

## **Cried Wolf 41**

### Chapter 41

Vaid no, now leave me alone!

Come on babe, just a little kins is all I'm asking for' Sean saye,

let me go you ferk

He is holding her arms against the wall of the house. She can't move, I walk up behind Sean and put him in a lock hold, I break his am Nina jumps at the sound of his arm snapping,

'you ever touch her again, I will kill you.' I say as my eyes turn completely black. There is a force inside me struggling to not kill him, to not rip his head off now. It's overwhelmingly powerful. I have felt nothing like it in my life. I'm fighting myself as I also fight Sean down as he tries to escape. He is screaming and holding his broken arm. I sling him into the swimming pool. It's that or I snap his neck and the last thing I need right now is to end up in wolf prison.

I'm hunched over heaving; my muscles feel as if they are growing bigger. In fact, I feel I'm slowly growing bigger and stronger. I'm overwhelmed with anger and I'm struggling to control it.

Everyone has run out of the house into the backyard to see why Sean is screaming. Everyone steps back slowly in fear as I fight myself

There is a voice in my head.

"Let me take over, let me kill him!" he snaps.

I cling onto my head, 'No stop, leave, go away.' I fall onto my knees as I feel a bone in my back snap.

"He's shifting!" someone yells.

He isn't eighteen yet, no one has shifted early before?' says another voice.

'Someone needs to go to the packhouse and get the Alpha and Luna straight away.' Paul yells. A few people run off together towards the packhouse as I continue to fight my wolf.

The pain I'm in is immense, I toss and turn on the ground. Another bone snaps.

"Shh it's okay, Magnus, you're going to be okay," I hear from the sweetest voice I've ever heard. Nina is approaching very slowly with caution. My inner wolf relaxes for a brief moment from the sound of her voice. He tries to take over again.

"It's okay, try to relax. Fighting your wolf will only make it more painful.'

"How do you know that?" I managed to say with a strained voice.

My dad told me the pain is far worse at your first shift if you fight it.

"11 1 shift my wolf might kill Sean.'

1 won't let your wolf kill him, the jerk already peed his pants when he ran off screaming holding his arm.'

I can't help but let out a small chuckle that Sean peed his pants. The pain subsides quite a bit and I realise Nina has my head on my lap stroking my arms that are growing fur. Completely relaxed and a few more bones snap and my face morphs into my wolf. My tongue sticks out panting in happiness as Nina strokes her fingers through my fur.

Everyone watching gasps

He is a pure white Alpha, Alpha's are meant to be black?' Zak says in amazement. I want to keep my eyes on Nina's face but I look down at my paws to see white fluffy fur. They're right I am white.

Magnus this is amazing.' Nina says in awe. She studies my face closer and strokes her fingers down my back a few times, 'Tell me I'm dreaming?' she asks looking at everyone,

Flint approaches and crouches down beside her

'You're not dreaming Nina, this is incredible though and I've never seen a wolf this big he is even bigger than dad's wolf.

Thank you, Magnus, for saving me back there. I was looking for Moss, he had vanished. I came outside to see if he was out here and instead found Sean who, well... you saw the rest.' She says trying not to sob. I take a step towards her and nudge her face, wiping the rogue tear away. She wraps her arms around me the best she could and cries.

'What's going on out here?' Moss asks approaching the crowd. Everyone parts creating a path, he freezes over at the sight of not just me but Nina crying with her arms around me. I let out a deep horrifying growl that makes everyone cower. Nina looks up and sees Moss. I take a few steps towards Moss, bearing my teeth and growling. He takes a few steps back and I take a few more forward

"No, Magnus,' Nina says and crouches in front of me. You can't hurt him, Magnus.' I give her a look as if to say where was he when you needed him? She hangs her head as if she had read my mind.

'It doesn't matter now Magnus; regardless Sean's actions are not Moss's fault.'

She was right, it wasn't his fault but I couldn't help but feel he was up to no good anyway. My wolf tries to fight for full control to kill him.

Magnus!' My parents shout my name as they tie their robes on from shifting back into human form.

As soon as they approach Moss takes the opportunity to take Nina's arm and pull her back. I let out a growl.

"Magnus, you've shifted?' Dad says.

'And he is pure white like my wolf.' Mum says stunned.

"Have you ever seen a white male Alpha before?' dad asks mum.

'No, but like me, he is a direct descendant of the Moon Goddess. Perhaps my grandfather was a white wolf or a grandfather before him or he could be the first pure white alpha wolf to exist? But either way, the Moon Goddess has bestowed this on him.' Mum smiles. You are so beautiful my son.' She says and hugs me.

Can you shift back?' Dad asks. I don't want to shift back just yet I look towards the trees and let out the loudest howl the pack has ever heard.

'A run it is then.' My dad says. My parents shift into their wolves, my wolf is at least six inches taller than my dad's. Everyone watches as all three of us howl in unison and run towards the woods just as Claire comes out from her house after probably

changing into fifty different dresses to see what is going on.

'Who's that wolf and where's my Boo-boo gone too? she asks confused.

Zak approaches her and places his hand on her shoulder. 'You might want to sit down for this?'

Claire passes out to everyone's amusement after Zak caught her up to speed.

The wind whips through my fur, my paws pound against the dirt, my massive tongue hangs out, collecting the odd flying bug. I feel so free, so wild and powerful.

My parents are only meters behind me as we run with the wind. As we howl into the night sky more wolves from our pack join us and howl in unison to celebrate the arrival of my wolf. Sitting on a mountain top one by one they line up and bow, exposing their neck showing full submission and loyalty. It's midnight, I run once more through the woods before returning home to the Packhouse with my parents, Seth, Leon, Mia, and Amelia. They all shift into their human forms and wait for me to shift.

\*Just relax son, close your eyes and imagine yourself in human form and you will shift back. It won't hurt.'

Closing my eyes, I imagine myself in human form as I shift back pain sears throughout my body. My howl of pain turns into a human scream

## Chapter 42

My mother falls to her knees and tries to comfort me I'm covered in sweat and in a lot of pain

What is wrong with him, Ryker?"

I don't know it's not meant to be painful. I've never seen a shift like this before Something isn't right Let's get him to his room and call the Pack doctor.'

Seth, Leon, and my dad carry me to my room.

He's got a fever.' Mum says, touching my forehead,

Seth leaves to get the Pack doctor while mum stays by my side wiping my face with a cold face washer. My whole body is shaking and I cannot speak.

"Maybe it has something to do with shifting early?' Dad suggests.

"Maybe Mum frowns.

The pack doctor arrives and takes my obs.

He has a fever, but I'm struggling to see how it has anything to do with shifting. And you mentioned he was in immense pain when he shifted back?'

'Yes, he was screaming in pain, doctor' Dad says.

I see, well I don't know what to say. I've never seen anything like this. I'll take some blood samples and see if I can find anything, For now, keep him cool until his fever breaks.'

Thank you, doctor,' Dad says and shows him out the door.

The morning arrives. I'm still shaking. Mum had fallen asleep at some point. Her head rests on my bed, Someone knocks at my door, stirring her awake

I'll be right back, Magnus.' She whispers.

Opening my door, she greets May, Nina, Zak, and Flint.

Dad just told us at breakfast Magnus has a fever? Is he going to be, okay?' Josie asks.

Im sure once the fever breaks, he will be fine.' Mum assures them

Can we see him?' Nina asks.

"Yes, I'm sure Magnus would like to see you all.'

They all step inside my room and approach my bed. They can see I'm shivering and sweating. I'm mumbling, but it's incoherent for them

Shn, Save your energy, just res!' The sweet voice says.

I feel Nina lake my hand and hold it between her two hands. She sits in the seat my mother spent the night in and holds my hand ughter. "You go rest, Luna I'll stay and watch over him for you.'

Thank you, Nina 'My mother similes

\*You get better soon, brother 'Flint says

"Yeah, we have school tomorrow and would rather you go with us. Josie says

They all leave the room except for Nina, who stays by my side, holding my hand

The whole town has been talking about your early shift last night and that your wolf is pure white. Even some of our neighbouring Packs have already heard and some of the Alpha's want to come to see you for themselves to see if it's true.' She takes the face washer from my forehead and noses it in cold water and wipes the sweat from my face. She walks over to the window and opens il

wiche, allowing the fresh breeze to whirl through my room.

Nina continues to stay by iny side for the next hour until my parents enter with the pack doctor.

He still has the fever? There was nothing unusual about the blood results, which doesn't help explain why he shifted early and why he has a fever. There has to be more to it, like something we can't see?'

like magie?' Nina says gaining everyone's attention.

The doctor pauses in thought for a moment.

Exactly like magic.' He says.

'I don't understand,' mum says

't have a friend, a witch. With your permission, I'd like her to come here to meet and assess Magnus. She will see if any magic is involved

'But I thought witches haven't existed in over a hundred years.'Dad says.

There is a small coven of witches that still exists that no one knows about. They don't make themselves known to the public for fear of being hunted and killed.'

I see. Well, if you think it will help Magnus, then you have my approval.' Dad says. The doctor nods and takes his leave. Nina sits back down in the chair and holds my hand until Claire comes running up the stairs.

'Boo-boo.' She yells, barging into my room.

'I heard what happened last night. I was told you are with fever?' She says and discreetly nudges Nina to move. Nina frowns and stands with my parents. Claire takes the seat and grabs my hand, squeezing it too tight for my liking.

Claire, I'm sure Magnus appreciates you coming to see him, but he really needs his rest, my dear.' Mum says.

'Oh Luna, don't fret. I will take over and watch over him while you all rest. It's the least I can do since I am his girlfriend.' She says while giving Nina a quick glare.

You can stay with him for a couple of hours, Claire, then I'll be back to watch over him.' Mum says.

"Okay Luna, I'll take good care of him.'

I'm sure you will.' Mum frowns.

They take their leave, leaving me alone with Claire.

On Boo-boo, let me freshen that face washer up for you.' she says, dipping into a bucket. She doesn't rinse the excess water and plops it onto my face. Water dribbles all over my face and pillow. I may as well be floating in the middle of the ocean at this rate. That breeze is messing my hair up, Boo-boo. Give me a moment while I go shut the windows,

I tried to tell her to leave the windows open, but no words left my lips. The room became stuffy within minutes, and my fever felt

even worse

"Oh Boo-boo, I'll hop in bed beside you.'

The last thing I needed was body warmth. I already felt sticky and slimy and overheated as it was. She lies beside me and starts sliding her fingers through my hair and tugs at it as she tries to soothe me. It is

annoying me and there is nothing I can do about it. After almost two hours of intensive care from Claire, my mother and Nina enter.

Magnus! What has happened? You look even worse!' she yells.

Oh, I thought he was improving?' Claire says,

Nina, fetch the pack doctor for me and show Claire out along the way, please.'

'By Booboo, I'll come to visit you after school tomorrow. She says, kissing my lips that I can't even move. They are dry and flaky from dehydration

Nina happily shows Claire out of the packhouse and calls for the doctor. She returns to the room and opens the windows. She looks around the room and takes a spare pillow.

'Luna, could you lift his head while I swap the pillows over, please' Mum nods and lifts my head as they change the pillow over. The dry, fresh pillow feels much better and the breeze from the window is refreshing,

'He needs water,' Nina says and fills a glass of water from the bathroom sink.

She sits beside me and lifts the glass to my lips. I take as many sips as I can. The doctor arrives with the witch. Nina stands up and moves away so the witch can assess me.

'Are you able to tell us what is wrong with my son?' Mum asks. The witch doesn't approach me. Instead, the witch looks over at

Nina..

'He is reacting to a curse.' She says.

What curse?' Mother says.

The witch points a finger at Nina

'Her curse.'

## Chapter 43

My ourne Nina sya

Are you implying Nina has been playing with some kind of magic and cursed my son' mother asks

Na, but she has a cure shadowing her, and it's allecting Magnus

I'm sorry, but you must be mistaken? I'm not cursed Nina says.

The witch looks Nina up and down

'Oh, you're ousred, sweetheart I can see it lingering all around you'

What kind of ourse? How do I get rid of it?'

“What kind of curse, for I do not know and how to break it. Only the one who cursed you knows how. Until then, you are stuck with it

“How do I find out who cursed me, then?”

“Only time will tell.” She looks back over at Magnus and approaches.

She hovers a hand over him and says an incantation. ‘The fever will break soon. In the meantime, until the curse breaks, I suggest you tell him to avoid shifting.’

Why is that?’ mother asks.

It’s going to hurt every time he shifts.’ The witch takes her leave without saying another word.’

We need to have a pack meeting immediately.’ Mum says to Nina.

Everyone leaves the room; my fever breaks. I’m able to walk to the bathroom and have a cool shower and feel so much better afterwards. I find my favourite black tight-fitting tshirt and my dark-colored jeans and put them on. As soon as I’m dressed, I walk down the stairs to find a meeting is being held.

“Magnus, you are looking better.’ Seth smiles.

“Yeah, I feel heaps better.’

“You better come join us, son.’ Dad says.

Seth and Mia sit at the end of the table while Nina sits with Leon and Amelia on the left side of the table. I take my seat next to my father

“As we all know, someone has placed some kind of curse on Nina, not only that, but it’s also affecting Magnus.’ Dad says.

I don’t understand who would want to curse my daughter.’ Amelia cries. Leon rubs her back.

“We will sort this out, Honey, we will find out who cursed her and have them break the spell.’

“Nina, can you think of anyone who would want to curse you?’

She shrugs her shoulders and looks down with a sombre look.

“Everyone loves Nina, Mum I don’t understand who would curse her.’ I say.

Other than it affecting Magnus, this curse hasn’t seemed to have affected Nina. She looks and sounds like Nina, she is gifted with great speed and has good grades So how is she cursed? Leon says

We are all at a loss and are silent in thought for a few minutes, trying to make sense of it all

There isn’t much we can do other than monitor Nina and Magnus and figure out what the curse does and who is behind it. I also think we shouldn’t tell anyone else about it for Nina’s safety. Mother says

‘Why wouldn’t Nina be safe, Mum?’

Chaphenes

Maomus, you are the future Alpha of the pack. Some pack members will go to great lengths to protect you, many would even kill to keep you safe'

Nina and I give each other a concerned look and nod our heads in agreement. We part ways, I decide to go outside and sit on the staircase Unexpectedly Nina joins me and aita beside me.

Magnus, I just wanted to say how sony I am that I caused you to be unwell and that you won't be able to shift easily. I don't want to hurt you.

N's not your fault, Nina.'

She cries. I place an arm over her shoulder and pull her closer as she cries into my chest. 'But it is my fault. Someone cursed me and it's hurting you.' She cries.

h will be okay, Nina. We will figure this out.'

Magnus?

Yeah?'

'Do you wish sometimes we could go back in time and change the way things were?'

'Every day. I wish I wasn't stupid and didn't ignore you for seven years.'

"Do you mean that, Magnus?'

'Every word.

'We can't go back in time and change the past, but we can change the future right now.'

"How so?'

'Let's forget the seven years never happened. Let's be best friends again.'

"Really? You mean that?' My stomach flutters and my heart is racing with happiness.

'Every word.' She smiles.

The next day we go to school together.

'I'm glad you are well again.' Zak smiles.

Thanks, me too.'

I'm glad to see Nina is walking to school with us for a change.' Josie smiles.

"Me too.' I say again. Nina and I give each other a smile.

We arrive at school; I have science with Nina first.

We walk in giggling and laughing and take our seats at our wonky table.

"Great to see you two laughing for a change instead of fighting.' Mr. Thomson says.

We open our textbook and complete our worksheet with no drama. The bell goes for the next class. Moss approaches Nina and wraps his arms around her, and lifts her up. She squeals with delight while he holds her up and she gazes into his eyes and they

kiss

As hard as it is, I keep my cool. He puts her down gently.

'I'll see you later, Nina,' I say, waving goodbye. She waves back,

'I thought you hated him?' I hear Moss ask her.

'We have put our differences aside and are once again friends,'

I see...' he says in a deep voice,

He glares at me. 'Let's get to class babe before we're late.' He says and leads her away

Claire races towards me 'I'm glad you're better. Let's get to English class. She says, holding my arm.

It was lunchtime before I knew, Claire and I made our way to the cafeteria. Nina waves and smiles at me from her table with Moss

by her side. I wave back

Why are you waving at Nina? Magnus?' Claire asks.'

'Because she is my friend, Claire.'

'But I thought you weren't talking to each other anymore?'

Well, we are now 'I say and munch on my food.

I have a good chat with Flint, Zak, Paul, and Josie. May keeps quiet but glares at Claire the whole time.

The bell rings

'What class do we have, Flint?'

'PE...

Great PE with Moss, way to ruin my day.

Flint, Paul, and I change into our shorts and tank shirts and hit the oval.

Moss keeps up with us trying to intimidate me, but it doesn't work. We completely ignore him and finish the three laps.

'Right boys, time for some dodgeball.' Mr Tilley announces. 'I want you all to form two groups.'

We form two groups; Moss is on the opposite team.

Mr Tilley places his hand on my shoulder.

This team will throw the balls first. The other team is to dodge the balls and not get hit.'

My team lines up and we throw them at random members of the opposite team. Moss is the last one on the oval still playing. He has great stamina and agility but is not as good as me. I aim the ball carefully and throw the ball. It taps his chest.

“You’re out Moss.” I say with a smirk.

He glares

Right, swap sides now, boys.” Mr Tilley yells.

As we pass each other, Moss whacks my shoulder with his. I want to rip his head off, but I contain my anger and ignore him, which seems to make Moss even angrier,

He kept aiming for me and missing; he was throwing the ball with significant force, hoping to injure me. I’m the last player on the oval and it’s been over twenty minutes,

Mr Tilley blows his whistle.

‘Time to pack up, and Magnus, well done’ He says.

I walk away with Flint, Zak, and Paul back towards the school building until I feel a sudden pain in the back of my head and everything goes black.

#### Chapter 44

I wake up in the nurse’s office with a throbbing headache and look around the room,

Flint is with me

What happened?

Mons decided dodgeball woun’t over yet he ran up behind you and threw the ball at her head with all his strength and knocked you out. He is currently being scolded in the principal’s office’

Nina runs into the nurse station and takes my hand,

‘I heard what happened. He should not have done that I’m so sorry, I will talk to Moss and make sure he does nothing stupid again.’

‘Nina, it’s not your fault. You don’t need to apologise’

“He just doesn’t like we are friends again, but he will have to accept it.’

Claire runs in, takes my hand from Nina’s grip, ‘Boo-boo, are you okay?’

“Yeah, every minute that goes by, the pain subsides.’

The nurse walks in, ‘That’s because you have your wolf now you will heal quickly,’She smiles, ‘Do you feel okay to return to class?’

‘Yes, I think I’ll be fine.’ I say and get up from the bed,

\*Thanks for checking on me Nina, I appreciate it.’ I say, waving.

Claire glares at me for a moment, 'You know Boo-boo,' she says as we walk away, 'I think you're spending too much time with Nina I'm feeling very neglected, you know.'

'I think you might be over-exaggerating, Claire; I only have science with her and wave to her when we cross paths at school. Although we both live in the Packhouse, we don't see each other there often other than meal times and even then, her seat is at the other end of the table. I have more subjects with you than I do, Nirla.'

She perks up a bit. 'Well, when you put it that way.' She smiles.

My wolf is restless and wants to go for a run. I want to shift and race through the woods, but I push it to the back of my mind, remembering the witch had advised me to avoid shifting.

I'm happy it's the end of the school day. Claire kisses me goodbye and I catch up with Zak, Flint, Josie, May, and Nina.

"Wanna climb some trees?" I say.

'All of us?' Nina asks. I nod.

Last one there is a rotten egg.' Josie yells.

We all race each other through the woods on the way home to our favourite tree climbing spot near the lake. Nina is the first to arrive, then me, Flint, Josie, and Zak,

\*Zak's the rotten egg? Josie laughs

We climb the trees, burning my excess energy was helping to keep my wolf at bay.

We reach the top and sit together, silently watching the village of Shadow Crest for a while.

The restlessness was returning. We climb halfway down the tree and I take my shirt and pants off and jump from the branch into the deep lake. Droplets of water from the splash reach the others.

'Magnus they all laugh. Once they climb down, they hopped into the lake.

"You boys have to turn around so you don't see our bra and knickers." Josie yells. Zak, Flint, and I roll our eyes and face the other way in the water.

May, Josie, and Nina strip down. Josie yells out once they are shoulder-deep in the water,

You can look now.'

We turn back around and splash the girls. They squeal and splash us back,

let's see who can hold their breath the longest, two at a time. The winner goes on.' Joale says,

Flint and Josie go first, Josie wins, It's Zak's turn to go against her.

This time, Zak wins and goes against May, Zak wins and goes against Nina and Nina wins. It's my turn to go against her.

On the count of three, we both sink deep down into the lake together. We are a good two metres under. We come closer to each other, trying not to laugh as we will lose air.

Suddenly, our eyes connect, and we relax in the water. My hand slowly reaches to her face and holds her cheek. My thumb caresses her skin, and she turns her face closer in my hand, closing her eyes.

When she opens her eyes, I'm closer. I want to taste her lips. We inch closer and closer until our lips almost brush each other. A sudden force pulls Nina up out of the water. Confused, I swim straight up after her.

May is pulling Nina's hair and trying to scratch her face.

'You know I like him. How could you?' she screams. 'It's bad enough I have to see him with that skank Claire, but you Nina? And you always wonder why I never see you as my sister!' she screams. Flint and Zak pull May away from Nina, who is now crying,

'Nothing happened May.' She yells back.

'That's only because I stopped you,' She storms out of the lake and grabs her clothes. I quickly pull Nina towards me and she flinches.

'Are you okay?'

'No, I'm not okay. She cries,

'We will go find May and bring her home' Zak says. Flint goes with him.

'Magnus, we can't do this. That was too close, we almost, and you're with Claire and I'm with Moss. It isn't right.'

'I know, but it feels right.'

'You will be Eighteen next week Magnus, you already have your wall, which means you can find your mate now, and in case you haven't noticed we aren't mates as you would have felt the mate bond. I also assume Claire isn't your mate because if she was, the mate bond would keep you by her side.

My heart sinks. I hadn't even thought about the mate bond. The warm tingle, the electricity that runs through your body when you touch each other, wasn't there. I had made eye contact with Nina and Claire and my wolf never submerged and declared either of them as my mate. 'Claire is going to be hurt when you tell her she isn't your mate, but it will hurt her more if you stay with her and find your mate in the meantime.'

Again, she is right. I look down into her eyes for a moment. I try to memorise this moment. Her beautiful doe-like eyes always get my heart racing. Magnus, I'm sorry, we can be friends, but from a distance. I think it's better if we stay apart as much as possible for the sake of the future Luna and your mate and the for the sake of us getting hurt. I'll be eighteen only a couple of months after you and you have my wolf and be able to tell if Moss is not my mate, then I will have to end the relationship and pursue my fated mate, just like you have to do.

Before I can say anything, she gives me an empathetic look and swims out of the lake away from me, and returns to the Packhouse 1 stay on the lake, frozen in place for what feels like an hour. As I leave the lake, I look at my pruned fingers and collect my clothing from the ground. I return to the Packhouse, now dry and dressed. Nina isn't anywhere to be seen.

She is to her room, in case you are wondering?’ Flint says.

She said she wants to be left alone and will have dinner in her room tonight’ Josie frowns,

May comes storming her way across the hall towards me As she opens her mouth to yell at me, I quickly speak first.

“May, can I talk to you privately for a moment?’

Her feet come to a stop and she gives me a look of confusion, which turns into a look of hope.

“Yes, I think we are definitely overdue for a private moment. She smiles

We go outside into the courtyard, away from prying eyes and ears.

“May, you should be the first to know that Nina nor Claire are my mate.’

“What? How’d you know that?’

“Remember, my wolf arrived early, which means I can sense my mate now.’

‘Oh! But wait, that means I’m not your mate either, am I?’

I’m sorry May, I never meant to hurt you and I never meant to hurt Nina and now I have to break up with Claire tomorrow at school, who is also going to be hurt by it. Today in the lake, that was me. That wasn’t Nina’s fault, and it was unfair of you to attack her like that. Just as I owe you an apology, you also owe Nina one as well.”

She sighs and looks away, thinking about it.

‘You’re right, jealousy got the better of me. She probably wishes I was dead; I’ve always been so nasty to her because I had seen the way she looks at you.’

‘Nina loves you, May, she would never wish that upon you. She even tried to protect you against Claire that day you got into a fight.’

“You’re right, I don’t deserve her forgiveness.’

I place my hand on her shoulder ‘Leave that for Nina to decide.’

May wipes the tears from her eyes.

‘Thanks, Magnus.’

## Chapter 45

I don’t want to go to school today knowing I have to end things with Claire. Sometimes I have to wonder if it’s me who has a curse. Everyone who seems to care for me ends up hurt. I force my feet out of bed, knowing what needs to be done. I get myself dressed, wash my face in the boain, and head downstairs for breakfast Everyone is already halfway through breakfast. I must have slept in. Everyone greets me except for Nina Her eyes stare vacantly at het bowl of cereal as she swivels the milk around with her spoon, lost in thought. As soon as I sit down, she stands up and grabs her schoolbag to leave.

'In a hurry?' Leon asks her

'I'm meeting up with Moss so we can walk to school together.'

"Okay, honey. You have a great day'

'Thanks, I will dad'

She runs out the door. Zak, May, and Josie are ready to leave. I grab my bag and join them.

Have you talked to Nina yet?" I ask May

'No, last night I went to her room, but she ignored me and wouldn't open the door.'

'Nina has gone through a lot. She just needs some time, then the opportunity to talk will arise.'

I hope so.' She frowns.

We arrive at the school, I walk to my locker and hear my pet name being called.

'Boo-boo, I missed you.' Claire smiles. She leans up to give me a kiss, but I take a step back.'

Claire, we need to talk.'

'What's the matter Boo-boo?'

"There is something I need to tell you and I'd prefer to tell you privately.'

'Whatever you have to say, you can say it here. I'm sure it's not that bad, whatever it is.'

'Claire you know how I have my wolf now?'

Yes

'Well, that means I can sense and feel my mate and I don't feel the mate bond with you.'

Claire lets out a loud gasp, gaining the attention of anyone nearby.

'What are you saying, Magnus?'

'What I'm saying is you're not my mate. Our relationship needs to end. You're only going to get hurt if we stay together and I find my fated mate'

"You're dumping me in front of everyone at school?'

I suggested I talk to you privately.'

Claire bursts into tears

How dare you break up with me? No one breaks up with me!'

Claire, I'm sorry, but it's over' I take my textbook from my locker and head to English class.

She doesn't sit next to me in her usual spot but a few rows away sobbing throughout the class

Clave, you have been crying throughout the class it's rather distracting, you know Do you need to go see the school nurse?

'No, Magnus broke up with me 'she blunts out and ches even louder

All the girls in the class whisper amongst each other and smile at me. The bell rings and i walk to my next class with a dozen girls

following close behind. I completely ignore them and walk into science.

Nina sits at our wonky table in silence.

'Hey, Nina.'

"Hey.' she says quietly and focuses on the notes in her textbook.

'I was thinking maybe we could go to the library today and study up about curses. It might help us find out more about yours?'

'Shh, someone might hear you. I'll go to the library after school by myself. We need to avoid each other until you find your mate. I'm only sitting at this table with you because Mr Thomson made us lab partners and we don't get a say in it.'

Knowing Nina doesn't want to be around me after we already missed seven years of friendship together is taking a toll on me. At lunch, I decide to spend it in the library and research curses to help Nina.

I've spent twenty minutes searching for a book about curses and cannot even find one. I see Pipsqueak at her usual table.

'Psst, Pipsqueak.'

She looks around the library.

'Over here.' I loudly whisper.

Magnus?' she says, standing up from her chair as she approaches me. 'I-is everything alright?'

'I need your help.'

'W-what kind of help?'

'If I wanted to study curses, where would I find the right book?'

'Oh, curses or any type of magic isn't allowed, Magnus. Those books aren't out here with the other books. We would get in big trouble if we studied any kind of witchery, voodoo, or magic.'

Where are they kept then?'

'In the t-town library, behind lock and key, in a r-room out of sight.'

'Do you know where?'

'Y-yes.'

'Great! Meet me at the town library after school.' I say, taking my leave.

'B-but...'

4 pm sharp.' I yell, 'And don't be late.'

The school bell rings I run to my locker, take what I need. I shut my locker door to find Zak, May, and Josie standing there.

"Ready to go home, bro?" Flint says.

"Um, I have a school project I need to work on. I'll be home late for dinner. Tell Mum and Dad not to worry about me.'

I run down the corridor, past Nina and Moss making out, and let out a growl. They stop kissing and watch me continue running. My wolf wants to come out, pain soars through my body. I stop running and lean on some lockers and fight my wolf to contain itself. Once I'm in full control, I race to the town library. Pipsqueak is waiting out the front.

'Are y-you okay Magnus? Why are you drenched i-in sweat?'

TI be fine. I had to fight my wolf back.'

"Oh, so the r-rumors you have your wolf are i-true?'

'Yes.'

Magnus, I know y-you want to see these books but we will get into s-so much trouble. You should reconsider this.'

'No, I have to do this, Pipsqueak, I don't have any other choice.'

'Why? What has happened?'

'I can't tell you. Only the high-ranking wolves in the pack know and I've been told to not tell anyone else.'

Oh, Okay. I just m-might not be as much help if I don't know what it is you are trying to find the answer t-to.'

'For now, let's just get inside that room.'

Pipsqueak nods and gestures for me to follow her. We enter the library and she leads me to the librarian's desk.

See the office over there? Inside is another door at the back. It's locked, and that is where the forbidden books are.'

Where is the key?'

Pipsqueak points at the librarian at her desk, scanning the box of returned books. I can see a ring of keys dangling by her side.

How are we meant to get the keys when she is wearing them?"

Y-you go distract her. I'll sneak up behind her and take them.'

Inod my head and approach the librarian.

Why hello miss,' I say, gazing into the librarian's eyes.

Yes, how can I help you?'

1-1 um was wondering if, ah, you fell from heaven?'

"Excuse me?'

Well, heaven called and said they are missing an Angel and I know a sweet angel when I see one.' I wink.

The librarian twice my age blushes, while Pipsqueak facepalms herself,

Oh, my she giggles.

I continue to flirt with her. Pipsqueak successfully takes the keys and tiptoes into the back office.

T'll see you around doll face.' I blow a kiss goodbye to the librarian. She sits down and fans her face as I walk away.

## Chapter 46

Pipsqueak waves me over into the back of the office. She unlocks the door and we step into the forbidden dark room together. It smells musty and the many cobwebs show no one has been in here for years.

The structure differs from the rest of the library that has plastered white walls, whereas this room has bluestone walls and old wooden beams across the ceiling. There are old rickety wooden bookshelves filled with old books. Some are leather-bound and some have steel clasps and jewels on them. We approach the table carved from stone. There are a few small candles that are half melted, with some matches nearby. Pipsqueak lights the three candles, we stand side by side and take the old medieval room in.

You start with those books and I'll start with these.' 1 point.

'But I don't know what I'm looking for.'

'How to break a curse?'

What are you getting m-me into?' she squeaks. I sigh and decide that I can trust her and it's best to let her in on the secret.

'You can't tell anyone, okay?'

'O-okay.'

'It's Nina, someone has cursed her, but we don't know what the curse is yet and how it affects her, and the curse it is affecting me by making my shifts unbearably painful.'

'How do you know all this?'

Because a witch came over and told us.'

'A witch? But they haven't existed in over a hundred years.'

"Sorry to break it to you, but they do. You can't tell anyone anything about any of this.'

'I won't tell, your secret is safe, but I have to ask if Nina is the one who has a curse, then how is it affecting you and not her?'

"That's just another reason we are here. We need to learn anything we can that will help.'

'Okay, well, we better get reading then.'

I take a book from one end of the bookshelf while Pipsqueak starts at the other end. I unlock the steel clasp and carefully flick through. Each page has a symbol and a description of what each represents and does.

Nothing helpful. I put it back and take the next book. I can't read it though it appears to be written in Latin.

'Found anything yet?' | ask.

'No, this one seems to be about the history of witches from all the way in Salem. I'll keep looking.'

Taking another book, the cover reads Spells and Hexes.

I run my fingers along with the words and read out loud.

Casting spells or cursing ill-fortune on another comes with the cost of one's own curse two-fold, Only spells that mean well will have no negative effect on the caster. Please proceed with caution.'

'What does that mean?' Pipsqueak asks I shrug my shoulders and continue to read the book.

Spells and hexes can be cast through many sources, Witches are the most popular known to cast spells and hexes. Spells cast in a group with their coven are longer lasting and harder to break Arcane Mages work the same way as witches.

Anyone who knows how to use it can be relics or items such as these can summon ghosts or even demons or may even curse someone These could be items such as a voodoo doll, a small statue, or symbols made from twine or other materials. If it's a curse, they usually place the item under the victim's pillow or bed

Praying or wishing to one's god or goddess may be granted if you are lucky. Anyone can also curse someone using their god's or goddess's name A powerful sign will occur, such as an earthquake, lightning strike, or a loud rumble from the sky. If the god or

goddess accept your pray, wish or curse.'

"Maybe you should check her bedroom for any relics when you return home?'

'That's a good idea.' I will try that. I unzip my school bag and place the book inside.

'W-what are you doing, Magnus? You can't take the book it would be -s-stealing.'

'I'm just borrowing it for now. I'll return it once we break the curse, okay?'

'I guess'

'Time to get out of here.' | say

We blow the candles out and open the door ajar. Once the coast is clear, I walk out and distract the librarian again with more flirting while Pipsqueak locks up the room and returns the keys,

I give her a hi-five and we part ways.

See you at school tomorrow, Pipsqueak.'

'It's Pippa.' She yells behind me.

As soon as I return home, everyone is eating dinner.

'How did you go with your assignment?' Mum asks.

'I think I found some helpful information.' I say, walking up the stairs. My intentions are to go to Nina's room and search for any relics

'Magnus, the rest of your assignment can wait. Join us for dinner. Your meal is already getting cold.'

'Okay, Mum.' I place my bag down. I'd prefer to search Nina's room first, but Zak, May, and Flint aren't aware of the curse, so I can't say why my meal can wait.

'What's the assignment for?' dad asks.

'Um, it's for... science.'

'I didn't know we had an assignment.' Nina says.

I give her a "be quiet" look.

'Oh, you mean that assignment?' she says, catching on quickly.

I devour my meal, so they can excuse me from the table.

"What's the assignment about?" Her mother Amelia asks.

Nina looks at me for help.

"Weather, how different weathers form." I say.

"Oh, fascinating" She says.

'This dinner was delicious,' I say, walking around the table to Nina I gently take her arm.

Since I'm about to finish our assignment, you may as well come to help me.' I laugh nervously

"Yes, our assignment" She says, standing up and playing along. She knows I'm up to something. We reach the top of the stairs.

What je going on with you, Magnus?'

“We have to search your room’

My room? What for

I look around to make sure no one is watching I take her hand and lead her into her room, and shut the door behind us Unzipping my bag, I hand her the book of spells and hexes

‘Magnus, where did you get that? Do you know how much trouble we can get into for having this?’

Yeah, I know I’m just borrowing it for a while t’u refum ii taler

“You shouldn’t have this.’

‘Nina, I took it to help you.’

‘How is that book going to help me?’

Read this part here.

‘Anyone who knows how to use it can use relics. Items such as these can summon ghosts or even demons or may even curse someone. These could be items such as a voodoo doll, a small statue, or symbols made from twine or other materials. If it’s a curse, they usually place the item under the victim’s pillow or bed.

She looks up from the book.

‘Okay, and what’s this got to do with anything?’

‘We should search your room for any relics, just in case’

She smiles and nods, hopeful about my suggestion. She closes the book and places it in my bag and searches under her pillow and through her bedding.

‘Nothing here.’

‘Here, move aside. I’ll lift your bed up.’ I walk over to her big, bulky bed and lift it up with ease. Nina moves the boxes of clothes aside that are underneath the bed.

‘Nothing here.’ She says.

‘Check the boxes.’ I say. She tosses many items around. While I put the bed frame back down and lift the mattress to check under there

‘Nothing’ I say

As she stands up, there is a loud knock at the door that startles us, Nina slips and I grab her with one hand and fall holding the mattress with the other hand and land huddled on the mattress together, our lips only an inch apart. The door opens, Zak, Flint, and May stand there with shocked, surprised looks on their faces while Nina and I blurt out at the same time.

‘This is not what it looks like!’

## Chapter 47

'So, it doesn't look like you two were having a full-on make-out session that literally messed up Nina's bedroom. Even your mattress is on the floor.... Josie laughs.

I get myself off of Nina and help her up from the mattress on the floor.

'So, which one of you is going to explain this situation?' Flint asks

Nina and I point at each other and the others laugh.

'Well, we can't tell you.' I say.

'What do you mean you can't tell us?' Zak growls.

Because our Luna said we aren't to tell anyone else.' Nina explains.

'Who else knows about this secret thing you are keeping from us? Zak asks.

'All our parents know, and then us two.' I say.

'So, our parents all know about whatever it is but we aren't allowed to be let in on it?' Zak says.

Correct.' I say too guilty to look them in the eye.

'If you don't let us in on what is going on, then I'm going to tell everyone about you two making out.' Josie smirks.

Nina and I give each other a look.

'Fine, get in here and shut the door behind you.' I grumble.

Everyone finds a spot sitting on boxes. Nina and I sit on the mattress.

I lean over and grab the book and hand it to Zak first.

'We were searching Nina's room for any relics someone may have hidden in here.'

Relics? And why I am holding a book of Spells and Hexes!' Zak asks.

I can't shift without it causing immense pain. We had a witch come over to see if she could figure it out.'

A witch? Josie says.

'Yes, turns out there is a secret coven that still exists. The witch came over and stated clearly, I can't shift without it causing pain because of a curse Nina carries.'

'Nina's cursed? Flint asks,

'Yes, we don't know what kind of curse or how it affects her, but it is affecting me. Without knowing who cursed her or what the curse actually is, we can't break it So, Pipsqueak and I broke into the town's library secret, forbidden room to research curses. This book was the only one I had come across so far that may be helpful.'

“Wait, wall, wall hold on a minute! There is a secret room in the library? And who is Pipsqueak?” Josie asks

“Yes, the library keeps all the torbidden and banned books in there. It was like a military operation to get in there without being Caught you know. Pipequeak is a friend from school. You all know her.”

Everyone gives each other a confused look Zak passes the spell book to Flint

tead in the book dial some curses can be made from relics being placed in the bedroom Nina and I were searching her room when you guyé knocked and startled us Nina slipped, I caught her, and well, you all saw the rest.’

Who would want to put a curse on Nina, though

makes the sease Josie trowns

We don’t know We ale wyung to do what we can in the meantime to break it No one else knows about this but us, our parents, and Pipsqueak Mother thanks Nana’s ute will be in danger of the pack finds out she is cursed and its affecting me, the future Alpha

Everyone gasps and stares ar Nina with worry.

“I’ll be fine as long as we keep this to ourselves and besides, nothing has changed about me. It hasn’t affected me... yet, anyway.’

‘If anyone notices anything that might be related to the curse, then let me know straight away.’ I say.

Everyone nods and we part ways and go to bed for the night.

I’m early for breakfast for the first time. Mum takes her seat on dad’s lap.

‘Alphas and their packs will begin arriving today for your wolf ceremony tomorrow night.’ She says.

I hadn’t really thought much about it until now. On your Eighteen at the stroke of midnight, we have our first shift and meet our wolves. The shift is involuntary, and the wolf takes over completely

Mum, Dad, if I already had my first shift, does that mean I won’t shift at midnight tomorrow or will I still involuntarily shift? I’m meant to not shift. Remember to avoid the pain. Last time, I ended up with that horrid fever for days.’

Mum and Dad stare at each other and mind link each other for a few minutes. When they finish their private conversation, they both turn to look at me,

‘We hadn’t thought about the fact you might shift tomorrow night. There isn’t much we can do other than have the pack doctor nearby and wait.

Flint and Josie enter the dining room, Mum and Dad change the subject, as they don’t know Josie and Flint are aware of everything

now.

‘You might meet your mate as soon as today.’ Mum smiles.

'Yeah... maybe.' I say unenthusiastically.

It should excite me I can find my mate now, but for some reason

I'm dreading it. I feel disappointed and I don't understand why.

Nina enters the room and I can't help but smile when I see her. She gives me a small smile in return and sits down for breakfast.

'Surely, you're not wearing those clothes today when Alphas are coming to see you. They will bring their unmated daughters too, you know! You must look your finest.' Mum says.

Nina, May, Josie, and the boys try to contain their giggles.

'What's wrong with these jeans and this shirt?'

'Goodness Magnus, let's go find something more presentable in your wardrobe.' She stands up and drags me up the stairs. Sometimes I wonder how she has so much strength in that tiny body of hers. I assume being Luna strengthens her more than a regular she-wolf, Mum rummages through my wardrobe and hands me over suit pants with a white shirt and a maroon tie.

'Are you serious, Murn? It's not a ball.'

No, it's not a ball. It's an even bigger event than that, my child. It's your eighteenth! Your wolf ceremony! Now get changed and get crackeracking this instance' She orders as she leaves my room,

Sighing, I fall back onto my bed and lay there for ten minutes before I get myself dressed. I pull my black shoes out from under the bed and put them on. I come back down the stairs and all eyes are on me.

'Now, that's more like it' Mum smiles

comb any hair using my fingers as Nina walks towards me.

She smiles at me and pleases that little bit closer Our faces are near She smiles and I blush to wonder if she is about to kiss me in front of everyone instead, her hands reach up and she adjusts my tie and places a hand on my chest

'There What's better Now you look perfect for your mate. She says with a sad smile 'I hope she is everything you dreamed of 'She

Dit Duatie lounge HUSE, set up decorations and a Danguotai today's arrivals of guests Alpha Mason arrives with his son, Hu\* with two daughters Bethany and Addison

Alpha Kyu,

Audi's been far too long since we've seen each other' He smiles

'Alpha Mason, we are so glad you could make it for our son's wolf ceremony.' Mother says graciously.

'We wouldn't miss it, especially my two daughters. They have been dying to meet your son. Is he around perchance?'

.

I'm standing behind the statue of a large knight behind the staircase, hoping to not be found.

Magnus, there you are.' Mother smiles, finding me straight away as if she knows this is where I would be.

She leads me to our newly arrived guests. The daughters fan their faces and giggle.

"Oh, so handsome.' One says and they both blush and giggle again.

"Magnus, these are my daughters, Bethany and Addison.'

I step forward and begrudgingly take Bethany's hand and place a kiss on the back of her hand and do the same with Addison. I know straight away neither of them is my fated mate.

\*Pleasure to meet you both.' I say.

U

"And a pleasure to meet you too.' Bethany says with a curtesy.

'Yes, a pleasure.' Addison says copying her sister's curtesy

"And this is my son Hank, future Alpha of the Greystone pack.'

We make eye contact and shake hands as the front door opens; Nina enters.

"And who is that stunning, beautiful creatuuuure ough!' He yells pulling his hand from my tight grip.

'You almost broke my hand?

"Oh, did I? Oops, sometimes I forget my strength, forgive me.' I smirk.

## Chapter 48

It's the night of my wolf ceremony. I've spent the day with my parents, greeting all the Alphas that arrived along with their families and pack members. It's been exhausting. I have met hundreds of unmated females that have swooned over me all day long. Along with all that, I've been worried that I might shift against my will tonight. The pain I went through when I had shifted was unbearable, to the point I thought I would die. It's definitely not an experience I want to repeat. I know the pack doctor is here just in case but is there anything he can do that will help me?

More unmated she-wolves arrive and swoon around me. 'Is it true you shifted early? Is it true your wolf is white? Are your muscles real?' Another asks, feeling my biceps. I can't help but notice Nina glaring at me. She looks stunning in her red dress that flows at the bottom. It has a long slit on the right showing off her petite, beautiful legs. Her hair is up high, with a couple of strands dangling down her cheeks.

Great, what have I done to upset her now?

The Moon Hall is filled with roughly a thousand people. I walk to take my seat. Moss arrives and takes Nina's hand and sits beside her. Now I am the one glaring at her. Mum elbows me, gaining my attention.

Not even one of these unmated she-wolves is your mate?' she asks with hope

“No mother, I’m sorry.’

‘It’s okay, perhaps she is not from any of these packs?’

Patience Mum, all in due time.’

She smiles, content with my answer. She nods.

My father stands up and thanks everyone for being here. We enjoy the banquet over the next hour. Although I’m hungry, I don’t feel like eating. Instead, I push my food around with my fork.

It’s time for the dance to begin’ My father announces. Mother elbows me to stand up. Because it’s my wolf ceremony, I have to join the dance

A dozen she-wolves try to outrun each other towards me, hoping for the first dance. I don’t want to dance with any of them, but have to oblige. Without looking, I take a hand and pull her along to the dance floor. She giggles the whole time we dance. The song finishes and I choose another random she-wolf and dance. She flutters her eyes the whole time, causing one of her fake eyebrows to fall off. She hasn’t realised and I say nothing. As I dance with the next girl, Moss and Nina approach the dance floor.

I can’t help but overhear everyone saying what a beautiful couple they make and that they hope they are fated mates. His hands been to creep tower and lower every time I look, almost touching her ass. A growl erupts from within me. I can’t control it. All eyes are on me. Sorry everyone, my wolf just wants to join the dance’ I smile and everyone laughs and continues to dance. Moss holds the girl against his body as they dance. I can’t help but sense she is uncomfortable.

Thank you for the dance’ I say politely to the girl and step away. I approach Moss and tap him on the shoulder, stopping their

has the future. After and being in wolf Ceremony, it is only proper I get to dance with a girl of my choice. I say, taking Nina’s hand from the girl who he can’t decline as it will cause a scene and show disrespect to not only me but my father, the Alpha

What a beautiful couple they make. I feel angry

angry

gently and place the other gently say the waist and began the waltz. I dance like a true gentleman, HOLD

West nu?

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\* Ape you bakit Vous

that you might shit?

'I won't lie, I'm definitely nervous, but there is the chance I won't shift since I have had my first shift already.'

'That's true. I won't go anywhere, no matter what happens tonight, Magnus.'

'If I shift, will you... stay with me?'

'Of course, I will. I'll be right by your side' She says, resting her head on my chest as we continue to slow dance. I want to stay like this forever, with my best friend in my arms. Where I can keep her safe and close to me forever.

Dad has the biggest grin on his face, watching us as if he knows something I don't. I raise my eyebrow at him and his smile only grows bigger.

'You were angry at me earlier; did I do something wrong?' I ask.

'What do you mean?'

'Before the banquet when more she-wolves arrived, you were glancing at me?'

'Oh, I wasn't glaring at you, I was... never mind. It's not important. I was just being silly.' She says.

The dance ends. My hand leaves her waist, and our hands slowly part even though they want to stay joined

Moss approaches quickly and takes her hand and walks back to their table. He looks over his shoulder and gives me a glare.

It's a quarter to midnight. My hands tremble and I sweat as my wolf is trying to take over control. I'm trying with all my might to keep him at bay.

I am supposed to stand in the middle of the hall where there is a large round window on the ceiling for when the moon is in place and it's time, we can all see the moon and its glow shine over me.

'Magnus?' mother says, sensing something is wrong.

I look at her and she gasps, startling dad and anyone nearby. My eyes are pure black and sweat beads glide down my face.

'Ryker, it's begun. He is going to shift.' She says to him with worry

Dad and Leon place my arms over their shoulders and carry me to the moon's beam of light. It's obvious I'm in a lot of pain.

I scream out in pain as bones crack and break. My body finches and flings around with each snap.

Magnus! I hear Nina yell. She runs towards me, but Moss grabs her arm and holds her back.

'No, you must stay here.' He tells her.

'No, I promised him I'll be by his side if he shifts.' She tells him.

"Nina, he is not your mate. It's not your business to intervene.' He growls.

'I don't care if he isn't my mate Moss, 1-I...'

"You what?' he snaps.

'h doesn't matter. What matters is I'm there, by his side.'

'You are meant to be by my side Nina and you will stay by my side.' He says discreetly taking her further back behind the crowd.

'Nin-argh! My back snaps loudly right in the middle of my spine The pack doctor kneels by my side.

Everyone whispers that the first shift is painful, but they have never seen a shift like this cause pain almost to the point of dying.

Give him space, get back' Mother yells,

'Where is she?' I say

"Where is who? Mother asks

I can no longer speak, I can't reply as my arms and legs snap into place White fur sprouts from my skin and my face morphs. I let out a howl that shakes the hall I've shifted

Everyone steps back and gasps of coos at the beauty and immense size of my wolf

My wolf only had one agenda strictly on his mind Moss

My wolf growls ferociously, snarling I leap over the frightened crowd.

Dad looks at my mother.

'We need to shift now! His wolf has death on his mind and we need to stop him.'

They shift quickly and race after me, leaving everyone confused.

My wolf is full of rage. How dare Moss take Nina away from me. I see nothing but red. I want to see nothing but blood. Moss's blood. I can sense wolves chasing after me, but their scent is familiar. I work out it's my parents following me.

My speed increases as I search for Nina and Moss. I sniff around and catch her scent of mint and lavender towards the parked cars. I howl, letting Moss know I'm after him. There is a car driving away. I know it's them. Before he gets too far, I leap onto the roof of the car, causing Nina to scream and Moss to swerve.

'Let me out, let me go.' She screams at Moss.

'No, you are mine, Nina.'

'He will kill you, Moss!

"Let him try.' He laughs.

Moss continues to drive, swerving, hoping I lose my grip and fall. I jump onto the bonnet of the car and begin banging my head against the windshield. It cracks, then breaks, shattering into thousands of pieces.

Nina continues to scream and holds onto the car door. Moss speeds up even faster as I lunge forward into the car. I bite into his left arm, Moss yells in pain. He swerves the car and I slip, letting go of his arm. I jump back onto the roof of the car as the car plummets full force into a tree. I'm flung from the impact a dozen metres away. Slowly standing on all fours, I gain my balance and look at the car smashed into the tree. Smoke rises from the bonnet.

Nina!

## Chapter 49

I race towards the car; Moss isn't in there. He has gone. I can smell his scent towards the woods. Nina is unconscious. Blood trickles down the left side of her head. There is glass everywhere.

I howl as loud as I can for help. Mum and Dad appear and shift into their human forms and climb into the car.

'Where has Moss gone? You didn't kill him, did you?' Mother asks worriedly. I shake my head and whimper as I step towards Dad carrying Nina.

'She needs to see the pack doctor right away, otherwise, she might not make it.'

I lower myself down, knowing the quickest way to get her to the doctor is me taking her. Dad places her gently on my back and wraps her arms around my neck. With every leap, I glide through the air like a bird, increasing my speed and making it a smoother run so I don't drop her. Mum and Dad shift back into their wolves and can barely keep up with my speed. We arrive back at the ceremony. Everyone parted ways, screaming or startled at the sight of Nina.

'Nina! Amelia screams. Leon follows her to me.' Nina's mother and father carefully lift Nina down, crying. The pack doctor assesses

her.

'What happened to her?' her mother asks me as my parents arrive and shift back.

'She was in a car accident; Moss was driving and fled the scene.' Astrid tells her.

'Let's get her into the packhouse where I can tend to her wounds. The doctor says.'

Leon carries Nina from the hall towards the packhouse.

'Thank you, everyone, for attending the ceremony, but it will have to end. Please enjoy the rest of your stay over the next couple of days.' My dad says.

They all leave and head to their cabins. Some of the she-wolves are trying to get my attention. They want to touch me. I let out a small snarl just for them to hear and watch as they cower back, changing their minds. I catch up with Leon and follow him up the stairs. He places her on.

Her bed and the doctor immediately attends to her wounds, cleans them, and bandages her. Nina lets out a whimper, even though she is still unconscious. I growl at the doctor, who quickly backs himself up to the wall.

'S-Sorry Magnus, I didn't mean to hurt her, but I have to cleanse her wounds. She doesn't have her wolf yet, so she needs my help to heal properly.'

Amelia sits by her side and holds her hand and Leon watches with a steel look.

Mum and dad join us.

'Magnus, aren't you going to shift back into human form?'

I shake my head and step up onto the bed and curl up by Nina's side. I'm going to stay here and protect her until she wakes. My head rests on her lap. Mum, dad, and Nina's parents give each other a sad look, then look back at me and nod in understanding

'You let us know the moment she wakes, ok Magnus?' Leon says. I lift my head and nod, then resume my position on her lap.

I must have fallen asleep, the warmth from the sun beaming through the window warms my fur. Nina's hand is resting on my back. She hasn't woken but must have moved in her sleep, I move my position and rest my head on her pillow facing her, and fall asleep again I wake up to a scream and sit up.

Nina and I are face to face Sweat covers her forehead and I watch as she realises it's just me.

Magnus?

Fuck her face

"Gross, Magnust' she yells

I whimper and lower my head and place my paws over my eyes Sorry Magnus, I didn't mean to growl. My head really hurts. She

says, touching the patch on her left temple.

Wait, last night. You were shifting. I try to get to you, but Moss wouldn't let me. He dragged me into his car and sped off, then you jumped onto the roof and that's all I remember. Did Moss crash the car?' she asks, observing the patches down her arms and legs. I whimper again, but this time I sit up and rest my head on her lap.

She pats my head and glides her fingers through my fur. I'm in heaven.

'Thank you, Magnus, for rescuing me.'

Leon and Amelia barge into the room, panting.

'Nina, you're awake! We heard you scream.' Amelia says.

'Sorry, I didn't expect to wake up with an oversized wolf in my bed' She laughs. I whimper my apology and she wraps her arms around my neck and pulls me in for a hug. 'It's okay Magnus, I forgive you.'

'How are you feeling? Do you want the pack doctor?' Leon asks her.

I'm sore, but I think I'll be okay. Where is Moss?'

I growl at her question.

'We don't know. No one has seen him since he fled the car accident.' Leon says.

'What if he's hurt?'

I growl again. Why should she care if he is hurt? 'I know you're not fond of him, Magnus. I know he should not have taken me away like that, but I think he was worried about me.'

Not wanting to hear anymore, I step off the bed and go to my room to shift into my human form. After ten minutes of excruciating pain, I shift back and pass out from the exhaustion and pain from it.

I'm woken by Zak and Flint shaking my shoulders and tapping my face.

I'm okay now.' I say, sitting up.

'Is it really going to be this bad every time you shift?' Zak asks.

'Yup, at least until Nina's curse has been broken.'

I make myself presentable and walk downstairs with Flint and Zak. We find Hank the Greystone packs future Alpha looking around.

Hank, can I help you?' I say.

Actually, you can. I have a proposition to offer.' He smirks.

What kind of proposition?'

One, you would prefer we speak about privately.'

'Whatever you need to say to our future Alpha, you can say to us.' Flint says.

'Well, sure if you don't mind everyone finding out about Nina's curse? I'd hate to know what would happen to her if anyone found

I grab him by the scruff of the neck and growl in his face. My eyes have turned black. I quickly let him go as people enter the room

Flint, Lak, gather Josje, May, and Nina We are to meet by the lake immediately.'

We arrive by the lake

'What's going on? Josje asks

Hank know about Nwau'curse, he has some kind of proposition to make I assume for in return for him to keep his mouth shut?! say, glaring at Mank

'How did he even find out? May aske

'None of us have told anyone, though? Flint ways and looks at us all. Nina hugs herself and looks down.

11 thought I could trust him. I thought he could help me find out how to break this stupid curse.' She cries. I pull her into my chest and let her cry

'Who is him?' Josie asks.

Moss.' Hank and I say at the same time.

'Shit' Zak says.

'Why did he tell you?' I ask Hank.

Moss and I go way back; we went to Pup school together far South from here. You could say we are very close friends. He told me in case anything happened to him to tell his mother about the curse.'

'What good would telling his mother about the curse do?' | ask.

'I don't know, but I know my sisters are inconsolable right now that neither of them isn't your mate. My father expected one of them to at least be your mate and was quite frustrated himself when he realised they weren't.'

'Yes, I get it. I broke the hearts of hundreds of other she-wolves last night. What's your point?'

'My point or proposal, I shall say, is that my father still wants to find a way for you to be mated with one of his daughters and now ! have leverage over you. I have a way for it to happen.' He smirks.

'Excuse me?' I growl.

'I won't tell anyone about Nina's curse and in return, you choose one of my sisters to be your mate in return.'

'What!? Are you crazy? I can't just choose a mate. I need to find my own fated mate!'

'Nonsense. It may be unusual to choose a mate rather than wait for your fated mate, but I've known plenty of wolves myself who have or have had chosen mates and most have had a reasonably happy life.'

'My parents would never allow me to have a chosen mate.'

'Well then, you better not let them know and pretend one is your fated mate.'

I grind my teeth and fall to my knees in pain. My wolf is trying to take over and shift so he can kill Hank.

'Magnus! Nina yells and kneels beside me.

Her touch helps calm my wolf.

"You can't do this Hank; you can't force me into mating one of your sisters.'

'I won't force you, Magnus. You will choose to do it to save your friend. If I let slip, she has a curse. We all know they will hunt her down like a witch and killed even by members of your own pack.' |

My wolf growls and I yell in pain again, Zak and Flint help me stand. Nina gives me a worried look.

“You can’t do this Magnus, you can’t choose one of them and pretend she is your fated mate! I can pack my stuff, I can leave Shadow Crest night now. I could never live with myself if you had to live with and mate with someone you didn’t want to be with.’

“No, I could never live with myself if you ever left Shadow Crest... left... me. No matter where you would go, someone would also be after you until they found and killed you.’

‘What do we do?’ she cries

Lak, Flint, Josie, and May watch us with sorrowful faces. Anyone would think we were at a funeral if they saw us

‘I will do whatever it takes to protect you, Nina.’”

## Chapter 50

‘Which sister is the oldest?’ I ask.

‘That would be Addison’ He smiles.

You can’t be seriously thinking about doing this, Magnus? Josie says,

‘What other choice do we have?’

Josie gives Hank a glare. ‘We could kill him?’ she smiles.

Josie, that would only make the situation worse, especially if the evidence is led back to us as the killers.’

Hank is looking at us, mortified that murdering him could be an option.

If you ever tried to kill me, Moss would know you were all behind it.’

He is right, but I already knew killing him wouldn’t help the situation.

‘What if your sisters want to find their fated mates?’ | ask.

“Please, Magnus, we all know you’re a catch and going to be one of the best and strongest Alpha’s in the land, and with a pure white wolf, any she-wolf would give up their fated mate up in a heartbeat.’

‘I need time to consider this, at least give me that?’

‘Fine, I will inform my father and Addison of the proposal in the meantime and that you will consider it, but I won’t mention Nina’s little curse to them... for now, anyway.’ He smirks.

‘Let’s go home.’ I say to everyone.

We return home and meet in Nina’s bedroom.

‘We need to all brainstorm a way out of this. Otherwise, I will have no choice but to have a mateship with Addison.’

Everyone nods as my mother, Astrid, knocks on the door.

'Time for dinner everyone she yells.'

'Okay' We shout back at her.

We all fist pump each other and walk downstairs and join our parents for dinner.

I hope you have been taking it easy today, sweetie?' Amelia asks Nina.

"Of course, mother,' she forces a smile.

"You lot are extra quiet tonight' My dad says.

"It's just been a long weekend, dad, it was my wolf ceremony after all and Nina was in a car accident as well.'

That's true Seth was able to speak with Moss today.' He says. We all give each other a look and stare back at my dad to speak

He had some cuts and bruises, but otherwise, he is fine. He said Nina, and him left the ceremony at their own will as it was 100 much for Nina to watch When he saw he was being chased and attacked by your wolf, he treaked out, causing the car to crash Most knew you were only there to bring harm to him and not Nina, hence why he left Nina, knowing she would receive immediate Care He thought it best to flee for his own safety and to not take the need for medical attention off Nina by him being there."

'Well, that explains that'Mother says

Are you saying that Magnus is the one that put my daughter in danger and not Moss? Leon growls and glares up at me

The room goes silent Nine mes to speak, but the words don't come out

Twould never intentionally put Nina in danger She was supposed to be there while I shined and Moss wouldn't allow her to stay

Even so, Magnus, that's no reason to hunt someone down! The cal acoident never would have happened if you never went aller

Moss in the first place.' Leon growls.

'If Moss hadn't taken her away from me, then it would not have happened.' I growl.

'Magnus, you are soon to be the Alpha once you find your mate. Your selfishness and recklessness have me worried that you might put this pack in jeopardy.'

'How dare you speak to me your future alpha that way.'

"How dare you endanger my daughter's life!!

My dad slams his fist on the table, silencing us both.

'Leon! Magnus! You both need to stop this. This was an accident and thankfully Nina will be alright.'

'Dad, he is right, it was an accident. Magnus would never do anything to hurt me.' Nina cries,

Leon and I look down in guilt for upsetting her.

'I'm sorry Magnus, I just couldn't imagine my life without Nina.'

'I'm sorry too. I also could never imagine my life without Nina.' I reply

We both give each other a small nod to accept each other's apology

Nina has stopped crying and smiles at us both.

'Thank you, daddy,' I hear her whisper.

We eat in silence and welcome the change of topic.

'Zak, you will have your wolf in a few weeks, then Nina will get hers a few weeks after that. Are you both excited?' my mother Astrid asks.

'You bet. I can't wait to meet my wolf and start my search for my lifelong mate.' Zak smiles.

'Yeah, I'm excited to meet my wolf and be able to join in on hunts and border patrol duties. I am feeling nervous and on edge about meeting my mate, though.' Nina says.

'Why so nervous about it sweetie?' her mum asks.

'I don't know why, mum.' She whispers and momentarily glances my way.

'Not to worry sweetie. I'm sure whoever he is will treat you like a Queen.'

'Thanks, Mum.' She forces a smile.

The next morning, I get myself ready for school as I step outside the front. I'm face to face with Alpha Mason, who seems rather happy.

'Good morning, Alpha Mason.'

'Magnus, I was hoping to have a quick private chat with you?'

'Um sure.' I say, We walk towards the trees, away from the packhouse.

'My son Hank came to me with some wonderful news last night that you would highly consider choosing Addison as your future mate and Luna? I had to ask you yourself if you were serious about this?'

I'm not wanting to be with Addison at all. I want to be with my fated mate and to keep Nina safe from harm's way, but I can't tell him that But I think I know a way to give myself more time to meet my fated mate.

'Yes, Hank came to me with the idea that since I'm to take over as Alpha, I won't have the luxury of waiting years to find my fated mate, If I was to not find my mate by my nineteenth, my pack would become unsettled and I would have to consider a chosen mate. Although my parents wouldn't approve of it, I would have to pretend Addison is my fated mate.'

'So, what you are saying if you haven't found your mate within a year, you will choose Addison as your mate?'

I want to say no, I want to scream no from the rooftop's heck, from the top of the mountains!

'Yes.'

”

VIDEO

Very well Magnus, it is agreed then, one year to find your fated mate and if she isn't found by then, then our families will join with you and Addison as mates.'

—

—

With great hesitation, I nod.

Nina, Josie, Zak, and Flint exit the house together. Their faces go from smiles to frowns when they see me conversing with Alpha Mason,

I need to go. My friends are waiting for me.' I say.

T'll see you around... future son-in-law' He chuckles.

An eerie shiver trickles down my spine at his words.

"Let's go.' I say to the others.

'What was that about?' Flint asks.

'I made a deal with Alpha Mason. It's not ideal or what I want, but it's a better deal than Hank's and gives us more time to get out of

'What deal? Magnus, please don't tell me you agreed to anything you will regret?' Nina says with sorrowful eyes.

'I have one year to find my fated mate. If I don't, I'm to be Addison's mate. Which also gives us a year to break Nina's curse. That's if we ever figure out what it is.' I say angrily, kicking a rock into the distance.

'What will Hank say when he finds out you've extended the deal?' Josie asks.

"Well, the deal is still on. I've just gotten more time out of it. He was probably expecting me to take Addison as my mate within a few days. He will be pissed off, but he will get over it.'

I hope so.' Josie frowns