Fated: The Alpha's Unwanted Luna - Chapter 431: He liked kissing her[1,260 words]

Viola left the pool area and made her way toward Sebastian's penthouse, believing he would be there, since she hadn't found him anywhere else. On her way to him, she rehearsed everything she wanted to say, how none of what she'd done had been meant to hurt him in any way.

It was almost funny how, just a few hours ago, she'd been the one furious at him, so much so she'd told herself she didn't care whether he got angry in return. But now the roles had reversed so quickly that she would give anything to make him feel less wounded by what she'd done.

Though she knew there was nothing she could do to find him another mermaid to sacrifice before tomorrow, she resolved to try everything she could to help him some other way, even if it meant using her own mermaid abilities and powers, something she hated leaning on, since it kept pulling her further into a part of herself she'd already decided not to embrace, the part she'd chosen to set aside in favor of the werewolf life she wanted for herself.

But for Sebastian, she realized she would use it to its full extent, if that's what it took to fix what she'd broken for him. She only hoped he would listen, that he would give her a chance. And if he didn't, she would let him cool off before trying again. Viola began running through everything she knew Sebastian liked, so she could use it to soothe him.

There were certain foods he loved that she knew well, though there wasn't enough time to prepare anything for him tonight, she decided she'd cook for him in the morning instead.

He liked kissing her, liked it when she touched him and stroked his shoulders and neck, no matter how worked up he was; if she started touching him, massaging him, running her fingers through his hair and body, his mood would shift. If it took seduction, gentle and coaxing, to soften the way he'd looked at her earlier, Viola decided she would give him double of it.

Before she brought up the subject at all, before she asked him any real questions, she needed his mood to settle to something at least manageable, so she made a mental note to use every single thing he loved against him tonight.

Still, she was nervous, and found herself wringing her fingers together to keep from biting them as she got closer, something she never did anymore, hadn't done in a long while now, not since he'd taught her to redirect the urge whenever it crept up on her.

When the elevator opened onto his floor, Viola was met with a wall of her bodyguards, all conscious again, groaning in pain, their faces smeared with blood as though they'd been badly beaten.

The moment they saw her, their expressions shifted, as if they'd seen a ghost, and they bowed to her with visible difficulty.

"Supreme Luna!" They greeted in unison, catching her off guard.

She didn't need to ask how they'd ended up bruised and bloodied. It was obvious that Sebastian had beaten them back to consciousness after she'd put them to sleep, because she was certain no ordinary werewolf could have beaten trained warriors like them this badly. The sight gave her a small measure of relief, despite feeling sorry for them, because it assured her that Sebastian was still in the penthouse.

The guards themselves had no idea why the Supreme Alpha had attacked them with such fury, as though he might have killed them outright had they not been thoroughly trained since their teenage years beside him. They naturally assumed it was punishment for failing to keep the Luna contained, and so, seeing her now, they kept bowing low.

"Is the Supreme Alpha inside?" She asked, feeling a pang of sympathy for the men, some of whom could barely stand upright from how badly they'd been beaten.

"No, Supreme Luna. He left just a few minutes ago." One of them replied.

Viola, who had been so certain she'd find him here, frowned. If he'd only left a few minutes ago, she should have crossed paths with him, since she'd used his private elevator to get up here. But as if reading her thoughts, another guard pointed into the penthouse and said, "He left through there."

Viola hurried forward and found one entire glass wall shattered, the wind blowing freely inward through the wreckage, the break shaped unmistakably like the outline of a large wolf's body. Her stomach twisted with worry. Without wasting another second, she turned back to the elevator to make sure he hadn't hurt himself jumping from such a height.

When she reached the street outside High Tower, Viola found a car parked directly beneath the angle of his window, its roof caved inward, as though something heavy had landed on it. There was no blood, no obvious sign of serious injury, but there was also no scent of him anywhere nearby, and she realized, with a sinking feeling, that he had left the premises entirely.

Viola stood outside beneath the flickering streetlamps, her dejected figure illuminated in pieces of light, staring down the empty streets, where not a single soul stirred. The breeze pushed her black hair across her face, but she barely registered it, standing there, hoping he would come back.

Her bodyguards gathered around her protectively, though she was barely aware of their presence. After a while, she decided to go back inside and give him the space he needed. Maybe he needed time alone to cool down. She would give him that.

When Viola returned to her own place, everything suddenly felt pointless and empty. The sister she had done all of this for couldn't even be reached whenever she wanted, from the look of things, Yasmin intended to keep her away from land entirely from now on.

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In the depths of the sea, the mermaid who had been freed reunited with her family, crying in relief as she embraced her mate and child together. Her mate examined her body carefully for any injury, and when he found several of her fins broken, his eyes flashed with murder.

"Now that you're out of that land, it's time I flood them and send the sharks in to kill every last one of them! They will pay for this!" her mate gritted out, already preparing to leave and unleash the disaster he had planned for the humans who had taken his mermaid from him.

Yasmin quickly stopped him, grabbing his massive, muscular arm. He turned to look at her, his ember-colored eyes burning with fury as his pink hair swirled around him in the water.

"You don't have to. I promised I wouldn't let you hurt them, even though I want nothing more than to kill them all myself. Serena is still there." She said, and at the mention of her sister's name, Ivy, who had been gliding quietly in the corner to give the family space to reunite, swam forward and asked,

"How is she? Will she be all right, after helping you like that?" She asked her cousin, who had already told them it was because of Serena that she was free and home again.

No matter how much Yasmin believed Viola lacked the sense the rest of them had, she was still family, still someone Yasmin would look after, the way she had been looking out for Ivy, since their own parents had been twins too.

Fated: The Alpha's Unwanted Luna - Chapter 432: The crescent mark[1,069 words]

"I don’t know. She looks confident, certain her monster won’t betray or hurt her for freeing me, and she’s as bitter as ever about Aunt Madeline. She still thinks she deserved to die at the hands of the werewolves. She’s not even willing to listen to me at all, and worst of all, she’s carrying his child."

Ivy gasped. "Did she tell you that?"

Yasmin rolled her eyes. "She didn’t have to tell me for me to know. She kept holding her stomach through everything she was doing, as if she were trying to protect it, and when I accused her of carrying a monster, she became so angry. She’s carrying his child. I know that." She said it with certainty, even though her cousin hadn’t confirmed it, and the realization only made Yasmin even angrier and more frustrated with Serena.

"She doesn’t know anything about what she’s getting herself into with those creatures or the fate she’s bringing another half-breed into their world. The werewolves are meant to suffer for everything they’ve done to our kind since the very beginning of time, starting with when our ancestor, Azmira, was killed by her so-called beloved werewolf. It keeps happening, over and over again. It was the same story with Aunt Madeline, your mother, but I don’t think your sister wants to listen to our side of the story," Yasmin said, frustration bleeding through her voice as she swam back and forth.

Ivy was well aware of how the mermaids viewed the werewolves, ever since she’d come to join them. It had been taught to her, part of their history, how all of it had started when their ancestor first made the mistake of going to land for a werewolf, only for him to kill her brutally afterward and hang her body to lure other mermaids into their captivity.

That story had stood as a warning to anyone who dared imagine they could fall in love with one of those creatures. But apparently, their own mother had walked the same path and met the same fate of death.

Ivy didn’t have the heart to resent them or carry a grudge the way the others did, as she’d also lived with the werewolves for most of her life. She forgave easily. However, this time was different, especially after she’d learned about the sacrifices their mother had made for them, sacrifices that had ultimately led to her death.

Ivy didn’t think she could bring herself to forgive her mother’s actual killer, not in this lifetime, but she couldn’t bring herself to hate the entire werewolf clan for what one of them had done.

"Serena won’t believe you, and honestly, I think that’s for the best, Yasmin. She’s found a werewolf who’s accepted her exactly as she is, and I believe she can live a different—"

"Oh please, Ivy, don’t be naive. Vaelor knew Azmira was a mermaid, knew she’d given up her tail for his sake, and in the end he still killed her when he became greedy for powers, then let his entire world discover exactly what use a mermaid’s heart could serve them. Those creatures can’t be trusted. Especially not the Silvers." Yasmin said, standing firm in

her own beliefs, in everything they'd been taught since childhood, in the lesson their ancestor's tragedy was meant to teach everyone.

Ivy decided to let the topic drop, knowing nothing she said would convince her cousin that her sister had already chosen her side, and that there was nothing left to do about it now. Rather than keep arguing, she said,

"I think I will go and check on Aunt Natasha. She has gone looking for you, and—" Her words were cut off as Yasmin's mother swam in as though summoned by her words, immediately wrapping her daughter in a fierce embrace. The glimmer along her tail brightened, just as mermaids' scales did whenever they were happy.

"I'm so glad you're back safely, my little one. I thought I might lose you too." Said Natasha, twin sister of the half-breed girls' mother.

"I'm not that easily defeated, Mama, though I did get some help from Serena this time around." She said, but noticed her mother still looked troubled even after confirming she was alive and whole, and asked, "What is it?"

Natasha swam toward her son-in-law and announced, "Something is wrong. I heard from the jellyfish that the sea witch left the sea today. I can't help but worry. Finn," she turned to her son-in-law, "can you help us track her whereabouts? The last time she left the sea, it was when she brought Ivy back to us, and I don't like the idea of who she might be going after this time."

"Serena," Ivy said, worry creeping into her voice. "Do you think she's found where to look for her?" She asked her aunt anxiously.

"Let's hope that isn't the case, or your sister is finished. The sea witch has been hunting down every twin born bearing the mark of the crescent, killing them one by one."

"Serena doesn't have that mark. I've told you that so many times already, Aunt Natasha. Whoever she's hunting, whatever reason she has for going after everyone born with that mark, she's going after the wrong person this time, and I really think we need to let her know that," Ivy said, worry evident in her voice.

When she'd started digging into why the Sea Witch was so determined to find her sister, she'd learned from several mermaids, including her aunt, that for many years, the Sea Witch, who lived in the deepest part of the waters, had been hunting and killing twins born with the crescent-moon mark on their bodies.

What Ivy couldn't understand was why the Sea Witch would go after her sister when Serena didn't have the mark.

It made no sense. Ivy had seen her sister without clothes, and there had been nothing resembling such a mark anywhere on her skin.

Ivy thought about it worriedly, too consumed by her confusion to notice the guilt and unease flickering behind her aunt's eyes. Natasha forced herself not to remember a past that would prove Ivy's words wrong, a past in which she had been the one to deal with something on the twins.

"I'll go take a look, see where she's headed, Ma." Finn said, already swimming off, away from the royal cave.

Fated: The Alpha's Unwanted Luna - Chapter 433: He's not that angry[1,078 words]

Viola woke up the next morning and immediately went to check on her husband, before doing anything else. She wouldn't even call what she'd had "sleep," since she'd spent most of the night wide-eyed, running through different scenarios of how she might make things right with Sebastian, of putting all of this behind them, especially with today being the full moon he'd spoken of, the day his brother might not survive.

Had she let him go through with sacrificing the mermaid, today would have been the day she carried his mark instead, the day their bond would have been sealed forever, the day she'd have been preparing for the ceremony rather than this.

She pushed the thought aside.

Last night, before going to bed, she had contacted Gilbert to ask questions about the curse and whether there was another way to break it.

"We've worked on it for years, Supreme Luna. Not just me, my great-grandfather did too. But there was nothing else that could break it completely except the prophesied mate, and none of the Silver Alphas had found her so far. It was as though she had never existed in this world."

Viola had frowned. "How are they supposed to know she's the one from the prophecy if no one has found her, and the Alphas are destined to so many she-wolves?" she'd asked, hating that only one person, someone who wasn't her, could save Sebastian completely from the curse he desperately wanted to be rid of.

"She's prophesied to be part of their fate. She's said to have the strongest spirit, which we translate as wolf spirit. Though it's also said that she bears the mark of the moon, that shouldn't be the only way to identify her, because the mark could remain hidden and only

surface after he marks her. That makes everything much harder, because if he marks the wrong one, she will die.

"So, at this point, he can only use the source of his curse to lift it or take three of his mates and mark them, allowing them to die before he can find the one he's meant to have. Now that we've lost the mermaid, there's nothing else I can think of," Gilbert had said with a heavy sigh, one that told her he was growing weary of the case.

She snapped back to the present with a sigh when she couldn't find her husband anywhere. She decided to look for Matt instead, eventually finding him in the office.

"He won't be back for days, Supreme Luna. Just like what happened last month, he'll be away for a while." Matt informed her, once she asked about the Supreme Alpha.

"Oh..." Was all Viola managed to say, even as something clawed at her throat and chest underneath, thickening in her throat with emotion, as though she'd swallowed a lump of bread whole. She hated that he had left just like that, without seeing her, without giving her any chance to fix what she'd broken.

How was she supposed to reach Alex now, without Sebastian to take her there? She knew he'd gone to see his brother, but she had hoped, at the very least, that he would have come to see her first. She would have told him, if he'd given her the chance, that she might have been able to cure him herself.

Viola hoped nothing would happen to his twin, because if it did, she doubted he would ever truly forgive her for any of this. She turned away from the office, beginning to walk off, when she heard Matt call out,

"Supreme Luna," he called, and she turned back to him as he added, "Don't feel too bad. I don't think he's actually as angry with you as he made it seem. If it helps at all, he told me to look after you while he's gone, and to make sure you have your bodyguards with you at all times, and to keep an eye out for Nick."

Viola, who had been sinking into a downcast mood, brightened immediately at that, her heart leaping. Even though he hadn't spoken to her directly, it was reassuring, knowing he still cared, still watched over her well-being even from a distance. Her mood lifted, and she said,

"Thank you, Beta Matt. What you just told me means so much to me."

Viola returned to her penthouse feeling impossibly lighter, even though worry for his twin brother still lingered in her chest. She hoped his heart would hold on a little longer, just long enough for her to make things right with Sebastian first.

Even so, missing him tugged fiercely at her heartstrings, leaving her feeling emotional, as though some part of her were simply missing. Viola pushed the feeling aside and decided to busy herself with other things, counting down the days until his return.

But the feeling was so difficult to push away that it almost felt like the mate bond itself, as though being apart from him were slowly killing her, dulling everything else around her.

"Maybe it's because I'm pregnant," Viola whispered to herself, remembering she'd read that pregnant women often grew emotional over small, random things, and told herself this fierce ache could only be that, because she didn't carry his mark for it to feel like she was dying inside herself without him.

It hurt so much she found herself easing her aching heart with her palm, rubbing against her chest and her eyes burning with hot tears.

It also reminded her that she still hadn't told him about the pregnancy at all, he didn't even know his child was growing inside her. There was almost too much they hadn't gotten the chance to talk about yet. She found herself desperately wishing for a day like the one at the amusement park, the day he'd confessed his love to her. If only things could be that simple, that happy, again.

Viola scolded herself for wallowing in self-pity, and pushed herself back onto her feet, taking a shower and calling for breakfast, since she didn't feel like cooking anything herself. Normally, as Luna, she would have been served automatically, but because of the omegas' attitude in the past, she'd told them not to serve her unless she specifically called for it.

Viola settled into a routine, waking up, freshening up, eating a slice or two of bread, then heading to the office to finish Sebastian's work.

Fated: The Alpha's Unwanted Luna - Chapter 434: Don't have much time[1,426 words]

There was little to no rest built into her days, since she kept herself deliberately busy, filling every spare hour with work rather than let herself sit and worry.

On the fourth day without Sebastian, Viola felt nothing short of wrecked with worry, having barely slept the night before. She wanted so badly to cry, felt too raw and worn down inside, which was exactly why, needing even more distraction, she made the decision to personally oversee a pending inspection Sebastian was supposed to have attended at one of their pack factories.

"I can handle that, Luna. You should rest, you look exhausted." Matt suggested, but Viola was quick to turn him down, knowing full well there was no rest waiting for her, even if she wanted it.

"I can manage it. From the report, it looks like the third Beta in charge hasn't been doing his job well, two omegas have already died from the machinery there. We can't let something like this keep happening in our pack, or the Alpha will get a terrible reputation for not overseeing the welfare of his lower-ranked workers. Every life matters in Silver. You can come with me, I believe I'll need you there."

Matt looked at the Luna with genuine admiration. Over the past four days, she'd taken on so much that some people didn't even realize Sebastian was absent from the pack at all, she was the one handling things. Most were even remarking that the Alpha seemed to be making unusually far better decisions lately, no longer delaying their requests the way he used to, unaware it was actually the Luna they'd been dealing with the whole time.

Matt had wanted Sebastian to look into this particular factory for a while now, but with everything else pulling at his attention, he'd let his other Betas handle it instead. Though he still believed Viola should be resting, something told him her visit here might finally put an end to the constant complaints.

When they arrived at the factory, they were handed protective gear and helmets. It was one of the factories tucked away at the far edge of the pack, and the moment they stepped inside, Matt understood exactly why the complaints had piled up.

The building looked fine from the outside, like every other modern building in their pack, but from the inside, it barely looked like it belonged to Silver at all. Workers moved around without any proper protective gear, while the toxic atmosphere was enough to make anyone want to cover their nose.

Matt frowned, immediately reaching out through the mind-link to the Beta overseeing the site. This wasn't how any of their factories should have looked, especially not in the biggest pack in the world.

"Head Beta Matt, what brings you here? You should have just called me over," the Third Beta said, his smile broad as he approached them. However, the uneasiness in his expression was obvious as he took in the unexpected inspection from the Head Beta and the small woman accompanying him.

"If we'd called you before coming, I doubt we'd have gotten the chance to see the raw state of our biggest glass factory and how the workers are being made to work," Matt said, his face displeased.

"Oh, I see what you mean, but it's not what you think. We're in the process of sanitizing the place and making some changes. You caught us at a bad time, when things are a bit messy, Beta Matt." He laughed lightly, brushing off the state of the factory as though

there were nothing unusual about it. "Would you like to step into my office? The atmosphere is much more breathable there," he suggested.

Viola turned to look at him, her eyes narrowing at his smug attitude, at how he addressed Matt directly while not even sparing her a glance, as though she weren't standing right there.

"Beta Hugh, is it?" Viola said, and he turned to her, his smile stiffening.

"Yes. And you must be the wolfless Supreme Luna, I take it?" he taunted, looking her up and down without the slightest regard for who she was.

Unlike Matt, most of the other Betas rarely witnessed how deeply the Alpha doted on his Luna or how he treated her. Beta Hugh clearly didn't appreciate being spoken to with authority by someone he considered beneath him. To him, the strongest wolf's voice carried the most weight, and he saw no reason to listen to her, much less stand there and allow her meet his eyes as though they were equals.

"If you don't mind, I'm having a word with the Head Beta, and I would appreciate it if you kept those holes on your face sealed. If you can't, you're free to step outside and give us room to discuss this, Supreme Luna," he said, emphasizing her title as though he were taunting her with it.

Matt parted his lips, ready to warn the Beta off, but Viola raised a hand, stopping him. She addressed the man herself.

"Not only are you exploiting your position, you seem to lack common sense as well," Viola said calmly. She then glanced down at her wristwatch before continuing.

"I don't have much time, and even if I did, I wouldn't waste it on someone like you, Hugh. But the little time I do have, I intend to use well. I won't repeat myself. Where are the monthly resources and equipments meant for this factory, and why do all these machines look like they haven't been replaced in years?" she demanded, holding his gaze.

Beta Hugh, who had overseen this glass-producing factory for years and had carefully covered his tracks after being coerced into diverting resources and equipment to the packless, funneled there by none other than Nick, wore a smug expression, confident a wolfless woman wouldn't be able to pry the truth out of him.

"I don't see how that's any concern of yours. This is a matter between the Supreme Alpha and myself, not something a wolfless should be worrying about, and—"

Hugh didn't finish his sentence because Viola raised her hand and delivered a hard punch across his smug face.

A punch from a wolfless shouldn’t have landed with that much force, yet the Beta’s head jerked to the side, blood appearing at the corner of his mouth.

"You bitch—" he began, but Viola swiftly tackled him to his knees before he could recover from the blow. She yanked his head back by his hair, digging her fingers into it as she glared down into his eyes.

"Call me a bitch again, and I’ll make sure you lose your tongue. Look around you. Every worker here has burns across their hands, and none of them look like they’ve had a proper break in ages. Don’t assume that just because the Alpha hasn’t had the chance to inspect this place himself, your actions will go unnoticed forever. What did you do with the monthly equipments?" she demanded.

Hugh felt a shiver run down his spine simply from meeting her eyes at such close range. An overwhelming urge to bow his head washed over him so strongly that he had to look away, his gaze shifting toward the Head Beta, who stood behind her with an amused smirk as he watched Hugh’s humiliation.

Wasn’t she supposed to be wolfless?

Then how was she controlling someone like him, a Beta, someone who should have been the one in control here?

Viola tightened her grip in his hair when he didn’t talk in time and he gritted out, "The Alpha never sent any replacement equipments here, and as you can see, this factory sits at the very edge of the pack, he must have simply forgotten about it’s—"

"Don’t put this on the Alpha to cover for your own crimes, Hugh," Matt warned. "I personally make sure this glass factory receives its full shipment every single month, since we use more glass than brick throughout the pack. So what exactly did you do with it all?"

Hugh, who knew exactly how crazy and a little touched in the head the Alpha’s cousin could be, the one he actually answered to, understood that speaking the truth now would mean nothing short of death for him and his entire family, and not a quick one either, not from Nick.

"I didn’t do anything with it." He gritted out, firm on his words as he would rather die than rat on what he had been doing for Nick.

Fated: The Alpha's Unwanted Luna - Chapter 435: The Supreme Alpha Is Back[1,160 words]

"Gamma," Viola called, wasting no more time, already certain the man wouldn't confess on his own. When her bodyguards stepped forward, she ordered, "Take him to the dungeon until the Alpha returns. He can answer to the Supreme Alpha's own methods of persuasion." She released his hair, watching the horror spread across his face.

"Wait, wait, we don't have to involve the Alpha in this! I swear I didn't do anything with the equipments!" Hugh tried to fight back, but the men were already dragging him away. The moment he was gone, Viola turned toward the workers, who looked so relieved that several of them dropped to their knees, bowing to her.

"Thank you, Supreme Luna!" They said together, in unison, and Viola, for the first time, felt something settle into place, a sense of actually fitting this role, a quiet satisfaction in having genuinely helped members of her own pack, even if they were simply a group of omegas.

"You'll each be given days off work. And by the time you return, I'll make sure every piece of equipment in this building has been replaced with something newer, something safer to work with." Saying that, the workers clapped and bowed even more deeply toward her.

She then turned to Matt. "I'll look around and note everything that still needs changing. Until Sebastian returns, I'll need you to oversee the work being done here."

Matt was quick to stand at an attention at her words. "Not a problem, Supreme Luna. I'm used to taking on more than my share of work. How about you head back to the car, and I'll finish the list?" He suggested, but she waved him off with a smile.

"We can do it together. There's no reason for me to sit alone in the car." She said, already walking ahead, taking the tablet from one of the remaining bodyguards and tapping into the notes app.

It was during the inspection that Viola began experiencing terrible cramps. At first, she thought she could push through it and kept glancing around, trying to focus, but as she climbed a small ladder to examine one of the machines, the cramp seized her so hard she doubled over, losing her balance completely.

Matt caught her before she could fall from the small height. "Supreme Luna, you don't look well at all."

Viola wanted to insist she was fine, but then she suddenly remembered Gilbert's warnings, the list of things she needed to watch for in her condition, and her face drained of color.

"I'm not fine..." She moaned in pain. "Take me to Gilbert. Something's wrong with me..." Her vision blurred as dizziness swallowed her whole.

In seconds, Matt swept her into his arms and rushed out of the factory, just as she lost consciousness against him.

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Viola had no idea how long she'd been unconscious, but when she finally came to, she felt an immediate wave of relief, the terrible cramping was gone, replaced only by a gnawing hunger and a mild headache that made her squint as she took in her surroundings in the healing room.

"I'm glad you're awake," Came Gilbert's voice as he walked into view. She began to sit up, but he stopped her. "Careful, don't dislodge the IV drip, Luna."

Viola looked down and belatedly noticed the IV connected to the back of her hand, then looked up at the doctor's grim expression, her own hand flying to her stomach as she paled. "Has something happened to the baby?" She asked, almost too terrified to hear his answer, terrified he might confirm the very thing she'd feared all along.

She had always known, deep down, that she might not be fit to be a mother, that she might harm the child before it ever had the chance to enter the world. But now, having finally started to accept the idea, to look forward to its birth, she didn't want anything to happen to it, and anxiety twisted tight in her chest.

"Don't worry, Supreme Luna. The baby is fine, but it might not stay that way, if you keep pushing yourself the way you have been, without rest or proper meals." He told her, watching relief settle across her face before guilt quickly followed, her gaze dropping.

"I understand you carry a great deal of responsibility as Supreme Luna, but it would be best if you took things easier, one thing at a time. Right now, your body doesn't yet have the protection of your wolf, the kind that would help shield your child, so you need to be especially careful." He said quietly.

Viola looked up at him, taking his words in, then asked, "Has there been any progress on the cure for my suppressant?"

"I'll admit, while we were dealing with the mermaid situation, I put the cure on hold. I've resumed working on it since, but I still haven't found a willing pregnant she-wolf to test it on."

Viola wanted to insist he inject her with it regardless, but the fear for her child's welfare outweighed even her deep desperation for her wolf again, and she bit down on the inside of her cheek, forcing herself to nod in understanding instead.

"How long have I been here?" She asked instead.

"Not long. Since this morning. You'll be discharged once this IV bag finishes, it'll help with nourishment until you're able to keep a real meal down." He said, before adding, hesitantly, "When do you plan to tell the Alpha? I imagine if he knew, he could use his authority to help us find someone for the test faster, before the baby absorbs any more of the suppressant."

Viola felt her heart twist painfully at the mention of her husband, and she looked away from Gilbert, toward the glass wall instead, where the sun was setting behind the horizon, birds drifting across the sky. "He left before I had the chance to tell him. But the moment he's back, I'll tell him."

"Then you don't need to worry much longer, because I heard he came back this afternoon."

Viola's head snapped back toward Gilbert so fast her neck ached, but the pain barely registered. "He's back?" She asked, her heart leaping.

Gilbert nodded. "Yes. Matt told me he was asking about you, said to let him know the moment you regained consciousness. There's— you shouldn't do that, Supreme Luna!" Gilbert said quickly, as she yanked the needle from her vein and swung her legs off the bed. When he tried to stop her, she sidestepped him easily.

"I need to see him first. I'm sorry, Gilbert, but I can't stay here until it finishes. I'll come back once I've talked to him." She was already at the door, dashing through it before Gilbert could warn her about the rest of what Matt had told him regarding the Alpha, though he doubted he could have made her stay to listen anyway.

Fated: The Alpha's Unwanted Luna - Chapter 436: There's no need for that[1,287 words]

Once she was gone from the room, Gilbert let out a sigh, knowing things were about to change. He looked down at his phone, where he had been trying to call Zoe since that morning, but her number was no longer reachable. He needed to check on her, both to make amends for his own mistakes and to make things right before he hurt her beyond the point of no return.

He had seen her missed calls a few days ago when he returned to his office, but when he called her back, she hadn't answered. Now, her number was completely unreachable. He'd been told she had returned to her fashion house, but he couldn't go there now, not with the trouble he could sense was about to befall Silver following the Alpha's return and everything Matt had told him.

Gilbert looked out at the sky through the glass window and let out another heavy sigh. He wished he could reach out to his own mate, but he couldn't, not until he'd had the chance to talk to Zoe.

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Viola dashed into the elevator, her heart racing with anticipation at the thought of seeing him again after nearly five days apart. She caught her reflection in the elevator's polished wall and saw how haggard, how exhausted she looked, but it didn't matter.

Sebastian had seen her in far worse condition and never once found her any less appealing, he'd taught her to grow confident in her own looks, in whatever state she happened to be in, until none of it bothered her anymore.

Viola could barely wait to reach his floor, already imagining how she would greet him. Had he missed her as fiercely as she'd missed him? Would he hug her, bury his nose in her neck, kiss her, call her Sunshine again?

Viola couldn't help the smile spreading across her face, the butterflies swirling in her stomach. Surely five days apart would have been enough to cool his anger, and the fact that he'd asked about her at all felt reassuring enough on its own.

When the elevator doors opened, Viola dashed out toward his office, certain he'd be there. As she reached the corridor, she spotted Matt walking out of the office, but her excitement kept her from lingering on the grim look on his face.

"Hey, Matt, is he in there?" She asked, barely able to stand still.

"He is, but you shouldn't go in, he—" he began, trying to prepare her for whatever she was about to walk into, but the Luna didn't wait to hear the rest. She rushed straight into the office, and he turned, hurrying after her.

Viola stepped inside and saw her husband emerging from the adjoining room of his office. Her heart raced wildly, longing gripping her chest, but she stopped short of running to him the moment his eyes met hers.

Viola stood frozen, not rushing into him the way she'd expected to, because his arms weren't open, waiting for her the way she'd pictured. Instead, his silver eyes were cold as ice, his lips pressed into a hard line. He didn't look pleased to see her. In fact he looked annoyed at her appearance.

Was he still angry with her? Hadn't he forgiven her yet? She wondered, panic beginning to creep into her chest at the sight of his expression and she racked her brain for anything to say.

"Sebastian, I know we didn't part on good terms, but I hope you'll give me a chance to make things right again. I can help Alex, and we can find another way out, if you'll just give me—"

"There's no need for any of that, Viola. Everything you ruined has already been fixed. I found another way to break my curse." He said, his voice flat, nonchalant, utterly devoid of emotion, and it worried her more than anything he could have shouted.

"You did?" She asked, and just then, the door behind him opened.

Viola felt her entire world tilt sideways as a beautiful woman stepped out, wearing his shirt like she used to, moving to press herself against his side, one arm wrapping around his waist. On the side of her neck was a mark, shaped like the crescent moon.

Viola looked from the woman's innocent looking face, framed with long brown hair to her husband.

"This is Victoria. She's my true fated mate, my prophecy." He introduced the beautiful woman at his side, wrapping his arm protectively around her, and Viola felt the ground drop out from beneath her, her whole world spinning too fast to keep up with.

Was this some kind of a dream? Viola thought, secretly pinching her own arm, trying to wake herself from it, because she hated this, hated every second of it.

This had always been one of her deepest fears, something she'd dreaded, something that had always carried a quiet sense of foreboding around it, but living through it was so much worse than she'd imagined, because it felt like something inside her was going to die if it turned out to be real.

When pinching herself didn't work, she began walking toward him with the intention to touch him and feel if it was real.

"Sebastian—" But the moment she came within reach, he placed a hand on her shoulder, his fingers digging painfully into her skin before he shoved her away with such force that she fell back hard, hitting her side against his desk.

Pain rattled through her body, and if the pain alone hadn't been enough to convince her this wasn't a dream, his next words made certain of it.

"From today forward, I don't want to see you anywhere near me. I don't want to see your face, or hear your voice. You don't belong anywhere here. Matt, call the guards," Came Sebastian's order, his arm pulling Victoria, who looked frightened by the sudden burst of anger, closer against his chest and soothing her with comfortable words in the ear.

"Seb, you don’t have to do this. No matter what, she’s still your wife, and she deserves—" Matt was saying, but the look Sebastian gave him was enough to make his head drop instinctively in submission.

Before he turned to call the guards, his eyes lingered on Viola, who was clutching her stomach with her head bowed, her hair covering her face as she stood completely still, as though she still couldn’t believe any of this was real. A wave of sympathy gripped Matt. He didn’t think she deserved this treatment after everything she had done in the Alpha’s absence, things he had never seen any other she-wolf do.

He hadn’t been able to believe it either when the Supreme Alpha had returned, carrying another woman in his arms, her arms wrapped around his neck and her head resting against his shoulder.

To think, Sebastian had once believed Viola was truly the one, and now he had returned with someone else entirely, someone bearing the mark of the prophecy on her neck. The mate bond between them seemed so overwhelming that Sebastian appeared physically incapable of letting her go, even for a moment, since his return that morning.

Matt had known the Luna was walking straight into heartbreak when he saw her coming. He had tried to warn her, to stop her from rushing in unprepared, but she’d pushed past him anyway.

Matt began walking toward her to check if she was all right, but the moment he took a step in her direction, Sebastian’s voice cut through the room, murderous and cold.

"Let her be. Call the fucking guards! She’s scaring my mate, I don’t want her here!" He barked.

Fated: The Alpha's Unwanted Luna - Chapter 437: Had to do something[1,034 words]

Matt called for the guards, assuming Sebastian only meant to have them escort the Luna back to her penthouse, but he froze in shock at what Sebastian said next.

"Lock her in the old dungeon. Nobody is allowed to feed her or give her water. Anyone who goes against my orders will be executed alongside her tomorrow. I declare her public execution for tomorrow night, in front of everyone, to make an example of what happens to traitors who stand with the sea creatures or carry a part of them within their bodies. Take her away!"

Viola, hearing this through the buzzing haze filling her head, turned to look at him, her blue eyes carrying every ounce of her hurt, disbelief and pain.

But he met her gaze with a hatred she never imagined she'd see in eyes that had once looked at her with such warmth, and she felt her throat close, her heart tearing apart inside her chest.

"Sebastian, what's gotten into you?" she whispered softly, but her words only seemed to enrage him further.

He released Victoria and strode toward her, grabbing a fistful of her hair and pulling painfully at her scalp until she had to bite back a cry of agony. He didn't seem to care that she was in pain as he dragged her roughly toward the office door. There, he forced her to look into his eyes and gritted out,

"Don't you ever say my name with that filthy mouth."

With that, he shoved her so hard out of the office that Viola lost her balance and slammed into the glass wall opposite the door. The impact split the skin on her forehead, and blood immediately began to trickle down her face.

"Take her out of here before she smears that blood all over my floor," he ordered coldly, irritation evident on his face.

Viola felt the blood trailing from the wound on her forehead down her face, but she was barely aware of the pain. The men who had once stood as her protectors and bodyguards came forward, grabbed her from the floor, and pulled her away.

As she was dragged off, Viola turned her head over her shoulder to look back at him one last time, silent tears streaming down her cheeks.

But he wasn't even looking at her. She watched him turn back toward the woman called Victoria, cupping her cheek with tender eyes, stroking the side of her neck, and Viola bit down hard on the inside of her cheek to keep herself from breaking down completely.

But as she began to look away, her eyes locked with the she-wolf's instead, who gave her a slow, satisfied smile, wrapping her arms possessively around Sebastian.

A fierce, possessive fury rose in Viola's chest. That was her man. Her mate. The urge to wrench free from the men's grip and physically tear the she-wolf away from him was so overwhelming that Viola forced herself to look away instead.

Viola was dragged to the darkest old dungeon underground, a place left untouched since the very beginning of Silver, and shoved into a cell. She lost her balance and fell into a puddle on the muddy floor, and behind her, she heard the cell door clang shut, followed by the twist of a key locking her inside.

Only after the men had locked her in and left did Viola drag herself over to sit against the wall, pulling her knees up to her chest and burying her head between them.

She was suddenly reminded of the night she was stripped to a hollow position and tortured every day and night.

She wanted to cry, but the tears refused to come, since everything still felt unreal, like she was trapped inside a nightmare she couldn't wake from. So this was how it would end? The relationship she had fought so hard to hold together had crumbled apart in a single blink of an eye...

She had known, deep down, that a day like this might come. But never had she imagined it would unfold the way it just had, and the physical pain still radiating through her forehead felt like nothing compared to the pain tearing through her heart.

She tightened her arms around her knees. He would execute her in front of everyone, he'd said. The same Sebastian who had once promised he would never tire of telling her how much he loved her was now planning to kill her, and with his own child growing inside her, no less.

Her chest tightened so painfully she could barely breathe.

Viola bit down on her lower lip, feeling utterly, completely defeated, certain that even the truth of their unborn child wouldn't change her fate now, because he wouldn't want a child that was part mermaid, not now that he'd found his true prophesied mate, the one who could give him exactly what he needed instead.

It was so hard to believe, let alone accept, that he would turn her away like this and want to kill her for the very secret he had once promised to protect from anyone who might ever discover it. His hatred for mermaids had surfaced with such force after what she'd done, and now that he'd found his prophesied mate, he wouldn't even forgive her.

His bond with Victoria must have been overwhelming, strong enough to outweigh whatever love he'd once felt for her, strong enough that he'd discarded her as easily as Evan had once discarded her for Leni. Only this time, it was some unknown she-wolf named Victoria...

Where had he even met her? Viola wondered miserably. Who was she, and why did it feel as though she'd seen her somewhere before today?

Victoria's smile surfaced in her mind again, and something about it felt wrong, off in a way she couldn't quite name, even as her looming fate pressed down over her.

She would be executed tomorrow.

Viola knew she couldn’t die here. Certainly not like this, not when she had a child she’d already promised to be a good mother to. Slowly, she lifted her head, forcing herself to look around the darkened cell.

She had to do something.

Fated: The Alpha's Unwanted Luna - Chapter 438: She’s pregnant[1,243 words]

Matt didn’t know who to approach about the matter, since the Supreme Alpha had forbidden him from seeing Viola, ordering the men to keep him out entirely until her execution.

So he went looking for Zoe instead, but when he couldn’t find her anywhere and was told she’d returned to her fashion house, he reached out there too, only to learn she’d left on a trip to a neighboring pack to sample fabric. Matt didn’t think much of it, since it wasn’t unusual for her to travel for business, as long as her guards were with her.

That left him with the doctor, so he went to find Gilbert. On his way there, he ran into Laila coming down the corridor, and the moment she saw him, she stopped him.

"Matt, is it true, what I saw on the screen just now? The Supreme Alpha just announced Viola will be executed tomorrow, for conspiring with the mermaids. What is going on?" Laila demanded, unable to believe the Sebastian she witnessed fall madly for his Luna was now planning to execute her himself.

Something about it didn’t sit right with her at all, and it had driven her straight to find the Head Beta and confirm this.

Laila’s uncle had been in the dungeon for days now, and no one seemed to know whether he was alive or dead, not that she cared much either way, but she found she couldn’t bring herself to be indifferent to Viola’s fate in the dungeon. The news felt too unreal, until Matt confirmed it for her.

"He found the one. His prophesied mate. And now she’s all he seems to think about, he wants Viola out of the picture entirely and announced her execution. Everything happened so fast."

Laila rested a hand on her hip and let out a disbelieving sigh. "And this is exactly the problem with these fucking Supreme Alphas. You can never fully trust them when they’re capable of having so many mates. But finding the prophesied one... that’s genuinely new. Wasn’t it said that she wasn’t real at some point, that she didn’t even exist?"

"Well, as we can see, she does, and she's here right now," Matt stated, knowing that many had believed the prophecy wasn't real after no one had been able to find the one for more than century to break the curse completely.

"But still, did he really have to execute the Luna over it? He didn't execute me after he found Viola; he just discarded me. Isn't this taking things too far, especially considering how much I've seen him care for her?"

Matt might have agreed it was going too far, if he hadn't seen firsthand how betrayed Sebastian had looked the moment Viola freed the mermaid. Whatever he'd been carrying since then must have followed him straight into meeting this new mate, and his love had curdled into hatred toward his wife far too quickly. That was the only explanation Matt had right now.

But then what about the time he told Matt to look after her for him before he left the pack?

"I don't know what's going through his head. He seemed determine to get rid of her. I need to find Gilbert, the elders are already celebrating, thrilled he's finally found what generations of his ancestors failed to." Matt began walking toward Gilbert's office, and Laila fell into step beside him, unable to just sit back and stay out of this, even though the last person she wanted to see now was that spinless doctor and be anywhere around him, she wanted to help.

Though her old self would have relished the fact that karma was a bitch, and it had bitten Viola right in the ass, making her taste some of what Laila herself had once suffered through, she had spent enough time with Viola to genuinely like her company, enough to even count her as a friend. And as a friend, she felt she should be helping.

"So who is this new mate, and where does she come from?" Laila asked.

Matt let out a humorless laugh. "That's the question of the century. Don't ask me; I have no idea. I've never seen her before in my life, but she carries a presence you can't ignore, even though she looks harmless on the surface, with those innocent eyes. She hasn't said a single word since he brought her back, and honestly, I don't like her one bit. She looks like she's just waiting for the right moment to bare her teeth."

"Interesting," Laila said thoughtfully. "If you've never seen her before, anywhere, and she carries that kind of presence, then she's clearly not from Silver, Sebastian would have sensed her from miles away otherwise."

Matt couldn't help but nod in agreement. "Then we have to find out where she comes from, because Sebastian didn't seem to care. He didn't even ask for a background check on her."

Before they reached Gilbert's office, they spotted the doctor walking toward them, a worried look of his own etched across his face. He stopped short the moment his eyes met Laila's beside Matt, memory of that night in his lab flooding back uninvited, but he pushed it aside, composing himself, offering her a friendly smile that she didn't return, looking away from him with cool indifference instead.

Gilbert felt a sharp pang in his chest but swallowed it down, telling himself it was for the best that she no longer paid him any attention, even as part of him still ached for it, still wanted it. He turned his attention to Matt instead, who said,

"Gilbert, I take it you've heard the news too."

"I have, that's why I'm out here. Isn't he taking this too far, executing her in her current condition, of all things? She needs rest more than anything right now and shouldn't be going through all this. She nearly lost the baby just today." Gilbert said, having served as her doctor throughout all of this, still unable to believe the Alpha would go through with an execution so callously after ordering him to make her a cure for the suppressant.

Matt's attention snapped to the doctor's words. "The baby?" He asked, bewildered, and Gilbert nodded.

"She asked me not to tell anyone, not even the Alpha, until she could tell him herself. She's carrying his pup." He announced, feeling he had no choice now, given how everything had turned out.

"Un-fucking-believable. That's yet another reason we can't let this execution happen. We need to find a way to get her out of there, but first, I need you to do something for me. We need to find out where this Victoria actually came from, and I think you and Laila are the ones who can pull that off. Something about her feels wrong, man. You should see the way she looks at people, like they're beneath her, even though she doesn't look like she comes from an important background."

"How do you expect me to find that out?" Gilbert asked, realizing that the Beta was putting him and Laila on the task.

"It's easy. You're the pack doctor, and you can get closer to her than I can. Here's the plan," Matt said, before explaining his idea to them.

Gilbert's eyes took on a look of understanding as he listened. When Matt finished, he nodded slowly.

"I hope it works out."

Fated: The Alpha's Unwanted Luna - Chapter 439: The Prophecied Bitch And Laila[1,699 words]

A few minutes later, Doctor Gilbert could be seen walking toward the Alpha’s penthouse, where he’d been told Sebastian was with his new mate, Laila walking beside him, her expression still cold and indifferent, as though she had nothing to do with him at all. The sight and her behavior made him feel hurt through their bond, and he wanted so bad to make up for last time, even though he was aware this was for the best.

"Miss Serrano, I—"

Laila turned to glare at him. "Here’s the deal, Doctor Rodrigo. I’m not here because I want you to accept me, or mark me. This isn’t about you, and you should already know I no longer give a fuck about you, you’re gone and forgotten to me. I’m here for Viola, to help however I can. Don’t make things awkward again by bringing up the mate bond." She said, her emerald eyes unbothered.

Laila had tried her best once to win him over, to make her mate look at her the way a mate should. But when it hadn’t worked, when he’d humiliated her that day in his lab by getting her aroused and then sending her away like a disposable banana peel, she refused to keep pushing herself onto him.

She had her own pride, mate bond or not. She would fight the pull of it, every urge, every bit of it, until it faded naturally on its own, or until she found it in herself to reject him outright to his face. But right now, none of that mattered. This was about Viola, not them.

She walked ahead of him, reaching the penthouse first, but since he was the pack doctor, who has more right to be there, she had to wait for him there.

Gilbert finally caught up, and when they arrived, Sebastian’s guards were posted everywhere around the floor, blocking their path forward. Gilbert cleared his throat.

"The Elders sent me here, as the pack doctor. You can confirm with the Supreme Alpha." He said, and the guard studied him for a moment before reaching Sebastian through the mind-link.

"You can go in," the warrior said, after speaking with the Alpha and granting them passage.

When Laila tried to follow, the men stopped her, one of them placing a hand against her chest to keep her from proceeding. A displeased look settled over Gilbert’s face, and he

turned back. He took Laila’s hand in his, glaring heatedly at the warrior before announcing firmly, "She’s with me. Keep your hands to yourself next time."

Then he pulled her along with him into the penthouse.

Laila felt a strange flutter in her stomach, but she quickly pushed it aside and hardened herself again. Even after they stepped inside the penthouse, he didn’t let go of her hand until she yanked it free herself, muttering,

"Isn’t it strange how many men he’s got guarding her? What is she, porcelain?"

Before Gilbert could respond, Sebastian rounded the corner leading into the living room and demanded,

"What brought you here, Gilbert? What do you want?"

At that exact moment, Victoria came around the corner too, still wearing his shirt, clinging to his side, her voice small as she spoke. "You haven’t finished making it for me yet, mate."

Sebastian wrapped his arm around her. "Don’t worry, I’ll get it done, sunshine. Just give me a moment, okay?" He smiled down at her, and though she gave him a flash of displeasure, she nodded anyway.

Laila, watching all of this, couldn’t help but narrow her eyes at the endearment, the same one she’d once heard him use with his wife, now being handed just as easily to someone else.

She studied the woman closely: tall, fair-skinned, as though she’d never once been in the sun, with a small, innocent face. As Laila studied her, Victoria’s eyes flicked over and locked with hers.

"What are these people doing here? She’s making me uncomfortable." She said, clinging tighter to Sebastian, and Laila nearly rolled her eyes. She hadn’t even done anything yet, and the bitch was already claiming discomfort. Oh wait until I am done with you!

"What do you want, Gilbert, and why is Laila here with you?" Came Sebastian’s irritated voice, glaring at both of them.

"I’m here at the elders’ request, to inspect the crescent mark and confirm she’s really the one before they set up a ceremony to welcome her officially. Laila’s here to help her feel more comfortable, woman to woman, and to help familiarize her with Silver, since we’re assuming she isn’t from here originally."

Sebastian looked ready to send them both away, and tell them he didn’t need either of them anywhere near her, when Victoria took hold of his arm, turning his face toward her.

"It’s all right. Let them do what they need to do. I don’t want to cause any trouble for you in the pack, especially with elders, they can be troublesome. I don’t mind." She gave him a reassuring smile, and Sebastian leaned down, kissing her forehead.

"I’ll be right here beside you. Get this done quickly and go, we were about to have dinner before you two interrupted." He said that last part to Gilbert, leading Victoria over to the living room couch.

Even though Laila no longer carried a mate bond with Sebastian and didn’t care who he had by his side, she couldn’t help feeling a flare of irritation at the way Victoria clung to him. That place didn’t belong to her; it belonged to her friend. Seeing Victoria so comfortably occupying it only made Laila more determined to figure out exactly where this woman had come from and why she was so annoyingly clingy.

She watched as Gilbert opened his equipment bag, while Laila walked around and settled beside the she-wolf on the couch, with Gilbert sitting on her other side.

Meanwhile, Sebastian returned to the kitchen to finish the meal he’d been cooking before their arrival, though his eyes kept flicking back to check that Victoria was comfortable, making Laila feel like she was going to vomit right into her own mouth from irritation.

Gilbert examined the mark up close, and while he worked, Laila played her part, smiling warmly.

"How are you liking Silver so far?"

Victoria’s brown eyes turned to her, and she smiled meekly. "It’s good."

Laila exchanged a glance with Gilbert. That wasn’t what she’d been hoping for, she wanted to see this woman’s true colors, because Laila knew a bitch when she saw one, and this whole "innocent little thing" act was nowhere close to the truth.

"That’s wonderful. If you had to rate it compared to where you’re from, how would Silver compare?" Laila asked, keeping her tone light and friendly.

"It can’t really be compared to my home. There’s nothing quite like home. I’m only here because my mate found me, and I can’t bear to be apart from him now." Victoria said, her eyes drifting toward Sebastian’s back in the kitchen.

"From what I understand, Silver has some of the highest standards of any pack around, so now I’m genuinely curious about this home of yours. Which pack is it?" She asked, but the question made Victoria’s eyes snap away from the kitchen entirely, turning sharply on Laila, her meek expression slipping just slightly as she said,

"What exactly are you trying to pry out of me, she-wolf? What do you want?" She asked, narrowing her eyes suspiciously at Laila.

Laila chuckled inwardly, thinking, bingo, now we're getting somewhere.

"Why would I pry? I was just curious. I've never heard of a pack more beautiful than Silver, and neither have I seen such a pretty she-wolf as you, especially your skin. It's so fair, like you've lived somewhere without sunlight. How do you maintain skin like that through summer?" Laila reached out to touch her arm in a friendly gesture, but Victoria grabbed it and twisted it swiftly, so hard that Laila had to bite back a cry of pain.

The bitch is strong!

"I know exactly what you're trying to do. You want my mate for yourself," Victoria said, that same smile still fixed on her face as she tilted her head to the side. But Gilbert's poking and prodding soon annoyed her, and she used her other hand to swat his away as he examined her neck, knocking him and his equipment away so hard that he stumbled backward.

"Only I'm smarter than you think, and I know exactly how to deal with annoying flies like you. Ouch!" she suddenly cried out, releasing Laila's arm with enough force to shove her slightly off the couch.

Before either Gilbert or Laila had fully recovered from the force she'd used to shove them both aside, Sebastian came rushing into the living room at her sudden cry.

"What's wrong? Are you hurt, Vic?" He was already on his knees in front of her as she clutched her arm.

Victoria turned to Laila, her eyes filled with tears now. "She pinched my arm, Seb. She's jealous of me, and she's made me so uncomfortable this whole time, touching me."

Before Laila even registered what was happening, Sebastian had reached out and backhanded her across the mouth, sending her to the floor. "How dare you?!" He gritted out, already reaching to strike her again, when Gilbert intervened, stepping between them and placing a protective hand over Laila.

"Supreme Alpha, she didn't mean to hurt your mate, it was a mistake. I've finished checking the mark, and it matches exactly what's described in the old texts. I believe she is the true prophesied one, and she'll absorb your curse the moment you mark her and make your life easier. If that's all you need, we'll take our leave now." Gilbert bowed his head, keeping his hand firmly over Laila, in case the Alpha lunged at her again.

Sebastian would have struck her anyway, if Victoria hadn't stepped forward to hold him back. "Tell them to leave us alone, and never to disturb us again. I don't like her. I don't want her anywhere near me."

"Get out!" Sebastian barked at them.

Fated: The Alpha's Unwanted Luna - Chapter 440: Tell Him[1,111 words]

"Are you okay?" Gilbert questioned Laila for the fifth time that night, dabbing a cotton pad against her split lip, the injury left behind after the Supreme Alpha had struck her.

Though werewolves healed fast, an injury dealt by an Alpha didn't heal nearly as quickly, which was exactly why most people respected his word enough to avoid getting hit in the first place. He ran the cotton, soaked in antiseptic, gently around the injured spot, looking into her emerald eyes as she gave him a small nod.

"I'm fine," she said, then pulled her head away from his tending hand and turned instead to Matt, who was pacing around the room.

"What are we going to do now?" She asked, since their plan to uncover Victoria's true identity had failed spectacularly and backfired into her getting struck for doing nothing wrong at all.

Laila was used to going toe-to-toe with any she-wolf who thought she could outsmart her, and she wasn't above hitting Victoria back either, but the bitch hiding her true colors beneath that innocent act had schemed her way into making Sebastian, a man who, no matter how much he'd disliked her after marrying Viola, had never once raised a hand against her, hit her hard enough that black dots had swum across her vision. Now this had turned personal for Laila and she would deal with Victoria the bitch!

She had come into this only wanting to help Viola out of her situation, but it seemed this Victoria, had just made herself an enemy, because Laila fully intended to repay that slap and had no intention of letting it slide.

More than anything, her cheek throbbed as though she'd swallowed a burning coal and pressed it against the inside of her own cheek, to the point that she'd allowed Gilbert, someone she genuinely didn't want close to her right now, to touch and tend to her, just to make the pain stop.

Now Laila watched Matt, waiting for another plan, and finally saw him stop pacing and turn to face her. "Since we can't figure out where she's from in order to dig into her background, I believe we're left with only one real option to save our Luna's life before tomorrow's execution."

"And what might that be?" Gilbert asked, arching a brow, waiting for the Beta to lay out his plan.

"We tell him she's pregnant. I'm not sure it'll be enough to make him send that she-wolf away entirely, but it might at least save Viola's life, get her out of that filthy dungeon. What do you two think?" He asked, watching as they exchanged a glance before Gilbert spoke.

"If we're going to tell him about the pregnancy, doesn't that mean going back to face him again, with that woman still hovering around him? We only just came from there, and I can assure you, she has him completely wrapped around her finger. Seeing us again is bound to upset her, and may the Moon Goddess help us if we end up executed too." Gilbert said, unwilling to put himself back into a situation where every instinct in him wanted to fight back against the man who'd struck his mate.

There was no telling whether Sebastian wouldn't hurt Laila again, if Victoria whispered something in his ear, and the last thing Gilbert wanted was to be pulled into a fight he already knew he couldn't win, for her sake. So he looked at Matt and added,

"I think it's your turn to go to him. You need to be the one to tell him yourself, being his Beta, you have far more standing to walk in and see him than either of us do now."

Matt had already decided, even before Gilbert suggested it, that he would be the one to see his friend. He'd been Sebastian's friend since childhood, and not once, in all that time, had he seen him behave the way he had these past few hours, since returning to Silver. He couldn't help but worry about how Sebastian might react to news of an unborn child, but regardless, he knew he had to at least try.

"What if it doesn't work?" Laila asked, narrowing her eyes. "What if he brushes off her pregnancy entirely and still goes through with killing her? Shouldn't we have a backup plan?"

Laila had no real sense of how pregnancy might shift someone's perspective in an instant, not after they'd already decided on someone's death, because if she were in a man's position, having already made up her mind, she doubted pregnancy alone would be enough to change it, she'd never cared much for children herself.

She was only trying to be practical, but it seemed the others didn't see it that way, because Matt said,

"If he's still the Sebastian I know, the one who cares about his family, every single one of them, then he'll stop and think twice."

Laila let out a sigh. "Let's just hope it works, then, because that same Sebastian killed his own twin years ago, Matt, and I don't believe a pregnancy is going to change his mind now that he has that bitch hanging around him."

Gilbert turned to her. "Are you always this pessimistic? Or is it just that you don't like children, so something like this wouldn't have swayed you anyway?" He asked, curious, and Laila flashed him a fake smile as she replied,

"I'm a practical person. And yes, I don't like children, and if this plan fails, I hope you'll all follow mine instead, because I already have something in mind."

"You don't like children?" Gilbert asked.

"Was that really the only thing you took away from what I just said, Rodrigo?" She narrowed her eyes at him, annoyed that he kept getting too close to her, ever since she'd already given up on him, triggering her mate bond all over again.

"I like children," the doctor said, and Laila chuckled in amusement. "Then good for you. I hope Zoe feels the same way, and the two of you have all the children in the world."

Gilbert parted his lips to respond, but Matt cut in, having zero interest in watching more of their petty back-and-forth when the situation at hand was far too serious for it.

"If you two are finished, can we get back to talking about the Luna? Honestly, you're both draining me right now." Matt complained, hands on his hips, glaring at the both of them as they turned back to him.

"So are you going to go talk to him now?" Laila asked, setting the doctor's comment aside.