

Fated To Not Just One, But Three #Chapter 471: Cheating Death - Read Fated To Not Just One, But Three Chapter 471: Cheating Death

Chapter 471: Cheating Death

Olivia's POV

Today was day five, and honestly, I hadn't seen much change in Lennox since the last time he called my name. But I was still hopeful. We had two more days left, two more chances to bring him back.

The witch had warned me that the fifth night was always the hardest, the night when the spirit began to struggle between staying and returning. So I sat by Lennox's bedside, not wanting to leave his side.

His face looked peaceful, too peaceful. It scared me.

"Please, Lennox," I whispered, brushing my fingers across his cheek. "Don't give up on me now."

The witch began her chants, the same low ancient words that made the air tremble. I closed my eyes, holding his hand tightly, and repeated the same prayer I'd whispered every night: "Find your way back to me."

The room felt warmer at first, then suddenly cold. A strange pull began in my chest, like something inside me was being tugged forward, drawn into a place that wasn't here.

Before I could speak, everything went dark.

When I opened my eyes, I wasn't in the room anymore. I was standing in a forest, but it wasn't real. The air shined like smoke, and the trees looked like shadows of themselves. Everything felt heavy, quiet, lifeless.

"Lennox?" I called out. My voice echoed far into the mist.

Then I saw him.

He was walking ahead of me, barefoot, shirtless, his figure glowing faintly in the dark. But his eyes... they were empty, like he didn't see me. He kept moving forward, deeper into the mist, toward a strange light in the distance.

"Lennox!" I ran after him, my feet sinking into the cold ground. "Please stop! It's me, Olivia!"

He didn't stop. It was like he couldn't hear me.

I pushed harder, my chest burning as I tried to reach him. But no matter how close I got, he stayed the same distance away. It was like the world itself was keeping us apart.

Then, suddenly, a shadow moved behind him—tall, dark, formless. It reached for him, its hand curling around his shoulder.

"NO!" I screamed, sprinting forward. I tried to grab him, but my hand went right through him like mist.

He turned then, slowly, and for a second, I saw his eyes again—alive, full of confusion. "Olivia?" he whispered.

Before I could answer, the shadow pulled him back, and everything around me shattered like glass.

I gasped awake in the real world, my whole body shaking, sweat covering my skin. The witch was still chanting beside me, but she stopped when she saw my face.

"What did you see?" she asked softly.

I could barely breathe. "He's fighting," I whispered. "But something's holding him there. Something dark."

The witch nodded slowly, her eyes grim. "That is the spirit of death, Olivia. We are cheating death itself, and if Lennox comes back, it comes with a price."

My heart pounded. I stared at Lennox's still face. What price? What could Death possibly want in return?

Before I could ask, the door burst open.

Levi and Louis rushed in, their eyes wide. "Olivia!" Levi called, his voice rough with panic. "What happened? We felt something—your energy—it vanished for a moment."

I turned to them, still breathing hard. "I-I saw him," I stammered. "I was there, where he is. But there was something with him—something dark trying to take him away."

Louis's expression darkened. "You went there? You entered his spirit realm?"

"I didn't mean to," I said quietly. "It just pulled me in."

Levi ran a hand through his hair, his jaw tight. "This has to stop, Olivia. You're getting weaker every day. Look at you—you're pale, your pulse is fading."

"I'm fine," I snapped. "I can handle this."

"No, you can't!" he barked, taking a step closer. His eyes were full of fear, not anger. "You think we don't see it? Every drop of blood you give him takes a piece of you! If you keep going, you might not make it to day seven!"

Louis nodded grimly. "He's right. The spell is strong, but it's feeding off your life force. If the balance breaks, you'll die before he wakes."

I shook my head stubbornly. "I don't care what it takes. I already lost him once—I'm not losing him again."

Levi's hands clenched into fists. "Olivia, listen to yourself! You're willing to trade your life for his? What will happen to us—what will happen to me—if you die?"

His voice cracked on the last word, and then I noticed the pure fear in his eyes.

"I can't watch you kill yourself for him," he whispered. "I've already lost one brother, Olivia. Don't make me lose you too."

For a moment, none of us spoke. The room was so quiet, only Lennox's weak heartbeat and my trembling breath filled the space.

I looked at Levi, my chest tightening. "I don't want to die," I said softly. "But if saving him costs me, then that's a price I'll pay."

Levi closed his eyes and turned away, his shoulders shaking. Louis reached for his arm, but he pulled back, storming out of the room without another word.

The silence after Levi left was deafening. I sat there frozen, still staring at the door he'd just slammed shut.

My chest ached. The air felt heavy, thick with guilt and confusion.

Louis sighed softly beside me. His expression was calm at first, but I saw the frustration hiding underneath.

He looked at Lennox for a long moment before turning to me. "You know," he said quietly, "you are mated to three, Olivia. Three, not one."

I blinked, not understanding at first.

His gaze hardened slightly. "You keep saying you'll give your life for Lennox. That's love, I get it. But what about us? What about me? What about Levi?"

His voice cracked on that last word, and he took a deep breath, his jaw tightening. "You talk like his life is worth more than ours. But we're all bound together, the same bond, the same pain. If he dies, we lose a brother. If you die, we lose everything."

I swallowed hard, the weight of his words pressing down on me.

He looked down for a moment, then shook his head. "Sometimes, I wonder if you even see us anymore."

Before I could respond, he turned and walked out of the room, his footsteps echoing down the hallway until I couldn't hear them anymore.

And just like that, I was alone again. Alone with Lennox's still body and the quiet hum of the candles and the sorcerer.

I looked down at him, my hands trembling as I wiped away a tear. Maybe Louis was right. Maybe I was blinded by my desperation to bring Lennox back. But how could I stop now? How could I give up when I was this close?

I leaned forward, resting my forehead against Lennox's chest. His heartbeat was weak but steady. That tiny rhythm was my only hope. My hope that he will come back to us.

I stayed like that for a long while, just listening, until the sound of footsteps pulled me out of my thoughts.

"Olivia?"

It was my mother.

I quickly wiped my tears and turned to face her. "Mother," I whispered. "What are you doing here?"

She stepped closer, her face soft with concern. "I heard the shouting. Are you alright?"

I forced a small smile, but it didn't reach my eyes. "I'm fine."

She didn't believe me—I could see it. She came closer and sat on the chair opposite me, her eyes moving to Lennox. "You haven't eaten," she said gently. "You haven't even slept."

I looked down at my hands. "I can't sleep. Not when he's like this."

There was silence between us for a moment. Then she spoke again, her voice soft but firm. "Olivia... can I ask you something?"

I nodded weakly.

"Do you ever stop to think that maybe you're not meant to carry all this alone?"

Her question caught me off guard. "What do you mean?"

She gave me a small, sad smile. "You're mated to three Alphas, my dear. Three. But you've been living as if your heart belongs to only one."

Her words stung. "That's not true," I said quickly.

"Isn't it?" she asked softly. "You're ready to die for Lennox. But you forget—Levi and Louis are also a part of you. Their pain is your pain. Their love is yours too. You don't have to choose one over the other."

Tears filled my eyes again, blurring her face. "I just don't know how to stop," I whispered. "I can't stand seeing him like this. Every time I close my eyes, I see his face—the way he smiled, the way he looked at me—and I can't let him go."

She reached out and took my hand, her grip warm and gentle. "Love doesn't mean destroying yourself, Olivia," she said. "It means fighting, but also knowing when to rest. Lennox will come back if it's meant to be. But if you break before he does, what will he return to?"

I bit my lip, trying to hold back the tears that threatened to fall again. "You sound like Levi," I said quietly.

She smiled faintly. "Then maybe you should listen to him."

Chapter 472: Missing her

Frederick's POV

My hands gripped the steering wheel tighter than necessary, and my jaw clenched.

My phone rang again.

I pressed the button on the dashboard. "Tell me you have good news," I said sharply.

The voice on the other end hesitated. "I'm sorry, sir, but we still haven't found the staff. We searched the southern borders and near the old ruins, but there's no trace."

My patience snapped. "Then search again!" I growled. "Every inch of that land. I don't care how long it takes. I want her found!"

"Yes, sir," came the hurried reply before the line went dead.

I exhaled heavily, dragging a hand over my face. I need to find that lady who lied about me sending her to kill Selene's mom. Once I get her, I will be able to prove to Selene that I am innocent, and maybe she could agree to be with me.

I sighed and took a deep breath. No matter how hard I tried, I couldn't stop thinking about her.

It had been just three days since the last time I saw her, and these past three days have been hell for me. It felt like a part of me was missing. In a short time, I had gotten so used to her presence in my mansion that now her absence has left a huge void in my life.

I knew I shouldn't go to her. She didn't want to see me.

And yet, the thought of her made it impossible to stay away.

Maybe I was a fool.

Maybe I was addicted to the pain she brought with her name.

But I turned the wheel anyway.

Toward the Full Moon Pack.

Because no matter how much she pushed me away, I couldn't stay away from her.

Reaching the Full Moon Pack, the guards at the gate immediately straightened when they saw my car.

They let me through without a word.

I parked in front of the mansion and stepped out, taking in the silence that hung in the air.

The place felt different—heavy, quiet—like the whole house was mourning.

And I understood why.

A guard approached quickly, bowing slightly. "Greetings, Alpha Frederick. Do the Alphas know you're here?"

I shook my head. "I'm not here for the Alphas," I said simply, moving my eyes around. "I'm here for Selene. Where is she?"

The guard hesitated. His eyes darted toward the main building, then back to me. "Lady Selene doesn't want to see anyone."

My jaw tightened. "That's not what I asked. I said, Where is she?"

He swallowed nervously. "In her room, sir. But—"

I didn't wait for him to finish. I was already walking.

I didn't even know what I was going to say when I saw her.

All I knew was that I wanted to see her.

I'd gotten used to her presence in my mansion—her voice, her stubborn silence, the way she'd glance at me when she thought I wasn't looking.

And now, without her, the place felt cold and lifeless.

I ran a hand through my hair, letting out a long breath.

If only she would just listen, just give me a chance to explain that I never sent that woman to harm her mother.

That woman—the liar, the one who started all this—was still out there somewhere.

And until I found her, I couldn't prove my innocence.

Couldn't make Selene believe me.

Still, I couldn't wait any longer.

I needed to see her.

Even if she slammed the door in my face again.

I reached the living room and met with Alpha Levi, who was speaking to a guard. The moment he saw me, a big frown etched on his face, but I didn't care. I wasn't here for him.

He sent the guard away and glared at me. "What are you doing here, Frederick?" He sounded so pissed to see me.

I kept my composure. "I'm here for Selene."

He raised a brow at me. "Selene has made it clear that she doesn't want to see you. Please leave."

My frown deepened. "If she doesn't want to see me, she can tell me herself."

Levi scoffed in annoyance and took a step closer to me.

"What the hell is your problem, Frederick?" he snapped. "You come here again, uninvited, acting like you have some right to this house. What do you even want? You don't want Olivia anymore—is that it? You can't have her, so now you want Selene?"

His words hit me like a blow, but I didn't respond right away.

Maybe because deep down, I didn't have a clean answer to give him.

I clenched my jaw, forcing myself to keep calm. "This isn't about Olivia," I said quietly. "I'm not here for her, Levi. I'm here for Selene."

He scoffed and crossed his arms. "Get out."

"I'm not here to cause trouble," I said, my tone steady but pleading. "I just need to see her. Once. That's all."

Levi laughed dryly. "You don't know when to quit, do you? You're only going to make things worse."

I took a slow step forward, lowering my voice. "Please, Alpha Levi. I know this is your home, and I have no right to ask. But I'm begging you. Let me see her. I need to talk to her."

Levi stared at me for a long moment, his expression unreadable. I could see the irritation still there, but something else flickered behind it—maybe pity, maybe curiosity.

He finally exhaled and looked away. "You've got thirty minutes," he muttered. "After that, I don't want to see your face anywhere near this house. Understood?"

Relief rushed through me, though I kept my composure. "Understood," I said quietly.

Levi brushed past me, his shoulder bumping mine as he went. "You're a fool, Frederick," he said under his breath before walking off down the hall.

Maybe I was.

But love makes fools of us all.

I drew in a deep breath, steadying myself before turning toward the stairs. Thirty minutes. That's all I had.

And somehow, I had to make her listen.

As I neared her room, I hesitated for a moment outside the door, my heart hammering. I could smell her—her scent, soft and familiar, flooding my senses like a drug I'd been starving for.

But then I heard it.

A soft sound at first—barely there. A muffled whimper, followed by a low moan.

I froze.

My brows furrowed as I leaned closer to the door. Another sound came, clearer this time. A man's low groan.

My blood ran cold.

No.

It couldn't be.

Without thinking, I grabbed the handle and pushed the door open.

The sight that met my eyes felt like a blade twisting deep into my chest.

Chapter 473: Act

Selene's POV

I sat at the edge of my bed, trying to focus on what my friend Daniel was saying, but my thoughts kept drifting. Everything had been chaos these past few days: Olivia's ritual, Lennox's condition, the constant tension in the air.

Daniel placed a comforting hand on my shoulder. "You're thinking about him again, aren't you?"

I sighed, not bothering to deny it. "He is my mate, but I have to hate him, Daniel."

Daniel gave a half-smile. "You sure about that? Because your voice just softened when you said his name."

I frowned at him, but before I could reply, a familiar, faint scent drifted through the air—musky, strong, unforgettable.

Frederick.

My heart skipped painfully. I turned sharply toward the door, pulse racing. I didn't even need to check. My wolf stirred uneasily inside me. He's here.

Daniel followed my gaze. "What's wrong?"

"He's here," I whispered. "Frederick."

Daniel straightened, already sensing the tension in my voice. "Do you want me to leave?"

I hesitated, then an idea formed, wild and stupid but necessary.

"No," I said quickly. "I need your help."

His brow furrowed. "Help? With what?"

I stood up and took a shaky breath. "Pretend... pretend we're together. That you're with me."

"What?" Daniel blinked. "You mean—"

"Yes," I cut him off. "If he thinks I've moved on, maybe he'll stop coming around. Maybe he'll finally let me go."

Daniel hesitated. "Selene, that's cruel."

I swallowed hard. "It's the only way."

He sighed. "Alright. What do you want me to do?"

I looked toward the door again. The footsteps were closer now. "Just... play along," I whispered.

Before I could lose my nerve, I leaned in and kissed him.

It was awkward, rushed, but the moment our lips touched, the door burst open.

And there he was.

Frederick stood frozen in the doorway, his expression one I'd never forget—shock, pain, disbelief, and rage all tangled together.

I felt my chest tighten painfully, my wolf growling in guilt and confusion. But I didn't pull away.

I couldn't.

So I kissed Daniel again, even though every part of me screamed against it—my heart, my body, my wolf.

Because I had to make him believe.

Suddenly, Frederick's hand gripped my arm, yanking me away from Daniel so fast I barely had time to breathe.

"What the hell are you doing?" I shouted, pushing at his chest, trying to free myself.

His voice came out low and sharp. "What am I doing? The better question is, who the hell is he?"

I met his glare head-on, even though my heart was pounding. "This is Daniel," I said, forcing my voice to stay steady. "My boyfriend. I told you I have a boyfriend."

For a moment, the room was silent. Frederick just stared at me, his chest rising and falling heavily. Then a bitter laugh escaped him, rough and broken. "Your boyfriend," he repeated slowly. "A boyfriend you couldn't give your virginity to."

His words stung, but I lifted my chin. "You have no right to question me, Frederick. What we had was a mistake."

"It wasn't a mistake for me!" he roared, slamming his hand against the wall beside me. The sound made me flinch, though I refused to look away.

"Please," I whispered, my voice trembling despite my defiance. "Just leave."

He didn't move. Instead, he turned to Daniel, his eyes cold. "Get out."

Daniel froze, glancing at me for guidance. "Maybe I should—"

"No," I said quickly, stepping forward. "You don't have to—"

But Daniel sighed. "It's fine, Selene. I'll step outside." He gave me a look—part worry, part warning—before walking out and quietly closing the door behind him.

The second the door clicked, Frederick turned back to me.

"Frederick—"

I didn't get to finish.

He was already in front of me, pressing me against the wall. My breath caught in my throat. His body towered over mine, his eyes burning like wildfire.

"Let me go," I said, pushing against his chest, but his grip didn't loosen.

He wasn't hurting me, but his presence was overwhelming, consuming.

His voice dropped low. "You think you can replace me that easily? You think he can touch what's mine?"

My heart skipped. "Yours?" I spat back, anger and fear twisting together inside me. "I was never yours. What happened between us was an act for me."

His eyes darkened further. "It wasn't for me, Selene!"

"I don't care," I shot back, my voice breaking. "I acted as if I liked you because I wanted to get closer so I could kill you." I spat on his face.

He stopped. His breathing slowed, his expression shifting from anger to pain.

My wolf stirred painfully inside me, whimpering, caught between anger and longing.

I hated this.

I hated that my body still remembered him—the warmth of his touch, the way his voice used to soften when he said my name.

He leaned closer, his breath brushing against my cheek. "I love you, Selene. Tell me you don't," he murmured. "Look me in the eyes and tell me you don't still love me."

I swallowed hard, my voice trapped somewhere between my heart and my throat.

And I couldn't say it.

Not because I didn't want to, but because the truth was already written in the way my heart raced beneath his touch.

Frederick's hand was still braced against the wall beside my head, his body close enough that I could feel the heat radiating off him. My pulse pounded in my ears.

"Say it," he whispered, his voice low and rough. "Tell me you don't love me."

I wanted to. Moon Goddess, I wanted to scream it.

But the words wouldn't come.

Instead, my breath came out shaky, and when I finally met his eyes, everything in me trembled. There was no anger left in them—only pain, longing, and that familiar pull that had always drawn me to him, no matter how much I tried to fight it.

His thumb brushed against my cheek. I didn't move. Couldn't.

"Frederick..." I breathed, but it came out as a plea instead of a warning.

He leaned closer, his breath warm against my lips. "Tell me to stop," he murmured.

I didn't.

And then his mouth was on mine.

The kiss was fierce, desperate, as if he'd been holding it back for years. My hands pushed at his chest at first, weakly, but the moment his lips softened, everything inside me melted.

My fingers gripped his shirt, pulling him closer instead of pushing him away. He deepened the kiss, one hand sliding around my waist, the other cupping the back of my neck.

Every thought, every reason to resist, vanished.

All I could feel was him.

Chapter 474: Reject Him

Selene's POV

We both moaned in between the kiss, but then my senses snapped back into me, and I withdrew, pushing him away and landing a slap on his face. The slap was so hard that it echoed in the room.

Breathing heavily, I took a few steps away from him while I watched him close his eyes for a moment, as if composing himself, before he slowly opened them and fixed them on me. I swallowed hard but refused to let him see my fear or unease. I expected him to yell or get angry, but he didn't. Rather, he sucked in a deep breath and turned to leave. I was dumbfounded as I watched him go for the door, but on reaching it, he paused. He didn't turn, but he spoke.

"I don't want to see you with that little boyfriend of yours, Selene," he said softly. "If you want him alive, I suggest you end whatever's between you. I don't share—and you should know that by now."

His tone was calm, almost gentle, but the threat underneath it sent chills racing through me. Without another glance, he opened the door, stepped out, and closed it quietly behind him.

The moment he was gone, I collapsed onto the bed, burying my face in my hands.

Why did I do that?

I pressed my hands against my face, trying to stop the flood of emotions crashing through me. Anger, confusion, and guilt—they all tangled inside me until I couldn't tell which hurt more. I could still feel his warmth, his scent clinging to my skin like a memory I couldn't wash away.

"Moon Goddess..." I whispered shakily. "What's happening to me?"

My wolf stirred restlessly inside. You shouldn't have pushed him away, she murmured, her voice soft but accusing. He was holding back. You felt it too.

I shook my head. "No... I have to hate him."

But even as I said it, my voice broke. Deep down, I knew it wasn't that simple. Frederick wasn't just any man—he was my mate, the one person my soul refused to let go of no matter how hard I tried.

My hands dropped slowly from my face, and I stared at the closed door. A tear slipped down my cheek before I could stop it. I hated him for making me feel weak... but I hated myself even more for still wanting him.

A soft knock at the door pulled me from my thoughts.

"Selene?" Daniel's voice came through, gentle and worried. "Are you okay? I heard something."

I swallowed hard, wiping my face quickly. "I'm fine," I lied, forcing my voice steady.

But as I looked at my reflection in the mirror—my flushed cheeks, trembling lips, and eyes filled with tears—I knew fine was the last thing I was.

Daniel entered, shutting the door behind him with care. He sat beside me on the bed, saying nothing for a while. The silence between us was thick, almost suffocating. Finally, he spoke.

"Will you tell him the truth?" Daniel suddenly asked, and I already knew what he was asking about. He was talking about the mate bond—about me telling Frederick that we are mates.

"I can't... If I do... he will never let go of me," I whispered.

Daniel nodded as if understanding my reason, but then he spoke. "But if you really want to stop being attracted to him, you have to undergo a rejection with him. And how can you do that if you don't tell him you both are mated?"

I swallowed hard. Daniel had a point. I could only be free from this chaotic feeling if I severed my bond with Frederick. But how could I do that if I didn't tell him we were

mates? I knew telling him would be a bad idea because the Frederick I knew would never let go of me once he found out. He would never agree to a rejection.

Daniel sighed, rubbing the back of his neck. "Then what's your plan, Selene? You can't keep running from this. You're hurting yourself."

His words hit me harder than I wanted to admit. I bit my lip and tried to look away, but his hand gently caught my chin, forcing me to meet his eyes. They were full of genuine concern for me.

"Look at you," he said quietly. "You're trembling just thinking about him. You say you hate him, but your whole body reacts when his name comes up. That's not hate, Selene. That's the bond pulling you."

Tears filled my eyes again. "Then how do I stop it, Daniel? How do I stop feeling this way about a man who ruined my life?"

"You reject him," he said simply. "It's the only way to break it."

I shook my head, my voice barely a whisper. "You don't know him like I do. Frederick won't accept a rejection."

Daniel frowned, concern etching deeper into his face. "Then you have to be smart about it. Find a way he won't see coming."

His words planted a seed of fear and determination in me at the same time. Maybe he was right. Maybe I needed to end this bond before it destroyed me completely. But how could I reject someone who had already taken so much control over my heart?

I brushed away the tear that escaped and whispered, more to myself than to Daniel, "He'll never let me go."

Daniel placed a gentle hand on my shoulder. "Or you don't want to let go of him."

I opened my mouth to say something—anything—but the words caught in my throat. Daniel's last words echoed in my mind like a cruel truth I wasn't ready to face. Maybe I don't want to let go of him...

Before I could reply, a loud knock shattered the tense silence.

"Selene!"

It was Louis's voice—rushed, panicked.

Daniel and I exchanged a quick, startled glance before I stood up and hurried to the door. The moment I opened it, Louis stumbled in, breathing hard, his eyes wide with worry.

"Louis?" I asked, my heart jumping. "What happened?"

He didn't answer right away. His chest rose and fell rapidly as he tried to catch his breath. Then he looked at me, his expression breaking my heart.

"Selene..." he said, his voice trembling. "Please—we need your help. It's Olivia."

Chapter 475: The News

Olivia's POV

I was halfway through my breakfast when the spoon slipped from my hand. A strange dizziness washed over me, making the whole room tilt. My vision blurred, and a sharp pain pulsed behind my eyes.

"Olivia?" Levi's voice sounded distant at first, then closer, more urgent. I tried to speak, but the words wouldn't form.

"Hey, easy," he murmured, catching me just before I collapsed. His strong arms wrapped around me, steadying me as my body went limp. "Louis! Get Selene—now!"

I heard hurried footsteps and the sound of a chair scraping the floor before everything faded to black for a moment.

When I opened my eyes again, I was lying in my room, my head resting on soft pillows. Levi sat beside me, worry clouding his face, while Louis paced near the window, running a hand through his hair.

Selene rushed in, eyes full of alarm and worry. "What happened?!" she demanded, kneeling beside me. "What's wrong with her?"

Louis exhaled shakily. "She just... fainted. One moment she was fine, the next she went pale and dropped her spoon. Levi carried her up here."

Selene frowned, gently touching my forehead. "Her temperature's normal. Has she been eating properly? Sleeping?"

Levi's jaw tightened. "She's been healing Lennox every day. She barely rests. Maybe it's taking too much out of her."

Selene's gaze snapped toward him. "You let her keep doing that without checking her strength? Her energy could be draining faster than she realizes."

"I'm fine," I murmured weakly, trying to sit up, but Levi pressed me gently back down.

"No, you're not," he said firmly. "You've been dizzy for days, Olivia. You just keep hiding it."

Selene sighed and stood. "We need a healer. Now."

Louis didn't hesitate—he dashed out of the room and returned moments later with the pack healer. She moved to my side and fixed her inquisitive eyes on me.

"What seems to be the problem?" she asked softly.

"She fainted suddenly," Selene explained quickly. "And she's been performing a draining ritual every morning for several days."

The healer hummed thoughtfully, her hands glowing faintly as she examined me. "She's not sick," she murmured after a moment. Then she looked at me closely. "Child, when last did you see your monthly flow?"

The question caught me off guard. I frowned, trying to recall. "I... I'm not sure," I admitted slowly. "So much has been happening lately, I didn't really pay attention."

Selene and Levi exchanged confused looks.

The healer's eyes softened as she rested her palm lightly over my stomach. A faint golden glow flickered between us, and she smiled.

"Congratulations, dear," she said gently. "You're not ill... you're pregnant."

The room went completely silent.

My breath hitched, my heart thundering in my chest. Levi froze beside me, his eyes wide. Selene's mouth fell open slightly, and even Louis stopped pacing.

Pregnant.

The word echoed in my head, heavy and unreal. I didn't know whether to cry, scream, or laugh. For a moment, I just sat there—frozen, staring at the healer like she'd spoken in another language.

Pregnant.

The word still felt too big, too heavy. I blinked rapidly, trying to make sense of it, but everything around me started to fade—the walls, the people—until I was left alone with the echo of that one truth.

"It's true..."

The soft, familiar voice of my wolf whispered inside me, breaking the silence in my mind. "You're carrying life, Olivia."

My heart stuttered. "Are you sure?" I asked weakly, my voice trembling even in thought.

She let out a low, happy hum. "I can feel it. The heartbeat is faint but strong."

My lips parted slightly as tears filled my eyes. Theirs.

Before I could respond, I felt arms wrap around me—strong, warm, and trembling slightly. Levi pulled me close, burying his face in my shoulder, while Louis crouched on my other side, gripping my hand tightly.

"You're pregnant," Levi whispered, almost in disbelief. Then he smiled—that rare, boyish smile that reached his eyes. "Moon Goddess, Olivia... we're going to be parents."

Louis chuckled softly through the tears that slipped down his cheeks. "I knew it. I sensed it."

Their joy hit me harder than I expected. I just stared at them, my voice soft, shaky. "You're... happy?"

Levi pulled back slightly, brushing my hair away from my face. "Of course, we are. You're carrying our child. That's everything we could ever hope for."

Something inside me cracked—not from pain, but relief. My throat tightened, and before I knew it, I was smiling too, even as tears ran down my cheeks.

But then, reality crept back in. My joy faltered as I turned to the healer, my stomach twisting uneasily. "How far along am I?" I asked carefully.

The healer smiled knowingly and placed her hand gently over my stomach again. A soft golden light glowed beneath her palm. "Just one month and a week, my dear."

My mind started racing. One month and a week.

That was around the same time I had...

I swallowed hard as my thoughts spiraled. Luckily, I'd been with each of them separately, but... within the same range of time.

I exhaled shakily, my heart pounding. So it could be any of them... or all of them.

The healer's gaze softened when she noticed my silence. "You're wondering who the father is," she said gently.

I looked away, embarrassed. "I just... I don't know how to explain this."

Levi reached out, lifting my chin until my eyes met his. His expression was relaxed, full of warmth and certainty. "You don't need to," he said quietly. "That child is ours—all three of us. It doesn't matter who it belongs to by blood. You're our mate, and that baby is ours."

Louis nodded firmly beside him. "The pup is ours."

A shaky breath left my lips, relief washing through me like a tide. For the first time in weeks, my heart felt light again.

But before the peace could settle, the healer cleared her throat softly. Her eyes dimmed with concern. "There's something else, child."

The room fell silent once more.

I looked at her nervously. "What is it?"

She hesitated before speaking. "Now that you're with child, you can't continue the healing ritual... or the blood exchange with Alpha Lennox. It will harm both you and the baby. The bond-sharing must end immediately."

Her words struck like lightning.

Levi and Louis froze beside me, the color draining from their faces.

The air in the room turned heavy again, and I felt my chest tighten painfully as the truth sank in.

If I stopped the ritual... Lennox might never wake up. And we were on day five.

And if I continued it... I could lose the life growing inside me.

Chapter 476: The Risk

Olivia's POV

For a moment, a heavy and suffocating silence filled the room. Everyone stood frozen, trying to process what the healer had just said. Me? I couldn't even breathe.

My hands instinctively went to my belly. There was life inside me. Tiny, fragile, pure. But to save that life, I'd have to stop the ritual—the same ritual keeping Lennox alive.

"No..." I whispered, shaking my head slowly. "I can't stop. We're too close. It's only two days left."

The healer's expression turned serious. "Child, listen to me carefully. If you continue this blood ritual, you're endangering not just your life, but your pup's. The spell drains your energy—and that energy is shared with the little one inside you."

"I don't care!" I snapped, tears burning my eyes. "I've come this far. I can't give up on Lennox now. He's almost there, I can feel it!"

Levi moved closer, his voice trembling but firm. "Olivia, please. You have to stop this. There'll be other ways to help him. We'll find them together—I swear it."

I shook my head violently. "No, you don't understand! The witch said seven days. If I stop now, everything I've done will be for nothing!"

"Everything?" Levi's voice cracked, anger slipping through his calm. "You think losing our child is nothing?!"

His words hit me like a slap.

Tears spilled down my cheeks as I met his gaze. "Don't make me choose," I whispered brokenly. "Please don't."

Louis's jaw tightened as he took a step forward, his voice low and shaking. "You're not thinking straight, Olivia! You're risking your life—our child's life—for a man who might already be gone!"

"Don't say that!" I screamed, clutching my stomach protectively. "He's not gone! He's fighting, and I won't abandon him like everyone else has!"

Louis's eyes darkened, anger flickering beneath his pain. "You think we don't care about Lennox? We're here every day, watching you destroy yourself for him! But what about us, Olivia? What about the family you already have standing right in front of you?"

My throat burned as I tried to speak, but no words came out. The room was spinning again—only this time, it wasn't from dizziness. It was from the pain of guilt and love tearing me apart inside.

Before anyone could speak again, my mother stepped forward and gently touched my arm.

"Olivia..." she said softly, her voice trembling with emotion. "You're not wrong for wanting to save him. But you have to remember something."

I looked at her through blurry eyes. "What?"

She smiled sadly, her thumb brushing away one of my tears. "You're not just fated to one mate, my child. You're fated to three. Lennox, yes... but also Levi and Louis. You carry all of them in your destiny. You can't save one by destroying the others."

Her words broke something inside me—the last thread holding my resolve together.

Levi knelt beside the bed, his eyes glistening with tears. "Please," he whispered, his hand resting gently over mine. "You have to stop. For you. For our baby."

Louis turned away, his voice thick with pain. "We've lost enough already. Don't make us lose you too."

"I won't stop," I said quietly, but my voice was steady this time.

Everyone turned toward me—Levi, Louis, Selene, even my mother—their faces a mixture of shock and disbelief.

"Olivia," Levi said slowly, his tone almost pleading. "You can't mean that."

"I do." I looked at all of them, not blinking away. "I'm finishing the ritual. Two more days, that's all it takes. I won't give up now."

Louis's eyes darkened. "You're not thinking clearly! This isn't love anymore—it's obsession!"

My heart twisted at his words. "You don't understand!" I cried, standing abruptly. "You didn't see him in that realm—you didn't hear him call my name! He's still there, Louis. He's fighting to come back!"

Levi's jaw tightened, anger flaring through the pain in his eyes. "And what if he doesn't? What if he's already gone? Are you willing to die chasing a ghost, Olivia?"

"I'm willing to do whatever it takes," I shot back. "Because I still believe in him—even if no one else does."

Levi's voice rose, breaking with emotion. "You're carrying our child! Doesn't that mean anything to you?"

Tears spilled down my cheeks. "It means everything to me! But this—" I placed my hand over my chest. "This is something I have to do."

Louis let out a sharp breath, shaking his head. "You're not doing it. I'm not watching you destroy yourself, Olivia. I can't."

Levi nodded stiffly beside him. "Neither can I. If you go near that ritual again, I'll have the witch locked out of this house myself."

I gasped, hurt flashing through me. "You wouldn't—"

But one look at Levi's eyes told me he meant it.

"Try me," he said coldly.

The tension in the air increased.

I turned away from them, my heart pounding, anger and pain boiling together inside me. "Get out," I whispered.

Levi blinked. "What?"

"Both of you!" I turned back, tears streaking my face. "If you can't stand by me, then just go!"

Louis let out a low growl, his wolf rising under his skin, but Levi grabbed his arm. Without another word, they turned and stormed out of the room, slamming the door behind them.

The silence that followed was deafening.

I sat there shaking, staring at the closed door, feeling my heart crumble into pieces. Then I turned toward my mother and Selene. "Tell me," I said quietly, "am I really doing something wrong?"

My mother hesitated, her eyes soft with sorrow. "Olivia... you have two mates here who love you, and now a child growing inside you. Lennox isn't the only part of your heart anymore. You have to think beyond him."

I shook my head slowly, tears blurring my vision. "Why are you all acting like he's not going to make it? Why am I the only one who still believes he can come back? Why has everyone already accepted that he's dead?"

Selene took a small step closer, her voice calm and her eyes full of worry. "Because, Olivia..." she paused, her eyes glistening. "Sometimes faith alone isn't enough to bring back the dead."

Her words struck like lightning.

For a moment, I just sat there, trembling, staring at her in disbelief. Then I looked down at my belly—at the life I was supposed to protect—and whispered, almost to myself, "Then I'll give him more than faith."

Because if faith wasn't enough... I'd give Lennox my soul. Nothing on this earth would stop me from completing that ritual.

Chapter 477: Not Happening

Levi's POV

I slammed the door the moment we entered my room. The sound echoed through the walls, and for a second, I almost hoped it would drown out the rage boiling inside me.

"She's acting like she's lost her damn mind!" I shouted, pacing back and forth. "Does she even hear herself anymore? She's ready to risk our child for him—for a man who isn't even breathing!"

Louis closed the door quietly behind him, his expression calm, though I could tell he was just as shaken. "Levi, calm down."

"Calm down?" I snapped, turning on him. "You saw her, Louis! You heard her! She'd rather die than stop that ritual. She doesn't even care what it's doing to her body."

Louis sighed, rubbing the back of his neck. "She's not thinking clearly. You know how much she loves Lennox. That bond is stronger than logic. You can't reason with that."

I let out a bitter laugh and ran my hand through my hair. "Love? This isn't love anymore, Louis. This is madness. She's drowning herself in guilt and calling it love."

Louis walked over to the window, staring out into the courtyard. "You're angry because you're scared," he said quietly. "We both are."

I turned away, jaw tight. "Of course, I'm scared! I already lost one brother, and now I might lose her too. And the worst part is... she won't even let me save her."

Louis didn't answer right away. Rather, a tense silence hung in the air. Finally, he spoke. "You can't force her to stop, Levi."

I met his eyes sharply. "The hell I can't. If I have to chain her to that bed to keep her alive, I will."

Louis frowned. "You'll only push her further away."

"Then let her hate me," I growled. "I'd rather she hate me and live than love me and die."

He sighed, running his fingers through his hair. "You know, sometimes I think the Moon Goddess made a mistake binding us all together like this. We're three hearts constantly fighting for one woman who can't choose peace."

I sank down on the edge of the bed, my anger dimming into exhaustion. "She doesn't even see what this is doing to us," I muttered. "To me. I can't breathe when she looks at him like that, Louis. Like we don't matter anymore."

Louis sat beside me, his tone softer. "We do matter. She's just... blinded right now. But when this is over, when Lennox either wakes or doesn't, she'll need us. And we'll still be here."

I nodded, though my chest still felt like it was on fire. "I just wish she'd come back to her senses."

Louis gave a small, humorless smile. "That's Olivia for you. The more you try to save her, the harder she fights back."

I stared at the floor, my fists clenched. "Then I'll fight harder."

Because even if she hated me for it, I wasn't letting her die for Lennox. Never.

I couldn't rest throughout the day. Every time I closed my eyes, I thought of Olivia and the risk. The thought alone made my chest ache with anger and fear.

So I stayed up. And when the moon reached its highest point, I went to Lennox's room.

The house was quiet, too quiet. Even the guards had lowered their voices in the halls, as if the air itself was mourning.

When I entered, the faint glow from the candles illuminated Lennox's still body. His skin looked colder tonight. His chest rose and fell weakly, shallow breaths that barely counted as living.

I pulled a chair to the side of his bed and sat down, elbows resting on my knees, staring at him.

"Why does it always come back to you?" I muttered bitterly. "She's breaking herself trying to save you. And I can't even hate you for it."

My voice cracked near the end, but I forced myself to stay quiet.

I knew Olivia would come at dawn—she was predictable that way. And I was right.

When the first faint light touched the windows, the door creaked open. She stepped in, wrapped in her night robe, her hair a tangled mess, eyes weary. The witch trailed behind her, carrying her usual bowl of herbs and blades.

Our eyes met, and the air instantly thickened.

"Levi," she said softly, almost as if testing the waters.

"It's not happening," I said before she could move another inch.

Her brows furrowed. "What?"

"The ritual," I said firmly, rising to my feet. "It's over. You're not doing this again."

She took a slow, deliberate step closer. "Move, Levi."

"I'm not moving."

Her hand trembled slightly, but her voice didn't. "Don't do this."

"I already did," I said coldly. "You're risking your life and our child for a man who's half gone. I won't let you kill yourself over him."

"You can't stop me," she hissed, her voice rising.

"I can," I shot back. "And I will."

The witch looked between us nervously but stayed silent. The air in the room pulsed with tension, both our wolves restless beneath the surface.

The door opened again, and our parents stepped in—my father's eyes sharp, my mother's lined with worry.

"Enough!" my father barked. "What's going on here?"

"She's trying to continue the ritual," I said tightly. "Even after the healer's warning."

My mother's expression softened as she turned to me. "Please, my dear, there are only two days left. Just... just let her do it."

My frown deepened. "Not happening."

My father let out a frustrated sigh. "You sound like you want Lennox to stay in that bed forever," he said sharply.

His words hurt me. I froze, my jaw tightening as I turned to face him. "Don't," I said quietly. "Don't you dare say that. Everything I've done—everything—is for her and for this family."

"Then act like it!" my father snapped back. "Lennox is your brother. His life matters."

I clenched my fists so hard my nails dug into my palms. "Not at the expense of Olivia's."

The room fell into another tense silence. The witch cleared her throat softly, her tone cautious. "Are we... doing the ritual or not?"

Olivia didn't hesitate. "Yes," she said, her voice fierce and authoritative.

I looked straight at her; my frown deepened. "No," I said. "It's not happening."

Chapter 478: Refused

Levi's POV

I stood my ground even as Olivia's glare burned holes through me.

The witch shifted uneasily beside her, the bowl trembling in her hands.

"I said no," I repeated, my voice like stone. "You're done with this, Olivia."

She clenched her jaw. "You don't get to decide that for me."

"I do when your life is on the line!" I shot back. "When our child's life is on the line!"

Her lips trembled. "You think I don't know that? You think I don't feel it?" Her hand went to her stomach. "But if I stop now, he'll die, Levi. He'll die, and I'll never forgive myself."

My patience cracked. "And if you keep going, you'll die!"

The words came out louder than I meant. Everyone froze.

Even Lennox's shallow breathing seemed to pause.

Olivia's frown deepened, but she refused to look away. "Then let me die with purpose."

Something inside me snapped.

"Purpose?" I barked, taking a step closer. "You call throwing your life away for him purpose? You call risking our child love?" My voice broke at the end, anger blurring into pain. "You're killing yourself for a ghost, Olivia! He's not here anymore. I am! We are!"

The silence that followed was deafening.

Her lips parted, but no sound came out. My father looked away, and my mother pressed her hand to her mouth. The witch's eyes darted between us, unsure if she should stay or flee.

Finally, Olivia whispered, "You don't understand."

I laughed bitterly. "No, you're right. I don't. I don't understand how you can look at me, at Louis, at your own unborn child, and still choose him over all of us."

Tears spilled down her cheeks. "It's not about choosing!" she cried. "It's about saving someone I love!"

"Someone?" I muttered, my chest tightening. "Or the only one?"

Her breath caught. For a moment, we just stared at each other, two storms colliding in silence.

Then I turned sharply and stormed toward the door. I couldn't breathe anymore. The walls were closing in, my father's disappointed sigh echoing behind me like thunder.

As I reached the hall, I heard the witch's trembling voice. "So... are we doing the ritual or not?"

I didn't look back. "No," I said, my voice hollow. "It's over."

But Olivia's voice cut through the air, fierce and defiant. "Yes."

I froze in the doorway.

For a heartbeat, no one moved. I wanted to go over there and pull her away, but I held myself back.

Without another word, I walked out. The walls seemed to shake with every step I took, fury and helplessness burning through me.

I didn't realize my hands were trembling until I reached the courtyard.

She wasn't listening. She never did.

And as much as it broke me to admit it, I knew exactly what she was going to do.

She'd disobey me. She'd go through with the ritual.

Even if it killed her.

I should have forced her to listen. But I didn't. I let her go.

I felt like the villain in this story.

Everyone thinks I want Lennox dead; even my father thinks so.

"You have to stop her," my wolf urged, a raw, instinctive pull that made my blood hot and my teeth ache. I wanted to obey that voice. I wanted to turn back, force her hands from the bowl, and lock her away until she learned reason. But the part of me that loved her, that had kissed her, argued with her, watched her laugh when the world was kinder, froze under the weight of every possible wrong choice. I was paralyzed by the fear that any move I made could be the final one.

The courtyard air was thin. I was still trying to convince myself I'd done the right thing, that I'd stepped away because I needed a plan, because I could come up with something better, when a shout split the night.

"Levi! Levi, she's down!"

I ran.

The hall blurred. Other footsteps joined mine. My chest pounded so hard I thought it would burst. I didn't think about the door. I slammed through it. The room smelled like iron and herbs and something colder, the static smell that always happens right before someone falls away from life.

Olivia was on the floor.

She was as pale as old paper, hair fanned around her head like a dark halo. The night robe was gaped open at the throat where the witch had cut, dried blood ringing a tiny crater on her palm. Her breaths were shallow. Her hand clutched at her belly as if holding the small life there close would keep it from rolling away.

I scooped her up before anyone could move, instinct first, logic later. Olivia was lighter than I expected, as if the ritual had hollowed her out from the inside. Her fingers scraped my neck when I gathered her against my chest; for a second, I panicked, thinking she'd slip away like smoke.

"Hold her," I barked at Louis. He was already there, steady hands under her knees, eyes wide and hollow. The witch and the sorcerer were murmuring frantic chants, but I shoved them gently aside.

The moment we reached my room, I set her down on my bed with too much force, and for a second the mattress dipped, and the breath left my chest with her.

Healers swarmed, efficient and sharp. Hands on her forehead, a palm to her chest, herbs crushed beneath quick fingers. Louis hovered like a guard dog, voice tight and sharp with instructions I didn't need to hear but wanted to. I stood back, hands clenched, while they worked, watching, measuring the rise and fall of her ribcage as if it were a countdown.

Minutes dragged and blurred into a long, terrible ache. The sorcerer and the witch were in a tight huddle, averted faces, fingers knitting together spells I couldn't name. My wolf snarled in the back of my mind, a low, hungry sound that wanted retribution. I wanted to tear the world open and drag whatever part of fate was responsible into the light and make it answer.

When she finally stirred, it felt like the sun worrying its way through storm clouds.

Her lashes fluttered. Her eyes opened, unfocused, then sharpened as she blinked and recognized the ceiling, and everyone in the room.

"I'm fine," she murmured, her voice small and brittle. "Really. Don't, don't make a fuss."

The healer's hand smoothed across her brow. "Rest," she said gently. "You pushed too far. Sleep now."

But something in me snapped like a twig under too much weight.

Chapter 479: The Decision

Levi's POV

"Fine?" I barked, the sound cracking. I didn't mean for the word to come out so harsh, but there it was, the animal in my throat exposed. Olivia's eyes flicked toward me, a sliver of confusion cutting through fatigue. "Levi," she began. "No," I said, hard and faster than reason. "You are not fine." She tried to sit up, a stubborn, familiar motion, but Louis caught her shoulders and pushed her gently back. "Don't move," he said.

I couldn't hold the controlled calm any longer. I stalked around to the foot of the bed and leaned over her, close enough that she could see every notch of anger and fear carved across my face. "You could have died," I told her. The words were blunt, but they were the truth beating at me. "Do you hear me? You could have died. You would have taken that baby with you. You would have left us with less than empty hands."

Tears welled in her eyes, not just from the physical pain, but from the way my voice was loud and full of anger. "I'm trying to save him," she whispered. "I can't let him go. I can't—"

"Save him?" I shoved the idea back like a poisoned thing. "What you tried to do tonight was gamble with two lives. Your life. The child's life. Our lives. You didn't just try to bring somebody back; you damn near destroyed the only life that recently started inside you."

Her jaw trembled. "We can't give up on him."

"And you think I don't love him?" I snapped. "You think I want him dead? You think I don't sit with him every night and listen to his breath and curse the world for what

happened to him? Do you think I wanted any of this? Do you think I wanted to be the kind of man who stands across from you and tells you to stop? I would pick you every time. I would choose this family over a ghost. But you, you risk everything because you cannot bear the thought of being without him."

She flinched at my words, as if each one had a physical edge. I hated how she looked when I hurt her, and still I couldn't take the fury back. "I'm sorry," she whispered. "But I couldn't just—"

"You couldn't just what?" I demanded, my voice breaking on the last word. "You couldn't just stop? You couldn't just listen to the hands trying to save you from yourself? You chose him. Again. Even with the child inside you."

Her eyes look exhausted and she looked small, smaller than I'd ever seen her. "I'm sorry," she said, ragged. "I'm sorry I keep hurting you."

"Sorry doesn't fix bone and blood," I said, softer now, the explosion of my anger burning until I was raw. "Sorry doesn't undo the fear. Sorry doesn't answer for the nights I sat up worrying I'd lose you too."

For a beat, the room held only our breathing. Then she reached, trembling, and laid her hand on my wrist. "Forgive me," she whispered. I wanted to lean in and take her into my arms and erase the fear with a kiss, to promise her I would do anything to keep her safe. Instead I let out a long, ragged breath and closed my eyes.

"Don't do this again," I said finally, my voice hoarse. "You hear me? For the child's sake, for all our sakes." She nodded, faint and hollow, but nodded.

The healer adjusted the blanket, murmured more soft instructions, and the witch offered one more small spell. Louis sat back on the edge of the bed and put his forehead to the back of her hand as if he couldn't quite breathe without that contact. Outside, the night kept its cold vigil.

Inside the room, I sat on the floor by the bed and watched her sleep, anger still burning at my edges but replaced, in slow measure, with a fierce, fierce love that made me ache. I had exploded, I had frightened her, but I would not have her die trying to prove a point to ghosts.

If this was to be the long war ahead of us, between grief and life, between past and present, then I would stand on the line and fight. Even if it meant she would hate me for the rest of her days for stopping her. Even if I had to be the villain in her story to keep her and our child breathing.

For hours we remained in the room, watching her sleep until an idea came to my head. An idea that would be disastrous but was for the best. "Louis," I whispered to Louis through the mind link.

Louis lifted his head the moment my voice brushed through the link. His gaze darted toward me from where he sat, still holding Olivia's hand. The fatigue on his face mirrored mine: dark circles beneath his eyes, shoulders weighed down by everything we were both trying to hold together.

"Come," I said quietly. "We need to talk."

He hesitated. His thumb brushed gently over Olivia's knuckles, reluctant to break the fragile calm that had finally settled over her. She was breathing evenly now, the faint rise and fall of her chest the only proof she was still with us.

"Louis," I said again, firmer this time.

He nodded, swallowed hard, and carefully laid her hand back on the bed before following me out. The door shut with a muted click behind us, sealing her inside that dim, quiet room.

We walked down the hall in silence. Each consumed with our thoughts. When we reached the study, I closed the door and leaned against it.

Louis turned to face me, jaw tight. "What is it?" he asked, his voice low, wary. "What's going on, Levi?"

I didn't answer right away. My thoughts were a storm—fear, love, desperation all tangled in a single choking knot. Finally, I forced the words out. "I've made a decision."

His brows drew together. "About what?"

"Olivia." My throat felt raw just saying her name. "There's one day left. Tomorrow, she'll try again. You know she will. She won't stop until she finishes that damn ritual."

Louis' expression darkened. He ran a hand through his hair, frustration and helplessness flashing across his features. "Then we watch her. We make sure she doesn't. We stay with her every second if we have to—"

"No," I cut in, my voice sharp. "That won't work. You know her as well as I do. She'll find a way. She always does."

Louis frowned, crossing his arms. "Then what are you saying, Levi?"

I looked him dead in the eyes. "I'm sending Lennox away tonight."

The words hung between us like a curse.

Louis froze. For a second, he just stared, as if he hadn't heard me right. Then his face hardened. "What?"

"You heard me," I said quietly. "If she can't find him, she can't try again. She's willing to die to bring him back, Louis. I can't—" My voice cracked. "I can't watch her destroy herself for a ghost."

Louis stepped closer, disbelief etched across his face. "Levi, think about what you're saying. If she wakes up and realizes Lennox is gone, she'll lose it. She'll hate you."

"I already said I'd be the villain if I had to," I said hoarsely. "If keeping her alive means she'll never forgive me, then so be it."

He stared at me for a long moment, eyes searching mine. "You're serious."

I nodded, my heart pounding like thunder. "Dead serious."

Chapter 480: Sending him away

Levi's POV

Louis stared at me like I'd just confessed to a crime. His jaw clenched, the muscle in it ticking as he struggled for words.

"You can't be serious, Levi," he said at last, his voice low but sharp. "Sending him away? That's not saving Olivia—that's betraying her."

I met his glare head-on. "It's not betrayal," I said quietly. "It's protection. You saw her tonight. She'll do it again the moment she wakes up. And next time, we might not get there in time to save her."

Louis shook his head, disbelief written all over his face. "She'll be furious. You know how she gets when someone interferes with her choices."

"I know," I admitted, my tone hardening. "She'll hate me. Maybe she'll never forgive me. But she'll live—and that's enough for me."

He exhaled sharply, pacing the room. "You think she'll see it that way? No—she'll see it as if we gave up on him. As if we abandoned our brother."

His words were true; that is exactly how Olivia would feel, but I didn't let it scare me. "We're not abandoning him," I said. "We're moving him somewhere safe. Somewhere she can't reach him until she's strong enough."

Louis turned, his eyes searching mine. "Where?"

"One of the healers' cottages near the southern edge of the territory," I replied. "It's quiet. Hidden. They have everything he needs—herbs, runes, wards. He'll be safe there, and they can monitor him without anyone knowing."

Louis frowned deeply. "It'll look like we're hiding him. Like we don't want him to wake up."

I looked away, the weight of his words settling in my chest. "This isn't about what it looks like, Louis. It's about keeping Olivia alive. About giving her—and our child—a future."

He studied me for a long moment before shaking his head. "You're walking a thin line, brother. Olivia will hate us completely."

"I've already accepted that," I said. "If I have to be the villain in her eyes to keep her breathing, I'll do it. I'll carry that blame alone."

Silence fell between us again, heavy and tense. The only sound was the soft crackle of the fire behind the desk.

Louis rubbed his temples. "You always do this," he muttered.

"Someone has to," I said simply. "And you know I'm right."

He didn't respond immediately, but his silence was an answer. I stepped toward the door, my mind already made up.

"Get the guards," I ordered quietly. "Tell them to prepare a car. We're leaving tonight."

Louis hesitated. "Levi..."

I turned back to him, my voice calm but authoritative. "Do it, Louis. Please."

He stared at me for a long time, then finally gave a small nod. "You better pray she never finds out."

"She will," I said, glancing toward the window where the moonlight spilled across the floor. "And when she does, I'll take whatever she gives me. Her anger, her hatred—anything. But I won't take her grave."

A knock came at the door. Two guards stood there when I opened it, their faces confused and wary.

"Alphas?" one of them asked. "You requested us?"

"Yes," I said, straightening. "Prepare the car immediately. We're moving Alpha Lennox to the southern healers' quarters. No one outside this room is to know. Do you understand?"

They exchanged uncertain looks but nodded. "Yes, Alpha."

"Good," I said. "We leave within the hour."

As the door shut behind them, Louis exhaled and leaned against the desk. "This is going to break her."

I stared out into the night, my chest tight. "Then let it," I murmured. "Better a heart that breaks — than one that stops beating."

Without saying anything else, I left and made my way back to Lennox's room.

When I entered, the air was still, too still. The faint hum of magic from the warded candles danced around the room, soft and blue, casting his sleeping form in ghostly light. Lennox looked peaceful. Too peaceful. Like the world outside didn't matter anymore.

I stood at the edge of the bed and swallowed hard, forcing the words past the lump in my throat. "Forgive me, brother," I murmured. "If you can hear me... I'm sorry. I know this looks like betrayal, but it's not. I swear it's not."

I reached out and brushed a strand of hair from his forehead, just like I used to when we were younger and he'd fall asleep during training. "You'd do the same if you were me," I said quietly. "You'd protect her—the woman we both love—even if it meant becoming the enemy. That's all I'm doing. Protecting her. Protecting our child. And you."

My chest ached as I whispered the next words. "Don't hate me for this, Lennox. Just... wake up one day, and understand why I did it."

The door opened softly behind me—two guards stepped in, followed by Louis, his expression tight but composed. The guards hesitated when they saw me standing there, but I nodded once.

"Dress him," I said. My voice came out low, but it carried enough weight to make them move without question.

They carefully lifted Lennox's body and dressed him in a simple dark tunic and cloak. Watching them handle him felt wrong—like preparing him for a journey he hadn't agreed to take. When they finally finished, they lifted him gently, one at the shoulders, one at the legs.

"Be careful," Louis said under his breath. His voice cracked.

"I know," I muttered, turning away so I wouldn't see the way my brother's arm dangled limply between them.

We made our way down the hall in silence. By the time we reached the main staircase, the weight of what we were doing pressed so hard against my chest that it was hard to breathe.

And then I heard voices.

"Levi?"

My mother's voice. Soft but filled with alarm. She and my father appeared at the end of the corridor, both wrapped in night robes, faces pale and confused.

"What's going on?" my father demanded, his voice rising. "Where are they taking him?"

"Keep your voices down," I said quickly, stepping forward before they could come closer. "Please."

My mother's eyes flicked from me to the guards, then to Lennox's still form in their arms. Her hand flew to her mouth. "Levi... what are you doing?"

I exhaled slowly. "I'm sending him away," I said. "To one of the healers' cottages at the southern border. Somewhere safe—somewhere Olivia can't reach him right now."

"What?" my father barked. "Have you lost your mind? That boy belongs here!"

I met his glare evenly. "He belongs alive. And Olivia belongs alive too. If she sees him here when she wakes up, she'll try again. You know she will."

My mother stepped closer, her eyes glistening. "But this isn't your choice to make, Levi. It's hers."

"No," I said firmly. "Not this time. This is the one choice she doesn't get to make."

My father took a step toward me, his expression stormy. "You're interfering with fate, son. Do you have any idea what you're—"

"I'm trying to save her!" I snapped, my voice sharp enough to make even the guards freeze. Then softer, pleading, "Please, just... let me do this. Don't interfere. Not this time."

The silence that followed was long and heavy. My father's jaw flexed, but he said nothing more. My mother looked like she wanted to speak, but instead, she just nodded faintly and stepped back, tears pooling in her eyes.

Louis moved closer, his hand brushing mine briefly—silent support, even if his heart wasn't entirely in it.

I gave the guards one last nod. "Go," I said quietly. "Take him to the car."

They obeyed, moving carefully down the stairs with Lennox between them.

As I followed behind, I didn't look back at my parents. I couldn't.

Because the moment I did, I knew I'd start questioning everything—and I couldn't afford that now.

Not when I'd already chosen to become the villain to save the woman I loved.

I could feel Louis's eyes on me as I climbed inside the car and sat beside Lennox's unmoving form.

For a moment, I just stared at him—my brother. My chest ached with every breath I took. He looked peaceful... too peaceful. The kind of peace that only existed between life and death.

My wolf stirred inside me, its voice quiet but firm.

"You're doing the right thing," it said. "This is for Olivia's good."

I exhaled shakily. "Yeah," I muttered under my breath. "But she's going to hate me for it."

"Better her hate you than bury her."

The words were simple, brutal, true. I closed my eyes and leaned back against the seat, listening to the soft rhythm of the car engine as we rolled through the forest path.

When we finally reached the healer's cottage, the sky was starting to pale—hints of gray edging into the night. Smoke rose gently from the chimney, and the scent of herbs and incense lingered in the air.

The healer, an older woman, stepped outside as we approached. "Alpha Levi," she greeted, bowing slightly. "We received your message. Everything is prepared."

I nodded curtly. "Good. He's weak but still holding on. Make sure he gets better."

"Yes, Alpha."

The guards carefully lifted Lennox out of the car and carried him inside. The room was warm and dim, filled with the soft glow of candlelight. They laid him gently on a wide bed draped with fresh linens.

I stood at his side once more, looking down at him—the brother I loved, the brother whose existence had become a storm that tore through everything.

"Take care of him," I said to the healer. "I'll come by every day to check on him myself. And if anything—anything at all—changes, you reach me immediately through the mind link."

She nodded, her tone calm and reassuring. "I understand, Alpha. He will be safe here."

I exhaled, rubbing a hand over my face. The weight of what I'd done pressed hard against my chest. I was doing this for the right reasons, I told myself again and again. But right now, it didn't feel noble. It felt like betrayal.

I turned to leave when suddenly Louis's voice brushed against my mind through the link—sharp, urgent, and breathless.

"Levi."

I stopped. "What is it?"

There was a pause—then his voice came again, rough with panic.

"She's awake."

My pulse spiked. "What?"

"Olivia. She's awake... and she's asking for Lennox. She says she wants to go to his room."