

Fated: The Alpha's Unwanted Luna -

Chapter 71: On the edge_Part 1[1,806 words]

Chapter 71: On the edge_Part 1

After Laila's turn, Viola sat alone in the room and watched Emilia's turn as well. However, unlike Laila, Emilia took so much time opening the cover that time ran out before she could complete the task.

She only succeeded in saving twenty people out of fifty, while Laila had managed to save forty, which meant Laila was still in the lead. The winner was determined by the time it took and the number of people saved. If Viola wanted to surpass Laila, she would have to save more people in less time, which seemed almost impossible at this rate.

When Emilia finished her turn and gave an answer that still didn't align with Viola's viewpoint, a guard walked into the large room and announced to Viola,

"It's your turn. Please follow me."

Viola felt her insides tighten, and her palms grew sweaty, but none of her nervousness showed outwardly. She took a deep breath, got to her feet, and nodded to the guard to lead the way. He guided her up a few flights of stairs to a smaller room with white walls, where a tube-like lift stood in the center. The lift doors opened the moment she stepped forward.

Viola stepped into the lift, and the doors slid closed behind her. It began to rise, taking her up into the arena.

When she emerged, like the other two Luna participants before her, no one cheered. There was a heavy silence before the audience began to whisper amongst themselves, as if they had come to an event simply to mingle, already having predicted the outcome of this round with the wolfless participant.

Predictability made things boring to many, and they couldn't see why they should pay attention to something that seemed so obvious. She was a loser who was meant to lose.

Some even thought it was a waste of their time and would have preferred if they just removed the wolfless from the arena and moved on to the more interesting participants.

Many in the crowd retrieved their phones, eager to capture memes, while others began typing away on their devices to pass time.

Fortunately, Viola couldn't see this to let it add to her nerves, as the top of the arena had been covered and turned into a sky filled with smoke rising from burning buildings.

Viola took in the disaster unfolding around her. The scene looked far more real from within the arena than it did on the screens, she could even smell the burning wood, smoke, and ash.

She then turned her gaze from the devastation to the people standing fearfully behind her. The people who had been hurt during Laila's and Emilia's rounds were replaced with a new set, bringing the total to fifty again.

The children among them cowered, whimpering, and tried to hide behind their mothers' skirts, staring at her as though she were some kind of monster who would eat them or bite off their heads. That look broke Viola's heart, because she hated being viewed in such a way.

Once upon a time, she had hated children and old people because she believed them to be troublesome and utterly annoying. Back then, little pups in Moonwillow had been afraid of her, because she snarled at them whenever they came too close. She had always thought that even if she were to have her own pups with Evan someday, she would not be the one caring for them and would simply leave them to the omegas.

Life changes people, and it had changed her in a very big way. The realization disgusted her now, the way she had once viewed things, the heartlessness she had carried so easily. These little children were terrified to death. They looked so thin and fragile that she wanted nothing more than to take them away from this place and feed them properly in her penthouse, somewhere warm and safe.

Her throat tightened painfully at the thought.

Rather than bark orders at them like she had seen the other participants do, Viola did something different. She dropped to her knees in front of them, offering a smile to the children before speaking softly.

"It's okay, you don't have to be afraid. I will protect you, and no one will get hurt," she assured, reaching out to touch the hair of one of the children, who had tears on her cheeks. It was the same girl Laila had shoved into the hole earlier.

"What's your name?" Viola asked gently.

"Dahlia..." The girl whispered.

"What does she think she's doing? Her time is ticking away," Matt remarked in disbelief. As someone without a wolf, wasn't she supposed to start things with a sense of urgency? Opening that door would take a miracle, so why the hell was she wasting time talking to the people like she was trying to make friends? What exactly was this woman doing?

"She's unpredictable. Let her do her thing," Sebastian muttered, his gaze unblinking as he watched her on the screen.

Despite the chaos around her, burning buildings, falling debris, and the roar of destruction, Viola remained calm, her voice soothing as she spoke to the people, as if the world weren't collapsing around her.

Sebastian felt a strange ache in his chest, the kind that came from recognition. She reminded him so vividly of... his mother, who, even in the worst panic, had never lost her composure. She had always reassured others, her calm a shield against fear, because she knew that panic could kill just as surely as the chaos itself.

Luna Katherina had been one of the calmest Lunas Sebastian had ever known. As a child, he had often marveled at her, wondering how anyone could remain so composed even in the worst situation. And now, seeing Viola act with that same serene authority, that same quiet strength, he felt a rush of awe mixed with something he hadn't expected, warmth, admiration, and the tiniest stab of longing.

She was just like his mother... yet also entirely herself.

"Now that's my Vee," Zoe mused from beside her brother, watching Viola with a proud smile. "She's not being aggressive or mean to the kids." Zoe didn't like unnecessary cruelty, especially from people who were supposed to be above others. She appreciated Viola's gentleness and began to cheer at the top of her lungs for her friend, causing everyone to look at her like she had lost her mind.

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Viola made sure to calm the kids enough so that their fearful expressions softened, and they stopped clutching onto their mothers before she outlined her plan.

"We will run together. Everyone, make sure to look out for each other. The stronger ones will support the weaker. Children, stay together, run as fast as you can, and take cover when I do. Do you understand?" Viola asked gently but firmly.

They all nodded in trust.

"My Mama can't run that well. Her ankle is swollen, Luna..." whispered the little girl, Dahlia now clutching onto Viola's finger and looking up at her.

"Don't worry, she will have support," Viola assured the girl, gently touching her cheek. She was reminded of all the times her own sister had reassured her when she was scared or panicking.

The little girl smiled up at her, and Viola turned to the rest.

"Everyone ready?" She looked at them and ordered two of the stronger women to support the woman with the swollen ankle. Everyone got ready behind her.

Just as the building beside them began to crumble, Viola yelled, "Run!" She clutched onto the hands of two of the children, and they all began to race toward the safety chamber, dodging and ducking the obstacles in their path.

Viola kept shouting words of encouragement to keep them going. Whenever someone fell behind, there was someone there to help them up, all coordinated based on what she had set in motion.

When one of the little boys lost his footing and fell, she bent down, scooped him into her arms, and kept running. The distance barely felt like anything to her, for she had trained and run hundreds of laps every night in the training grounds.

With words of encouragement, not barks and snarls of orders, the people gave it everything they had to keep up with Viola. The mothers, seeing this particular woman looking out for their children, couldn't help but push themselves harder to make things easier for her.

When they reached the chamber cover together, Viola was putting the little boy she had carried down. She parted her lips to speak, but just then, Dahlia cried out, "Mama!"

Viola turned to see the woman with the swollen ankle left behind, vomiting and gasping for breath. She was an omega and had already been shot twice during Laila's and Emilia's rounds. Despite the injuries, she had forced herself to recover quickly because she wanted the membership of the Silver Pack for herself and her daughter, but her body could no longer keep up.

Viola realized that if the woman got shot again, she might actually die from how weak she had become. Her body, being that of an omega, couldn't recover as quickly, and the little girl would be orphaned.

Viola glanced at the ticking clock and saw she still had fifteen minutes left, but she hadn't even opened the chamber door yet.

A devilish voice inside Viola told her to forget the woman. She was just a nobody, and Viola couldn't afford to lose because of someone insignificant. Besides, she was an expert at turning away from people to get what she wanted. She could do it again, let the woman die. Life wasn't fair.

But another part of her, the part that had suffered for four years and was still suffering for turning away from her sister, rebelled against that thought. She had promised herself she would never turn away from someone in need again. She would never be that selfish woman with a dark heart and no compassion.

This poor little girl shouldn't lose her mother. She shouldn't have to suffer what Viola and her sister had suffered in the orphanage for not having parents. Fifteen minutes, that was still enough time, Viola told herself, even though she knew deep down that it wasn't.

"Stay down, everyone!" Viola shouted. Without a second thought, she turned back and dashed toward the woman, running with everything inside her.

"I'll be damned! Why is she going back for one person?!" Matt exclaimed again, so invested in the situation that he couldn't help but wonder why the wolfless girl was so determined to save just one person. Shouldn't she be focused on winning? If she was, she would have abandoned the weak woman and start trying to open that cover.

# Fated: The Alpha's Unwanted Luna -

## Chapter 72: On the edge\_Part 2[ 1,013 words ]

### Chapter 72: On the edge\_Part 2

Laila and Emilia, watching from another room, laughed like they were watching a comedy show as the wolfless girl ran back for just one person, a weak person, at that, who didn't contribute anything to their pack.

"You know, I've thought she was stupid, but I didn't know she was this stupid. Look at my hands, I got burns trying to open that damn cover, and it took me more than half the time!" Emilia remarked, sipping the refreshments provided for them as she watched the wolfless girl reach the omega and then bend down to carry the woman on her back.

"Did she just carry her?" Laila burst into laughter, clutching her stomach as she couldn't control it. This wolfless girl was dense, but her stupidity would be the gateway to Laila's victory. Laila already considered herself the winner; she was just watching for entertainment.

Viola, on the other hand, knew there was no way the woman would be able to run with that swollen ankle. She was so skinny, with barely any flesh on her, that Viola knew she wouldn't be hard to carry, and she did just that. She lifted the woman onto her back and began running just as fast as she had before, unburdened by the weight on her back.

By the time they reached the cover of the chamber, only twelve minutes remained. Viola gently put the woman down next to her daughter and, without even staying to take another breath, she turned to the people.

"You all remember what I said about working together, right?" she asked, her voice calm and steady, without a hint of urgency.

The people nodded.

"Then we need to work together to survive. Our men are fighting to keep the enemies at bay; we will fight to keep our lives and start a new world together. I need the stronger ones among you to assist me in lifting this cover. I cannot do it alone, but together, we can."

The people, who had already begun to like Viola more than the other two participants, and knew that if this woman won and become the Luna, they would be in good hands in Silver, even though they were nobodies, came together, bending down and offering their strength.

Even the elderly women and children helped. Those with powerful wolves used their wolf strength, and in no time, the cover groaned and cracked. Slowly, it began to lift until it reached above them, and Viola fit her back against it to hold it up.

"Everyone get in!" she groaned, feeling the weight of the cover pressing against her back, threatening to crush her down, her legs were shaking terribly from within.

The people began to rush inside, and while they did, the weight on Viola's back increased. She bit back a cry as the strain became unbearable.

The audience, who had thought the wolfless girl was predictable and weren't expecting to be this invested, watched in shock, waiting for the cover to crush her. But to their astonishment, she held it up with her back until every last person had gotten inside.

"She's going to get crushed, Seb." Matt grimaced, holding his hands together, imagining the burns she must be enduring from the cover pressing into her back.

Sebastian's fingers tightened into fists at his side. He fought every instinct to rush forward and hold the cover up for her and help her. His heart felt like it was crushing him as he watched his mate struggle, and just when he thought he couldn't bear to watch how the cover might crush her, she surprised him.

She angled her body slowly towards the direction of the hole while still holding the cover with her back, and in one swift, calculated movement, she jumped into it. The cover followed down with her, creating a deafening crash that made Sebastian shoot to his feet from his seat.

A collective gasp left the audience as they all believed she had been hit on the head by the cover and was now dead below. However, she had managed to save every single one of the members without leaving anyone behind, and she had done it in, everyone's eyes turned to the screen showing the time—

Twenty-five minutes, while Laila had taken twenty-nine minutes and hadn't managed to save everyone...

Sebastian didn't realize he was holding his breath until the camera panned below the hole to reveal the inside, but the people she had saved were crowding around her so much that he couldn't see her immediately.

He started to move from his space, without thinking, to go and take a look when he finally saw her smiling face, crouched on the floor, looking at the swollen ankle of the woman she had gone back for.

"You'll be fine," she assured the woman, and the relief that washed over Sebastian was so profound that it slammed him back into his seat. Was she planning to give him a heart attack?

'Foolish woman,' he cursed her inwardly, but his lips betrayed him with a smile. She had done it again. She had surprised him.

When Viola was asked why she went back for the woman and why she did everything the way she did, her reply was simple: "As a Luna, every life of my pack members should matter to me. No life should be considered more valuable than another, because in the end, without the members, the Luna is nothing."

The audience fell silent for a moment, then murmurs of admiration began to break out. Though many didn't like the wolfless girl, a sense of respect began to build toward her. She was right. Even those who had supported Laila's viewpoint couldn't help but question it now. What if they were the ones left behind in a war? No one wanted a Luna who would abandon them to die.

Slowly, the audience began to rise to their feet, clapping for the wolfless girl. She had shown something that the other two participants had lacked.

## Fated: The Alpha's Unwanted Luna - Chapter 73: Are you jealous?[ 1,663 words ]

### Chapter 73: Are you jealous?

Meanwhile, in the room where Laila and Emilia were seated, Laila's drink caught in her throat as she stared at the screen that showed the difference in time it had taken her and the wolfless girl to solve the problem and bring the people to safety. The girl was ahead of her by four minutes and had saved all fifty people, while she had left ten behind.

The wine turned bitter in her throat as she saw the audience cheering for Viola, and she curled her fingers into tight fists, her nails digging crescent-shaped marks into her palms.

This is unacceptable... nobody ever wins against me in anything, Laila thought, disbelief and fury warring inside her at the turn of event. She had been so sure the wolfless girl would fail. How had she dared win over her?

But then, remembering the brutal nature of the second round, her consuming anger subsided slightly, and her fingers unclenched. Let the wolfless think she had won this round without a wolf; there was no way she would survive the next test, or the third. The second round was the real crucible, the one that could crush any werewolf, and despite the sting of being beaten at the first round, Laila was reassured by that knowledge.

"I have really underestimated the bitch," Emilia remarked with a deep frown, as unlike Laila, the wolfless had surpassed her by far.

Not long after, Laila and Emilia were led away from the room to prepare for the second round.

It was just as Laila was about to leave that her uncle stormed in and stopped her, ordering the guard to go ahead with Emilia. The icy glare in his eyes made her swallow hard, and she forced a smile as she greeted, "Uncle—"

"Don't 'uncle' me, muchacha," Elder Halvrek snapped, his voice firm and sharp, full of disapproval. "You assured me you would be ahead of the participants. It's not looking that way. You are a step behind of a mere wolfless girl."

Elder Halvrek had been barging to the others that his niece would surpass every one of the participants. He had even been among the people who made fun of the wolfless nobody who went back for a single person, only to be met with her victory instead, and then be mocked in return over his niece. He didn't like being wrong or being made fun of by others.

Hadn't Laila promised him she wouldn't disappoint him?

Laila fought not to cower under his scrutiny. Cold sweat broke across her back. Her uncle had always been someone she feared, even more than her parents, and despite her determination to win this for herself so she could be Sebastian's wife, she knew failure was not an option with her uncle involved. Her uncle had wagered half his wealth on her; victory would double it, but defeat would cost him half, and she knew the fallout would be disastrous to her.

That wretched wolfless girl. It seemed Laila had underestimated her. She had used cheap, weak tactics to win the first round, tactics a Luna with authority and class should never lower herself to. It shouldn't be acceptable, but Laila knew she wouldn't be the one to voice that opinion publicly. Instead, she turned to her uncle.

Laila smiled tightly. "Uncle, you saw how I put my all into it. It was the wolfless girl who used a cheap trick. She—"

"That's not enough, girl. It's not enough," Elder Halvrek snapped. "I want to see action and good results. I don't care what tricks you have to use, win." He scolded her harshly, clearly unconcerned with how the victory was achieved, as long as she did not make him a laughingstock among the others.

Laila's fingers curled into her palms. "Yes, tío."

Elder Halvrek's hardened eyes softened only slightly as he continued, "You'd better keep your word and become our Luna. The next heir must come from a Serrano. Make me proud." His gaze locked onto hers, the warning unmistakable.

"Yes, sir."

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After making sure the injured people were taken to the healing house and properly cared for, Viola was escorted back to a resting room. She was washing her face in the sink and wiping the water off with a towel when Zoe and Nick walked in, already arguing as usual, Zoe insisting that Nick wasn't supposed to be in there.

The moment Zoe saw her, her gray eyes brightened. She hurried forward and pulled Viola into a warm embrace, making her smile despite herself and the lingering dread still sitting in her heart.

"I'm so glad you're all right, Vee. Are you hurt?" Zoe asked, pulling back when she caught the strong scent of blood clinging to her friend. She immediately began examining Viola for injuries, hovering over her like a mama hen checking her chicks.

Zoe let out a relieved sigh when she realized the blood wasn't Viola's, but belonged to the people she had carried and run alongside to protect.

"You've gained a few more supporters in the audience," Zoe said proudly. "That's a good thing. They'll vote for you at the end of the competition. Are you really sure you don't feel any pain after that jump? I can call a healer and_"

"I'm fine, really," Viola assured her for the second time when Zoe asked if she felt any pain from jumping into the hole while holding the cover up with her back.

Honestly, her leg muscles ached a little, but it was nothing serious, and it hadn't stopped her from moving or walking.

Nick stepped forward, gently shoving Zoe aside so he could have his moment with Viola as well. Zoe yelped and slapped his back in protest, but Nick only laughed and said, "It's my time with my future wife, so stand back, prima."

"In your dreams, muchacho. She's winning and becoming my sister-in-law," Zoe grumbled, though she still stepped aside and gave him space, knowing he had been just as worried about Viola as she had.

Nick ignored Zoe's comment and placed his large hands on Viola's shoulders, grinning down at her warmly. "I could kiss you, Vee. That was incredible, really." He leaned down and pressed his lips to her cheek.

Viola flushed, heat rushing all the way to her face, but she quickly masked it with a chuckle, realizing she wasn't immune to Nick's charm despite him being one of her best friends. His lips were warm against her cheek.

She had never had a male friend before because, in the past, Evan hadn't liked her hanging around with other men, just as she hadn't liked him being around other females.

They had made an agreement to stick to friends of their own gender to avoid unnecessary jealousy. But who would have thought he had been cheating behind her back the entire time, while she had remained loyal, loyal enough that she had never even been kissed on the cheek by another male...

Evan never gave her cheek kisses. And she could count the few times they had shared affectionate lip kisses. Looking back now, Viola realized those kisses were only given when she did something remarkable for him or solved a problem he couldn't. She would spend sleepless nights solving academy and pack issues for him because he was the heir. She did all of his work for nothing more than a scrap of his kiss and affection.

Viola pushed thoughts of Evan aside and looked up at Nick's handsome face, grinning down at her.

She smiled at him, completely unaware that a certain someone was watching from the door, fighting the strong urge to barge in, break Nick's neck, and remove his hands from her shoulders.

How dare Nick kiss her?

He couldn't bear to watch them without breaking someone's arms, and the pull of his mate-bond to check on her and make certain she was unharmed was nearly unbearable, but with his sister and cousin in the room, he couldn't act on his instinct to check on his mate.

Clenching his jaw, he turned on his heels and slipped away without making his presence known.

If she could stand and smile at his stupid cousin, then she wasn't injured like he had feared she would be after the way he'd seen her jump into the hole like the little rabbit he believed she was. But recalling Nick's kiss to her cheek sent fire through him. I should cut his lips, Sebastian thought with a dark scowl.

'Are you jealous?' Muffin questioned, but before Sebastian could deny it or shut off his wolf, Muffin added, 'It's all your fault. If you hadn't been mean to her from the beginning, it would be you she was smiling at right now and warming up to. You messed things up. Get ready to eat my shit because she's in the lead.'

For the first time, Sebastian didn't shut his wolf off, even though he still strongly believed he had been cursed with a very stupid wolf. As an Alpha, he should have a no-nonsense wolf, but instead he was stuck with this one called Muffin.

'Do you think she's warming up to Nick?' he asked, his expression dark.

'Duh. Wasn't it obvious?' Muffin said. 'The way she was smiling at him, her cheeks all red? If you're not careful, she's going to fall for him, and you'll be the one in pain when your mate falls for another male.'

Sebastian didn't like that at all. The mental image of her with his cousin sent stabbing pains through his chest and made him feel as if he had swallowed hot coals. 'If she's going to be my Luna, I'm not about to endure unnecessary pain every day,' he said tightly. 'How can I make her warm up to me?'

'Well, now you're talking,' Muffin replied. 'From now on, you're going to listen to me. Understand?'

Fated: The Alpha's Unwanted Luna - Chapter 74: Second round_Part 1[1,664 words]

Chapter 74: Second round_Part 1

In the resting room, Viola placed her hand against Nick's arm and said, "It's all thanks to you and Zoe for being my trainers. But we shouldn't celebrate too soon, the trials aren't over yet. We still have two more to go."

Nick waved his hand dismissively, as if shooing away a bothersome fly.

"Nah. I trust you'll pass them, Vee. I wouldn't have bet my last card on you if I didn't sense great potential," he said confidently, already trusting her abilities after what he had witnessed her do in the arena. She was amazing. He had never seen any woman as captivating as she was, and though he had doubted her ability for a moment when they first met in the dining hall, he had known she possessed great potential the instant she spoke to Laila and endured her Alpha aura.

Nick found her complex and different, which was why he was all in when it came to supporting her, and betting on her. He thought this as he removed his hand from her shoulder and looked into her eyes, belatedly realizing she wasn't wearing her glasses.

"Have your eyes been cured?" he asked in surprise, so much so that even Zoe peeked from behind him, only to notice that Viola truly wasn't wearing her glasses.

"Did you take your glasses off?" Zoe asked, chiding herself internally for only just noticing.

Viola blinked, suddenly aware of the lenses that still felt a little uncomfortable in her eyes, strange, but tolerable. Because of the high-stakes tension of the trials, she had completely forgotten about them until Nick and Zoe pointed it out. She raised her hands to her eyes, then shook her head, resisting the urge to rub them as it felt slightly itchy.

"No. I'm wearing lenses," she told them, hoping they wouldn't ask where she had gotten them.

Such things weren't sold in the werewolf world; no shifter had problems with their vision. She didn't know whether it was right to tell them that the Alpha had sent them for her, along with a few other things, like the cheat sheet, because she had no idea how to explain why he would do that when he clearly didn't support her.

The man was acting bipolar, his unpredictable behavior constantly confusing her, and she didn't think she wanted to dwell on him at this critical point in the competition. Relief washed over her when the two simply said—

"Oh, lenses. I've heard they work just as well as glasses. It's good you thought of it and didn't wear your glasses," Zoe remarked, completely unaware of how vision actually worked or how glasses were prescribed. They were never taught about such problems, so she assumed any lens sold would work just fine. Viola didn't correct her.

"I'll see you during the second resting time, mi amor," Nick said, glancing down at his wristwatch then at her face. "I need to get back to the computer room before they notice I'm missing. The next competition will start in five minutes."

He gently patted her head as he added, "Be careful out there, Vee. Don't die, stay alive. If anything happens to you, I won't be able to forgive myself."

He sounded serious for the first time in his life. Nick rarely sounded serious, but Viola had become one of the people he considered important, along with Zoe.

They were important to him now because they were the only ones who truly saw him.

His own mother didn't care much about his existence, largely because he lacked the ambition of his older brother. Nick didn't want the burden of ruling or carrying the pack's weight on his shoulders. All he wanted was a free life spent in front of his systems, solving problems and chasing challenges that had nothing to do with becoming Alpha.

He and Zoe had been close since they were little children, and she had always been closer to him than even his own brother. There was a time when Nick went through darker days, depressing days filled with thoughts of ending everything. He had felt invisible within his own family, unseen by his own mother, no matter what he did. Nothing was ever good enough.

He had wanted it all to end.

But Zoe had saved him. She had stayed by his side when his own family failed him, standing in for the kind of family he should have had.

He had lived with her in her penthouse in the City of Silver while she worked at her fashion house and modeled. During those months, his mother never asked about him, not once. She never called. She never worried about his whereabouts.

Nick and Zoe had grown close like siblings, and their childish banter and constant arguing made him feel seen, if only a little. Now Viola had joined their small circle, and he had added her to the list of people he cared about. In the month he had known her, she had never neglected someone she cared for.

Even when training exhausted her, she still made time to join their group chat, talking and joking with them. Nick found himself liking her more than he should.

That was why he knew that even if she failed to pass all three trials, he would do everything in his power to make sure she wasn't banished from Silver. He would give her a home there, even if it meant marrying her.

His mother wouldn't care anyway. She wouldn't mind him marrying a wolfless.

"I will be careful. Thanks, Nick," Viola assured him, and only then did he leave, with the promise of cheering for her from the computer room where he worked.

Once he was gone, Zoe turned to Viola and asked, "Are you ready for the second round?"

No, Viola answered silently in her mind.

Despite wanting to feel victorious and accomplished after the first round, Viola knew she might not be so lucky in the next one. It was a deadly round, the very reason she had brought her daggers and

bow. The thought sent pins crawling through her stomach, increasing her dread of the second competition.

"Yes, I am," she lied.

Soon after, she drank some water and cleaned herself up before being escorted to the Silver Room to wait for her turn alongside Emilia.

Just like in the first round, they watched as Laila stepped into the arena for the second round on the screen.

The top of the arena was left open this time, and everyone would be watching it happen live. Though holographic screens still surrounded the grounds, the audience chose to watch it directly the moment they realized what this round was about. Eyes widened across the spectator stands as the challenge was presented to Laila. Even Viola, who already knew what it was, wasn't prepared for it. Her throat went instantly dry, parched like a desert.

"Now this is where a stupid wolfless can't use cheap tricks to find her way around," Emilia sneered, a smirk playing on her lips as she noticed Viola turning slightly pale at the sight on the screen.

Though Emilia herself felt nervous the moment she saw the challenge, fear tightening in her chest, she took comfort in the wolfless's reaction.

Did she really think she could use people again, like in the first round, to pass this?

Emilia scoffed. That would be impossible here.

This round involved no civilians, only the participant and the black howlers in the arena. Creatures that would tear her to shreds and eat her alive.

Viola stared at the two mighty beasts on the screen, her heart dropping heavily into the pit of her stomach. In this round, the participants were required to face and defeat black howlers, or die in the arena.

Black howlers were a different breed of werewolves, far larger and more powerful than red howlers, who were a mixed breed of lycans and werewolves. Nick had once told her that a few participants had died trying to face a red howler in previous competitions. Black howlers were even worse than red howlers.

They were enormous, larger than a big bull. A single paw strike could crush a human into the ground. Viola watched as they were released from their cages, which slowly rose from the platform beneath them.

They had glowing red eyes and fur as black as ebony, with massive fangs and horns, yes, horns. They had black horns. These creatures were said to be cursed with immense strength and power, their appearance vastly different from that of regular wolves.

Once, black howlers had their own pack just like the normal werewolves. But that pack had been destroyed after they attempted to dominate the entire werewolf world. They slaughtered members of other packs brutally whenever those packs refused to bow to them.

Their violence forced the largest packs to unite and bring down both the black and red howlers. Instead of killing them all, the victors divided the surviving howlers among themselves, turning them into prisoners and using them as living weapons, armies forced to fight.

The black howlers were known to be filled with anger and fury. They had once ruled, and now they were enslaved. Any opportunity to kill a member of the packs that had defeated them was a chance to vent years of rage.

The Silver Pack had been among those who brought them down.

Releasing them for this round meant there would be no mercy. The participants would either kill, or be killed.

This trial existed to ensure that if the pack was ever attacked, the Luna would be capable of protecting herself, even against the strongest of wolves.

Viola stared at the screen as the two massive wolves stepped out of their cages and into the arena. The platform lowered slowly beneath them as they began advancing toward Laila, who had already shifted into her wolf form.

Fated: The Alpha's Unwanted Luna - Chapter 75: Second round_Part 2[1,164 words]

Chapter 75: Second round_Part 2

Viola stared at the screen as the two massive wolves stepped out of their cages and into the arena. The platform lowered slowly beneath them as they began advancing toward Laila, who had already shifted into her wolf form.

Viola, who had once thought Laila's wolf was big, now saw her looking like a puppy next to the massive black howlers that circled her like predators trapping their prey. It made Viola belatedly wonder how she, in her human form, would look next to such beasts. It wouldn't take any effort for her to be chewed once and swallowed, she thought, but she quickly chased the dark thought from her mind. This wasn't the time for negativity. She needed to study how Laila fought them off.

Laila stayed alert, watching every movement of the dark howlers, ready for whatever they might do.

When the trumpet was blown, the two creatures attacked at the same time. Viola watched the intense fight with her breath caught in her lungs as growls echoed and dust rose into the air, the wolves stomping, pawing, and attacking.

Laila's wolf, smaller than both of them, seemed to gain an advantage from her size. She slipped through their attacks, striking fast and biting hard whenever a fatal point was exposed.

As Laila's wolf jumped away from one attack and leapt onto the back of one of the black howlers, biting down on its neck, she was brutally and swiftly flung aside. The force sent her crashing hard into the ground, dust bursting up around her as she cried out like an injured puppy. Yet she was back on her feet as if it were nothing, except now she limped slightly, favoring her back leg where she had landed.

The fight was so intense that Viola almost thought Laila would be killed many times. Though Laila's wolf might have been smaller than the black howlers, she was no weakling. She soon ripped the throat out of one of the wolves, killing it.

Fighting one-on-one with the other black howler didn't take her much time, but as Laila reached for its throat, the black howler bit down on her head, nearly swallowing it with its enormous mouth. She cried out and pulled back, then lunged again for its throat, this time striking precisely and ripping it out, sending the wolf crashing to the ground with a mighty thud.

A loud cheer erupted from the audience, jolting Viola and making her gulp down saliva to moisten her dry throat. She watched, wide-eyed, as Laila's wolf staggered back with a cry before collapsing. In a fluid motion, Laila shifted into her human form, her body streaked with blood and deep bite wounds, bleeding heavily onto the ground. Gasps rippled through the crowd, Emilia included.

She had been given an hour to defeat the black howlers, and had done it in just forty minutes. Viola's stomach tightened. That meant she and Emilia would have to finish the task in even less time if they wanted to stay ahead.

Healers in blue uniforms rushed into the arena, lifting Laila's weakened, battered body onto a stretcher to take her where she would heal. But the audience continued cheering, their excitement unbroken even though she had been injured in the fight and rendered unconscious.

What Laila had done was extraordinary. The black howlers were feared for a reason, and she had killed them in forty minutes. No ordinary shewolf could have pulled that off. Not one they had ever seen.

Viola watched as the arena was cleared of the two dead black howlers. Could she really fight these mighty creatures without a wolf? she wondered dreadfully, tightening her fingers into fists.

She was still staring at the screen with a blank expression when the delta came for Emilia. But Emilia surprised everyone by quickly standing up and backing away from the guard, exclaiming, "I forfeit! I forfeit! I am not going to face those beasts! I am not fighting again!"

Emilia wasn't ready to die. Her wolf was nowhere near as strong as Laila's, and though Laila had defeated the black howlers, she had been knocked unconscious and left injured, her body covered in bite wounds. It was common knowledge among the werewolves that black howlers had poisonous fangs and bites to normal werewolves system. There was no way in hell Emilia was willing to risk her life for a position she wasn't even sure she would earn in the end. What was the use of fighting when the odds were clearly not in your favor?

She wasn't stupid and delusional, she would definitely die out there without an Alpha wolf.

The guard who came to escort her didn't look surprised at Emilia's words, he merely spoke into the mic attached to his shirt and announced to the public that Emilia Jones had forfeited the competition.

None of the audience blamed her; they even thought she was sensible. Only a fool would want to fight those beasts after witnessing Laila's intense fight. Those black howlers looked like the devil's pets! Only a suicidal person would want to face them without an Alpha wolf! Emilia was really smart and realistic for backing out at this moment.

Many participants had died in the past fighting these devilish-looking wolves, and that alone should have taught anyone enough of a lesson, enough to serve as a wake-up call about what the Luna position truly entailed if they could not survive this competition.

It seemed Emilia had received that wake-up call, even though her wolf was not considered weak and many wanted to call her a coward but then knew that if they were in her shoes they would have done the same thing.

It seemed the winner had already been decided, so there was no use in continuing the competition. The guard assumed the wolfless girl would forfeit as well, just like Emilia, after watching Laila's round. He didn't even bother to ask and began to turn away, ready to order the competition wrapped up and closed, since it was obvious Laila would be crowned once she recovered.

But Viola got to her feet, stopping him, a deep crease forming on her forehead at his rudeness.

"I am still fighting. I believe it's my turn next, since Emilia has withdrawn?" she asked, causing the guard to raise an eyebrow and scan her from head to toe. He almost found it amusing, but trained as he was to mask his expressions, he simply gave her a nod.

This was unbelievable. Didn't she just see what she would have to face to pass this round? Could it be that she didn't know those were black howlers, or that she lacked the wolf to fight them? the guard wondered. Still, he said,

"Come with me."

As Viola began to walk past Emilia, she heard the she-wolf scoff. "Good luck killing yourself. You'll finally get what you want. Rest in peace in advance."

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Chapter 76: She's unpredictable[1,377 words]

Chapter 76: She's unpredictable

Viola looked at the she-wolf without a word. She wasn't a coward and never had been.

Anyway, even though she was afraid, she had nothing to lose here but her life. And some things had taught Viola, the hard way, that her life held no value, that it meant nothing. If she backed out at this very moment because of fear, she would have absolutely nothing left to live for, nothing to look forward to, and nothing but endless regret and loneliness. Even the two friends she now had would no longer be in her life. She would be banished and sent away.

She had already sworn to herself that she would die trying to make amends to Ivy, and she wasn't about to chicken out because of something called fear. Fear had been the main reason she had betrayed her twin once before, and it would not be the same reason that stopped her from making things right now.

She had signed a contract to leave if she failed; forfeiting would be another form of failure. Viola had made good friends she didn't want to be forced to turn away from because she failed, friends who cared for her, and who she knew would also care for her twin once she brought her here.

This was for Ivy. And with that thought, Viola hardened her heart, shoved her fears to the back of her mind, and walked past Emilia, following the guard.

They went through the same path as the first round that led to the arena.

When Viola's name was announced to the public and her profile picture appeared on the screen, the audience immediately erupted into chatter. They had assumed she would forfeit, just like Emilia. What did she think she was doing, stepping into the arena to fight black howlers?

"Is she crazy?"

"Just because she passed the first round doesn't mean she can survive this one. Can someone save this suicidal girl from herself and get her off the arena?!"

"I really liked her after the first round, but I can't help thinking she lacks sense and common brain to think. Someone save her and talk some sense into her empty brains. I really don't want her dying." said an elderly shewolf.

"Well, if she wants to die, let her. We'll watch her get chewed up and swallowed by the black howlers. This is going to be fun," Laila's supporters said, looking forward to seeing her eaten alive, convinced she didn't know what was good for her at all. Instead of following in Emilia's footsteps and backing out to save herself from unnecessary death, she wanted to play a senseless heroine in the story. She must think she was the female lead of some game, who got lucky and won, how delusional could one get?

Unlike the first round, the arena had been transformed into a normal arena with sandy grounds, without burning buildings, fire, or arrows.

The sun blazed down from above, its heat burning the top of her head and causing her to squint her eyes to see ahead. When the lift carrying the next set of black howlers began to rise from the ground, Viola tightened her grip on her dagger at her waist and took a deep breath.

Viola watched as the large cages were lifted onto the arena, the snarling of the wolves sending cold shivers down her spine.

When the cages began to open, she swallowed hard and started calculating her plans in her head, counting down from ten.

Don't be a coward, Serena. You can do this. You have to fight and show them you're not weak, that you can take on any challenge and set things right again in your life. Don't be a coward.

She chanted the words to herself repeatedly, even as anxiety crawled beneath her skin, tightening with every breath.

"Seb, she can't make it through this round. The black howlers will eat her alive," Matt muttered, shaking his head in pity. She should have just forfeited this round. "She's—"

"Shut up, Matt, and just watch. She might be small, but you'll be stunned by what she can do," Sebastian interrupted, without even thinking about his own words or the effect they had on Matt and Zoe, who heard him and turned to look at him with slack jaws. Since when did he believe Viola was anything but a helpless weakling, someone he constantly judged and insulted?

They thought, but none of them said anything. There was no time for talk with what was unfolding below in the arena.

Sebastian was watching so intensely that he didn't even blink. Zoe doubted he would respond to any of her words even if she spoke to him again.

Since when did he start caring enough about her Vee to look this invested? Zoe thought, her lips pouting slightly in suspicion as it was so unlike her brother to care of someone he showed dislike towards. She decided to investigate that later, when she wasn't busy worrying about her friend fighting those beasts.

Sebastian, on the other hand, narrowed his eyes at the girl in the arena. He didn't know how she planned to fight this and couldn't stop the sting of worry in his chest, which he carefully hid,

refusing to let it show on his face, especially not where someone might notice and read too much into it. Someone like his sister.

He kept his expression blank, his eyes fixed solely on her, until the moment the cage reached the arena floor and began to open. However, Viola did something completely unexpected, causing the entire audience to burst into laughter, as if they were watching a comedy show rather than a high-tension, life-threatening situation.

"What the hell is she doing? Why is she running away?" Matt questioned again. Because Sebastian was also wondering the same thing, he couldn't bark at Matt to shut up.

Matt had always been the kind of man who talked even while watching a movie, or anything engaging on a screen. Even when the answer was plain and clear right in front of him, he would still ask Sebastian, who often wasn't even watching with him, what a character was thinking or what they were doing, as if they were experiencing it together.

He was a very impatient man, the kind of person you shouldn't sit next to while watching anything on a screen, unless you were ready to answer questions nonstop.

However, for the first time, Sebastian was also thinking that. What was she doing? He wondered, as he watched her begin to run away from the cage with all her might before it finished opening, rather than fight the wolves. Why was she running away?

He didn't think she was the kind to cowardly run from something, so he had a feeling she was up to something, something that soon became clear when she reached the end of the arena walls and began to climb them just as the trumpet was blown for the wolves to attack.

She had already put so much distance between herself and the black howlers that by the time they reached halfway across the arena toward the walls, Viola had almost climbed to the top. She moved with speed and precision, like a skilful monkey crawling up a tree, her body agile and determined as she ascended.

The walls had a smooth surface and weren't something one could normally climb, but Sebastian watched her stab her dagger into a soft surface between the brickwork and use it to lift herself onto the wall, finally standing at the top.

"What is she really doing?" Matt asked again, rather than watching silently. "Oh no, she's going—"

"Matt, shut the fuck up," Sebastian barked.

Matt, completely unaware of himself for asking questions repeatedly, quickly bit down on his lips. "She's unpredictable, I can't help it," he admitted. "But really, what is she doing?"

Sebastian ignored his friend and instead narrowed his eyes on the girl, who had unhooked her bow from her waist, grabbed two arrows from her quiver, fit them onto the bow, and raised it toward the black howlers running at full speed toward the walls, targeting the creatures.

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Chapter 77: She's definitely dead[1,609 words]

Chapter 77: She's definitely dead

Sebastian ignored his friend and instead narrowed his eyes on the girl, who had unhooked her bow from her waist, grabbed two arrows from her quiver, fit them onto the bow, and raised it toward the black howlers running at full speed toward the walls, targeting the creatures.

She fired the two arrows at once. Sebastian's eyes locked on them until one struck a creature on the side and the other arrow hit the ground next to the black howler. The one that was hit cried out and slowed, but the arrow didn't stop it from running towards her; it only angered the creature further and made it growl.

Black howlers were known to be highly intelligent, and they immediately understood what she was trying to do. They began to run not in a straight line, but in zigzags, deliberately changing directions to confuse her next shot.

Sebastian noticed how she couldn't keep up with their zigzag movements and kept missing her shots, each arrow striking the ground instead of the creatures flesh.

In no time, the black howlers reached the wall, stretching up on their hind legs and swiping with their front paws in an attempt to knock her down from the top. Viola hurriedly stumbled backward, almost falling off the other side, and Sebastian tensed sharply at the sight, but she managed to balance herself at the last second.

If she had fallen, it would have meant she was out of the competition. End of the game, and possibly the end of her life, as the ground on the other side, just beyond the audience seats, was uneven and littered with sharp irons jutting out from the earth like waiting teeth.

The black howlers stretched their front legs, attempting to grab her feet with their paws, but Viola released another arrow, striking a large paw and causing the creature to fall back with another cry of pain.

In that moment, the two fell away from the wall. She moved forward and pulled another arrow. This time, she waited for one of the black howlers to raise its head before releasing it. The arrow struck straight in its red eye, producing a pop sound as blood oozed out along with the creature's howl.

"Bullseye!" Matt exclaimed.

The mighty creature fell to the ground, crying and howling in agony, while the other one struggled to remove the arrow stuck in its paw. Viola used that opportunity to draw another arrow and target the head of the one she had fired in the eye.

Just as she struck the creature to its death in the middle of its head, the other one had recovered, rage burning in its red eyes. It pounced, using its paw to grab her ankle and yanking her down from the wall, causing the audience to gasp and Sebastian's insides to clench as he saw her hit the ground with a force that would surely hurt or break her bones.

The wolf didn't give her a moment to recover from the fall. It swiped its paw to knock the bow from her grip, then sank its teeth into the back of her suit belt and hurled her against the wall with such force that bricks crumbled and dust rose into the air.

"Oh no, and here is the end. She's definitely dead," Matt muttered, but this time, it was Zoe who turned on him, tears in her eyes, and struck him squarely in the face with her designer purse, catching him on the nose.

"Hey!"

"Shut up! If you say anything else about my Vee, I will break your head. Hermano, tell your beta to shut up and stop talking," Zoe turned to her brother, with tears streaming down her lashes and smooth cheeks.

But if Sebastian heard her, he wasn't paying attention, not to her, not to Matt, with his heart hammering inside his chest as Viola's bow was crushed under the paw of the black howler. The creature pressed another paw down on her chest, pinning her to the ground, where she let out a cry of pain that Sebastian felt deep inside his soul.

His knuckles turned white from gripping the arms of his chair, fighting every instinct to shift into his wolf form and rush to rescue his mate in distress. Male werewolves were far too protective over a mate to watch her suffer, and Sebastian had to push Muffin to the back of his deepest mind to stop him from taking over and shifting them in public and revealing to everyone that she was his mate.

He had sat here and watched Laila fight these creatures, she had been bitten and beaten, but his wolf had not reacted to her suffering the way it was now reacting to Viola's. Laila was also his mate, yet her pain had stirred pity in him, not this deep, burning rage and the instinctual urge to fight the predator for her. Why was it different with Viola?

'The fucker is going to kill her!' Muffin raged, as they watched the black howler playing with Viola, hurting her before it would end her life. Wolves were known to toy with their prey before delivering the final blow, and Sebastian could feel every second of the torment as if it were inside him.

Zoe couldn't watch anymore. She turned her face away from the arena, burying it into Matt's shoulder. He tried to shake her off, but she gripped his arm tightly, keeping it there to hide her eyes from the gore and the pain of her friend. She just couldn't watch it anymore.

Helpless, Matt let out a sigh and let her hide there. After all, she was his friend's sister, and she hated seeing anyone suffer, especially someone she cared for deeply. By now, he was too invested in Viola himself to mind that this brat, who had just smacked him with her purse, was hiding her face against him.

Watching the girl struggle in the arena even made Matt feel pity for her. She had shown such great courage and bravery, and he wished this wouldn't be the end for her, but the outcome in the arena was plain as day. The black howler was just too strong for her to fight off...

"You can do it, cariño," Sebastian gritted through his teeth as he watched her strain to reach for her dagger at the side of her belt. But something seemed wrong with her hand, she couldn't move it properly.

In the arena, Viola felt the claws of the creature sink deeper into the side of her chest, her eyes watering from the pain as she was trapped beneath its massive body. She could barely move her hands, one pinned under the black howler's paw, the other hurting from striking the wall when she had been knocked off and hurled against it like a boneless rag doll. Only her free hand trembled as she tried to reach her dagger.

Viola's entire body was burning with pain, and she couldn't tell which parts were broken and which were simply bruised. She gritted her teeth, unable to fight off the mighty weight of the beast pinning her to the sun-heated ground, its massive head blotting out the sun.

"I will eat you alive," the wolf snarled, its hot breath so close to her face that she could feel it saliva dripping onto her neck. She gritted her teeth and forced her aching hand toward the dagger, but just as she reached it and began to close her trembling fingers around the hilt, the black howler opened its jaws.

Everyone in the audience held their breath as the wolf began to clamp its massive jaws around the wolfless girl's head. She was dead already. It was too late. Many of them believed there was no way she could escape, that she was about to die.

Then, just as suddenly, the creature cried out and staggered away from her. When they looked closely, they saw blood oozing from its chest, where Viola's silver dagger had pierced deep into the wolf's lethal point. Before anyone could react, the massive creature collapsed to its death next to her.

Silver to the heart kills a werewolf instantly, especially when it pierced deeper and touched the heart.

Everyone watched, stunned and utterly speechless, completely taken aback by the turn of events. Did a wolfless girl just kill two black howlers? And in less than thirty minutes, no less!

The entire arena fell silent for a full ten seconds as they watched the wolfless girl crawl to her knees. Though bleeding, she looked up at the audience and said coldly, her eyes devoid of emotion, "You don't need a loud, mighty wolf to be a Luna. And you don't need to be a wolf to kill another wolf..." Saying that, she didn't wait for the healers, who were far too shocked to move or act, before she began to push herself to her feet.

Viola pushed herself from the ground, despite the dizziness washing over her and the pain burning through her body, and began to make her way out and away from the arena before she would pass out entirely. She could feel the pain reaching deep into her chest like hot lava.

"Holy mother of the moon, she made it..." Matt mused quietly to his friend, only to turn toward where Sebastian had been sitting a moment ago, and found the seat completely empty. A frown settled on his face. Where the hell had Seb gone just now? Wasn't he sitting here only a moment ago?

Fated: The Alpha's Unwanted Luna - Chapter 78: The wrong person[1,275 words]

Chapter 78: The wrong person

Viola pushed herself to go back to the resting room she had been given during the first round. Her legs were trembling like they were made of jelly, and her heartbeat was slamming so hard she couldn't even tell where it was located anymore, as she could feel it pounding in every single pulse of her body.

Her vision, despite the uncomfortable lenses in her eyes that helped her see without her glasses, was blurring away, seeing things in two, and the noises around her were beginning to fade. Still, she shook her head as if to clear the fog crawling its way into her brain and mind.

She hadn't stayed to be taken by the healers because Viola knew that once she gave in to the weakness of falling unconscious, like Laila had done, she would wake up in the healing house and miss the rest of the competition, as her entire body was now screaming for rest. She could feel her temperature rising so high that she felt cold and hot at the same time.

The wristband Nick had given her immediately came on and began to flash a red light. It vibrated once and then said, "Critical temperature. Toxin confirmed. Survival risk rising. Vee, you need medical attention."

Viola didn't need to be told what was wrong with her. She had lived her whole life among werewolves, even though she didn't have one herself now. She had studied different kinds of werewolves and was knowledgeable enough to know that black howlers had poisonous bites and claws. One of the black howler's claws had dug deep into her chest, dangerously close to her heart, and the more she bled and move, the more that poison would spread toward it.

She shouldn't have left the arena and should have waited for the healers to take her somewhere she could be given an antidote. Viola chided herself as she stepped into the resting room with great difficulty and then closed the door behind her, pressing her back against it with a grimace. In that moment, she realized why she hadn't stayed in the arena, she didn't want to show weakness.

She didn't want to give them any reason to throw her away from the safe haven she was trying to build for her only family. That Alpha who always found ways to call her weak, she didn't want to give him any satisfaction or opportunity to mock her again.

That was why she had walked out of the arena as though she hadn't been affected by the hits and bruises she'd received. But now, she was definitely regretting her decision to play brave and unaffected, because this damn wound was killing her.

Viola looked down at her chest, which was drenched in blood and soaking downward. The beautiful suit made of fine material was torn, and Viola felt worse about the ruined suit than she did about her own wound. It had been gifted to her by Zoe, she thought, as she brought up a trembling hand to touch the claw tear.

She immediately grimaced and moaned in pain as her fingers brushed the wound just to the left side of her chest, the tear reaching from the top of one of her breasts down below it.

Viola sat there, hoping that Nick or Zoe would come soon so they could help her with the antidote. They were the only ones she trusted enough to show her weakness to, the only people she had added to the list of those close to her heart.

She bit down on the inside of her cheek so she wouldn't pass out. From the way she had walked steadily out of the arena, everyone must have believed she was perfectly fine. But if Zoe and Nick didn't come in time, she knew her dead body might be what they would find here, as she could feel her left hand becoming paralyzed and immobile from the wound.

Viola began to feel faint and utterly exhausted, and she started to give in to the darkness calling to her mind. If giving in would make the pain go away, then so be it. She longed for numbness and oblivion.

But just as she began to let go and surrender to the luring unconsciousness hovering just above her awareness, she heard the doorknob rattle above her head where she was sitting on the floor, as though someone was trying to open the door.

She gave herself a mental shake to wake up. It must be Zoe and Nick, she thought, using the little energy left in her battered, weakened body to move aside and use the doorknob as support to pull herself to her feet.

Once she was standing, her head swayed, feeling heavy as though a mountain of rocks was weighing her down. Her breathing felt hollow, and her vision spun. Viola didn't let herself fall back down as she tremblingly turned the key, then moved away from the door and opened it.

But just as she opened it for whoever was standing outside, her legs gave out beneath her, no longer able to hold her up. The person quickly stepped into the room and grabbed her by the waist, pulling her against a solid, rock-hard chest.

"I got you, cariño," came a deep, husky, accented voice she would recognize even on her deathbed, and she tensed against the comforting chest her heavy head rested on. Wrong person, she thought.

He was the last person she needed here. He might mock her and then make her feel even more miserable for being unable to swiftly kill the black howlers.

Though what Viola had done was remarkable, to her, she hadn't done enough. She didn't see the good in anything she had done, nor did she believe it was enough to make anyone commend her, especially this man. He wasn't the one she wanted here right now. She preferred Nick, or even Zoe...

Viola wanted to pull away, to put distance between them before he could insult her, but her exhausted body rebelled fiercely against the effort. His expensive scent was soothing, reminding her of coffee and spice, of everything warm and delicious. She let her weight lean on him, finally giving in to the exhaustion she had been fighting since the first round of the competition.

She was tired, mentally and physically, tired of pushing and trying to prove herself. She couldn't keep holding herself together when her body was clearly screaming for her to sit and rest. She hadn't slept well in days, hadn't eaten properly, nor felt any peace. She was hurting so badly now that Viola no longer cared what this giant bully thought of her. But there was still something she wanted him to know.

"I... I am not weak... I can be your Luna and take on any challenge... I am not weak, do you hear me, Kade? You are such a big bully..." Viola muttered, her speech sounding strange even to herself. Then she belatedly remembered that an unfocused, sluggish mind was one of the first symptoms of black howler poison before it fully numbed and paralyzed you.

"I... am not weak, do you hear me, you giant bully?" Viola murmured, hitting her forehead against his hard chest as if to get her point out to him.

Sebastian's face, which had been tightened with worry and concern for her, softened, and his lips curved slightly at the corner at the way she dared to address him. But why didn't he find it insulting in any way, the way he normally would have?

Chapter 79: End of competition/ possessive Alpha_Part 1

Chapter 79: End of competition/ possessive Alpha_Part 1

"I know you are not weak. Now stop talking, cariño. The venom is already moving through your blood," he whispered as he put one arm around her waist and held her against him before reaching with his other hand to close and then lock the door behind them.

After locking it, he turned fully to her, bent down, and carried her into his arms, walking toward the single sofa in the resting room given to the participants to freshen up after each round.

She was burning up so much he could feel the heat through his clothes, seeping into his skin. The little fool had walked away from the arena like nothing was wrong, but Sebastian had already seen how the black howler's claw had dug into her chest. He knew there was no way in hell she was fine, and she wouldn't be if she wasn't taken care of immediately.

He had been the one to call her weak repeatedly, but Sebastian knew he would never be able to call her that again after what he had watched her do, again. Even Laila, who had an Alpha wolf, hadn't been able to fight off the poison of the black howlers and had fallen unconscious the moment she defeated them. Yet this woman in his arms had gotten up and walked away on her own legs like nothing had happened.

Sebastian looked down at her sweaty, flushed face. Her eyes were pressed tightly together in pain, and her lips were parted as her breath came ragged through them. Her lashes were long and curly, ebony black like the hair on her head, and her thick, sharply curved brows sat above her doll-like eyes. He didn't know whether to think of her as remarkably brave and courageous or foolishly so, because who in their right senses would have done what she had done and displayed in the arena?

This woman was full of surprises he couldn't help but want to uncover and peel away little by little. Just who was she? She stirred both his curiosity and a deeply rooted protectiveness. If she was this brave and strong without a wolf, he wondered just how she would be with one. She was small, and yet remarkable.

Sebastian had never kept or been with a woman this small. All the women around him, and in his life, had been tall. And as much as he hadn't wanted her at first and had strongly believed she didn't fit into his world or life, he could now see just how much she would fit into it. She would do as the kind of woman he wanted beside him and for his next plan in breaking his cursed prophecy. But to make that possible, he realized he had to keep her alive through this poison and every obstacle that would block her from becoming his Luna.

Sebastian gently put her down on the sofa, but she moaned in pain at the movement and clutched tightly to the front of his shirt.

"It hurts... don't touch me," she protested, a deep crease forming between her brows.

Sebastian chuckled softly, his gaze dropping to her slender, bruised fingers clutching the front of his shirt. How shameless. She was the one holding onto him so tightly, yet telling him not to touch her.

She always held him this tight whenever he carried her. Only now, her blood was smeared across the front of his shirt, snapping him out of his amusement and the thought of how cute he found her.

"Well, to save you, I will have to touch you, *niñita*. Not only touch you, I will have to take off your suit," he told her as he reached out and slowly began to pry her fingers from his shirt.

But as expected, she was gripping it so tightly that he would have to hurt her to free himself. Why did she always hold onto his shirt whenever he carried her? She clung to him like she was afraid of something, like letting go would cause her to fall into something unseen.

Unknown to Sebastian, she was indeed afraid of something, something that lived deep inside her, something that lured her toward a vast, dark emptiness that came with sleep. That was why she held onto him so desperately, because it felt like holding onto a light she didn't even know she needed in her life.

Though Sebastian was far from being a light to anyone's darkness, especially hers, Viola's subconscious didn't know that, nor did it agree with it. That was why, whenever she slipped into sleep or unconsciousness, his presence unknowingly balanced something inside her, something even she wasn't aware of.

With a sigh, he instead swiftly ripped his shirt open at the front, letting her keep her hold on the torn fabric.

It seemed it would become a habit for him to destroy his shirts whenever she grabbed onto them. The little woman had a grip of steel.

She didn't reply to his words about taking off her clothes, and Sebastian belatedly realized her mind must be processing things slowly now, the pain and toxin likely catching up to her.

Her face was growing redder, her breathing more ragged. Though he could call for an antidote to be brought, it would raise questions about why he cared enough to ask for one for her. And if the healers came and took her to where Laila was, there was no doubt the elders would use their connections to ensure she was given more poison than antidote. She had just shown everyone she was capable of being their Luna.

Her capabilities would be a threat to many, especially the elders, who believed that because they had been in power two decades ago and had ruled the Silver Pack when his parents first died, when he was only ten years old and held as a prisoner by Moonwillow, they could do almost whatever they believed was good for the pack, even if it meant eliminating a wolfless and blaming it on the toxin of the dark howlers.

That left him with only one option to save her, even though he had a feeling she wasn't going to like it.

"Niñita?" he called as he slipped an arm beneath her to lift her torso and reach for the zipper of her suit.

She tried to swat his hand away, even though her eyes remained tightly shut.

"Don't call me... that. Don't touch me... I don't like you..." she grumbled, her face scrunching up in pain, her chapped lips pouting in displeasure.

"You are one stubborn woman, cariño. You are on the verge of falling unconscious, and you are still fighting me. Stop that," he chided when she blindly struck at his face with her good hand and tried to move away from his touch. Did she hate him so much that she wouldn't allow him to touch her even when she might die and he could save her?

Sebastian felt a bitter taste rise in his throat at that thought, followed by a string-like tugging pain in his heart. Your mate wasn't supposed to hate you like this, even if things were strained, and yet here she was. Still, he understood then that this was his fault. He had tormented her for believing she was too weak for him.

Sebastian found the zipper of her suit and pulled it all the way down to her waist. Her struggle had grown weak, and she was now leaning her head against his chest, her warm breaths fanning against his bare skin where he had ripped his shirt, stirring goosebumps along his body.

"Don't touch me..." she muttered again as he began to pull the suit from her shoulders and then slowly eased her arms from the sleeves. She strained one arm, refusing to let him remove her clothes, but she was too weak to keep fighting and eventually let him do it.

She moaned in agony when he began to free the injured arm, and Sebastian immediately paused. He leaned down and whispered into her ear, "Sorry. I will make the pain stop very soon. Shh," he coaxed, pressing his lips gently to her damp temple, knowing she was in unbearable pain.

He felt her tears soak into his chest, and his jaw tightened as he whispered soft, soothing words into her ear, holding her carefully while her body trembled against his.

Chapter 80: End of competition/ possessive Alpha_Part 2

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He pulled the suit away from her chest after removing the sleeves, and when he tugged it free from her bleeding wound, she cried out hoarsely. Her barely conscious mouth brushed against his skin as he worked the cloth down, and the heat of her faint, uneven breath against his exposed nipple made his muscles coil like live wire.

It aroused him instinctively, a sharp, unexpected surge of heat, and he muttered a curse under his breath, trying to focus on the task, but with her mouth and warm breath against his skin, it was nearly impossible.

"You are torturing me, love. I know it hurts, but bear with it a little longer. Hey, don't cry, shh," he whispered, kissing her earlobe when she began to sob, her body trembling against him. Sebastian wished there was another way to do this without causing her more pain, but this was the only way without an antidote.

He slowly moved back after pulling the suit down to her hips, leaving her torso bare except for her black bra, which was also ripped at the side, the claw marks cutting deep into her skin and leaving the wound raw and dangerously inflamed.

Though Sebastian wasn't supposed to get distracted or let his gaze wander off, his eyes betrayed him, drinking in how she filled the black bra, the two mounds pressing perfectly against the fabric and swelling out around it.

A sharp, scorching heat pooled low in his trousers, sudden and impossible to ignore.

'She's hot, but keep your perverted thoughts in check, man, and quickly take out the poison and heal her,' Muffin warned as Sebastian found himself getting distracted.

Sebastian reached his hands behind her and unclasped her bra, because the wound reached the side of her left breast. He swiftly removed the piece of clothing, and his breath caught in his throat as she was now bare before him.

He couldn't tear his eyes away from that part of her body as he gently tabbed at the bleeding with her bra. Two perfect, full, pointed mounds, smeared with blood, tiny goosebumps scattered across her skin, and pink buds arched as if begging to be touched.

Involuntarily, his throat went dry, and a tight knot of desire clenched his stomach.

However, he couldn't dare admire her perfection with her breathing growing faint and her awareness slipping. He dropped the bra and put his arm around her, then leaned down toward the wound, opening his mouth to lick and suck before spitting out the toxin to the side.

Viola, who was slipping toward unconsciousness and was barely aware of herself or what was happening, still knew the annoying Alpha she disliked was with her and was touching her.

She wanted to fight him, to stop him, but her body no longer had the strength. She was aware of him, aware that he was removing her clothes and that it was inappropriate of him to do, yet she couldn't do anything to resist as her body grew increasingly paralyzed on the sofa.

From being completely numb because of the poison, she was suddenly slammed with sensation, not just any sensation, but the feeling of someone's mouth sucking at her skin. She felt the warmth of his mouth, the faint graze of his teeth, then the swipe of his wet, warm tongue moving fluidly across her skin and around her... breast.

Viola forced her heavy lids open, and her eyes landed on his silver head bent over her, his mouth moving around her chest like a hungry animal savoring the last bite of a delicious meal. A consuming, embarrassing heat slammed into her, and she forced her hands to move to push him away, but she lacked the strength to push him away completely. His arms tightened around her, and his voice came muffled against her skin as he said,

"Let me finish. I am trying to suck out the poison and heal you with my saliva. Stop pushing at me, amor, unless you want me to let it kill you."

Viola stopped pushing immediately. She wasn't ready to die without fulfilling her purpose, and for some reason, his shameless, embarrassing way of healing her was easing the unbearable,

paralyzing pain in her left breast and chest. Her muscles loosened, only to tense again when she felt the heat of his mouth and tongue.

Heat rushed up her neck and cheeks, and she suddenly felt like she couldn't breathe from what he was doing. Viola fought the urge to cover her exposed torso and half-nakedness, but even if she wanted to, her body was too weak to move.

The wound was just at the left side of her breast, but she felt his tongue stray from that direction to the tip of her nipple, which had hardened like stone. Against her will and against all reason, heat settled low in her belly, and she bit back a sudden moan that rose to her throat. It wasn't a sound of pain, but of pleasure, which only deepened her embarrassment and awareness of him and what he was doing to her.

What was he doing? she thought weakly, forcing her other hand up to cover her right breast. This was the first time any man had ever touched, or licked, her like this. She knew that mates could heal each other with saliva, that a male could lick and stroke away every pain and injury of his female, and she had seen it done many times before in Moonwillow, but always when both were in their wolf forms, never like this, in their human form.

It had never happened to her. Not even Evan had ever come close, not even once, to touching her so intimately or stroke her with his tongue for any reason at all.

Even though it was meant for healing, it felt too intimate and completely wrong, so wrong that she pressed her teeth into her bottom lip to suppress every treacherous sound threatening to escape.

The sensuous way his tongue moved across her skin felt forbidden, as if it shouldn't be happening at all, yet each stroke sent waves of heat through her body. The unbearable pain she had felt just minutes ago was replaced with a sinful warmth and a dangerous urge to press her aching nipple back into his mouth. The thought alone struck her with both embarrassment and shame.

Was she really supposed to feel pleasure, and the urge to draw him closer, when she didn't even like the man? And why, for the love of everything, was he helping her again? He was an expert at ignoring and rejecting his mates, so why was it that he kept helping her after he had heartlessly rejected her at her time of need?

What was wrong with this man?

The more he licked and sucked, the more the poison drained from her system, bringing back clarity and awareness. Her toes curled inside her shoes when she felt his arm tighten around her waist and heard the faint suckling sounds where his mouth met her skin.

A soft moan escaped her lips as his teeth grazed her skin again, and she instinctively drew back from his mouth.

It took everything Sebastian had not to groan in pleasure or rise up, undo his pants, and take what his body demanded. He hadn't wanted any other woman since she walked into his life and disrupted his senses with her delicious, addictive daisy scent, leaving no one else appealing to him.

His cock was so hard it strained painfully against his trousers, and he knew he needed to stop licking her wounds before he lost control. The life threatening danger was gone, he had already

drawn out the poison, and now he was only sucking for pleasure. Only that pleasure was not so pleasurable when he was only tormenting himself with what he couldn't have. That realization snapped him back.

It took all his willpower to pull his head away. When he did, he was breathing hard, like a man who had run a race and lost, not victorious, but burning with unfulfilled hunger. And with the way she was looking at him now, cheeks flushed, eyes hooded and wary, Sebastian had to rein in every primal instinct screaming at him to claim his mate.