

# Fated: The Alpha's Unwanted Luna

## Chapter 21: Find a Luna\_Part 1

### Silver Pack Meeting Council

People nervously held their breath in anticipation. A few shivered at the deathly cold temperature that filled the room, while others were so tense that cold sweat dampened their foreheads and backs. There were even ordinary werewolves among them who stood close to tears, struggling to withstand the deadly aura pressing down on their lungs.

Seated in the large leather throne made for a king was Alpha Kade.

With his stoic presence and deathly stare, even the six elders felt a chill crawl down their spines. Who wouldn't? He was not Alpha for no reason. His power and overwhelming aura were what placed him on that seat, and though they all held the political authority to bring him down if united, none of them possessed the physical strength to challenge him directly.

His silver eyes were as dark as burnt ash, resembling the color of a gray sky just before a storm, an impending doom waiting to descend upon them.

His expression was so cold and frigid that everyone present hesitated to speak first. He normally wore a blank, emotionless face, but today was one of those days when everyone knew he was deeply upset, and the unfortunate wolf who dared cross him would find himself shot dead through the heart with a silver bullet.

A deathly aura surrounded him, a clear warning to all. The silence that followed his arrival into the meeting room was so loud and oppressive that if a feather were to fall to the ground, it would have echoed.

The six elders had been discussing him in hushed tones, particularly how he had returned three weeks ago from the North Pack without saying a single word about the future Luna he had gone to see. Did he expect them to know his decision without him telling them?

They could not allow his constant foul mood to cause them to fear voicing out what was important to the Silver Pack. Thus, despite the gloomy and suffocating air surrounding him, Elder Ysara, the second female elder among the six, finally spoke.

"Alpha Kade, it is crucial that we speak about your next Luna," she said carefully. "The North Pack has sent word, asking whether you intend to take Ember as your Luna and if she should come here, as you left without giving them any notice."

Sebastian's expression barely changed as he replied. "No. She doesn't have the first sense or the brain required to be my Luna," he said indifferently.

Ember, or rather, the little slut, was everything he actively avoided in a she-wolf. She would be clingy, demanding more than her position allowed, using her body as a tool of seduction. Just like his first experience, he wanted a she-wolf who would use her mind to communicate rather than her body, someone who would earn the position instead of expecting it to be given to her freely.

There were times when he lost control and fell into a wild heat, moments when he wouldn't be able to resist the first alluring female body offered to him, moments instinct and pain took over rather than rationality. In that state of mind, Sebastian knew he could be driven to agree to anything a woman wanted.

He refused to bind himself to someone who would manipulate him through desire, and Ember fell squarely into that category. She was no longer a consideration, and he made sure the elders understood that.

"We chose her for a reason. She is smart and intelligent. You can't simply turn her away," Elder Caelum, the commander of the Silver Pack warriors, said, his voice barely containing his displeasure, as he had been the one who suggested Ember in the first place because her father was a close friend of his.

'He called that smart' His wolf scoffed. 'Then he should marry her himself and enjoy the smell of asshole for breakfast every day. She showed us her dripping ass instead of talking about what she would do once she became a Luna to help our pack. I don't like her.'

"My decision is final. I will not take Ember as my Luna," Sebastian said, the finality in his tone leaving no room for argument or further persuasion.

"Then if Ember will not do, Alpha Kade, it is time we hold a Luna competition," another elder spoke.

"Just as we did two years ago to find the late Luna Evangeline. You cannot rule without a Luna, nor without an heir. We need stability and only your Luna could bring that in this pack."

The remaining five elders nodded in agreement. No matter how well they knew he had lost two Lunas, and that one of those losses had nearly broken him and become the turning event that made him even colder and more despicable, they could not excuse leaving the Luna seat vacant. As their ruler, duty came before grief. And besides, he had grieved her long enough, four years was more than enough, and she had been forgotten.

Everyone knew that after that loss, he had taken more than a dozen women to his bed and discarded them just as easily. If they did not pressure him to choose a Luna and produce an heir, he never would, and that negligence would only cause the stagnation and eventual decline of their Pack.

Sebastian's jaw clenched in irritation. One thing was certain: though he was king of his pack and many others, no king ruled alone. The six elders possessed the authority to remove him and place another in his stead, replacing him with his cousin or even his Beta should he refuse to follow the traditions and customs of werewolf law.

Sebastian had worked relentlessly and promised his father to carry on his legacy. He would not give it up over something as inevitable as choosing a Luna, someone he believed would not last long in his life and would most definitely die, just like all the others. All he needed, all he hoped for, was that the next Luna would at least give him an heir before the cruel fate bound to him claimed her as well.

Thus, he finally declared, "Fine. After I finish handling pack affairs, we will set a date and give the she-wolves of our pack a chance to compete for the position. I will marry whoever passes."

Smiles immediately broke out across the faces of the elders and several important warriors present. This was a rare opportunity for them to bring forth she-wolves from their families, and many would not allow such a chance to slip away. It wasn't every day that Alpha Kade agreed to something like this.

But cornering him had always been the best strategy, because Sebastian Kade was not an easy Alpha to trap, nor one anyone wished to face when pushed too far.

"You won't be disappointed, Alpha Kade," Elder Brenna declared, a hint of satisfaction in her voice. She was known to have daughters, and finally, one of them would have the chance to be picked as Luna.

"The meeting is dismissed."

Without another word, Sebastian stood up from his chair, clearly intending to leave and put as much distance as possible between himself and the elders, when one of them spoke again.

"We heard you brought back a girl from the North Pack and she is receiving treatment in the healing house. Who is she?"

Every muscle in Sebastian's body tightened into a knot. He had done his damned best to remove her from his mind, to push her existence out of his head, and for the most part, he had been succeeding, until they had to remind him of her again, and of the foolishness that had led him to bring her here in the first place.

Many times, Sebastian had felt his heart and soul being drawn to her like a moth to flames, but each time he had ignored it, buried it deep. Even now, he could feel her presence tugging at him, either longing for him through the bond or deliberately distracting him by thinking about him.

What did she think she was doing? Did she really believe he would abandon his duty and everything just to run to her? He had thought he heard her mutter that she hated him, so why the hell was she disturbing him now? She was the cause of his irritation this morning. He didn't like being distracted in any way.

"She's a nobody," Sebastian said coldly. "Once she recovers, she will be gone. Matt, come with me. We need to talk."

## Chapter 22: Find A Luna\_Part 2

"She's a nobody," Seb said coldly. "Once she recovers, she will be gone. Matt, come with me. We need to talk."

With that, he walked away from the meeting room, finally allowing the less powerful people present to breathe again. Still, none of them dared lift their heads until the echoes of his footsteps completely disappeared.

Matt followed after Sebastian and opened the door to his private office, allowing him to enter first before stepping in himself.

Just like Sebastian's personality and expression, the room felt lifeless and chilly. Once upon a time, this office had been filled with lively colors and photographs of a single woman, but now it was as cold and barren as Sebastian's life had become.

Right behind the enormous ebony desk where he conducted pack affairs stood a large glass window that gave a perfect view of the skyscrapers lining Silver City.

Sebastian strolled to his chair and sat down heavily. "Have you gotten it ready?"

Matt cleared his throat and pulled out his phone, turning the screen toward his friend. "Yes. Everything is arranged for tomorrow. And I ordered the glasses the doctor recommended."

"I thought it was supposed to be today. She's a pest in my life," Sebastian said darkly, resting his chin on his propped-up arm and scowling at Matt.

Matt rolled his eyes. It had taken him years, since they were kids, to get used to Sebastian's dark stares and voice. He knew it was unintentional, but did it really have to look like the devil himself was staring straight into one's soul? If Matt didn't know him so well, those silver eyes alone could give anyone nightmares.

"Did you think it was easy getting the elders off my back and finding the time to set everything up so we could send her away?" Matt complained as he dropped into the chair opposite Sebastian.

"Not to mention Miss Ember has been bugging me nonstop, trying to bribe me with her meal recipes if I put in good words for her to you. She even included her body and boobs as dessert. She's really something, Seb."

Sebastian opened his laptop as he listened to Matt talk, then hummed nonchalantly. "You can have her. I don't want her anymore. And also, I want their pack blacklisted from the Silver Pack. Anything made by the Silvers will no longer be sold or given to them from now on."

Matt blinked. Blacklisted?

Wasn't that going a bit too far? Almost every pack depended on the Silvers for resources, canned foods, advanced technology, and newly forged weapons for protection. Many of those were exclusively produced in the Silver Pack. Any pack that got blacklisted, like Moonwillow, would immediately suffer shortages that would cause serious setbacks.

After what Moonwillow had done decades ago to Sebastian, they had been cut off completely, and the consequences were still haunting them to this day.

They had tried to make amends countless times, but what they had done had been far worse than what the North Pack had committed. Even so, they had been punished severely.

Once blacklisted, getting back on terms with the Silvers was nearly impossible, because Sebastian never forgave.

What Matt didn't understand was why Sebastian was blacklisting the North Pack when all Ember had done was offer her body. Or had she done something else to offend him, something beyond attempting to seduce him that night in the drawing room?

On their way back to the Silver Pack weeks ago, with the injured, unconscious girl in tow, Sebastian had told him exactly what Ember had done. From what Matt knew of his friend, whenever a woman offered her body, Sebastian would take it without hesitation and then have nothing to do with her afterward. That had always been how he handled such situations.

Which was why it had come as a surprise to Matt that Sebastian hadn't taken what Ember had offered him at all.

The Alpha was a man who never got offended by attractive bodies or offers of sex.

So what made him willing to punish an entire pack over something so trivial?

Unless...

Could it be because that girl had been found nearly dead within their territory?

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Viola's recovery was progressing, but it was going a little slower than she would have wanted. She had been given a wheelchair just that morning and told to prepare because she was leaving. Leaving?

The word sent urgent panic racing through her heart, because she still hadn't met the Alpha yet. However, no matter how hard she tried to pull him to her by manipulating the connection he was feeling from the bond, it wasn't working, or he was deliberately ignoring it.

She hadn't been able to sleep at all the night before, her mind fixed on what she planned to say to the Alpha once he came, but it seemed he was truly intent on getting rid of her completely without ever seeing her.

Someone who had once threatened to kill her just to break a bond that would rip him apart could certainly endure a little discomfort from ignoring her forced longing, a longing she didn't want to use, but had no choice but to rely on.

He was the last person on earth she would ever long for or want.

But being wolfless, it was a one-sided bond they shared unless he marked her as a mate: right now she couldn't feel anything from him, but he would feel hers for as long as they remained on the same land.

He would be restless for as long as she was longing and thinking about him. Fated mates could never ignore the pull of longing, because it always led to desire. Desire? Viola wanted to laugh at the word.

He would be the last person she desired.

She didn't want to long for his presence and would have loved more than anything to never see him again, but she needed him, and it was the fastest way to draw him here. Yet even that seemed impossible when it came to the mighty Supreme Alpha.

Alpha Kade. Sebastian Kade.

Viola thought of him then, recalling when she had first learned his name years ago, how fate worked in its twisted ways, and how he had turned out to be her fated mate.

When she had first heard of him in her pack, he had been married to his first Luna, Natalie.

She vaguely remembered the stories she had heard in the past about the Alpha who had taken the Moonwillow as an enemy, though she never knew the full details of what causes the conflict with him because she hadn't joined the pack then, and many people didn't speak about it much.

The only rumors and news Viola had been interested in were about his life with Natalie, whom people described as the luckiest woman in the world for being his Luna.

She remembered watching a viral video on werewolf social media where he had taken Natalie on a cruise ship to a human country, risking everything just to give her happiness.

Werewolves avoided human lands because humans were double their population, and if humans ever learned of them, they would no doubt seek to capture them, take them into laboratories for testing, conduct all sorts of experiments, and destroy ways and systems that had existed for centuries.

Because of that, most werewolves avoided the human world, but Alpha Kade had taken his Luna there years ago. Though Viola hadn't known him then, she remembered feeling envious and thinking that she wished her own man would risk everything to show her the human world.

But Evan had not only been a coward, he had hated humans and everything related to their world.

That had been the first time she had truly learned about Alpha Kade, and for some reason, she had admired him greatly, even without ever meeting him in person. It was also how she remembered that he had silver eyes, though she hadn't been able to recall it that night in the forest.

She had watched videos of that cruise trip a thousand times, because despite how much Viola pretended to be indifferent in her pack, she longed to be loved that way, a love she had once hoped to find with Evan. But who would have thought a few years from then he would discard her?

She had even given Evan gifts bought with her life savings. She had once gifted him a cruise trip, not as lavish as the one Alpha Kade had taken his Luna on, but Evan had never gone on that cruise with her. She recalled him saying he would after her wolf awakening.

Alpha Kade... she had known of him for a long time, though only from a distant world, from the safety of her phone.

She had heard many people claim he was born cursed, that he had killed his twin and caused the accident that took his parents' lives. Viola hadn't known much about the deaths of his twin and parents, because she had been in the orphanage at the time.

Many said he was cursed to be alone for the rest of his life, cursed to have multiple mates simultaneously.

She had heard many say he was cruel, cold, and bitterly heartless.

Now, though, she was experiencing his cruelty firsthand. Having multiple mates would no doubt make it easy for him to discard her without feeling anything. He must already be an expert at discarding she-wolves, she realized.

'I don't need his loyalty as a mate, nor his love or anything else. All I want is the position beside him. I need to be his Luna at all costs and secure a place for myself in order to find out why my wolf is not surfacing, because in this world, there is no place for the wolfless. I won't belong or have a place, and as much as I want to belong somewhere... I can't if I am only a Hollow,' she thought, looking down at her broken, cast legs resting on the step of the wheelchair.

Do I even have a chance of convincing him to give me a chance like this, in my current condition? Would he even listen to what I have to say before he throws me away?

## Chapter 23: A challenge\_ Part 1

The two female omegas assigned to Viola had come and helped her take a bath, a very painful bath she didn't think she was supposed to have yet, because her bruises were still in the process of healing. Her entire body ached now as she sat in the wheelchair, waiting for whoever she had been told would come and remove her from the Silver Pack.

Viola released a sigh of despair just as she heard the door finally open.

She raised her head to see the unclear shapes of men entering. They didn't speak to her, but one of them asked the other,

"Is she the one?"

"Yes. She's the one."

Before she could register what was happening or ask them if she could see the Alpha, she was hurled out of the wheelchair without any care and thrown over a broad shoulder.

"Put me down!" Viola snapped as his shoulder brushed her rib that had been operated on and was still in the process of healing. "Y-you can't send me away... I need to see the Alpha!" She tried to wiggle down from his shoulder, but the Delta barely budged, and it only caused her more pain in the ribs.

Angered at being manhandled again after everything she had been through, she gritted her teeth and lashed out with her cast feet, ramming him in the side and lower torso with enough force to make him stagger and finally release her. She tumbled painfully to the polished hallway floor as he cursed savagely.

Through her hazy vision, Viola saw the Delta, angry, reach out his hand and grab a handful of her hair, about to hit her, but froze midair when a chillingly cold voice rang out in the hall.

"Touch her, and I'll break your neck. Step away from her."

Viola felt him let go of her hair, and along with the other two Deltas, they moved to the side and bowed their heads to the Alpha. "Supreme Alpha!" they greeted.

However, Sebastian's sliver eyes weren't on the others, they were on the one who had grabbed Viola's hair and almost hit her.

"Did I give you the right to touch her?" he asked, his voice cold. It suddenly seemed the air in the hallway had grown icy, though there was no air conditioner there. "She has a wheelchair; you didn't have to carry or lay a finger on her."

The Delta looked confused and terrified at the same time but stammered, "N-no, she was being difficult, so I—"

"So you thought to hit her to 'straighten her up,' is that it?" Sebastian asked flatly, his tone blank yet lethal, making the Delta swallow hard.

He had never been addressed directly by the Alpha before. All he had heard was that speaking to Seb was like standing before the devil himself, whose presence and voice could make anyone drop to their knees. Now he understood that the stories weren't exaggerations!

Despite his fear, the Delta had been doing his duty properly, so he tried to explain:

"Y-yes, Supreme Alpha. She kicked me where I got hurt during training in the grounds, so I—"

"Take him to the underground dungeon," Sebastian ordered, no longer interested in the Delta's explanation or why he had raised a hand against the girl.

The Delta's eyes widened in horror. The underground dungeon was a place where, once a werewolf was locked inside, they never came out alive. What had he done? All he had done was try to discipline a nobody who had hit him first! He was innocent!

"Supreme Alpha, please forgive me!" he cried.

The Delta was soon dragged away by the others, kicking and pleading for Sebastian to spare him. But if Sebastian even heard him, he gave no sign of it. Despite the Delta being one of the best men in his red barge, the prized warriors under his command, Seb did not show mercy.

'Seb, aren't you going a little too far for her?' Matt spoke through their link, unable to understand why the Alpha would sentence one of their top warriors to death for someone who didn't even belong to the Silvers.

He had seen how Sebastian discarded many of his fated mates in past years who were weak, and how he controlled the bond to avoid being controlled by it.

Sebastian had always put his pack members first, before anyone else, but now he was sentencing a warrior for the sake of an outsider, someone Matt didn't like very much, because as his friend, he strongly believed the Silver Pack was not meant for her.

'First, you're sending her to—'

'Even if I do not want her, they don't have the right to touch her when I am already sending her away,' Sebastian replied, turning his silver eyes to the fragile figure on the floor, who was squinting to see through her unclear vision. Stupid girl.

"You have a death wish, don't you, little girl?" Sebastian said coldly, as if he hadn't been the one to stop her from getting the beating of a lifetime from a strong warrior. "First, you disturb my time from my duty, and then you dare hit a warrior. I should put you in the dungeon with him to die there."

"Then go ahead," Viola gritted out, looking up at his hazy form. Despite how his aura made her break out in a cold sweat, she had nothing to lose by talking back. He should go ahead and order her execution; it would be better than being thrown out to the packless!

Sebastian's brow rose at her defiance. "Talking back, are we? You know I can do that, don't you?" he said with a humorless chuckle. The nerve of the little thing to challenge him, when she looked like someone he could so easily step on and crush into the floor. Did she really think he couldn't order her execution in the blink of an eye? Killing her would be much better than sending her away.

"I have no doubt you can, being the mighty Alpha you are," she replied, resentment clear in her tone, which made Sebastian's lip twitch upward at the side. "It wouldn't be new for you to get rid of me, but from what I see, you won't do it."

"And what makes you think I won't?" he asked.

"Because I am your mate," Viola stated, carefully choosing her words, aware of how much she was risking by stepping onto dangerous ground, but she needed to step into it to save herself by acknowledging what he has rejected. Well she hadn't accepted his rejection because she didn't have a wolf to do so, so she might as well use it to her advantage.

"You stopped him from hitting me a moment ago, and you won't send me to that dungeon with him."

'Ooh, I like her. She's talking back to you and claiming you,' his wolf said cheerfully. It was the first time someone had dared to talk back to him while he carried the aura of a mighty Alpha, and instead of being enraged, his wolf was entertained.

That alone annoyed Sebastian. Even more so because his wolf wasn't telling him to throw her out again after they had brought her back from the North Pack. The hypocrite had switched sides the very moment they found her broken on the forest ground.

"Don't get too confident, little girl. You are no different from all the other mates I've rejected. I've rejected you too, and I could still kill you to break the bond," he warned in a dangerously low voice.

The threat made Viola want to rethink her decision to approach and corner him this way, a chill crawling up her spine despite her stubborn resolve.

"I am not a little girl," she countered, and Sebastian let out a short, exhaling laugh, not kind, but more an amused acknowledgment. He found it strangely entertaining and annoying that the girl felt the need to correct him, even though she was still a teenager and looked every bit a little girl to him.

No one could convince him otherwise, especially since he had seen her bare torso weeks ago in the forest, and that had been unmistakably the chest of a small girl, soft and undeveloped.

"Then what are you? Seventeen? Eighteen? Or less?" he asked, his eyes narrowing. "If you know what's good for you, you'll stay silent and stop getting on my nerves with this mate nonsense you keep clinging to. I've already made arrangements to send you to America, where you can live among humans. You'll have a house there, a new life, and no one will ever suspect you of being anything other than human. Matt, get her wheelchair and hand me the case."

Matt stepped forward and handed over the glass case, then turned and left to get the wheelchair.

Viola's eyes widened in surprise. She had expected he would simply throw her out of his pack territory, leaving her to the rogues. But now... he was sending her to live with humans.

A part of her, happy about the news, wanted to stay silent and not speak again so he wouldn't change his mind about sending her to the human world. But the other part, wanting to rise to power in this world, find her twin, and make everyone who hurt her pay, couldn't stay silent.

Had he offered this to her selfish self four years ago, she would have jumped at the opportunity and left without a single moment of hesitation. But she couldn't. She wouldn't leave without

finding her sister and making things right. She didn't want to be selfish anymore, and though going away would save her from much pain and humiliation, Viola knew she couldn't.

"I don't want to go to America," Viola declared firmly.

Sebastian, who was unboxing the pink case Matt handed him, looked toward the girl with mild surprise. "Who said you get to choose where you go? It's either there or outside my territory. Pick wisely."

"I am your mate. I want to stay where my mate is, in Silver Pack. To be more precise... I want to be your Luna," Viola declared, looking up at him.

Yes, she sounded shameless and utterly delusional, but what other options did she have? She belonged in the werewolves' world, not the human world. Here, in this world, she had a chance to uncover what had made her wolf fail to surface, a chance she would never have in America, wherever that place was located around the world. The only way to ensure no one would ever humiliate her again was to rise as his Luna, the Supreme Luna, and secure a position no one could strip from her.

## Fated: The Alpha's Unwanted Luna

Yes, she sounded shameless and utterly delusional, but what other options did she have? She belonged in the werewolves' world, not the human world. Here, in this world, she had a chance to uncover what had made her wolf fail to surface, a chance she would never have in America, wherever that place was. The only way to ensure no one would ever humiliate her again was to rise as his Luna, the Supreme Luna, and secure a position no one could strip from her.

Sebastian didn't know whether to laugh or feel shocked at her words. He simply stared at her for a long, silent moment... then he moved.

Viola almost flinched when he crouched down beside her on the floor, his expensive cologne filling her breathing space and making her wish she could keep inhaling such a delicious scent, even though she didn't like the person it belonged to.

The delicious scent itself didn't offend her the way its owner did, the man she wished she could claw at for the way he kept looking down on her, bitterly judgmental, cold, and utterly heartless.

She saw him move his hands in her direction all of a sudden, and she flinched back instinctively, but stopped when she noticed him holding something up. Before she knew what it was, he had slid a pair of glasses onto her face. They rested on the bridge of her nose, and just like magic, Viola suddenly saw everything in vivid clarity, which made her gasp in surprised disbelief.

The man before her became crystal clear. The silver walls of the hall, the fluorescent lights on the ceiling, and the glass walls around them that gave a view of the city with its countless skyscrapers, all came into focus. Yet her eyes were drawn back to the man in front of her.

She gasped again at the utterly handsome face before her. Was this person real, or was she imagining this face to belong to the bastard? She had been seeing him this whole time through a very blurry vision, and now, wearing the glasses, it had suddenly cleared in a way she hadn't believed she would ever be able to see again.

She had seen Alpha Kade in pictures before, but she realized just how much those online images had failed to do him complete justice.

He had silver hair, the coldest, most hardened silver eyes, and a long nose bridge that cast a shadow above his thin, sexy lips. He was wearing some kind of fancy gold suit that left his tattooed chest partially bare for all who wanted to look, and her eyes involuntarily went to the snake tattoo

coiled across his chest, its silver eyes gleaming. She gulped at the terrifying artwork and quickly forced herself to look away from it.

He was crouching before her, elbows resting on his knees, those cold silver eyes of his fixed on her, giving her time to adjust to her sudden clear vision, though he seemed to be the very first thing she found herself studying.

"Now that you have clear vision, perhaps it will give you a clear sense of your state. Tell me, do you see yourself leading as a Luna in this world? Look around you. Take your time," he said, gesturing toward the glass walls that gave a clear view of the layout of the Silver Pack where almost everything were in different shades of silver color.

The Silver Pack was known for having more glass than bricks; everything was modernized in a way even the human world hadn't reached yet. Viola didn't need to look again to see the fascinating world of the Silver pack, she understood what he meant, and what he was implying. A nobody like her could never rule a place like this. He was looking down on her again.

Her fingers curled around her dress, and that small action sent a sharp pain through her cast arm. "I want to be your Luna. I have been trained all my life to be the Luna of my pack. I can—"

"Another reason you can never be my Luna," he interrupted. "You come from the Moonwillow. I hate every single one of them, from the high to low rank wolves. Besides that, if I had a Luna, she is not supposed to be weak, is she?" He raked his gaze over her cast limbs and small body, lingering on her sling arm that was fisted.

"Should she be incapable of defending herself? I am Alpha," he gestured toward his world. "Would fate want me to take you to lead by my side? To protect us? You can't even protect yourself properly."

'Damn you, man! We saw her kill a wolf that night, she protected herself enough.'

'That is not enough. She's weak. She will make me weak in the future. She will die easily.'

"You don't belong here, little girl."

His tone wasn't cruel or mocking. It was coldly reasoning, almost like he was speaking to a child, or to a madwoman who had lost her mind, and he was softly reasoning with her.

She knew her current appearance wasn't convincing enough to make her stand out as a Luna. Being a mate alone wasn't enough to earn that title.

"I've killed for this pack," he continued when she said nothing. "I've been challenged ten times and emerged victorious, with the flesh of my rivals filling my belly. What have you done? Have you earned the rank you want to claim?" His voice was even, and there was pity in his eyes, something that gnawed at her from within, because he knew she didn't want his pity, so he gave it to insult her even more.

She didn't need his pity while he reminded her of what she lacked, how she wasn't enough and might never be enough for anyone or anything. She hadn't been enough when she had the backing of her parents and Evan, and now that she had nothing and was broken...

He shook his head. "You are confused and too young to understand what goes on in pack life and what a Luna truly is. Matt will escort you on my jet to America. Enjoy your life being human. The humans will accept you as a weakling more than we ever will."

Saying that, he began to rise to his feet, but he stopped, not by choice, because Viola reached out and grabbed his sleeve.

Sebastian looked down at her thin fingers clenching his sleeve with so much force that they were trembling, then at her blue eyes, framed by the round glasses that looked a little too big for her small face. Those blue eyes blazed with anger and determination, something that seemed mismatched to her small frame.

"I am not a little girl. I am twenty-three years old. My name is Viola Linden. Moonwillow has humiliated me and turned my life upside down, and my sworn mate rejected me. I want them to pay for it, and the only way is to be your Luna, even though I don't like you in the slightest bit. You say I haven't earned it? Have you given me the chance to earn the position of your Luna?" she asked, and without waiting for his response, she added determinedly,

"Give me the chance and see how I make you and everyone eat their words, how I slap you in that arrogant face with your own words. I can be a better Luna than you can imagine. And if I fail," she met him dead in the eye without flinching, "I will walk away from your damn pack without taking your half-hearted kindness to send me to the human world, you judgmental bastard!"

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## Fated: The Alpha's Unwanted Luna

'That's a first, man. She called you a bastard!' his wolf said, and Sebastian knew that if his wolf had his own form, he would be cracking up with mirth. Sebastian himself couldn't believe she had called him that without even a trace of fear. Did she have any idea how many people he had sentenced for far lesser crimes than that?

"I can't believe you let her stay, Seb," Matt remarked when they returned to Sebastian's office. He had brought back the girl's wheelchair, expecting to be told to hurl her onto it and take her to the waiting jet, but instead he had been told to take her back into the healing room because she had agreed to participate in the Luna's competition.

The Luna's competition? Was the girl courting death?!

Did she have any idea what it was like?

"She wants to earn the position and prove her worth. Let her do it," Sebastian mused indifferently, his back to Matt as he looked out the glass wall at his world, a glass of champagne balanced between his slender fingers.

"You can't let her do that. The elders won't ever approve a wolfless. She's just going to waste her time and her life instead of going away to start a new one," Matt reasoned, not understanding what had come over Sebastian to give her this chance to compete with she-wolves who were anything but ordinary.

Sebastian let out a low chuckle. "The elders set the game, and if she wins, they can't do anything but crown her Luna, and my wife. Which I strongly doubt she will. The least that will happen is her killing herself in the competition. There's a slim chance she'll pass any of it without a wolf, though I would be disappointed if all that defiance was a bluff," Sebastian added, a faint pull at his lips. The fool believed being a Luna was an easy feat?

Not in the Silver Pack.

Other packs might pick anyone to be their Luna simply because she turned out to be a mate, but not in his pack. Sebastian strongly believed people had to earn things. A weak Luna would do nothing but drag down the Alpha and the pack alongside herself.

He had wanted to save her from her foolishness, to send her away where he would never have to cross paths with her again, where she could leave and avoid being beaten again, not that he cared so much what happened to her, but he didn't like being affected by her or getting hit with arousal whenever he perceived the scent of daisies. Getting forced into heat wasn't something Sebastian liked so much.

Yet, it seemed she had chosen death rather than freedom.

"She said she was rejected by a sworn mate in Moonwillow. Do you have any idea who he is?" Sebastian asked blankly, swirling his glass and his eyes on his private jet flying away in the sky.

Viola Linden. He had once heard that name before, because he recalled a time when a certain someone had mentioned it to him more than once.

Zoe, his only family left, his sister. Though he still had other relatives, to Sebastian, Zoe was his only family, and no other person would ever fit into that circle again.

Zoe had looked up to this Viola Linden online.

But he had never said anything to stop her from admiring someone from that pack, because he never said no to Zoe. He could deny the world and every single person anything, but not her.

She would shove her phone in his face to show him what this Viola had done. Sebastian had been annoyed and irritated, but he had no choice but to smile and pretend he was interested in watching this Viola live her spoiled life as a princess.

Hadn't she been a Beta's daughter? He didn't care about what the girl did online to influence many in her pack, including Zoe, who was picky about the people she allowed to affect her.

But no doubt, Viola had been cast aside for being wolfless. No one had ever gone wolfless in the Silver Pack, so they did not have the Hollow system like most other packs.

Every year, there was always one or two wolves who didn't find their wolf immediately, but in the end, they turned out to be late bloomers. Viola's case didn't seem like that, there was no trace of a wolf's scent on her, not a single hint. He couldn't help but wonder how that came to be.

Apart from the mating essence scent of Daisy that still annoyingly clung to his stomach, she smelled entirely human. A foolishly brave human.

'But she is still our mate and she has a spirit that wants to fight to be your Luna.'

'It won't get her anywhere but her grave without a wolf,' Sebastian scoffed.

Matt, who was checking through his phone for information Sebastian had asked him to verify, announced, "I found it. She was a sworn mate to Evan, the new Alpha of Moonwillow, but on the

day of her awakening, he chose a she-wolf named Leni instead, which placed this Viola into the Hollow system they have in Moonwillow. She's been there for four years."

Sebastian took in the information without a flicker of change to his handsome face, only a faint twitch of his jaw. Evan, the son of the previous Alpha who had committed the unforgivable against Sebastian, fueling his deep hatred for the pack. Sebastian had heard about Evan and had seen him once or twice in other packs where they unfortunately met.

He had listened to Evan speak among the werewolves and studied the man. He was a fool, utterly unobservant, and talked too much for an Alpha heir.

How had that fool been crowned Alpha when he had an older brother? And furthermore, this Viola, what did she see in Evan? He didn't want anything to do with Moonwillow werewolves, especially not this niña (little girl) who thought herself an adult.

Nonetheless, he couldn't help remembering the anger and determination in her eyes, the desire for revenge against the Moonwillow.

'You two have a similar goal. You also want to destroy Moonwillow. Join hands, kiss, make up, and finish the pack,' his wolf said simply.

Sebastian mentally grimaced and replied, 'I don't kiss little girls.'

"What more is there about her?" Sebastian asked Matt.

"Nothing more. That's all I found online. Every other thing about her is wipe away," Matt mused, putting away his phone before going to sit on the couch in the office, his eyes fixed thoughtfully on Sebastian's back.

"Shouldn't we just drug her and hurl her away from here, Seb? Elder Brenna's daughter will be among the participating she-wolves, and you know what that means. She will crush the girl so easily, and the bond would end up affecting you. If you end up being exposed in public, everyone would see they could get to you through a weak mate." Matt reasoned, making sure Sebastian could see that giving the girl the chance to be among the she-wolves wasn't actually going to do either of them any good.

Elder Brenna had been among the elders because she was one of the she-wolves who fought beside Sebastian's grandfather to build this pack and keep its name strong. She had brought her daughter to participate in the competition years ago when the second late Luna had been chosen, but the late Evangeline had come from another mighty pack and completely overshadowed the elder's daughter.

Elder Brenna would do anything to make her daughter win this time around, just like every other elder who had a female relative. The chance of this wolfless girl winning, or even being alive after the competition, would be so slim.

Another reason why Matt didn't think this girl should be allowed in this was because an Alpha was known to marry someone who wasn't only strong, but who would also add to his pack politically. This girl no longer had a pack nor any name, not to mention she was in a wheelchair. Oh man, this would be tough if Sebastian didn't just agree to force her away so she could go and enjoy her life in the human world.

Sebastian's lips twitched up at the side as he turned to look at Matt and said,

"You know me. I do things fairly, and it would be unfair not to make her wake up to the reality that there is no place for someone like her here." Not just that, Sebastian, despite himself, looked forward to seeing if she had the spirit, or if it was all bark and no bite.

No doubt she would give up at the first sight of what she was up against.

'What if she didn't? Oh, I will make you eat my shit, man. I have a feeling my girl will show you.'

'I will eat more than your shit. And when did she become your girl?' Sebastian asked with a dark scowl.

'Since she challenged you.'

Sebastian had been with his wolf long enough to know that he rarely got attached to any of their mates, because it was a known thing that Sebastian didn't stick with nor keep any of them. His wolf had become so used to him discarding them that when they first saw the girl, he was picky and wanted her rejected like the others.

But now that the little idiot had insulted and challenged him, something that hadn't happened before, his damn wolf was going against him to cheer for her. Well, Sebastian looked forward to seeing her back out or fail. Little girls like her should be playing dress-up, not being in the big game.

After a moment of silence,

"What if a miracle happens and she wins?" Matt questioned, his curiosity grave. "She doesn't meet the requirements of your prophecy like the others. If the wrong one wins again, the cost will be paid in blood and life. You've already lost two because of it."

Sebastian's fingers suddenly tightened around the champagne glass, shattering it into pieces. The fragments cut into his palm, yet he didn't flinch or blink. His eyes only hardened like steel.

"Whether she loses or wins, it will be the same outcome for her. She, or anyone else who wins, will end up like Natalie and Eva. In the grave," he remarked nonchalantly, turning away from the window and seating himself behind his desk to complete his paperwork, rather than waste another moment on Viola Linden, the suicidal *niñita* who didn't know what was good for her.

## Chapter 26: Her New Place\_Part 1

Matt noticed how the Alpha didn't seem much bothered by the prophecy and the consequences of taking another wrong person. Seeing that Sebastian showed no reaction at all, he decided to drop the topic. Being best friends, they had always been there for each other, and Matt's parents had become just like Sebastian's own after he had lost his. Matt's family had been there for Sebastian through everything, even after what Moonwillow had done.

Matt chose not to dwell on what those hypocrites had done to Sebastian when he was just ten years old, when he had already lost his parents and was drowning in grief and pain.

Thinking about it still made his chest tighten. Sebastian was a man surrounded and consumed by many layers of darkness and secrets that not even the elders fully knew about, and the prophecy, something tied directly to his fate, was one of those things he hated speaking about the most.

Instead of pushing the subject further, Matt decided to change it.

"I'll be going back home tonight," he said casually. "Since I don't have to travel to America as an escort anymore, Mom and Dad are demanding I come home for at least a day."

Sebastian's lips curved into a faint smile at that, and he replied, "Good luck. They've probably set up another matchmaking dinner for you to get married."

Unlike Sebastian, who had many mates and had already met them, his friend had never met his fated mate. Matt hadn't even been in any serious relationship that could have led to marriage.

Matt relaxed deeper into the couch with a long sigh, his handsome face finally easing. "That's exactly why I'm a little disappointed I won't be going to the U.S. to escort the girl. Mom's choice of women is never my type. I like someone I can compete with in my kitchen."

Sebastian scoffed quietly. Matt was a foodie, more accurately, a shameless glutton, who would probably fall in love with food faster than he would with a person. He firmly believed there wasn't a she-wolf alive who could cook as well as he did, and that if he ever found one, he would marry her whether she was his mate or not.

Aunt Danielle, as Sebastian called her, only ever matched her son with she-wolves who had absolutely no interest in kitchens, which only made things worse.

"By the way," Matt added lightly, "Zoe texted me. She's coming over to witness the Luna's competition. She's asking when it will take place."

At the mention of Zoe, Sebastian's hardened eyes suddenly softened a notch, and his fingers stopped flying across the keys as he looked toward Matt with a faint smile, a smile that still didn't quite look like a smile at all.

If Zoe couldn't bring a genuine smile to this ice-cold devil, then no one else ever would again, Matt thought, clicking his tongue softly.

"It's about time the brat comes back home. The competition will be in two months from now."

"Isn't that too long?" Matt questioned incredulously. Did he want the elders to have his head before then? "Everyone will be anticipating it to happen sooner."

"I am not in a hurry to have a Luna. Make it three months and tell the elders about the little girl who wants to take part," Sebastian announced nonchalantly. "Also, once she has recovered, appoint someone to take her to her new place, she will stay there until she kills herself in the competition."

The thought of her dying stirred something dark and unwelcome inside him, but that only made Sebastian despise her more. And yet, there was nothing he could do now, not after he had already allowed her to stay and participate.

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Viola had been in the healing house for weeks now, so long that she had lost track of time entirely. Since the moment the arrogant Silver, because that was what suited him best, having everything about him silver, had agreed to let her stay.

Not that he had agreed in the sense of actually saying it. He had only told his Beta to take her back inside, and Viola had assumed that meant she could stay. Yet no one had come back to tell her what her staying here truly meant.

Did he mean to say he had given her the chance to prove herself? If yes, how was she supposed to prove it? She had waited for him to return and tell her what she was expected to do, or at least send someone to relay his instructions, but no one had come.

Rather than waste her energy worrying about the entitled, arrogant bastard, she focused instead on recovering and regaining her strength and former physique, her old body shape, not this current malnourished state that made him look at her like a small child when she wasn't.

She couldn't wait to recover, then she would see if he would still dare to call her a small child.

The cast on her leg had been removed two days ago, though the one on her arm remained, as the bone there had been completely broken and needed more time to heal. She made sure to walk around the room and stretch her legs whenever she could. She had been the one to challenge him; it wouldn't do any good if her condition made it impossible to prove him wrong.

This was her only chance, and Viola couldn't allow herself to let it slip away.

Every night, she lay in bed afraid to close her eyes, terrified of sleep because of the nightmares that waited for her. She saw herself being beaten and humiliated again. She saw Evan hitting her. She saw terrifying flashes of him hurling that idol at her eyes, remembered the sparks of color she had seen before everything went blank in her vision.

Her nightmares were worse than anything. They terrorized her and made her cry in her sleep, something she never did four years ago. She relived the pain, the past wounds, the memories of the day she had left her sister, of the days when her adoptive parents had turned on her too, of how she had been brutally beaten again and again.

How could she ever sleep with all of those things haunting her? Not unless she saw them pay, not unless she found Ivy. And now, not until she made that arrogant Alpha eat his words.

Another thing Viola had struggled with during the first week was the glasses.

They made her head hurt and made everything look strange. She had wanted to take them off countless times, but she knew her vision was terrible without them.

They constantly slid down her nose whenever she bent forward. They weren't sized for her face.

Now, she was gradually adjusting to both the vision and the feel of them, and the pressure in her head had lessened. But one thing Viola would never take for granted again was being able to stand in a room and see it clearly.

After spending four years on hard floors, this healing house room still felt like heaven to her. Every morning, she woke up just to stand beside the bed and appreciate it, then walk to the bathroom simply to watch the fresh running water in the shower and tub.

Sometimes, she felt a strong urge to weep and go beg that Alpha to give her a chance, promising she would forever remain in his favor. But her pride, after everything he had said to her, would never allow it. She would never beg him. Instead, she would earn her place beside him and have every right to put him in his place.

Apart from bringing her food, the omegas no longer bathed her. She could manage just fine on her own now with her crutches. Even though her appetite hadn't fully returned, Viola always wolfed down every meal and cleaned her plates. Perhaps it was habit. She even washed the plates in the room's sink and set them aside for collection so no one would find fault with her and send her away.

But the more time passed with no one coming to see her or tell her what she was supposed to do, the more restless she became. Had he changed his mind? Was he still going to throw her out? Or would he simply pretend she didn't exist and leave her here indefinitely?

Viola thought about this as she sat on a loveseat near the floor-to-ceiling glass window, staring at the sunset. Its rays glimmered and flashed against the tall skyscrapers, bathing the world in a picture-perfect hue that made one long to capture it in a photograph.

As she looked at the beautiful city and listened to its faint sounds of activity and life, she became so lost in the moment that memories from her past slowly began to creep through the guarded walls she had built around her heart and mind.

Walls she knew that if she let fall, she would end up hating herself even more and seeing herself as unworthy of anyone or anything.

'I wish we could live in a place like the Silver Pack, where we'd be among a big pack,' Ivy had once said when they found a poster of the Silver world discarded in a bin. 'I would work my whole life and give you everything you want, Serena. I wonder where our real parents come from, or if they come from a place like that.'

Viola had stared at the poster back then with deep yearning, wanting to experience a life of luxury and belonging.

Now, thinking back, she realized she had always been selfish. Because even then, while imagining herself living here while they suffered in the orphanage as children, she hadn't imagined it with Ivy beside her. She had only imagined herself escaping, finding a family, and belonging somewhere.

A deep melancholy and self-loathing suddenly engulfed her as she recalled the gentle smiles of her sister. The feeling grew so overwhelming that her breathing turned shallow. Without realizing it, Viola subconsciously began to aggressively peel at the skin along the sides of her nails, the motion frantic and repetitive, until the skin broke and began to bleed.

She didn't stop, not even when it stung, as she begged her mind to shut down and stop thinking about Ivy and everything she had done. To stop looking back entirely and focus instead on fixing what still could be fixed.

Stop thinking. Stop it. She cried in her head as she subconsciously continued to peel off the skin, her fingers working mindlessly.

Then someone snapped her out of it when there was a click at the door and it cracked open, causing her to look toward it to see who it was.

Her brows furrowed when she saw the person standing there.

## Chapter 27: Her New Place\_Part 2

Viola's frown deepened at the unfamiliar sight of the beautiful young woman standing at the door, looking at her with a faint smile.

For a moment, Viola was stunned by her beauty. Plump lips and high cheekbones. She was tall and elegantly beautiful in a dark pink dress that reached below her knees and high heels, her hair a smooth mixture of silver and blonde, let down over her shoulders.

Though she wasn't flashing her status through her dress, Viola knew money when she saw it, and this person was clearly not an omega but some important shewolf.

Viola's body immediately stiffened when the woman closed the door behind her. She didn't like people coming to see her; any important person usually had only one thought in mind: to cause her more pain, beat her, or humiliate her, even when she hadn't done anything wrong to them.

Panic began to rise in her chest, but as if sensing her unease, the young woman smiled and asked, "Where are my manners? I should have knocked. Since I'm here... may I come in, Miss Viola?"

How did she know her name? Viola wondered. And why did she think she needed to ask for permission to come in, when it wasn't even her own place? Yet, somehow, the question made Viola feel a small sense of importance. For so long, she had been neglected, never allowed to speak to anyone of note or control even the simplest thing, like granting someone permission to enter.

She nodded slowly. "You... may."

The young woman's gray eyes suddenly brightened, and she stepped further into the room. Her eyes taking her in. The way she looked at her made Viola self-conscious, wishing she could vanish from here.

Her bruises and disheveled appearance filled her with shame. Unable to voice her discomfort at having people stare at her, Viola returned her hand to peeling the skin around her nails, but when no loose skin remained, her fingers began to tremble on her lap.

Please. Go away...

She thought as she warily watched the she-wolf approach, but when she reached the couch beside her and Viola mentally braced herself for a beating, the she-wolf's eyes fell on Viola's bleeding cuticles.

Instead of recoiling in disgust, as Viola expected, as many had done when she was a Hollow, the beautiful woman gasped, then sat beside her and pulled out a handkerchief, reaching for her hand.

Years of reflex from past beatings caused Viola to shrink back instinctively.

"Oh, sorry. I'm Zoe, by the way. I would have said it's nice meeting you in person, but... I hate what I'm seeing. Really, did they do this to you in your pack?" Zoe asked.

Viola stared at her without a word, not understanding why this she-wolf was apologizing, who she was, or why she was here at all. Had they met before? Did Zoe know her somehow? She searched her memory, but she had never heard of anyone named Zoe...

"I... I am Viola," she said awkwardly, her voice uncertain. She wasn't used to being spoken to as if she were a person, rather than something meant to be stepped on and beaten.

"I know you, well, I believe you don't remember me. I once followed you on WolfTalk, and though you never replied to my comments or private messages, I was your top fan. I liked watching you do all those stunts in your school! I was so excited to meet you when Matt told me you were here, but... I'm sorry. I wasn't expecting..." Zoe trailed off, not wanting to offend Viola but unable to look past how different she was now.

She looked nothing like the confident, smart princess of Moonwillow she had once admired online. Though Viola had never replied to any of her comments or acknowledged her messages, Zoe had taken it as meaning the girl was too busy, and with so many followers, she couldn't have had the time to respond.

Viola flushed with embarrassment and shame. She had ignored many people during her time as Evan's girlfriend. Anyone who didn't fit into the circle she deemed worthy had been blocked or ignored. To think that one of those people was now looking at her with gentle, concerned eyes made her want to sink into the floor from the deep sense of shame.

Viola ducked her head and muttered, "How may I be of help to you, Miss Zoe?"

Zoe's face broke into a smile. "I'm here to take you to your new place," she declared.

In truth, it wasn't her job to come, but she had volunteered anyway because she wanted to meet the woman who had called the Alpha a judgemental bastard. Matt had told her about it and Zoe had found it amusing. She would have given anything to witness it in person.

"You're taking me away from here?" Viola asked, hiding the panic rising inside her. A new place? Had the Alpha finally decided to put her somewhere appropriate for a wolfless? No... she didn't want to go back there. She liked it here, where she had water and a bed, but did she really have a choice?

"Yes. You've stayed here long enough. Can you walk, or do you need me to carry you?" Zoe asked, standing up and rolling up the sleeves of her dress, which made Viola's eyes widen as she looked at the slender woman before her. Was she joking? Why would an important person want to touch someone like her? She thought, but it didn't seem like a joke at all, so Viola quickly shook her head.

"I have my crutches. I can walk." She rose from the couch, and Zoe stepped back to give her room.

"Is there anything you need to pack? I can help you pack it," Zoe asked, glancing around the room.

Viola almost let out a bitter laugh. She had no possessions, not even a single change of clothes, and she let Zoe know with a short, quiet shake of her head.

Walking carefully toward the door, she paused, eyes turning on the room. After four years of living in dirt and neglect, this had been her first decent room, her first bed, her first running water. Her throat burned as she feared being sent back to a life where she was nothing, a nobody, swallowed by the dirt she had fought so hard to escape.

Should she have just gone to America when he offered? she wondered, glancing one last time at the bed, the window view, and thinking about the three daily meals with running water she had never failed to savor every second of.

Viola left the room dejectedly, and Zoe closed the door behind them, chatting warmly and telling her about things Viola couldn't focus on, because she was too fearful of where she would end up next, and also unaccustomed to the kind of genuine kindness this Miss Zoe was giving her, with no reason at all to do so. People were never kind to her without reasons...

## Chapter 28: Her New place\_Part 3

Viola left the room dejectedly, and Zoe closed the door behind them, chatting warmly and telling her about things Viola couldn't focus on, because she was too fearful of where she would end up next, and also unaccustomed to the kind of genuine kindness this Miss Zoe was giving her, with no reason at all to do so.

She-wolves were rarely kind to omegas, and even less to a wolfless, so Viola didn't want to let her guard down, even though her heart was warming to the kindness of the young woman. With her height, the way she walked, and how she drew the attention of the male Deltas standing guard along the long hall, Viola couldn't help but wonder who this woman was.

Zoe seemed to know almost everyone in the building, waving and greeting them as they passed. While people greeted Zoe warmly, they gave Viola scornful, disgusted looks that made her wish she could retreat back to her room, safe and far away from the world. Her fingers tightened around her crutch, and she used her sling hand to adjust the sliding glasses on her nose bridge before it made her stumble.

They entered the elevator that took them down, and soon they stepped out of the sprawling healing house. In every pack, there was a healing house for injured werewolves recovering from wolfsbane or attacks, but Moonwillow's was nowhere near as large as this one, which loomed over the street.

Zoe made a call, and shortly after, a fancy car pulled up, the door opening for Viola.

Viola's confusion deepened as she stared at the car. "Are you sure you want me to enter? I can walk to—"

"Nonsense. Not in your condition. Get in," Zoe said, waving her hand dismissively.

Viola bit the inside of her cheek before stepping into the warm, sweet-scented car, its luxurious interior hitting her with a nostalgic pang, reminding her of a time when she had known something like this.

Zoe, noticing Viola sitting stiffly and uncomfortable in her present state, remained quiet throughout the journey, careful not to make her more restless.

Viola dreaded the unknown of her new place and wondered how she would ever get the chance to meet the Alpha again, to convince him to let her prove herself, even if it meant swallowing her pride and begging on her knees, she would.

Still, perhaps the Hollow quarters here wouldn't be as bad as Moonwillow. The city felt like a paradise. Roads twisted above and below, connected by bridges that caught the nightlights and shimmered over the dark, glittering waters beneath. Towering buildings housed countless companies, their windows glinting with activity as goods were crafted and sent to other packs.

Moonwillow, by comparison, was frozen in time, stuck with old versions of everything because Alpha Kade had blacklisted them. Here, everything felt alive, vibrant, moving forward, a world full of opportunities she could only hope to survive in, let alone conquer.

When the car finally pulled up before a large skyscraper, Viola felt her heart lurch in dread. Was this the place?

Her door was opened by the Delta escorting them, and she stepped onto the night-lit street.

"We're here!" Zoe announced, hooking her arm around Viola's sling arm and assisting her forward despite her discomfort at being touched.

Was this their Hollow quarters?

"This building houses many of our important werewolves, including our Alpha's meeting house and office. You'll like it here," Zoe said.

Viola's mind was already racing with possibilities. If she was brought here to work, then she had the chance to meet Alpha Kade and speak with him civilly without insulting him, perhaps even convince him again.

Her dread eased slightly. At least it wasn't the Hollow quarters, she thought. But she was unprepared for the surprise awaiting her when Zoe finally led her to her new place.

Viola hadn't expected this at all. She had assumed she would be given a small storage room to work and stay in, but Zoe led her to a penthouse at the top of the skyscraper apartment building. A beautiful, sprawling penthouse that left Viola's jaw hanging as Zoe announced, "This is your new place."

Could it be that Miss Zoe didn't know what she was saying? Wasn't this too big and extravagant for her? It looked like a place an Alpha would live in, there was even a piano beside the glass wall overlooking the city!

"Am I going to stay here as a cleaner?" Viola asked, wanting to make sure there wasn't a mistake. This looked too good to be real.

Zoe chuckled. "No. Alpha Kade ordered for you to be brought here until after the competition," she explained.

Viola, unable to tear her eyes from the polished penthouse with its glass walls, finally turned to ask, "What competition?"

"The Luna competition, of course. Didn't you agree to take part and compete with our she-wolves to be the next Luna and Alpha Kade's wife?" Zoe asked, noting the confusion on Viola's face. Didn't she know about it? Everyone was already calling her a suicidal wolfless who wanted to die.

So that was it, Viola realized, understanding dawning on her face.

"Of course, I will join the competition."

She had no idea there was a competition, but hearing it now, she felt her hope rise. At least she would have a chance. Though she didn't know what competing with other she-wolves for the position would truly entail, Viola wasn't the type to back out, not when it was an opportunity to make things right in her life.

Viola noticed Zoe's eyes dim a little at her words, and the she-wolf looked at her with an expression close to concern as she spoke.

"I don't mean anything offensive by this, Miss Linden, but are you sure you want to do this? I'm not saying you can't, but do you know what comes with winning... or even what comes before winning?" she asked carefully.

"I learned the hard way in life that nothing comes easy, Miss Zoe," Viola replied quietly. "And when you want something, you have to be willing to give anything it takes to have it."

Zoe gave her a look Viola couldn't quite interpret before the she-wolf sighed. "Hmm. I like how you think. But a little heads-up, you should know the history of the Silver Pack and anyone who becomes its ruler, and what they have to give up. I know you're not ignorant about the rumors surrounding the previous Lunas. They all died the same way, and even the former Alpha lost three Lunas before he found the one who lasted long enough to give him children."

Viola wasn't ignorant of that history. It was said that every Alpha who ruled the Silver Pack lost three Lunas before finding one who stayed. Many believed it was a curse that ran through the Silver Pack Alpha bloodline.

Alpha Kade's father had gone through it. The only one said to have escaped that fate was his grandfather, which was why many didn't take the curse rumors seriously. If it truly ran in the bloodline, it shouldn't have skipped anyone. But hearing this now, Viola couldn't help the chill that slid down her spine. It seemed the curse hadn't skipped Alpha Kade after all.

"Many didn't think the fate of the previous Alpha would pass on to the current one," Zoe continued, "but obviously he has already lost two Lunas. If you win, you will be his third. Are you really

willing to risk it just to lose your life? I honestly don't think it's worth it." Zoe shrugged slightly, giving Viola a look as though she expected her to back out.

Viola didn't know whether the she-wolf was trying to discourage her or scare her, but whatever it was, it worked, just a little. Still, her fate was already sealed. If she didn't become his Luna, she would eventually suffer until her death. And if she did, she could use whatever time she had to make amends for her past mistakes and make Evan and his entire pack pay.

Either path led to pain. And leaving the werewolf world, knowing her sister was still suffering somewhere, was never an option.

Viola's face hardened with determination as she replied, meeting the she-wolf's gaze as Zoe studied her closely, clearly waiting for her to say she wouldn't participate.

"I will take part. Thank you for the heads-up, Miss Zoe."

"Well, to do so, we'll need to make sure you can walk without the crutch and that the sling is removed from your arm. It's a month from now. But don't worry, I'm here to help you and get you ready before the dinner tomorrow night, you'll be presented to the elders and meet the other competitors," Zoe said, sounding a little excited.

To her, Viola was now a challenge to be conquered, a project to mold into a beautiful and graceful presence before the elders, and perhaps even a way to surprise a certain someone who had said Viola Linden was a confused teen who didn't know what she wanted.

One would wonder why Zoe was doing all of this, or even why she was trying to warn the woman at all, but she had her own personal reasons, reasons that had nothing to do with simply caring about her brother.

However, one of her main goals right now was to make sure Viola was at least transformed back into the woman she had once been, no longer the shadow of the confident Viola Linden she had admired years ago, before the month passed.

Otherwise, Viola would have no chance of surviving the competition, let alone getting through it to be the Luna.

"Dinner with the elders..." Viola mused quietly.

Everything seemed overwhelming to her. She hadn't even digested the fact that she now had a penthouse, that there was a competition she hadn't known about, and that she would soon meet the elders for dinner. Her stomach twisted in nervousness, and a deep anxiety crept over her, making her feel small and unprepared for what lay ahead.

## Fated: The Alpha's Unwanted Luna

Viola stood before the door where Zoe had finally left her after hours of helping her settle into the new place. She had set a keycode on the door and had been shown every single room and corner, which now left her completely overwhelmed.

Viola turned away from the door to look back at the room and the large screen Tv on the wall, playing on mute. She pushed up her sliding glass and stood there for a moment, digesting everything Miss Zoe had told her.

There would be a competition that would prove who would fit well into the Luna position, and many other she-wolves of Silver Pack would be taking part.

Not just that, she would also be required to meet the elders for dinner tomorrow night. Viola's stomach suddenly knotted in dread, and the palm clutching her crutch turned sweaty. She had not expected Alpha Kade would let her prove herself this way, or she would have prepared long ago. She had truly thought he had dismissed her back in that room.

When she had been expecting to be thrown out, she was instead told she would be part of a competition she was absolutely not prepared for, and on top of that, a dinner with the elders tomorrow night.

Did he do it on purpose, just so she could give up on her own? The pretentious bastard! She wouldn't be surprised. Still, she wouldn't give him the satisfaction of seeing her quit. She would become his wife if she had to, even if it meant losing a limb in that competition.

Though she didn't like him in the slightest, she couldn't help but admire how he had built the Silver Pack and how he wouldn't just let anyone be his Luna. Looking out at the pack from behind the glass wall, she couldn't help but feel scared and sick with anxiety in spite of herself.

Even the elders of Moonwillow were not people you could simply sit with and have dinner without feeling as though you were balancing on the edge of a knife, not to mention the elders of the Silver Pack, the largest pack in the world, with the greatest population and power. The thought alone made bile rise up Viola's throat, her nerves tightening painfully, especially when her mind drifted back to the curse Miss Zoe had mentioned.

Viola forced herself to dismiss it for now, pushing the thought aside before it could take root and consume her with worry.

The silence inside the penthouse was suddenly deafening when she shut down her thoughts.

She walked to the shining piano at the side with a plush chair, using her finger to press a key that echoed through the space and into her empty heart.

Just like the black-and-white keys of the piano, Viola realized her life was like that at the moment: if she made a mistake and did not become the Supreme Luna, she would fall into an abyss of darkness; and if she did succeed, her life might finally have a chance to be bright again.

Though she doubted she would ever be happy, happiness came when one was at peace, Viola had forgotten what peace felt like. She had forgotten what warmth felt like, and with every secret and every pain of her past she carried, she might never be bound for happiness ever again.

She pressed another key as a bitter smile settled on her face. Happiness wasn't what she sought now; revenge and atonement were more her propriety.

She was scared, terrified, and utterly alone, but that wouldn't change the fact that she needed to fight her fears and face her worst nightmares.

Many years ago, she had thought she would never look back on what happened that day the Lindens came to the orphanage, and that it would never come back to her. Now she realized nobody could run from their sins and past, and once it caught up to you, you had to pay a bigger price for it.

And her own price was rejection and being unwanted. If she hadn't done what she did in that orphanage years ago, perhaps she and Ivy would have had their wolves by now, and would have found a fated mate. She wondered if Alpha Kade would still have rejected her for appearing weak, and if she would need to prove herself by joining a competition.

Viola found herself pressing the piano keys and playing a piece of music, a very sad one that tugged at every part of her empty heart and made her feel like a needle lost amidst a pile of hay.

She'd always liked music, and as the future Luna of Moonwillow, she had been taught many skills, but music was the one she loved wholeheartedly and could play skillfully even with one hand.

The sound filled the room, wrapping around her like a blanket and making her feel more like she was home.

Home, where she would play in the Linden living room and they would sit around her listening to her music, her father looking at her with pride. Only he wasn't her father; their real parents had not wanted them and had left them at the orphanage with a note that tore at her inside whenever she was reminded by the people of the orphanage.

Viola played until her fingers burned and her eyes stung. When she stopped playing, the silence she hated so much consumed her again, and she stepped away from the piano, not wanting the sad music to break her and remind her of everything she had done wrong in her life.

Zoe had advised her to try to learn to walk without the help of the crutch before tomorrow night, and Viola carefully put it aside against the sofa and slowly let her aching feet touch the polished floor. If she were to stand before the people who would determine her future, she didn't want to appear weak in any way, and certainly not fragile.

Viola walked around without the crutch and ate the food Zoe had sent someone to bring her. For the tenth time that day, Viola wondered who this Zoe was and why she was so kind. All she knew was that the shewolf was a fashionista.

Done eating, she walked upstairs toward the bedroom, and though Viola had seen it earlier with Zoe, she was still mesmerized by its elegance and beauty when she entered it for the second time. It had a gray theme. The bed was king-sized, with fluffy pillows and blankets.

She hadn't explored all the space yet because she hadn't felt comfortable with Zoe, so now she walked in and opened the side-by-side doors attached to the room. One led to a bathroom that looked like it could only belong to a king, with a big bathtub and different kinds of showers. She gently closed the door and opened the other one, and Viola's breath caught in her throat.

No way in hell did this belong to her! she thought, stepping into the big closet with walls lined with shelves. One side was filled with different kind of shoes and heels from floor to ceiling; another side had bags and different arrays of dresses that made her mouth go dry. When she stepped into the closet, the shelves lights automatically came on, illuminating everything even more.

She pinched herself to see if she was dreaming, but it wasn't a dream. This was a walk-in closet that looked like a mini shopping mall, and it belonged to her. No, not yet; if she failed, it wouldn't be hers.

She hadn't owned something like this even when she was still liked by everyone in Moonwillow.

Moonwillow didn't have this level of grandeur.

One wall was a full mirror, and when Viola made the mistake of looking at her reflection, a gasp left her mouth.

She looked like a mismatched old piece fit into beautiful surroundings, utterly and completely out of place. Her hair was a tangled mess, and her face was pale with no color, but filled with dark bruises. Her hospital gown hung like a sack on a stick on her skinny body.

Ashamed and horrified of her own reflection, Viola turned away from the mirror, unable to look at herself in that state because it only made her doubt herself further and feel how much she didn't fit into this type of world anymore. She feared she would find it justifiable if Alpha Kade threw her out.

As much as she wanted to look through all the dresses in the closet, Viola didn't want to see herself in the mirror. She only carefully took a set of pajamas with a rabbit print on it and left the closet, shutting the door behind her.

She went into the bathroom, turned on the bath water with her left hand, as her right hand was still not smoothly usable yet.

As the bath water filled the tub, she took off her hospital gown and began to apply leave-in conditioner to her tangled hair without using a mirror. The task wasn't easy with one hand, but she did it anyhow before she turned to the filling water in the tub, which made her feel like weeping again because it looked too good to be real.

"I have my own bath and water..."

Since her vision was so terrible, bathing without her glasses was like bathing with her eyes covered in clouds, everything hazy and blurred. But the moment she stepped into the water and settled into the bathtub, her vision immediately cleared a little more.

She didn't think too much about it, though, as it had happened a few times before when she was in the hospital.

Water always does the trick, she thought with a heavy sigh, unaware that it was more than relief, it was a link to who she truly was and what she had been searching for all along.

If Viola had been holding a mirror at that exact moment, she would have noticed a sliver of gold flickering inside her pupils, and a strangely shaped shadow hovering behind her within the bathtub, a shadow that didn't belong to her.

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## Fated: The Alpha's Unwanted Luna

By the time Viola finished cleaning herself up, she was utterly exhausted because she had done everything with one hand. She wore the pajamas and felt too tired to remove her hair from the towel and blowdry and comb it like she had intended to.

She found herself going to the king-size bed and falling onto it from exhaustion.

She curled up and tried to sleep, but despite her tiredness, she couldn't fall asleep. The bed was just too big. So she pulled off the blanket and blindly laid it on the floor, and almost immediately after she lay down on it, she was plunged into slumber, only this slumber was filled with one of her worst nightmares from her past.

'Take them away!' an urgent voice rang out in the air, filling her with fear. 'Kill them if you have to, but don't let them be apart!'

'You left me...' a familiar voice whispered. Her twin looked at her with pain. 'You were evil. You were the reason our real parents put us in the orphanage.'

'I am sorry...', Viola said as she reached out for her sister, who seemed close and yet so far away at the same time, just like every time in her nightmares.

'You will never be happy, Serena. You remember what the note says... one of them is cursed to ruin the world with her bitterness, and she has to be anchored by the other. That's why our parents left us. It's you. You are the cursed one, Serena. I protected you, but you showed me your true colors,' Ivy said, tears streaming down her blue eyes, making Viola desperately want to wake up from this nightmare she knew wasn't real, yet her mind refused to believe it, and the scenes kept shifting.

'I am in pain, Serena! You are killing me!' Ivy suddenly cried out, and Viola saw her sister lying in a pool of blood before her, a gaping hole in her chest. The knife plunged into her sister's heart was clutched in Viola's own hand.

Viola's entire world narrowed to that moment, and despite knowing she was dreaming, it looked so real that she began to scream and cry, thrashing and murmuring, "I didn't mean to hurt you! I didn't mean to hurt you!"

Viola began to feel herself sinking into what seemed like an abyss of darkness when she suddenly felt something pull her out of it into a warm embrace. She clutched onto that warmth and began to cry in her sleep, her fingers gripping the coarse fabric beneath them.

"No... I didn't mean to hurt you. I didn't mean it..."

"Hush, cariño," he murmured, his hand gliding over her back in a gentle, soothing caress.

Sebastian's brows furrowed together as he looked down at the small body in his arms, her fingers gripping his shirt like a lifeline as she cried and trembled, her tears soaking into his chest. Though she was finally calm, her faintly arched brows, several shades darker than her frizzy, damp hair, furrowed occasionally as her dreams grew troubled. The lashes that lay in thick arcs on her cheeks were also dark and naturally curly.

Her lips were parted as she slept, particularly revealing straight, white teeth.

One would wonder what in the world he was doing in her room and how he had ended up here, holding her in his embrace on the floor.

He had given Zoe a new phone to deliver to the girl when bringing her here, but his sister hadn't brought it along and had left it in his office due to her excitement to meet Viola Linden. Of course, Sebastian could have left it until tomorrow and sent someone to bring it, but he had been restless like hell since this morning, and he knew that feeling was because of this girl, who he hadn't seen for two months now.

It's been two months and yet the bond with her was not fading.

He had come this way with the intention of dropping off the phone and warning her against having him in her thoughts as she was disturbing him, but then he had found himself intoxicated by her scent, enough to lead him into her bedroom. Or, to be more precise, his wolf had controlled his movement straight to the bedroom.

How stupid of her to use her name as the passcode to the penthouse door. He had easily found his way inside.

She had been thrashing and whispering words in her sleep, apologizing to someone. Why on earth was she even sleeping on the floor when there was a bed?

She was having a nightmare, and without even realizing what he was doing, Sebastian lay down on the blanket on the floor, holding her in his arms like a small child. She immediately clutched onto him.

"I am sorry... forgive me..." she whispered again, her body trembling, and Sebastian's hand tightened around her skinny ribs, which felt like they would break if he held her too tightly.

"Shh. Go to sleep," he found himself whispering to her, unable to help but wonder what she was dreaming about and who she was apologizing to with such desperation.

'Who the hell is causing our mate to have nightmares? Let's kill them and use their flesh for breakfast in the morning!' his wolf groaned.

'She's not our mate,' Sebastian replied.

Even as he said that, he still held her to his chest and buried his nose between her neck and shoulder, inhaling her essence. It sent a sparkling, electric-like current through his body and blood,

heat surging inside him like liquid flame before settling in his loins, making him groan in both frustration and restraint.

For two months, he hadn't taken any woman to bed because none of them were as appealing, or smelled like heaven, like this little thing in his arms.

The feeling of being close to your mate, the feeling he despised, always ended up being his undoing. No matter who the person was, it couldn't be helped. The arousal was always strong, and so was the sense of rightness when that person was in his arms.

How much he hated it, and yet how much his body still responded and wanted it, especially when she moved and settled herself on top of him, her head resting on his chest, her skinny legs straddling his, her thighs brushing over his hardening manhood that had grown so painfully erect for her it ached to find a place inside her and finally reach release.

"Damn you. I don't want you in my life. You don't fit in it, nor do you belong here. You don't have anything the right one is supposed to have. I will either kill you too, or the world will," he groaned into her neck, his mouth moving over her flesh.

She moaned softly in her sleep and turned her head, but she didn't wake. The nightmare had faded, and her body was relaxed. He ran his mouth and nose along the cool skin of her neck down to her shoulder, nibbling and licking, wishing he could control his own body's reaction to her, and how desperately he wanted her.

'You creep. You're only supposed to soothe her, not take advantage. What will you say if she wakes up to you licking her neck?' his wolf asked.

Sebastian immediately put a stop to what he was doing, laid his head back on the floor, and stared at the dim ceiling for a long, silent moment, trying to get a hold of his damn body again. When he finally did, he moved aside and placed her back on the floor.

He would have put her on the bed, but the last thing he needed was her knowing he had come here. He didn't want her to hold any hope that she would be treated differently because his bond with her was a little stronger than with the other mates he had met so far, when she was the weakest of them all, and one far away from the one he was meant to search for.

He would pretend to himself that he hadn't just crept into her room to hold her, Sebastian thought as he looked down at her peacefully sleeping face, her lashes still wet with tears. Her cheeks were still sunken, marred with dark bruises, and her right eye still bore a deep bruise around it. Her lips were pale, drained of color.

There was absolutely nothing appealing about her appearance right now, yet Seb found himself staring until she turned her head in her sleep. He snapped back to his senses and moved away.

"I hope you change your mind when you see what you are up against tomorrow, little girl. Being my Luna is a death sentence."

Saying that, Sebastian rose to his feet, but as he began to turn to leave, his eyes fell on something lying on the floor beside the blanket. Without thinking, he bent down and took it, tucking it into his pocket before turning away and leaving her behind, promising himself this would be the last time he would ever bring himself to her again.

'Did you just steal from her?'

'Shut up.'

