how he does look for imaginary hunters," a feminine voice interrupted them, rousing laughter amongst them. The wolf they spoke of seemed to get angered by how lightly they took his claims and stomped away from them.

"Don't trip on imaginary stairs on your way there," another yelled after him, laughing in response.

"You take it too far sometimes, Clyde. Cool off the boy," the feminine voice came again, this time more serious.

"Yes, ma'am, but if I may ask, do you think he will be able to make it to our objective in one piece. He seems to be far too timid," Clyde asked.

"Well, there is strength in numbers, don't forget that. If you send one of his kind at an enemy, they can just as well be paperweights to a hunter, however, keep adding more of them and the hunter will surely fall. That's only if they are enough and if they keep on coming," the female voice spoke. It was the last that Jackeline paid attention to before turning her attention back to the wolf she'd targeted. The man was storming off in the direction she'd hoped for...

Everything was going according to plan... even more reason for the girl to worry. She looked back at the collection of rogues she was about to leave behind her. They were truly many in number, however, if she stayed quiet, she was sure she would put some distance between her and them. She left to follow the wolf she'd captured after saying a mental prayer to Prometheus that she would never have to go back there... Her hopes were that this scrawny wolf had the information she needed to bring the suicide mission to a halt. What she didn't take note of was the fact that a single pair of red eyes was watching her vividly, taking note of her every movement.

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The wolf, oblivious to the hunter that followed him through the trees continued to walk in one direction. With time, Jackeline was sure the man was going to get lost, for he began to divert from the straight path an arrow would have taken, "Ah, dang it, perhaps they were right. I really am just delusional and

get spooked easily," he spoke to himself. He stopped moving and started turning about, searching the trees.

The stalking hunter chose this moment to slide down to some lower branches. Just as she was about to leap out of her hiding spot, a voice rang out through the darkness, "There you are. I thought you were going to get lost again."

"Alpha Amanda, what are you doing out here?" the man responded, fear and... was it, 'respect' in his voice. Jackeline couldn't believe anything like that was possible amongst these savages.

"I came looking for you of course. You dropped this, so I figured there must have been a reason you were so sure about a hunter being here. Unfortunately, hunters don't have bows that shoot arrows strong enough to go come from this far... unless you're dealing with Cupid Shooter. That bow is special," the woman responded.

"Oh, well then, is there something else I can be of assistance with?" the man asked her.

"Well, I would like it very much if you hurried back to your post and made sure to believe in the number of rogues that surround you. Do you really think there is a sane hunter alive that would choose to attack this massive group of rogues? They would have one hell of a death wish," Amanda chuckled, "Now, scram."

Silence filled the air as Jackeline watched her target rush back to the safety of the group of rogues. This time there was no hope of her getting another since the alpha beneath her had carefully worded her message to keep him from falling for her tricks again. 'What's this feeling in the pit of my stomach?' Jackeline's thoughts echoed in her mind as she stared at the back of this female alpha. This was the first time she was seeing a female alpha amongst the rogues. Perhaps females could never be allowed to...

"I know you're up there... I thought we'd chat for a bit. Now come down," the woman spoke up. Jackeline remained quiet for a bit, hoping the woman before her was only bluffing. The woman sighed heavily and turned around so that Jackeline was no longer staring at her back, but instead, she watched her chest. The hunter swallowed hard, keeping as silent as she could until it happened. The woman's searing red eyes were staring right into her hazel brown. 'Why do they have to be so damn scary when they do something like that? And when did a woman become an alpha?'

"Now that we've established the fact that I know you're there, would you come down now so we can talk?" the woman responded.

"What makes you think I would do such a thing?" she asked her.

"Well, I do not intend to capture you, but I guess you already know that. So I'll make you a deal. I have information that I want to know and you have something that you want to know. I honestly couldn't care less about whatever wicked scheme the hunters are cooking up. The point is that right now, we both need each other and as a symbol of my good faith, I will allow you to put as much distance from the rogues as you feel comfortable and you can flee as soon as you see necessary," she said to her.

Jackeline took her time to think it through, "What if I just shoot you right here and now?"

“Well, I am one of the most highly trained generals of his majesty, I think it will be hard to dispose of me with a mere bow and arrow. Are you in or not... It’s not every day that I get the opportunity to meet an overly ambitious hunter. Just the thing I need,” the woman replied.

The two of them were soon dashing away from the rogues. Once they were a comfortable distance away from them, Jackeline signalled that they could stop. She was panting with exhaustion and made sure to stay high up in the tree to rest while keeping an eye on the wolf, “You don’t let your guard down. I guess that’s to be expected from someone like you.”

“I’ve never heard of a female rogue alpha. How is it even possible?” Jackeline said, in between breaths.

“Well, let’s make one point clear before you go on to ask me questions that will, in the end, be entirely useless to you,” the woman said, finally getting serious. She looked up into the tree, making eye contact with the hunter. Jackeline’s hand gripped the bow, tension filling the air... With her bow at the ready, she watched the woman’s eyes shift to a bright blue before going back to a crimson red.

“How did you do that?” Jackeline asked.

“My name is Amanda. The rest is unimportant since rogues do not give last names. Anyway, I’m not who you think I am and far from your enemy...” Jackeline stared at the wolf, trying to wrap her head around everything that had happened... ‘This was definitely not part of the plan...’ she internally groaned.

“Well, my my... You’re just full of surprises...” Jackeline replied, lowering her bow and placing her arrow back into her quiver.

“What can I say? Nothing has been the same since I chose to run away from the rogues and met the person that got me in this situation that I’m in at the moment,” Amanda replied, taking a seat, and leaning against a tree.

“What situation?” Jackeline asked.

“Females are never allowed to get as powerful as I did and I would never have made it this far up the ranks if it hadn’t been for the power I got during my escape. I was asked to go undercover and it was through that I was able to work my way up. When the Rogue King recognized my abilities, I was exempted from the same treatment that all the other females get amongst the rogues.

“You’re not letting me know much, are you?” Jackeline sighed and watched a smirk grow on the woman’s face, “Very well. I will ask you my questions then. What is the Rogue King planning? Why is he gathering this many rogues in Lycaon?”

“Well, I figured that is the question you’d be asking, however, I am surprised you weren’t able to figure that out by now. It’s quite simple actually. The king is sick... He’s currently lying on his death bed. On the other hand, the prince has not yet marked his mate. If the Rogue King can kill the king before the prince marks his mate, he will gain the power of the Lycaon family.”

“What’s that got to do with anything? Doesn’t he have the power of a royal already? Not to mention the fact that he’s got to be connected to the royal families somehow. Is he a lost relative or something of the sort?” the woman asked.

“Oh, no, that’s a long story. I don’t know it fully myself, but it’s one long and sad. He isn’t connected to the royal families in any way and does not bear what he seems to call the obedience towards the brainwashed goddess that controls the royals,” Amanda responded.

“What does he want with the power of the Lycaon family then?” Jackeline asked.

“Well, if he had that power... Well, that pretty much changes everything. He would then be able to control every last one of the wolves that bears the power of the Lycaon family running through them,” Amanda replied. Jackeline’s eyes went wide with terror... With the force that the rogue king had gathered, he was pretty much guaranteed to break through to the king with these numbers.

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“Well, you’ve answered my question, now I’ll answer yours. What’s your question?” the woman asked her.

“Honourable... I might just like you,” Amanda smirked, before looking at the ground and losing her happy expression, “I mentioned earlier that I was undercover. Well, I have someone I have been talking to from the inside, however, I can’t seem to reach him.”

“What’s his name? Maybe I could help you deliver a message for him,” Jackeline replied.

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The female hunter could barely think through what she was supposed to tell the others when she returned to their camp. She was a mess of emotions and there was nothing she could do about them. She couldn’t get what the woman had told her out of her head, nor could she get the fact that she trusted every word she’d said without a second thought out of her mind. Why she trusted the woman was lost to her, but she knew everything she’d been told to be true.

Amanda was a werewolf undercover and Jackeline believed every word she’d heard. Unfortunately for the alpha, she didn’t have any information on the person she was seeking. She did know, however, who might know who the person she was talking about was and had every intention of getting the girl’s message to him. Zipping through the trees, her heart was singing only praise for a mission well executed. It had gone far better than she had hoped and now she would do everything in her power to keep the others from carrying out their suicide mission.

When she finally landed in the clearing that held their tents, she found Sera seated at the front of her tent. When she saw the girl return, she looked surprised that she was back, “Have you finally changed your mind or did you forget a souvenir that you just had to return to your darling, Frost?”

“Never make fun of Frost and I most certainly didn’t come here to join your suicide mission. I came for a rather different reason altogether. Do you remember the question I asked you before leaving your tent?” Jackeline asked her.

“A preposterous one, I might add,” the woman commented.

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“If you consider it preposterous, then you really don’t expect this whole crew to make it out of this ordeal alive,” Jackeline replied.

“What’s your point, Jackeline?”

“I was able to get the information you need to call this off. The reason the rogues are gathering towards the capital of Lycaon,” the woman replied. After a nod from Sera, Jackeline began to tell her of what she had discovered, making sure to alter the details so that it wasn’t discovered that she spoke to one of the rogues and let them rejoin their pack with their life still intact.

Sera was thinking for a long time before she spoke up, “Would you care to tell me how you got this information so quickly?” the woman asked.

“It wasn’t easy to get it, but I also didn’t want to leave the rest of you here knowing you were going to meet your deaths. I took a very long route to get to the front of the force. They are many... thousands like she said, but alas, the leaders of the rogues were at the front, like I suspected. I don’t what level of luck I had to be able to find them talking about the very plans the rogue king had, but it was convenient for me and I took the chance to pay attention to every detail,” Jackeline responded.

“Did they spot you?”

“No, but they almost did,” she repeated.

“How did you avoid being spotted?”

“I silenced the rogue that was about to expose my presence with a swift accurate shot to the throat. He barely had the time to react,” Jackeline reported, keeping her voice firm as she was interrogated.

“Let me see your quiver...” the hunter took the quiver from her back and handed it over to the older woman who then began searching through the arrows. One was missing, as was expected.

“Would you swear on your life that the information you are reporting to me is the absolute truth to the matter?” Sera asked her.

“Yes, I would...”

After a heavy sigh, “Very well then... we shall proceed with what we have been doing and keep our distance from the rogues. I shall report your findings to the hunters and have them inform all concerned parties. I don’t know how this will help us turn the tide, but if they can use this information, then that’s good.”

“You did hear me talk about the reason the rogue king wants the king dead, didn’t you?” Jackeline asked.

“Yes, I did, but come on, what are the odds that the dead mate of the Lycaon prince will suddenly come back to life. I’m seeing the possibilities of an all-out war here,” Sera replied.

“What... So you haven’t heard. The princess was never dead, to begin with,” Jackeline chuckled.

“Those rumours don’t sit right with me. If the two of them had already met, then the princess would have been marked already. This would all be for nothing. The rogue king doesn’t seem bothered about the prince. I heard the boy is safely tucked away in the Sirius empire. Just what is he hoping to achieve by running away to safety?” Sera huffed.

“Just how fractured is your intel, Sera?” Jackeline laughed out.

“Huh, is there something you know that I don’t?” the woman asked her.

“Well, yeah, I practically raised the princess of Sirius. So yeah, there is something I know that you don’t. Katie Sirius is the mate to Cole Lycaon... We should get a message to them so that they know what this is all about,” Jackeline said to her.

“You’re just full of surprises, aren’t you? And here I thought you were merely a defective hunter. I guess you just think differently from the rest of us,” Sera shrugged, getting up to retrieve her phone. Jackeline was confused on whether to take it as a compliment or an offence. Looking up at the half-moon that gave them the light they used now... she wondered, ‘Is there something else you were trying to tell me that time as well... Frost...’

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The hotel was quiet that night... the students barely made noise this time, exhausted from the party they had just had. The moon was high in the sky and the emotions of the werewolves that were watching the duel filled the mind link. Cole and Katie found themselves blocking out the excitement from most of them. “Do you think she will win?” Cole asked her.

“Yeah, I think she’ll do just great, however, it’s what happens after that I’m afraid of,” the girl responded.

“Well then, should we get going then?” the man said, reaching out for her hand, however, Katie didn’t budge an inch. She looked to the ground with a look he couldn’t decipher.

“Cole, you’ll have to there on your own and help them. Sandra and Jason have already gone to help. You’re the only one left. I’ll ask one of the hunters to follow ahead, but I can’t leave the hotel... Not yet anyway,” Katie responded.

“What’s wrong, Katie,” Cole asked her, worry seeping into his voice.

“Well, I’m staying behind. I don’t know why just yet, but I am staying behind,” the girl wouldn’t meet his gaze and kept her eyes to the ground, “I’m not alone, Cole. Am I?”

He’d used the words on her once before... However, having them thrown back at him was something else. Katie was the one that took on most of the burden on her own. This was the first time she was letting someone take care of keeping everyone safe. It was against her very nature and yet... she was trying.

“Do you think there will be an attack on the hotel?” he asked her.

“It’s just a feeling. I have always trusted my gut, but having to do the same when you have no proof that the enemy is coming is worse than anything I’ve endured so far,” she replied.

“Your mojo is so confusing...” Cole chuckled. He was running out of time and they both knew it. However, from the direction the girl was facing, he was now sure she wasn’t going to follow him to the beach. The royal walked around her so he was right in front of her. Pulling up her face so she looked him straight in the eye. He wiped away a stray tear with his thumb, smiling down at his mate. ‘So beautiful.’

“Follow your gut, like you always have. However, don’t do anything dangerous without consulting me, as you promised. Is that understood?”

Katie nodded in response to his demands, “And you better come back to me, is that understood?”

“I will nothing less, my love,” he replied before placing a kiss on her lips. Katie watched the black wolf vanish under the cover of the woods. Her senses had flared at the last moment... before they could proceed into the woods. It was faint, but looking back on the hotel, she realized just how many humans she was left unprotected. Each time she thought of leaving, her gut filled up with dread... And yet, she was sure there was something going to happen out in the woods that she had to deal with. ‘She couldn’t be in two places at once... could she?’

Her mind worked fast as she made her way back into the hotel. She reached her room and got her bow from the dresser before rushing up to the top floor where she was sure to find the hunter’s rooms. At the top of the floor, she found stairs leading to the roof. She could sense two beings at the roof and that’s where she went as fast as she permitted herself indoors.

She pushed the door to the roof open and stumbled through, misjudging the strength she’d used. At the roof, a man she’d not yet seen and Alice stood on opposite sides of the roof, watching the woods quietly and diligently. They both turned to look at her when she came through the door, “Katie, is something wrong?” Alice was the first to ask.

“Alice, I need your help. The werewolves are at the beach... all of them, and the rogues are going to make their move there soon,” the girl told her in between breaths.

“Well, you’re a hunter, can’t you do that? You have alphas at your beck and call and you ask me to help you,” the woman replied.

“I’ll take your place here, Alice. Help me with this just this once,” the girl asked her, her eyes pleading with the older woman. Alice was becoming more and more curious about the girl’s request...

Looking to the direction in which the beach was, “And you promise that I will find some action in that direction?” the woman smirked while she eyed the ocean in the distance.

Katie smiled at her response... “One more thing though,” Katie told the woman, “Take this...”

Alice looked back to see the hunter before taking off her official hunter leather jacket, “What do I need with this?”

“Oh, it’s not for you. Get it to Sandra for me. The girl will need it,” Katie replied. Alice was curious now more than ever.

“Well, I will be asking a lot of questions when I return,” the woman replied before leaping off the rooftop. Katie looked up into the night sky. The moon was full and clear and the wind was cool on her bare skin. The thin cloth that now covered her exposed the one part of her that she’d kept hidden from the rest of the world for a long time. However, tonight was the one night she didn’t care if it was to be seen. After all, it was the same day she’d planned to show it. Unfurling her bow, she looked on to the see, closing her eyes and letting her other senses take care of aiming the arrow she was to shoot first.

Lina watched the rogues come out of the woods and trap them in one dangerous semicircle. There was nowhere to escape and they hadn't come with a single hunter. Stepping out from the crowd of wolves, Caden stood in front of them, "You made a grave mistake coming here tonight," he spoke up to the alpha on the other side of the tree line.

"Oh, I'm shaking with fear at the mighty Alpha Caden. I don't think even you have the power to take care of this many rogues on your own. Your death might just be one of the most entertaining things I see on this trip. You know, if you had come with that hunter of yours, you might just have had a chance. Her aura was monstrous. However, when I saw this large group of wolves coming here with barely a hunter for protection, I was simply filled with excitement," the man's face continuously contorted into a disgusting grin.

Caden's mind worked fast, but only brought up bad news for him. He didn't want to subject any of the wolves to a battle that could result in their deaths and yet... 'I could try forging an opening for them to escape, but they are so many. That will only split them up into many groups...' his thoughts got cut short as the ground began to shake vigorously.

The rogues stopped their advance and began to look about, "What's going on?" the rogue leading them yelled out, but no one answered him. The ground continued to shake and before any of them could figure out what was happening, an explosion of vines erupted from the ground in a flurry of green, wrapping around the rogues and restraining them instantly. The vines restrained the rogues, but they were still clamped in groups.

Caden took the chance to yell out his orders to the rest of the wolves that were with them, "All of you, head for the hotel while they are still trapped."

The vines were starting to get weaker and let the rogues loose. The wolves took the chance to make a run for it. Spreading out into groups that only confused the rogues. The vines gave way and one of the rogues leapt out to attack Lina. Caden turned quickly with every intention of stopping the rogue in its tracks. However, before any of them could react, an arrow went through the rogues, back bringing it down instantly. Caden looked in the direction of the arrow... "The hotel is that way..."

With that said, everyone knew their destination, Lina grabbed Caden's hand when he was about to shift, "Caden, we have to keep them in a group. If they run about in panic, they will get lost. There is quicksand in the forest. If any of them gets trapped in it, there won't be anyone to save them..."

"We'll keep them together Lina. Is your friend okay though?" Lina looked to her right and noticed Honour stumble backwards in extreme dizziness. The same blue glow she'd had in the field on moon lotuses was only getting off her at the moment. She rushed to her and caught her before she fell.

"I'll take care of Honour and get her to safety," she said to Caden, "The rest of you and all the alphas are to help with getting the wolves back to the safety of the hotel."

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"Lina, let me help protect Honour," a female voice rang in her mind. She'd now grown accustomed to hearing the voice popping out of nowhere.

“Just do what you want, Crysta,” the girl replied before shifting. With Caden’s help, Honour was placed on her back. The girl held onto the white wolf’s fur so tight that Lina was sure she was going to rip the fur right out of her hide. The rogues snapped at the vines which kept shifting between weak strands and strong thick vines. “I don’t know what saved us or how long it will hold these rogues down, but all of you are to make it back to the hotel before something bad happens.”

Lina was dashing through the forest at blinding speed with her friend on her back as soon as she had mentioned that. ‘Hold on, Honour. You have to hold on. We’ll make it there soon.’

‘No, Lina, not the hotel. Take me back to the Lotus Lunaria,’ her friend’s voice came through.

‘What are you talking about? You need to rest, Honour. Just look at you, you can barely stand,’ she replied.

‘I was the one that summoned the vines, Lina. Take me to the moon lotuses, Lina, please,’ it was as though she’d just been commanded by her mother and she found herself taking a detour in search of the moon lotuses. She had no idea where they were and yet... here she was dashing in a direction she’d never known fully aware of what she was going to find in that direction. The trees seemed to be letting them through the forest and clearing the floor of all obstacles. Wisps of moonlight came through the canopy, illuminating a path for her to follow.

‘Very well, Honour. I’ll take you to that side... Only because you begged me though,’ the girl replied as she dashed at her fastest through the forest.

‘Thank you, Lina.’

Lina rushed through the forest with one destination in mind. She had no idea why she was headed there or how it would help her friend, however, no matter how much she tried, she couldn’t quite control her own feet. Her wolf pressed on with all the energy she could manage heading towards a location she didn’t even know existed.

The woods were constantly shifting and the moonlight illuminated a path for her to follow. Eventually, the blue light from the blooming flowers reached her eyes. She came to a stop at a wide entrance to the field of flowers that she was sure wasn’t there before. Laying down at the centre of the clearing, she watched the trees move back in place, sealing them inside the clearing.

The white wolf lay her friend down and shifted back into her human form. The girl was glowing a radiant sky blue and the flowers seemed to lean towards her, “What in the world is happening to you, Honour?” she asked more to herself. The girl before looked far too tired to answer her anyway.

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Cole had only been running through the forest for a while when a group of wolves rushed past him. Accessing the mind link, he began to ask them, “What is happening?”

“Rogues... Many of them... Trapped in vines... So many... Vicious rogues... Lina won the duel...” numerous voices filled the mind link giving him incomplete pieces of information that couldn’t help him. He blocked out the voices and linked with his alphas, “Jason, Caden, what’s going on?”

“Well, there are rogues in the woods. Our aim is to get the wolves of Sirius together as they run back to the hotel. As far as I can tell, most of the rogues are still trapped at the beach. Caden, Liam, Wyatt and Crystal are taking care of returning the rogues back to the woods. Sandra and I are going to check on the rogues at the beach,” Jason replied.

“Caden, what’s the situation with the wolves being returned to the hotel?” Cole asked.

“Well, everything is going fine as long as we keep this formation. We’ll be at the hotel in a few minutes if all goes well,” Caden replied.

“When does that ever happen?” Cole replied, rushing forward with the intention of getting to the beach. His wolf sensed danger in that direction and that is what he followed. The feeling in his gut was similar to the one he’d had when he’d faced beta alphas the last time, but a little different.

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Jason brought his running to a sudden halt when he felt the ground moving. The beach wasn’t far off, however, what his eyes saw couldn’t be described as normal. There was everything wrong with the vines that continued to constrict around the rogues, letting them loose and grabbing them more at the same time. A few rogues were breaking through their natural cages, using the short times when the vines were weak to break through. It was a tedious process as the vines kept growing back and trying to cage them all over again, but there was progress. “Hey, don’t stop all of a sudden without warning,” the girl on his back complained.

“Complain after we’ve disposed of this load of trash,” the alpha replied, keeping his eyes on the scene before him. Sandra turned and froze at the sight before her.

“We should put them out of their misery before they get a chance to resist us, shouldn’t we?” Sandra asked him, unsure of what to do in this situation.

“You sound like you’re trying to read this out of a hunter handbook,” the alpha chuckled.

“Well, there was nothing in the handbook that talked about dealing with rogues that were trapped by moving vines,” the girl replied, walking out to the beach.

“Aren’t you scared?” Jason asked her.

“No, I’m angry... the rogues pulled a cheap move attacking defenceless werewolves,” the girl replied.

“And here we are about to bring their lives to an end while they struggle for their lives,” Cole’s voice sounded, calling for their attention. The alpha walked out from the cover of the trees and straight to one of the struggling rogues. Without a second thought, he pushed his hand through the vines and grabbed the wolf by the neck, pressing the wolf to the ground until a sickening crunch rung through the air.

Seeing their fellow wolf lying there unconscious, the other rogues began to struggle. Cole proceeded to the rogues that had made it partly out of their caged prisons and began to put them out of their misery, “What are you waiting for, Jason?”

“Oh yeah,” the alpha replied before getting to work.

“Don’t think for a second that our enemies are redeemable,” Cole said to the hunter who stood behind them as they carried out the dirty work.

“Oh, I know what rogues are like... After all, I was there when Katie was granted her Prometheus gifts. I have never felt any sympathy for them ever since,” she replied. Just then, a woman appeared beside her with a bow in hand and began to kill the rest of the rogues without letting the wolves finish the job. However, her last arrow was caught by her last target. One of the rogues was fully free from the cage and he snapped the arrow into pieces.

“That was a pathetic display...” his deep voice echoed through the night. ‘He is dangerous,’ Sandra’s senses surmised.

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The air seemed to come to a stop when the man voiced his presence. It wasn’t normal to see a rogue in their human forms. This was one of those times when they felt they were in very big trouble. Sandra looked around her and found that the man was alone against her, Cole, Jason and Alice... Yet she still felt like the odds were barely in their favour. ‘I’m probably just in a hurry to see this man put down,’ she tried to convince herself.

‘You’re not the only one that feels uneasy around him. The only other rogues that confidently flaunt their human forms are the Rogue King’s beta alphas and those have not been seen in quite some time. Well, in their human forms that is,’ Jason explained to her through the odd mind link that the two of them shared.

“It’s nice to know there is one of you that still has the spirit to reveal their human forms,” Cole spoke out loud.

The man narrowed his eyes at the royal, “There is more than a few of us that can do that... Well, I speak of the Rogue King’s generals... I am one of them. You may call me Balar and it is I that shall see to your end, heir to the Lycaon throne,” the man said with a slight bow.

“Confident for a man that’s outnumbered four to one,” Cole replied, clenching his fist in anger at the man’s claim.

“The fact that you value numbers over the skill of a fighter is all the more proof that this will be your last hour alive,” the man sighed, “Let’s skip the chitchat... I don’t have all day. After all, we didn’t come here to kill just one of the moon goddess’ chosen. Both of them are meant to leave the land of the living tonight as ordered by our king himself,” the man replied, training his eyes on the prince.

An arrow whizzed past Cole and to the man only to be snapped in half effortlessly once again. Before Cole could react, four arrows whizzed past almost at the same time as though they had been fired by four different people. The man’s hand zipped through the air, grabbing each arrow as though they’d been frozen in air for him to pluck. “The archer might as well give up... I’ve been trained to catch six arrows fired simultaneously.”

Cole barely wasted a second, ‘Jason...’ the beta alpha reacted at his alpha’s beckoning and went on the offensive. Cole was the first to reach the man, taking the initiative to throw the first attack, his fist aimed at the man’s face. The rogue deflected the blow effortlessly... a move the alpha had anticipated. ‘This

might be more of a challenge than I thought...' he thought to himself as the years he'd spent training suddenly kicked in allowing him to fluidly move on from the missed opportunity.

He blocked the man's counterattack and stepped back as his beta alpha stepped into the fight, not giving the rogue startling the rogue with the odd switch between the two. The two of them worked together like a well-oiled machine, attacking in turns that never once collided as though they knew what the other was thinking. Together, the two of them seemed to have the rogue on his toes...

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Sandra took the time to recognize the skill with which Jason used while he was fighting. It was like nothing she had been able to witness during the time they'd been training together. It was enough to tell her that she was not yet a threat to him. Either that or the power of a beta alpha was making him a better fighter. The fight between the three wolves raged on, getting faster and faster until Sandra could only barely follow their movements... "Amazing..." she exclaimed, entranced by the choreography before her.

Averting her focus on the wolves, Alice held out something to the girl, "Sandra, I was asked to hand this to you. I don't know what the girl was thinking, but apparently, she thinks you are worthy of this... I personally..."

"Is that Katie's hunter jacket?" she asked the woman, cutting her off without noticing... something else bothered her... She couldn't tell what it was... but she knew she was supposed to be somewhere else... The jacket proved it all... 'What could you have in mind, Katie?'

Sandra got the jacket from the woman and slipped it on, turning her eyes back to the fighting wolves. Cole and Jason managed to push the man back until he stood in the water... The fight was not looking up for them, but not for the rogue either. He seemed to be holding his ground even against two of the most powerful werewolves in the world. It didn't make sense to Sandra. "Yes, it is..."

Sandra looked back at Alice and remembered her question... It had been rhetorical... Having worn the jacket before, she knew what it was before she'd even asked the question. She knew where each weapon was and knew how to draw them out at the time when she needed them. It wasn't something she was in need of training... With the jacket, she felt safer as it would be easier to dispose of rogues with the weapons at her disposal...

"Is she coming?" Sandra asked, her heart going into overdrive the moment she asked.

"No, she's not..." Alice replied. This was all she needed to know that they were not out of the woods yet. There was no way she could communicate with Katie and Katie wasn't one to communicate everything she was thinking. Most of the time, she had to figure out what it was that her mentor was planning. However, it was clear there was trouble back at the hotel that the girl had stayed behind to take care of. What they were taking care of here was nothing in comparison.

"Is there any other hunter left at the hotel?" she asked Alice.

"Yes, I left Morgan there along with the others although they are asleep. Why would you ask?" Alice asked before recognition snapped in her eyes, "I knew there was a reason she stayed behind and asked me to come here... However, I'm not that much help here. What could be worse than this?"

“This man we are struggling to defeat. He’s not a beta alpha... If I’m guessing right, the foe Katie is going to face is much tougher than him,” Sandra replied right before she watched what she thought was impossible. The rogue got the upper hand and delivered powerful punches that pushed both Cole and Jason a good distance away from him.

“The two of you, given the right guidance would have made fine warriors... But alas, you’re nothing compared to me and your training is far too simple... Gaining the amount of skill that...” he stopped talking as a loud whistling sound pierced through the air as though shutting him up. Two more similar sounds were heard before everyone caught up with what was happening... Blood trickled down the side of Balar’s mouth as he looked up beyond the forest... “So that’s where you decided to watch over the fight from...” with that, he coughed and slowly fell into the shallow water he stood in.

Sticking out of his chest were three black and red arrows. No one had noticed them until the man had bled... “An arrow from Cupid Shooter’s bow... that’s what he asked for... I guess that’s what he got.” Alice mentioned.

Sandra snapped out of her daze and rushed to Jason, “Jason, are you alright?”

“Yeah... besides the fact that I just got beaten by a normal alpha... I never thought I’d see the day...”

“You’re a beta alpha. You can’t imagine what it means to push back not just a royal alpha, but Cole Lycaon. Are they all as monstrous as him...? The generals... and if so... what are the beta alphas like? Or the Rogue king for that matter?” Cole barely noticed he was yelling while he complained. His mind rushed with the different possibilities of trouble they were in. He’d never felt an average alpha close the power gap this much. Considering his added abilities, he was more than shaken by the man’s capabilities.

“That’s just it, Jason... Cole. Katie stayed behind. She’s not coming. I know her... she wouldn’t stay behind unless there was a reason she was doing so... I know the humans could have been protected by the hunters, but she took it upon herself. I’m suspecting...”

“A beta alpha...” Cole had shifted before Sandra could finish her statement. Jason reacted a second later and followed his alpha’s example, shifting into his brown wolf. The girl reluctantly took a seat on the brown wolf... ‘It’s times like this that I wish I had an agility Prometheus gift,’ the girl thought to herself.

‘Well, you will have one in no time if you keep up your training,’ Jason replied to her thoughts.

‘I sure hope so...’ Alice was beside them as they rushed back to the hotel as fast as the wolves could zip through the forest. The blue-eyed black wolf beside was the cause for the most worry...

“I warned her to keep out of danger unless we’ve discussed it,” he voiced his thoughts to Jason.

“Then trust that it’s what she planned,” Jason replied, “We cannot start jumping to conclusions.” At the mention of Katie getting into trouble, Cole had lost all thought of the rogue they’d been fighting and set a new goal. Jason shifted his attention to his fellow beta alpha, “Caden, let’s hear some good news...”

The mind link was quiet for a bit before the reply came, “Ummm... I’m sorry to disappoint you on that... I have bad news instead...”

Caden was tasked with coordinating the wolves rushing through the forest. He knew the direction they were supposed to be going and all he had to do was keep track of the wolves as they rushed through. Through the mind link, this was more than easy. With the help of the three alphas they'd come with and Crysta, he was able to get them well-coordinated and keep the panic to a minimum.

Most of them were spooked by the fact that rogues had only surrounded them a moment ago. It didn't help that they were saved by plant life either. Both experiences made the wolves hard to control, "Crysta, how is your side?" he asked from the back of the pack.

"Well, they are pretty much relaxed now... They aren't talking yet though. It might take some time for them to completely shake off the experience they have just gone through," she replied to him.

"What about you, Wyatt?" he asked the alpha he'd assigned to the other side of the pack.

"Same here, really. There is nothing out of suspicion. I hope the rogues we left behind don't break free and chase after though. I believe we've had enough of a scare for one night," Wyatt replied.

"Liam," Caden called out.

"There is nothing wrong here, either. I thought they'd all be too scared that they'd trip just from trying to run faster than they should through the woods, but they are surprisingly calm. So everything is fine at the front right as well..." Liam replied.

The same reply came from Derek at the front left of the pack. Everything was going as planned and Caden was starting to feel relaxed... until a message came through the mind link. This message was personal though and was not to be heard by the rest of the wolves that he was running with...

"Alpha Caden..." it was Katie's voice, "I want you to look at the wolves you're running with carefully. Try mind-linking with any that look suspicious... I have a bad feeling in my stomach."

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A sinking feeling of danger sank into Caden's mind. He felt as though he'd lose his supper just from what he'd heard. He rushed forward and into the wolves and started to look around like his Luna had suggested. At first, he was relieved to see the normal vibrant fur of the pack wolves... That was until he saw one of the wolves running with them bearing messy fur... It was matted with dirt and the scent that came off the wolf was unlike any that came from a pack wolf.

Upon trying to mind-link with the wolf, there was no response. It was only then that the beta alpha realized it wasn't just one of them... the rogues were many and scattered through the wolves as they ran. 'They mixed in with the rest of us when we were panicking...' he thought to himself.

Before the beta alpha could despair, a voice rang in his head, loud and commanding, "Do not despair, Alpha Caden. Mobilise the wolves that can fight and make sure you keep track of the rogues... guide the pack wolves slowly to the side of the pack and get the rogues to the centre of the running pack... Once they rogues are all together, give them hell."

"Easier said than done, Luna Katie," he replied.

“Well, for the sake of getting the pack out of this unscathed, this is one of the plans I could come up with... If the rogues aren’t attacking even after infiltrating the pack, then I have one more request to make of you...” Katie said to him.

The wolf didn’t like the tone behind his Luna’s voice, but nonetheless, he could do nothing but comply, “What would that be, my Luna?” he asked her and paid attention to what his Luna had to say to him. Hearing everything that he was supposed to, he switched to carrying out her orders. They made sense to him and he wanted to do everything he could to make sure he put the rogues down before anyone was hurt...

The image of the rogues going mad in Brigadia a while ago flashed through his mind. He’d watched them reign carnage on the hunters that had them surrounded... the bloody images in his mind only motivated him to carry out Katie’s orders spectacularly... Starting a private communication with the three alphas and delta, he began giving orders to them... “I don’t want the others to notice the situation we are in otherwise there will be mass panic and the rogues will be coaxed to bring down as many as they can. The rogues need to believe their plan is still working... otherwise, they will take down as many as they can before they can meet their death. It’s one of their tactics that makes them very dangerous...”

“I’d say they are silly for not using that strategy now...”

“If what Katie says is right, then the plan keeping them docile at the moment will allow them to wreak far more havoc,” Caden replied, allowing them to take in what he was saying before they could carry out the plan.

“I have an idea,” Derek spoke up all of a sudden. He explained his plan to the others and waited for confirmation.

“Has this ever been done before?” Caden asked as he seemed to be the only one unfamiliar with this plan.

“Well, yeah, we’ve done it before... although, back then, it was just for fun,” Crysta replied.

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The alpha rushed to the front of the pack, “Listen up everyone... To ease the tension, we shall be doing something you all know very well... We are going to run in a diamond formation, however, I will be the one shuffling everyone...”

Caden pushed to the back to watch what was about to happen. The rogues couldn’t hear anything going on in the mind link which he depended on in this plan... Derek began working his magic, placing orders on individuals. Each one that was told to reposition themselves was to slow down and the others around were to adjust accordingly to allow them to gain their new assigned position...

It was like moving puzzle pieces, but thankfully, the objective was a simple one, get the rogues to the centre of the pack and isolate them from the rest of the wolves... Everything was working right until a voice reached Caden’s ears... It was a clear voice from someone who wasn’t shifted. He allowed his eyes to scan through the pack and surely after a while he spotted something that should have been a part of them... ‘A human...’

“Caden, let’s hear some good news,” Jason’s voice filtered into his mind.

It was impossible to think of good news after what he'd just seen. Like clockwork, the voice he'd heard had reached the ears of not just the pack wolves, but the rogues as well. The rogues could hold off killing other wolves, but the whole mission they followed was to wipe out the entire human race... The situation had changed completely, "Umm... I'm sorry to disappoint you on that... I have bad news instead..."

The rogues began to lose their composure... Looking at the formation within the pack, they weren't completely confined to the centre and he'd hoped that wasn't the case, however, their renewed attraction made them realise just how close they'd gotten to each other... 'Damn it...'

"Jason, there is a human here... We need back up really quick... the rogues... they are everywhere..." his words were followed by the hostile growls from the rogues as they picked up on what was going on. Their plan was falling apart and there wasn't much that he could do about it... 'Switching to plan B... Minimize casualties... Not my favourite plan, but the best that I can manage at the moment...' It felt as though he was trying to convince himself more than telling the others. The five of them tore through the pack with the aim of engaging the rogues.

The other wolves noticed and instinctively spread out, leaving the rogues at the centre surrounded by the four alphas and delta without warning... It had all, but worked except for one thing that Caden had hoped to stop... Two rogues had broken away from the others and were pursuing the wolf carrying a human girl that had come along to watch the duel. 'How hadn't we noticed them?' Before Caden could change his direction, he slammed right into the collection of rogues they'd managed to gather...

The rogues had not had the time to process everything when they realized they'd been isolated... well, two of them had gotten away, but the rest of them were now surrounded... "Jason..."

"Just take care of the rogues, Caden..."

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Sandra couldn't help but feel like something was going to go really wrong the more they ran. Jason sensed this from her and tried his best to press on... However, he didn't know what use he would be if they got to their destination when he was already exhausted. Caden's reply had shaken him a bit... He could now tell that the girl on his back had heard it loud and clear as her heels dug into his sides...

"Hey, perhaps you could..." he was stopped by a new communication from his fellow beta alpha, "Jason, there is a human here... We need back up really quick... the rogues... they are everywhere..." this was the only thing that he needed to hear to pour renewed energy into his system... However, it was different for the girl on his back. Upon hearing this, Jason felt significantly lighter and the next thing he saw was the same very girl many metres ahead of them and finally out of sight... 'What did I just see?'

226 Chapter Two Hundred Twenty Six

Alice could barely believe the sight before her. The girl who she'd known to be a junior hunter had just shot off at a speed faster than that of the wolves they were following. This level of urgency was what told her something was terribly wrong... She tapped into her abilities and dashed forward, doing her best to keep up with the girl as she dashed forward.

Growls filled the dark forest notifying them of the rogues that were in the forest... Just then, the woman was able to identify the rogues ahead, along with the other wolves that had scattered away from them and seemed to be regrouping further away from the scene... They were unprotected... the girl before took a sharp turn dodging the mass of rogues before them that clearly outnumbered the alphas that surrounded them...

Alice was about to stop when a voice rang through her mind, "Go and help her... She's gone after a human." She didn't wait to ask who it was that had just spoken into her mind. Her Prometheus gift seemed to react all on its own at the mention of a human in trouble... However, what she found upon following the girl was beyond her wildest imagination... 'Who is this girl?'

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Sandra didn't know what happened and she barely had the time to process it. She only knew she had to protect the human and that is what she set her mind to. She used everything she'd learned during her training to rush after the rogues that were after the human without paying attention to everything else that was happening before her.

Katie had been teaching her how to follow her senses no matter how thin they were and she'd never been more sure in her life than she was at the moment. The moment she'd heard there was a human among the pack, she'd been sure of everything her gut was trying to tell her. She knew what she had to do and how to do it. Whether she could pull it off or not was not a question she asked herself... which is why she barely noticed when she whizzed past the wolves and burst forward faster than a human was meant to ever go.

She caught up to the rogues that were chasing the wolf harbouring the human and allowed her hands to slide into the jacket she wore, retrieving blades she'd grown accustomed to using whenever she was granted the chance. Katie had taken her along many times to hunt rogues when she felt they had attacked... Her senses were so sharp that she knew of this before they were even a danger to Brigadia...

Sandra barely hesitated when she reached the first one. The rogue turned to the right just in time to see a blade plunge deep into its side. Sandra brought her feet to a stop, allowing the blade to cut through the beast's hide before she pulled the blade out and made lacerations to the wolf's joints, making quick work of its ligaments before starting her pursuit of the last one...

Since Katie's werewolf side had activated, the blades were as expected, free from wolfsbane and not as deadly as she had hoped they would be. Sandra soon caught up to the other wolf as it was about to make an effort to leap and get to the human... The girl quickly cut the wolf's hind leg's ligaments, downing the beast and delivering a killing blow to its throat. With that done and her sinking feeling of danger gone, exhaustion came crashing down on the girl's body. She'd been running so fast for longer than she'd ever managed...

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She lay beside the dead beast with her arms spread out, panting... Alice was in time to see everything happen. She'd been so impressed by the junior hunter's quick work of the rogues that she'd kept from helping her out... After all, she had also noticed something else happen in the same exact moment... Sandra was at the precipice of her own awakening... 'Had you known this would happen, Katie?' Alice

asked herself. If the girl had come with them, the opportunity to have this girl attain a Prometheus gift probably would have never presented itself.

“Get up, Sandra... You still have a lot to accomplish. The forest is stained with more rogues than you can imagine,” the woman responded...

“Why can’t Katie come and help?” the girl on the forest floor complained.

“I don’t know what kept Katie behind, but as you said, it was probably something more troubling than everything we’ve seen now...” the woman said to her, offering a hand for her to get up.

“Yeah, I know what I said... I hope I’m not right. I don’t want us to have to deal with someone more dangerous than the man at the beach,” Sandra replied.

“You seem to be handling yourself well. Can you still run?” the woman asked her.

“I should be able to after a short rest... I don’t get it... where did the rogues come from? They are far more than... Reinforcements...”

“Can you also detect your enemies just like the Chase family?” Alice asked, nocking an arrow and pointing it randomly in the direction they came...

“I’m not as good as Katie is, but I keep trying. I’ve learned a lot from my mentor, but I’m not as fast a learner as she is... However, if I’m right, then, the rogues called for reinforcements. Either that or they planned to fool Katie’s senses by bringing a dummy number first before the main force came in later...” the girl tried explaining.

“That explains why the girl stayed behind to protect the hotel. Who knows how many they are...” she paused as a rogue rushed out from behind the trees towards them, delivering an arrow right between its eyes and retrieving another arrow just in case the first one prove ineffective.

“If I didn’t know any better, I’d say you know of the same ability,” Sandra observed. She was finally breathing evenly.

“Well, I grew up with the Chase family for a time... so yeah, I did learn something,” she replied, “although it is not as much as what you and Katie Sirius seem to know. Are you well rested now?”

Sandra wiped her bloodied blade against the pelt of the rogue she’d killed, and stood up, “Yeah, I’m now well-rested...”

“Very well... then try to keep up with me...”

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The battle in the woods raged on as the rogues spread out to attack the now disorganized pack of Sirius wolves. Most of them weren’t capable of fighting to the death. They’d been trained to defend themselves and only a few were worthy of joining the ranks of the pack warriors at their ages. Cole and Jason joined Caden and the rest of his crew in trying to bring down their numbers. The rogues scattered and changed their objectives cornering any wolf they could find. For those that had the chance to witness it, the creatures of the forest would come out of hiding and down the wolves with whatever

means necessary. Bees and hornets stung the wolves... Squirrels transmitted all the information to the Eagles that reported to a master that was unknown to the wolves.

Ants crawled onto the unsuspecting rogues and irritated them until they couldn't focus on anything other than the creepy crawlies on them. Cole bit down on a wolf right before he saw a bear rise onto its hind legs and come down on a retreating rogue, ending its life with a powerful bite to the throat... 'What in the world is going on?' the royal asked himself when he noticed the ants crawling through the fur of the wolf he'd just put down himself.

"So, Katie decided to embrace her second ability," he smiled to himself. He felt a little safer knowing they had far more numbers than they'd initially thought...

At the heart of the forest, two wolves stood in a field of beautiful lotuses completely isolated from the fighting and panic. Honour had collapsed at the centre of the field the moment they'd gotten there... Lina watched as the trees closed up the path that had allowed her to get her friend to the moon lotuses in her wolf form.

"Honour...?" she asked the girl pulling her head into her lap.

"You know I'm not going to die, right?" Honour replied, opening her eyes to meet her best friend's blue orbs.

"Well, you don't look so good, so of course, I'm going to worry about you," Lina replied before looking about her. The blue light coming from the moon lotuses had spread to her friend once again...

"You don't have to act like you don't see the change that happens when I'm near the moon lotuses," the girl replied.

Lina was quiet for a bit before answering, "It's a beautiful change, Honour. You don't..."

"I'm not worried about what I look like, Lina..."

"You're worried about what it means..."

"Yes, Lina... Yes, I'm worried about what it means." Her best friend replied. The girl who was always positive and cheerful was looking worried for the first time in her life. Lina didn't know just how worried she was supposed to be that she was witnessing this for the first time.

227 Chapter Two Hundred Twenty Seven

Seth lay beside his wife rolling in the ever-increasing boredom of the moon palace. She hadn't taken her eye off the scrying pool in such a long time that he was beginning to think she'd forgotten him. However, each time he dared to look into the pool, he saw something that was cause for worry and let her be for the moment. She didn't dare send him there to help and yet she continued to worry about them deeply.

"Why do you just watch and do nothing?"

"It's because, at times like this, the other gods are watching as well. Since I've been moving about asking for their help, they are now watching them more than ever. If I intervene, they will know and be forced

to start an investigation about the things we've been doing to help them," she replied. Through the link they shared, he could sense the deep worry she had for the wolves down below.

He was about to suggest something when a knock at their door got their attention. The moon goddess looked up at the door with worry in her eyes. None of them had expected a visitor, but then again when was there ever a time when a goddess expected a visit. Everyone seemed to be a goddess who came with always knowing when it was that someone would be visiting.

Celeste got up from her place by the scrying pool and beckoned for Seth to take her side as she willed the door to open. On the other side of the door stood a presence that none of them expected to ever show up the moon palace. The presence of this new arrival was enough to force both of them on their knees with barely an effort, "I wasn't expecting you to visit me so soon, father..." the moon goddess spoke up.

"I'd rather speak to you in your more respectable form. As for you boy, leave us be..." the god's voice boomed across the halls.

"That will not be necessary, father. He will stay. It's been a while since you left your place at home," the moon goddess spoke while her form began to morph into a form she'd been known for at a time before the coming of the werewolves.

Zeus eyed Seth, rethinking the thought of turning him to ash. The boy had so much influence over his daughter that it bothered him to the core, however, getting rid of him was just another way for him to lose his daughter at the same time. He'd already forced her hand in many things and she'd tolerated him to the best that her free-spirited soul could allow. This would be stretching his luck.

Swallowing his pride, he allowed himself to disregard the once mortal and move on to matters that had brought him, "Can't a father come down from his palace to visit his daughter in a lower realm such as this one which I see remains the same..."

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"I don't expect to find anything with Olympus when I return to it. You're two years early, father," the moon goddess said to him.

"Oh, I only came to witness the awakening of the one that would be taking your place in two years' time. We should catch up when the time comes. There has been a lot happening on Olympus while you've been tampering with the mortal down on earth. It shouldn't have been good for you to deal with those fleshlings," the king of the gods spoke up.

"And I see you still hate them just as much as you always have..."

"Yes, that is true. I would see them destroyed given the chance, but alas, there are a number of the gods that would rather have the humans stick around. I hope you don't think for a moment that I have not been witnessing your meddling with them," the king spoke up.

"Is that what brought you here, father?" the goddess replied.

"No, it's not. If you're in such a hurry to listen to what I came to do, I'll get to the point. I came here to make sure you still remember what it is we agreed on when you decided to watch over the humans and

offer your guidance in allowing them to co-exist with that traitor's creatures?" the king spoke formally this time.

"I remember what we spoke of, father. In about two years from now, I am to give up my title of goddess of the moon to a mortal that I have chosen to ascend to this position as a minor god of the werewolves," the goddess replied to her father, "the mortal was chosen long before she was ever born and she is to be finding out about this arrangement in a very short while from now..."

"And this is what I came to oversee..." the god of gods replied.

Seth had his mouth agape while he listened to the conversation between the two gods. His mind began to work out the missing pieces while they spoke with each other, "I'm not sure I follow... When was all this decided?"

He would have flinched if it hadn't been for the goddess holding his hand when the god of gods turned to face him, "Well, if you weren't so young, you might have known that your dear Artemis was never meant to spend an eternity taking care of those fleshlings. She was supposed to spend two hundred fifty years watching over them and no more than that... In two years, that time will finally run out and she will return to Olympus, relinquishing her title to someone of her choosing... Or someone chosen by the fates to take her place.

"Who has been chosen to take over the position of the moon goddess after all this time?" Seth was only getting more curious.

"How about you hold off the questions?" Artemis asked her betrothed. It was rare for the man to speak to her in this form. She was more composed and barely showed her emotions and yet... after spending all this time with Celeste, he could tell what lay behind her cold beautiful stare.

"Very well," he replied to her, letting his curiosities rest.

"If there isn't anything else you would want, father. The palace is open for you to tour... I would give you a tour personally, but as you know... I do not have my grandfather's power to bring time to a halt. The werewolves are involved in quite the scuffle... One that I must attend to..." Artemis replied to him.

Zeus debated his reaction... something he was doing the second this day. This realization made him realise how much of a soft spot he held for his daughter, but alas, he didn't have to put up much resistance with a decision such as this one, "If you don't mind, I would like to watch you work. After all, I felt as though this time I would like to see for myself how the moon goddess carries out her responsibilities."

"So it's true that you have been keeping a closer eye on me this entire time," the goddess replied whilst her form changed yet again into the one Seth had grown used to.

"Well, yes... I have been watching you more closely. You're about to come home after all... It's only natural that a father would get curious about what his daughter has been doing after all this time watching over the humans... Are you anywhere close to finishing that pointless war you started with the traitor?" the god of gods asked.

“You still hold the position of best at holding grudges, father. I was able to get over the argument I had with him and yet you can still remember what he did millennia ago,” the goddess replied as she took her place by the pool. She adjusted it showed to scenes... Two extremely large scenes...

In one scene... she watched over a reserve that was now in chaos as the fighting had broken out while within the other, two armies charged at each other at top speeds... arrows raining from both sides to down their enemies... Seth had not been paying that much attention to know that there was something as much as a war taking place on earth. He did his best to hide his ignorance as he watched the two scenes. He had no idea what his goddess was going to do to bring this war to a close without intervening while the god of gods himself was right next to her. ‘Perhaps, I really should have left the room when the king had asked me to...’ he thought to himself.

It was the biggest war that he’d seen in over a hundred years... ‘When did this happen?’ he asked his goddess through his mind link... To explain that... I’d have to go a little bit into the past... Twelve hours to be exact... Sudoku is not the only thing you should be paying attention to.’

228 Chapter Two Hundred Twenty Eight

Thorrin hadn’t wasted time after his sibling had left. The family reunion had allowed him to clear a lot that was on his mind he was able to decide pretty much everything that he was supposed to do next. Ordering a small family meeting, he declared that the entire family was going to Lycaon to reinforce the security around the capital.

The resolution was that they were going to put the rogues down no matter how many of them they found there. The family was all for the brutal murder of the largest collection of rogues in history, however, they were not stupid. Measures had been placed to try and ensure victory... Thorrin stood on a balcony at the top of the palace, overlooking most of the capital. His ten-mile radius senses were detecting more and more rogues moving into the woods.

An order had been issued that all households were to be reinforced with anti-rogue measures. Wolfsbane was supplied to all families to keep their doors sealed and an order was issued that all houses that were to be used for residential purposes were to be equipped with a bunker and supplies that could weather out the storm that was to come.

“How many are they?” a voice called out to him. He looked to his right and greeted his sister with a nod...

“Enough to make the beach jealous... It’s like he’s throwing everything he has left in his arsenal... I would have never thought the rogues could be this many. An order was issued that the spies try to figure out what it is he is hoping to achieve by all this...”

“A messenger came here just a moment ago to deliver that exact message,” the woman replied, handing the Mighty Warrior a sheet of paper. His eyes scanned through the details inscribed on the paper in his hands...

After what seemed like an eternity, the man spoke up, “Very well... If the king is the one they are after, then I shall take my place at the king’s door. They won’t get to him.”

“No, I object, brother. Let me be the one to guard the king. Come on... Even Micah can take care of that on his own. You have a duty to the rest of us to make sure you put the Rogue King in his place. I know it, Thorrin. He will be here today and I know he might end up proving too powerful for the rest of us to handle. Please Thorrin... We will protect the king. Let you be the one to bring the rogue king to his knees.”

Her voice was filled with so much conviction that the Mighty Warrior wasn't so sure he was still speaking to his sister. For so long, he'd thought he was the only one that shared in the desire to put down the rogue king so quickly and yet here was someone else telling him to follow his path to the finish, “Very well... I shall bring him down even if it's the last thing I do.”

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The woman breathed out a sigh of relief, “That's so good to hear. I wouldn't be comfortable giving that assignment to anyone else. Although I hate to say this, the higher-ups have given you an extra order to come with the long-awaited victory against the rogue king.”

“What might that be?” he asked her.

“They want you to bring him in alive. Given the chance that you can bring the rogue king alive, it will be considered to be more of an achievement than bringing him down when he could even have an heir waiting to take his place,” the woman said to him.

Thorrin was quiet for a while thinking over his sister's words... He brushed his hand through his thick locks of hair before sighing, “That's going to be such a bother...”

“I know,” she replied with a chuckle...

“I have been detecting different groups of werewolves coming into the capital. Might I know what that is supposed to mean?” Thorrin asked her.

“Oh, the werewolves called for help from the other packs and all packs that were willing sent a detail of all the pack warriors they could spare to help in protecting the capital of Lycaon. They have all been checked for suspicion. They are clean as far as security goes... The new queen seems to know all of them quite well. The hunters welcomed them after verifying who they were... I didn't pick up anything unusual from them except a few who were verified as well...”

“Why did you stop? We always follow our senses. You of all people know that...”

“Yes, Thorrin, I know, but when the rest of the hunters have agreed to accept the werewolves in and all you have to go on is a feeling that they might be dangerous, people start to question your sanity,” the woman replied, cutting him off.

“They know which family we are from. We have the liberty to dismiss someone simply because we don't like the way they look. Tell me you didn't just let someone like that just watch around the castle,” Thorrin replied rubbing his temples...

“No, of course, I didn't. I had to re-establish the security detail around the palace and change the criteria required for one to access the palace grounds. This was to make sure someone like that could not enter without being watched or stay out completely,” she replied.

Thorrin looked on the horizon beyond the balcony... He could feel the weight of the coming battle, this was no time for him to start questioning those amongst themselves when the enemy drew near, "The rogues will attack tonight, Evelyn. Make sure we don't have potential traitors amongst us when the fighting breaks out. We are protecting the king. We don't need to have people among us that we have to worry about."

"I understand, Thorrin. I will get to it, straight away," Evelyn said before leaving his presence. The hunters of the world had never been forced to bring this many of their forces out to one place. The rogues had caused more of a stir than ever before...

"I will just make sure the rogues that had surfaced today fail to see the light of day tomorrow," he said more to himself as he stood on the balcony. His eyes opened but merged with his other senses to expand his vision beyond its physical capabilities. It was as though he was staring at all of them... Just then, his senses spiked the highest since he'd ever learnt to use them... Pinpointing the direction and position, he could practically feel the Rogue King as though they were in the same room...

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"Where are my generals?" the Rogue King's voice boomed through the forest. He didn't even do anything to conceal his presence. He was several miles from the capital, however, it was still unusual for rogues to announce their presence in the manner with which he did. The rogues around him scattered to give way for the generals to reach the man before he chose to show how impatient he could get.

General Gander was the first to arrive. The man was large and known for his strength. All the generals were similar in skill which made him an enigma as he had to be as quick as the others to be called a general in the first place. The only ones that were known to pull off such a feat at his size were the beta alphas... After all, their power dictated that they be that size. This man was naturally bulky and yet he could pull his weight. This was probably what made him the scariest of the generals along with his deep voice.

"You seem to be in good moods today, your majesty," he said, bowing low with one knee to the ground.

The second to make it to him was General Amanda. The woman strolled in yawning as though there was nothing scary about the blue-eyed man that had summoned them. She took her place beside the bulky man in a similar position, "You called, my king."

"It's nice to see that..." THUD... went a sound not far from the king. They all turned to see another red-eyed man or... boy at this point, rolling about in the grass...

"Ouch ouch ouch, that is not the way it was supposed to look," the boy rolled about, trying to ease the pain in his back. Whatever manoeuvre he'd tried through the trees had got him to land on his back right on top of a buttress root. It wasn't a surprise to any of them as the boy was known for similar antics...

The rest of them waited patiently as he finished nursing his wounds... As he did so, another voice pierced through the air, "I see Benji hasn't forgotten his ways... You know it's disgusting of you to emulate the hunters..."

“Oh, don’t be such a stick in the mud, Samson. You also know how cool they look when they zip through the trees like that... It’s creative of them,” the boy replied, finally recovering from his fall. Samson, the more composed man took his place beside Amanda.

“My Lord,” he announced.

“If I’m to pick up where Samson left off, you look like a monkey when you try to do that Benji. Now get in with the others before I emulate his majesty’s impatience,” A new voice interrupted them... This one was more powerful than the other generals and his presence calmed the king. The man was large and his eyes burned a bright red... His aura was nothing less of a beta alpha and his name was Thane.”

Benji picked himself up and took his place beside Samson bowing to the rogue king, “My King, we are at your service...”

Thane sighed nodding his head and took his place in front of them before taking a bow as well, although his was more of that of a butler and not knightly in any way. The king, pleased with their response proceeded with his words, “Well, now that I am here, shall we?”

Smirks spread across their faces as they confirmed what they had wanted to hear since they’d heard their king’s summons. Waiting for the king had been excruciating, but the time for them to carry out his wishes was finally upon them and nothing could make them happier...

229 Chapter Two Hundred Twenty Nine

Thorin departed from his place on the top-most balcony and retreated into the empty room it belonged to. Looking about the somewhat dusty room, his mind ran through the records of the battle that was the reason for its emptiness. It was the room that once housed the royal family eighteen years ago. Looking back at it now, he hadn’t been powerful enough to protect them then. He didn’t expect that to happen again though.

He walked out of the room and surveyed the security detail about the castle before making one last destination. The large double doors that greeted him on the highest floor of the palace only brought sadness to him. Even as they protected the king, his life was slipping away from his fingertips. The hunters at the door stepped aside and let the mighty warrior inside.

Inside the room, nurses tended to the dying king as he lay on the bed in the worst condition ever known to a werewolf. The pain was all the man had known for a long time. Werewolves could heal from almost anything and when one got stuck with something incurable, it was torture. All that and the man had held on. “Your majesty...”

“I... read the report your hunters brought to me,” the man’s strained voice came through the mask he wore.

“My King, you should not strain yourself,” the queen rushed to his side, holding onto his hand as though to tell the man he still had more to live for.

The king’s eyes opened for the first time in a while and he turned his head to stare at his wife, “I might as well tell what I know about the situation if it can help to bring this war to an end.” After getting confirmation from her, he turned to face the Mighty Warrior. It was then that Evelyn came barging in, no doubt her senses telling her that she was meant to listen to everything that was going to be said at

that moment. The king spoke and he spoke clearer than they had ever heard him in months, making sure to keep his story clear and coherent while he did.

There was much for the Mighty warrior to note down, along with everything he needed to know that would put an end to the war. When the king was done telling them what they needed to know, he went to sleep without a warning. The room was plunged into a deep silence that was much welcomed by its inhabitants. Thorrin turned immediately to leave, his coat waving in response to his sharp movements and with that, he was out of the room.

Thorrin walked through the scores of hunters and wolves that stood about him. He was to lead them to the largest battle seen in a hundred years. It was the largest collection of rogues that had been seen at that time. Standing at the gates of the large courtyard, the man began speaking, "A day like this has not been seen in ages... And to be honest, I don't know whether I should be happy about it or not. On one side, we've been presented with the first chance in a long time to bring the rogues' number tumbling down.

On the other hand, the rogues could completely outnumber us and bring our numbers tumbling down. Seeing that as the worst-case scenario, I stand before you with confidence that we will succeed. Some of you might ask where I get this confidence from... Many of you will just to the conclusion that it is because I am Thorrin... the Perfect Warrior, but that is not what gives me courage and confidence.

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I am confident that the odds are in our favour because I know my enemy. I know his strengths. I know his weaknesses. I know what he wants and what he is doing here. I can use that against him and bring his plan tumbling down. The rogues seek to snuff out the king so that the rogue king might gain the power to control werewolves all over the world..." there were gasps throughout the crowd upon hearing that.

"As most of you can guess, the moment he obtains such a power, he won't need his army of wolves, for he will be able to command any and all werewolves in the world. This war will surely be over and the rogues will have won if that were to happen. Now that you all know that, defeat is not an option in this battle," the Perfect Warrior spoke up.

"But what about the rogues... They keep coming. Surely you don't think our numbers can hold them back forever," one of the alphas that were present asked the man.

"No, I don't think that... although I do hope that our numbers can hold out long enough for the Rogue King to meet his end," Thorrin replied, watching for the gasps and questioning looks they all received, "Yes, the rogue king himself is present for this battle... and he will be my target tonight."

Thorrin's senses spiked as the rogues stirred. He turned to face the direction of his foes, "Alas, the battle shall be started by the rogues... I advise that you kill your foes and not simply maim or knock them out... That way, they will stay down when you bring them down," he said to them before walking out the gates with the army behind him.

The hunters were dressed in leather while the wolves dressed in whatever was comfortable for them. Some packs chose colours to signify their pack warriors while others didn't bother with formalities.

Some of the wolves were extremely well-trained while others weren't as blessed... All were greeted with welcoming hands and allowed to help out...

"Do you really sense him?" a masculine voice came from the right of the Perfect Warrior.

Thorrin looked to the right to see his good friend and comrade, Jim Gordon, "Yes, Thunder... I know he is here..."

The man beside him sighed, "This wouldn't be the first time you have felt his presence before, you know..."

"Well, who was I to know exactly how powerful the man was supposed to feel... And to think each time I had detected a phoney king, it had been one of his meddlesome generals," the man cursed...

"Wait, what are you picking up this time?" Jim asked him, his voice rising a few octaves in panic. Thorrin looked to his side and took in the sight of one of the Mighty Warriors displaying an emotion that was unsightly on anyone bearing that title... 'fear...'

He sighed and reported his observation, "A good number of his generals are here along with a beta alpha."

"That's..."

"Catastrophic... I know..." Thorrin did not have to be told twice. He'd faced the generals before and only got the chance to get a glimpse of a beta alpha. The creatures were not normal and they both knew it, having gone against them before...

"The generals shouldn't be much of a problem for you or me, but the beta alpha..."

"My goal is the rogue king... I do not have time to worry about those beneath him... I shall cut straight through to the rogue king and strike the snake at its head," Thorrin said, wrapping all his conviction in one statement. A loud horn sounded through the air, signalling the sight of the first rogues breaking the tree line outside the capital.

The hunters and werewolves remained watching them as they came closer. Far behind the main force, archers aimed their bows to the sky and let loose a volley of lethal arrows, each one of them laced with the deadly poison that was used against the werewolves. One of the many things that gave the hunters an edge over the werewolves in a war such as this one.

Thorrin watched with the rest of the hunters as the rogues fell at the moment of contact. The fallen rogues were very quickly replaced by numbers far more than what they had just witnessed. The next volley of arrows was able to down a large number of them. The ones that made it through unscathed were taken care of by the hunters on the ground.

"We'll take all the help we can. The archers did what they could," Thorrin spoke in a tone that suggested he was speaking to himself. The message in his words, however, was carried through the ranks of werewolves and hunters as a signal that the time to stand about was finally over. Before the Perfect Warrior could take any action on his own words, those about him rushed forward.

The world seemed to go silent while the two armies rushed forward to meet each other head-on. There was a peace to it. The peace the hunter felt before any of his own had been put down. The rogues had

every intention of bringing the world to its knees. Losing a battle such as this one would have more consequences than there had ever been. The two Mighty Warriors stood beside each other watching the battle rage on before them. "Shall we?" Jim asked the man.

The question bothered the Perfect Warrior... after all, he was the one that knew what they were up against. He'd sensed the generals of the Rogue King... It was the largest gathering of the powerful rogues that he'd ever felt in his life and yet even after knowing how powerful they all were, their power in the presence of the rogue king felt like nothing he'd ever felt in his life before...

Noticing the Perfect Warrior's silence, Jim chuckled, "Does he really feel that powerful?"

"Well, I haven't felt something like this in my life. I have goosebumps," Thorrin replied with a shudder and a laugh.

"That's something coming from the Perfect Warrior. Do you think you can bring him down?" Jim asked.

After the years Thorrin had spent training his body to be the perfect weapon against the rogue king, shuddering at the moment of truth wasn't something he was surprised would happen. After all, it was as though he was getting to take the final exam that he'd been preparing for a very long time. He was nervous, "You know there is nothing that can faze me anymore, Jim. Of course, I can beat him..."

"That's good to hear... For a moment there, I thought you were actually scared," the Thunderbolt chuckled, hopping onto his feet and stretching out his muscles. He could feel the time for them to get going drawing nearer and nearer.

"I wouldn't use the word 'scared', Jim," Thorrin replied, turning his face in the direction they were headed and letting the Power of his gifts flow into his body. He fastened the buttons at the top of his large coat and got ready, "I would use the word, excited..."

This was what the thunderbolt last heard before his friend vanished before his eyes, tearing through the battlefield with a goal in mind. The man barely wasted a second in following his friend, a smirk plastered on his face as they both raced forward, their coats blowing in the wind.

Jim Gordon, lacking a strength Prometheus gift retrieved a blade from his coat and got to work with each rogue he went by. Thorrin, on the other hand, used his bare hands. One fist from the dashing human would send a rogue crashing through many of its comrades at a deadly force that two more behind it would be killed from the impact. 'It's like watching a human wrecking ball in action...' Jim thought as he did his best to keep up with the Perfect Warrior.

To Evelyn who watched from the balcony Thorrin had stood on moments ago, two loud thunder claps rang through the air along with two lines of blood and dead wolves appeared in barely a blink of an eye as the two beings tore through the force of werewolves, 'You two better be careful,' the woman sent her silent wishes. The two of them had been together on missions before during Thorrin's search for power.

"The rogues... Do you think they will break through?" one of the female hunters that stood with her spoke up, holding tight to her bow.

"I don't know what will happen, but we are to keep them from getting any closer than they should. Honestly, if we get to fire any arrows, then we might as well assume the rogues will make it as far as the

interior of the palace,” Evelyn replied. Her blood boiled to help her fellow hunters in battle, but alas they were to stay behind and protect the king...

“To think all this bloodshed could be put to an end...” she held her tongue before any of her words got out. ‘Walls have ears...’ her brother had told her. Instead, she finished it in her mind, ‘by someone who’s not even here.’

230 Chapter Two Hundred Thirty

Lina sat with her friend finally starting to look better even beneath the blue hue that covered her. The air around them was calm and yet there was a deep feeling in the royal’s stomach as though there was everything wrong with the forest at the moment. “You must be seeing beauty all around you,” her friend’s voice broke through the silence.

“Well, obviously, I’m in a field completely filled with moon lotuses glowing under the moonlight... With a friend that glows just as beautifully as they do,” the royal replied.

“Your compliments make my skin crawl just as much as the glow of my skin,” Honour replied before getting up from her friend’s lap. For some odd reason, Lina wasn’t offended by her friend’s words which only served to make her more suspicious.

“Well, what about you? You’ve always wanted to see them. Aren’t they...”

“They are more beautiful than I could have ever imagined, however, they are not the ones I see. I see a battle raging on and on in the forest. The pack... everyone is in trouble. It’s like I did nothing at the beach,” the girl replied, rubbing her temples as though in pain.

“What do you mean, Honour? You said earlier that the vines at the beach were your doing. I didn’t think you were serious...” the look the girl gave her confirmed everything she’d been trying to deny. The way the flowers here responded to her. The way plants had always responded to her. The opening when they’d come... It was undoubtedly an ability she’d never seen coming, “But I’ve never heard of a werewolf that could control plants. There have been odd werewolves over the years in an attempt to put an end to the rogue king’s reign, but you would be the first to bear the power over nature.”

“I don’t think that’s all it is. I can’t explain it, but I can see everything in the forest at once and it’s giving me one hell of a headache. I know using my power to help them would only tear me to pieces. I don’t know what to do. The rogues just keep on coming and I don’t know what to do,” the girl lamented.

Lina walked up to her friend and held her hand in hers, bringing her to open her eyes. Her mind searched for an answer to their problem... There was only one she could come up with, but she wasn’t sure if something like that could help, “Can you see my sister?”

Honour blanched for a moment losing track of the battlefield as she stared back at her friend. It was a bizarre question... she’d been looking at the entire battlefield and not seen the hunter at all. It was as though she’d abandoned her kind at the last moment, “Of course, I have not seen your sister... She hasn’t set foot from the hotel since the rogues decided to tear through the pack.”

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“Then where is she?” Lina asked her. Sensing the girl’s hesitation, “Please, can you see her? It might be important.”

Honour gave her resistance and searched for the girl, focusing her powers on the one place she was sure the hunter was... Getting a clear view of the hotel from the sky from what she was sure was an eagle, she saw the hunter. Katie stood at the top of the hotel with an arrow nocked into her bow, focused on the forest, however, she wasn’t firing. It was as though she was waiting for something.

“She’s just standing at the top of the hotel with her bow ready. How’s that supposed to help?” Honour reported.

Lina’s eyes glowed with excitement... “It all makes sense now... Katie didn’t come because she had to protect the hotel, but she didn’t leave us completely unprotected either... She just needs a little help.”

“What are you talking about, Lina?” Honour was confused now. She felt the presence of something more within her friend’s eyes. It wasn’t the normal flash of blue she was used to when a werewolf was about to shift. She ignored the feeling as she found no way to explain it to her friend.

“I have been wondering how Katie does it, but I have a feeling she could help you put an end to this war without much effort from you. Do you remember when we got attacked by the rogues the first time we came here?” Lina tried before continuing her explanation.

From Katie’s vantage point, she felt her time grow ever closer... ‘My muscles were starting to get stiff...’ she told herself as she readied her bow.

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Cole chased down every rogue he could at the fastest that he could manage, taking note of the ones that got away from him and relaying their positions to his beta alphas. Biting down on the neck of the fourth unfortunate rogue that he’d caught up to. ‘Damn, they just keep coming.’ His voice roared across the mind link of the protectors.

‘Yeah, although I had never thought they would be this easy to put down,’ a feminine voice replied. Crysta seemed to be having more fun taking out her anger on the rogues than most.

Right when Cole was about to approach another rogue, a pair of alphas came crashing through, throwing the rogue off his path, which was directed at a civilian wolf that was running away from him. Cole nearly dismissed the two, but curiosity got the better of him. “This one is mine, Wyatt... Why won’t you focus on another rogue?” it was an odd argument.

“Oh, come on, Liam. You know you get ahead of yourself when you start to feel powerful and let your guard down,” Wyatt replied, as the two of them circled the poor rogue.

Liam got angry at the argument and lashed out at the wolf. The other alpha stopped pacing and watched as his friend mercilessly pinned the wolf and bit down on its throat against all its resistance. In the end, it didn’t matter if a wolf was trained. A stronger well-trained wolf would put it down against all its resistances and snuff out their life. This was why alphas were never crossed by those beneath them.

“As you can see, Wyatt, I am perfectly fine. I don’t need your help with rogues as weak as these,” Liam barked at him before running off away from him. The alpha looked on in the direction the other alpha

ran off in and turned in the opposite direction in an attempt to leave his friend be. However, he couldn't bring himself to let him go...

'No, I've known you my whole life, Liam... I wouldn't be able to live with myself if you got killed just because you were blinded by your rage towards me,' the alpha thought to himself before turning around to follow the path his friend had taken.

Cole shook off the haze that came with watching the two quarrelling wolves and focused his mind on saving the pack. Feeling for signs of distress through the mind link, he was able to find another group of wolves that was in fear of being killed. These were the groups they prioritized above everything else to minimize the casualties.

The royal rushed through the forest, making sure to direct any that he found in a general direction they were meant to be going. The message was clear through the mind link, however, the distress didn't help them. Talking to them physically helped them clear their minds and got them moving in the right direction. The battle wasn't looking too good for any of them. On Cole's way to the group of wolves, Cole witnessed Crysta bringing down more wolves than Cole could have thought her capable of. She was vicious when she chose to be.

Cole rushed through the woods just in time to find the wolves that were feeling the most distressed in this situation... Shouting at the top of her voice was... Bree, one of Crysta's friends. The two girls had shifted back into their human forms forgetting they didn't shift back with their clothes. Either that was the case or this was a strategy they'd come up with at some point during their run from the rogue that was currently before them.

Cole was about to intervene when something stopped him. Right before his eyes, the rogue began to bite and shake himself all over. Something was totally wrong. It wasn't the first time he was seeing it this night, however, each time he saw it happen, he froze at the sight. The oddities happening in the night were also what was keeping him from growing a massive body count. "Hey Cole, I was looking for you."

A voice snapped the royal back to reality... Sandra was walking up to him with a blade in hand. She stopped and took notice of the rogue rolling around in pain before them and ignored it, turning to the wolf before her. "Have you seen Katie?"

"No, I haven't. She hasn't come to the forest yet," he responded before turning to the two naked girls, "The two of you should shift right now... The hotel is that way." He signalled, pointing the girls in the right direction with a nod of his head.

The two girls didn't need to be told twice, stepping as far away from the rogue as they could, they fled the scene, leaving the two with the rogue. Sandra walked up to the rogue and stabbed into its throat expertly severing a crucial artery. The beast struggled for a short while before going completely still. "Do you need a ride?"

"No, I think I can manage," Sandra replied. The two of them were running back, having confirmed that there was no more distress coming through the mind link, "Is it over?"

"I wouldn't be so sure. For as long as communications are down, the rogues are going to keep coming here with confidence that there will not be any backup. They can keep sending more and more numbers

and wear us out,” Cole responded. We need to get those that cannot fight to the hotel and protect them while we figure out a way to bring us out of this.

The two of them began the run back to the hotel. Cole was surprised the girl could keep up without complaining. Her pattern of running reminded him of every hunter he’d ever run beside in his life. She was not the same person he’d known. Just before he could ask her, loud howls filled the air notifying them of the increasing number of rogues that were attacking...

“Just how many of them are there. They are supposed to be in Lycaon, so what are they doing here?” Sandra cursed into the night sky.