

526 The Final Front

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Dawnstrike

It was as though a bruising weight had been lifted when the sun finally revealed itself. Its rays filtered through the holes in the tent that Eve had been forced to stay in. The red haze slowly gave way to the pure golden light of the sun.

Eve could not help but breathe a deep sigh of relief as the sweltering heat of the red poison receded. She rose on wobbly legs, aches traveling through her body. But she ignored it, stroking her still-flat belly.

"Do you want to see the sun?" she asked her pups, hobbling her way toward the flap. She pressed on the comm connected to Ellen's station then. There was no reply. There had been no reply for the past one hour.

Dread clogged her throat—had Silverpine survived, had Ellen and Cain survived? Victoriana had promised info soon but that had been half an hour ago.

She could hear cheers outside.

Relief. Joy. Survival.

She pushed the flap and stepped into what felt like a brand new day.

The camp was alive.

Gammas embraced each other, some crying, some laughing, some simply standing in the sunlight with their faces turned upward.

The Bloodmoon had passed.

They had survived.

Eve stepped forward, her hand still resting protectively on her belly.

Gallinti saw her first. His face split into a relieved smile. "Luna! You shouldn't be—"

"I'm fine," Eve said, waving him off. "I just needed to see it. The sun."

She looked up.

And for the first time in three days, the sky was blue.

No red haze. No oppressive heat. No radiation bleeding through the atmosphere.

Just—sky.

Beautiful. Clear. Safe.

Tears slipped down Eve's cheeks.

"We made it," she whispered.

Gallinti nodded. "We did."

Around them, the camp was assessing damage.
Counting casualties. Tending to the wounded.

But there was hope now.

The Bloodmoon was over.

The worst was behind them.

Eve's hand moved to her chest, over her heart.

Over the bond.

Hades.

She could feel him. Distant. Exhausted. But alive.

And—

Moving.

Fast.

Coming toward her.

Eve's breath caught.

"He's coming," she whispered.

Gallinti looked at her. "The Alpha?"



"Yes." Eve's voice was firm. "He's—"

Then she felt it.

Through the bond.

Not exhaustion.

Urgency.

Fear.

Warning.

Eve's eyes widened.

"Something's wrong," she said.

Gallinti's expression shifted immediately. "What?
What is it?"

"I don't—" Eve stopped, her hand pressing harder
against her chest. "He's—he's afraid. For me. For
—"

A horn sounded in the distance.

Not Obsidian's.

Silverpine's.

Eve's blood turned to ice.

"No," she whispered.

Gallinti was already moving, shouting orders.

"POSITIONS! SILVERPINE INBOUND! ALL UNITS
TO DEFENSIVE STATIONS!"

The cheers died.

Replaced by the sound of weapons being
grabbed, armor being strapped on, exhausted
soldiers forcing themselves upright.

Again.

Eve stared at the horizon.

And saw them.

Wolves.

Hundreds of them.

Fresh. Rested. Massive.

Silverpine's main force with the mark of Malrik
etched into their hides.

The one they'd been holding back.

Saving for this.

For when Obsidian was weakest.

When they thought it was over.

Eve's hands clenched into fists.

"No," she said again, louder this time. "Not now.
Not when we're so close—"

But they kept coming.

And at the right and left flank she saw them.

Black hair tied up, with her green eyes gleaming from the distance.

Felicia. 1

On the right, sandy hair and brown eyes gleaming with predatory amusement was none other than Darius' Beta, James.

But even then their army spread out more, rising in numbers that Eve never thought possible at the latter end of a three-day ongoing war like this one. They were out of ammunition but not Gamma.

Her stomach dropped when from the men, ferals joined the fray—along with larger ferals. These ones, by their gait and the way their eyes never strayed from the camp, were more alert and intelligent compared to their counterparts.

These were the ones that Eve had been informed about.

The Prime Ferals.

They were bigger than any wolf on the field, and were more so around her size like it had been reported before.

She squinted, before she was handed a pair of binoculars.

She put them to her eyes, seeing them in better detail and began to count and with more numbers she came up with, the more her stomach knotted, tighter and tighter until she felt herself go faint.

This had to be their final front, all forces converged, ready to break into Obsidian at all cost. And with those numbers, it was like they had not suffered any casualties on their side like Obsidian had.

The divisions and forces that Obsidian had fought before seemed like a test run compared to what Eve saw now.

She made a horrifying realization, her breath catching as someone took the binoculars from her, the voice of the person too muffled out by her raging thoughts to be instantly recognized.

"They will run us through," she muttered, almost numbly, even as terror clawed at her heart—its talons digging in and making her bleed all over again. "We have to call for a convergence of all the divisions now. There is no time. They need to get here now." Eve always knew that the

Silverpine population was far higher than that of Obsidian's but when she was younger, what they didn't have in size, they made up in strength and ferocity.

Eve could only hope that it would be enough to save Obsidian.

They kept pouring. Eve tuned in to the voice.
"Luna."

She raised her gaze to meet Victoriana's. "Your husband needs to speak with you." In her hand was a comm. She offered it to Eve.

Eve's hand shook, accepting the comm and putting it to her ear. She pressed the button.

"My love." His voice carried through the line.

Her chest grew too constricted for her raging heart, her pulse throbbing as her entire body responded to his voice before she even opened her mouth. "Hades."

"I know this might be strange." By the way his voice was distorted, she could tell he was flying through the air, and she raised her head instinctively, searching for him among the clouds.

"What is going on?"

"They should have come by now in full. Darius' final army. They will be large and intimidating and nothing like we have been battling for days."

Eve lowered her gaze and eyed the waiting army. "They are here and they are just like you described. How did you know?"

"It's a long story," he replied. "But I am leaving for Silverpine. I got intel and I know where to get the horn—the one Vassir told you about. The one that is the source of his power. I will sever his connection to it and render him powerless so we can finally win this." The fragile hope in his voice cut through Eve.

Eve tugged at the bond between them, the mate bond this time, hoping he felt the trust she had in him and that it gave him more strength. "Bring it home, my love," she said, eyeing the formidable army on the other side. "We will give you time."

There was silence on the other line before his voice felt distant through the earpiece. "I know you will want to fight with them. There is nothing I can do about that. But vow on the lives of our little girls that I will cut him off in time. You will survive. They will survive. I swear it." His voice cracked before hardening. "I love you."

Eve tried to keep the emotion that threatened to run her over away from her voice but her words came out hoarse with choked tears. "I love you more."

The comm went offline.

Just as a flying figure raced by in a wild, red whoosh across the sky, blocking out the sun—the red returning for just a second before it left.

"Luna, look!" Gallinti gestured, pointing toward the enemy.

Eve followed his finger, just as he came into view as the army parted for him. Eve put the binoculars to her eyes.

On the largest Prime Feral was a man—the Alpha, the greatest monster of all.

Darius Valmont had come and coming to flank him were two vampires.

