

## The Ivory Queen Chapter 56

\*\*\*Oliver's POV\*\*\*

I'm waiting for Aurora in the foyer and decide to mind-link Carter about the progress on Erin.

"How's the interrogation going?" I ask.

"Terrible! The b\*\*\*h won't budge. She's said nothing useful and my hand is starting to hurt."

"Don't kill her. That honor is mine and mine alone," I warn.

I told Erin not to mess with Aurora or there would be consequences. She didn't listen and tried to hurt my Luna. Her parents don't deserve this blow. They've been loyal members to the pack but I gave their daughter a chance and she blew it.

Lost in thought, I don't realize Adeline has waltzed in until she's standing right next to me, trying to caress my cheek.

"What are you doing here?" I snap, grabbing her hand and throwing it back.

"I was out of town for some Lune de Minuit business when I got the call that you guys were under attack. I came as soon as I could to offer my help," she says, giving me a sweet smile.

I force back a shiver. "Well, we're good now so you can go home," I say, trying my best to not to lose my patience.

"I heard you have a prisoner and given that I'm a representative of the Lune de Minuit's interests, I think I have a right to be at the interrogation. Don't you think so, Oli?"

I want to wipe the smug look on her face when I hear Aurora's soothing voice call me. She descends down the stairs and wraps her arms around my neck, pulling me into a deep, slow kiss. I respond to her kiss, slipping my tongue into her sweet mouth and tasting her hungrily. Forgetting Adeline completely, I lift my baby up by her thighs and she wraps her legs around me. I press her body up against the wall and kiss her like my life depends on it. We pull away breathlessly and Aurora peers past my shoulder.

“Oh, you’re still here?” Aurora asks innocently.

I stifle a chuckle as I hear Adeline storm out. “That was mean,” I tease, loving this jealous side of hers.

“Well she started it ... Oli!” She mocks, practically gagging at the nickname. “But you’re mine!”

I feel my eyes darken and Michael growls, wanting to take control. “Say that again,” I demand, loving her possessiveness.

A little grin tugs on her lips and she leans forward towards my ear. “You’re mine, Olivier,” she whispers. “Only mine.”

I bite her lower lip and tug it a little. “Only yours.”

I take Aurora to the dungeon where Erin is currently being held. Carter, Evan, Adeline, Wesley, Dean and Patrick are all gathered outside her cell discussing something. Scarlett gave birth earlier this week and so Jonathan’s Beta, Dean, is here instead. They named their daughter Aurore in Aurora’s honor.

The Alphas drop everything to greet Aurora and ask how she’s doing, making me swell with pride. My mate is the most respected wolf in all the packs and they don’t even know she’s a queen in her own right and the most powerful wolf to ever cross their paths. She’s earned their respect and admiration on her own. How incredible is that?

Evan quickly wraps her up in his arms and spins her around, happy to see she’s alright. Michael growls but I calm him down. I’m ashamed as hell for ever believing Adeline’s lies about them. It’s clear as day Evan loves her but only as one loves a sister. Evan was an only child growing up and Aurora had her only sibling taken from her and was then abused by her adoptive siblings. It makes sense they’ve found comfort in each other. Of course, I still get jealous when he gets too close with her. She is mine after all. I give them both a warning look and Evan winks at me before letting her go.

Did he just f\*\*\*\*\*g wink at me?

Michael snarls at his playfulness and I glare at him. Aurora walks over to me and kisses me on the lips, grinning from ear to ear when she pulls back.

Oh, you’re enjoying this, aren’t you? Well, we’ll see about that.

I wrap an arm around her waist, pulling her towards me and lifting her up so that her legs are forced to wrap around me. I squeeze her a\*s and she blushes furiously, pushing against my chest to let her go.

“Mine,” I smirk.

She huffs as I put her down and I earn a smack to the shoulder.

As we walk up to the cell, I peer through the tiny window to look at Erin. She has been pretty badly beaten by the guys and the sight is nauseating.

“Maybe you should go back, baby. I don’t think you should see this,” I urge, not wanting her to see Erin’s condition.

“Oliver it’s fine. I need to speak with her. She said something that she needs to explain.”

“She’s been tortured... can you handle seeing that?” I ask nervously.

Her face hardens. “I need to speak with her,” she says sternly.

I take a deep breath and step aside so she can see Erin in all her bloody glory. She gasps and holds back a whimper but quickly composes herself.

“Has she said anything at all?” Aurora asks no one in particular, taking her eyes off of Erin and turning back to us.

“No,” Wesley mutters.

Erin begins to laugh hysterically. “Aurora...” she calls out in a sing song voice that makes the hairs on the back of my neck stand up. “Where are you?”

I barge into the cell and slam Erin into the concrete wall. “Don’t play games with me right now! Tell us who’s behind all the attacks!”

She wheezes but still manages to crack a sinister smile on her face. “I’ll only talk to Aurora.”

“Fine,” Aurora answers and I turn around to scold her.

“Not a chance, Aurora. She’s dangerous.”

Aurora gives me a bored look. "She's tied to the wall with silver chains in a cell guarded by at least 20 wolves. I'm also not made of porcelain, Oliver. I can take care of myself just fine."

I don't like this one bit. Does she not understand Erin literally tried to have her kidnapped? "No-"

Aurora storms in and tries to push me out of the cell. "This is important to me! Now get out! I have to speak with her!"

I sigh with annoyance and glance at Erin. There's a sinister grin hanging on her lips. "You have 5 minutes alone with her. Make them count," I warn before stepping out of the cell and closing it.

Adeline's stupid voice pierces my ears. "Are we really going to let that little girl handle an interrogation?"

I and all the Allies snarl at her comment. Before I can respond, Wesley comes to Aurora's defense.

"You do not get to question Luna Aurora's actions, not after all she's done for this alliance. Aurora has every right to lead this interrogation given she was the subject of the attack," Wesley snarls. "If she wants five minutes, she will get five minutes!"

It's refreshing seeing Wesley come to Aurora's defense. Just a few weeks ago, he couldn't stand the thought of her leading with me and now here he was defending her.

"If I were you, I would remember your place. You are not my Luna" I snap. "You are a business partner and this is not a business meeting so I suggest you leave immediately."

Her face darkens and she storms out of the dungeons. I lead the Alphas out to the entrance of the dungeon to give Aurora her five minutes.

\*\*\* Aurora's POV\*\*\*

Erin c\*\*\*s her head to the side and giggles. "Alone at last," she smiles. "My master is dying to speak with you."

I glare at her. "Tell me who she is!"

“Careful what you wish for...” she laughs before she cries out and her eyes turn red. “Salve, Aurora.”

Her voice sounds distorted and different.

That’s not Erin, Reyna explains.

“Tandem in occursum nobis,” she smiles. {At last, we meet}

Much to my surprise, I understand her and respond. “Postremo.” {Finally}

We speak Latin? I ask Reyna.

All Gold wolves speak it.

Erin’s face contorts into a wicked smile. “Habes quaestiones. Interroga eos.” {You have questions. Ask them}

\*\*\*Note: The following conversation is spoken in Latin.\*\*\*

“Who are you and what is it you want?” I ask, trying to keep my voice strong.

“That’s not the question you want to ask. There’s something else bothering you, isn’t there?” She says, tilting her head and staring at me curiously.

She evading my question deliberately. She must have a specific goal in mind with this conversation.

Be careful, Reyna warns.

“What is your name?” I ask again, this time with more conviction.

She sighs with boredom. “I have many names, but you can call me Tais.”

“And what do you want? Why are you attacking my allies and my pack?”

“So many questions...” she chuckles. “I like your medallion by the way. Very Regal, your majesty.” My hand goes instinctively towards it and she laughs. “You still haven’t asked the question you want to ask.”

I’m annoyed with how evasive she is. “Erin said you know me very well. W-what did she mean by that?”

“Hmm...” She chuckles softly. “Why, I’ve known you since before you were born my dear. In fact, I was very well acquainted with your parents,” she pauses, clearly enjoying my shock. “Your father was a very handsome King by the way. He had a very powerful gift...although it was wasted on such a weak being. All I had to do was mention his name or you and he bowed down before me. Werewolves are such pathetic creatures.”

“Y-you killed -“

“Ah well, there were many after your family, but of course, yours truly is not the average witch. I had the honor of killing your father...” she smiles sweetly.

Angry tears roll down my cheeks. “Y-you killed my parents!”

“No, no. Just your father. The honor of killing your mother goes to my sister. Queen Sofia went quick, though, don’t worry. She didn’t suffer too much. Decapitation is a very efficient way to kill.”

My heart drops to the pit of my stomach and I fight the urge to vomit.

Decapitation?

Tears spill from my eyes at this revelation. “You evil-“

“Witch? I am aren’t I? It’s quite fun, actually, ridding this world of those retched silver and gold wolves. Gifted children of Moon Goddess... Tch! They don’t deserve the power they wield,” she snarls. “One by one they’ll all fall, I’ll make sure of that. I got rid of your father and his entire silver wolf clan. Well almost. I can’t seem to find his sister, but I found his brother just fine.”

My eyes widen in shock. It can’t be!

“Y-You killed Emiliano?”

“Oh yes, dear, I did. But I couldn’t have done it alone. I had quite a bit of help, thankfully.”

“But he was killed by rogues...”

Her cruel smile deepens.

She’s enjoying this.

“Who do you think those rogues were working for?” She asks.

No..... No this can't be...

“I give him props though, he went through great lengths to hide you.”

This is too much. She killed him? She's been watching us this whole time?

“Who helped you?” I ask.

“Ah, ah, ah. That I cannot tell you just yet. Just know that I have eyes and ears everywhere. There's not a thing that happens to you that I don't know about. You see, a lot of people hate you and for good reason too. You cause a lot of problems. But don't worry, it'll all be over soon.”

“What is it that you want?”

She smiles again. “Why it's so simple. What I want.... Is you.”

“Me? Why-“

We hear the door to the dungeon entrance unlock.

“Times up. Until next time, my dear.”

\*\*\*end of Latin\*\*\*

Erin's eyes return to their brown color and she starts to choke and gasp for air. Little black veins run up her neck and her eyes begin to bulge out of her skull. I remain frozen as she jerks and thrashes against the cold pavement. Blood oozes from her nose, ears and mouth while she starts to convulse again. Within seconds, her heart stops and her cold dead eyes stare directly at me. I let out a scream and fall to the ground. The men rush to the door and find me crying on the floor next to Erin's body.

“Aurora, what happened?” Oliver asks, clearly panicking. He grabs my face and wipes my tears while Carter runs to the body.

“|-|-“

“She's dead, Alpha.”

Seeing my unresponsiveness, Oliver picks me up and walks out of the cell. "It's okay baby, I'm here. Let's get you home."

## The Ivory Queen Chapter 57

\*\*\*Aurora's POV\*\*\*

Oliver brought me home and asked me to rest but I can't. My conversation with Tais keeps replaying in my head. I roll out of bed and Rio tries to play with me.

"I'm sorry buddy, not now."

Evan tries to get me back to bed but I refuse and walk towards the office where Oliver and the Alphas are currently having a meeting.

"Well we still have no idea who this witch is and—"

They stop talking as I walk through the door and greet me.

"You should be in bed," Oliver scolds as I take a seat on his lap and lay be head against his chest.

"Her name is Tais," I mumble.

"What?" Wesley asks and I repeat myself.

"She spoke through Erin and talked to me. She told me things I wish she hadn't," I say shuddering at thought of my mother's decapitation "She k-killed Emiliano," I croak, holding back tears and trembling. "She-she killed Erin without even touching her."

"Do you know what she wants?" Patrick asks.

I nod my head. "She wants me."

"Why?" Oliver almost snarls.

"She wants to get rid of silver and gold wolves all together," I sniffle. "Oliver, she's been watching me for years. She has people and allies everywhere and she won't stop!"

“But why does she want you specifically?” Wesley asks. “You’re not the only silver wolf here. Your siblings are silver wolves as well. Why just you?”

“Aurora, is there something you’d care to explain to us? We heard some warriors talking about what you did to Erin and those rogues-“

“I’m sorry, Alpha Patrick, but for the time being I’m not at liberty of discussing my powers with you all just yet. I need you to trust me on this. It’s important that for now you understand that Tais’s end game is to terminate all Silver and Gold wolves.”

“That’s a tall order for you to ask of us, don’t you think?” Dean asks. “As allies, we have a right to know exactly what’s going on here.”

“Aurora will explain everything you’ll need to know in two days time. I know it’s a lot to ask for given the amount of attacks we’ve endured but please be patient with her. After everything she’s done, she deserves to have our trust,” Oliver says.

The Alphas reluctantly agree to give me two days. Upon our return from Idaho, we are to hold another meeting at the Blood Moon Pack house.

“So what’s the next step?” I ask . “What are we going to do now that we know about Tais?”

“We’ll do some research on her to know what we’re dealing with before we make any decisions. Did she say anything else?”

I think carefully for a bit, trying to remember what she said that wouldn’t reveal who I was.

“She slipped up and mentioned she had a sister but she didn’t say a name.”

“Thank you, Aurora, that’s still useful information. I don’t know what we’d do without you,” Wesley smiles.

Probably live peacefully...

The Alphas take their leave and I remain curled up in Oliver’s arms.

“Talk to me,” he pleads.

“It was awful,” I mumble. “She killed my Dad and his- his entire clan except for my aunt. S-She killed Emiliano. And my mom...” A small sob escapes me, “was d-decapitated!” I cry, burying my face in his chest.

He wraps his arms around me tightly, making me feel safe and protected. “I’m so sorry. I’m so, so, sorry.”

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Oliver has dinner brought up to our room and he tries to feed me but I’ve lost my appetite and instead help him pack for the trip. After he’s all set, I go to the office and grab the book from the shelf. I need to read up on what happens during the shift.

Oliver stares in confusion at book.

“Umm, baby where are the words?” He asks.

“In this book is the complete history and secrets of silver, gold and ivory twins. All of our strengths and weakness, our powers, everything. It’s meant to be read by our kind only and it’s enchanted so no one else can read it,” I reply.

\*\*\*Aurora’s POV\*\*\*

Oliver brought me home and asked me to rest but I can’t. My conversation with Tais keeps replaying in my head. I roll out of bed and Rio tries to play with me.

“Oh, so there are words in there,” he laughs.

“Yes now hush, I’ve got some reading to do,” I say, turning my attention back to the book, picking up where I left off last time.

Unlike other wolves, Ivory twins must have their first shift in the presence of each other. Failing to do so will result in death.

Many conditions must be met before the twins can shift completely. The shift can only take place during a full moon, a solstice or an equinox. Both twins must come together wearing the medallions given to them by Moon Goddess and activate their elements to enter realm of Moon Goddess. There, they will meet with Moon Goddess herself. While in the realm, the Ivory twins are in a vulnerable catatonic state in the physical world. They will not be able to use their powers, nor defend themselves physically from an outside threats until

they awaken from their meeting with Moon Goddess. The shift will take place shortly after, revealing the characteristic white fur and heterochromatic eyes distinctive to the pair. The twins will also reveal their true selves and possess a unique set of powers they'll need to defend silver and gold wolves.

Our true selves? What does that mean?

You'll find out soon enough...Reyna says cryptically.

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We're up at 8 am and I'm f\*\*\*\*\*g exhausted. I didn't sleep very well last night, my mind repeating the conversation I had with Tais. Oliver and I have a quick shower and get dressed before I drop Rio off at Evan's room.

"This is my child. You better take good care of him," I warn him.

"Just give me the dog," Evan yawns, taking Rio's leash from me. "Where are you going this early anyways?"

"Oliver and I are making a quick trip somewhere and won't be back until tomorrow evening."

Evan is too sleepy to ask more questions and shrugs before drifting back inside his room and going to back to sleep.

Oliver and I do a quick check on our stuff and grab a snack for the drive since San Francisco is an hour away. Carter is waiting for us in the car and drives us out.

As we leave pack territory, I get the unsettling feeling that we're being followed. I turn around to see a black car following us. At first, I think I'm just being paranoid but as we get onto the 101, I look back to see the car still following us just a few cars behind.

"Carter, I want you to get off the freeway in San Rafael. I want to see something," I say.

"What's wrong? Did you forget something?" Oliver asks.

I shake my head. "I think we're being followed. There's a car that's been following us since we left River Moon and I'm starting to get concerned."

“Ok, Carter you heard her. Get off the freeway and check this car out.”

As we merge off the freeway, the car merges too, confirming my fears.

“f\*\*k, it is following us!” Oliver growls. “We have to lose them.”

“On it,” Carter replies and he starts to speed up.

He swerves between lanes and cars, making random and abrupt turns, but the car still follows. I can’t make out who they are but I know two people are inside. I pull out my phone and start looking for secluded areas.

“Drive to the memorial park!” I say, handing him my phone for directions. “I have an idea.”

Carter does as he’s told and before we know it, we leave the residential area and drive through a wooded area. The car is still trailing us. I concentrate on the earth outside and make a tree fall onto the road. We hear the car attempt to brake before crashing head first into the trunk of the tree. Carter stops the car and I turn around and make roots sprout out and wrap around the car to crush it.

“Go!” I snap as I watch the two wolves try to get out of the car.

I breath a sigh of relief when I see they’re stuck inside. Carter steps on the gas and we drive off towards the nearest freeway exit.

“That was f\*\*\*\*\*g awesome,” he shouts as we merge into the freeway.

“That was terrifying,” I snap. “Goddess knows what would have happened had they followed us to the airport!”

“We’re ok now, nena. They won’t find us now. Just try to relax. We still got an half an hour before we reach SF,” Oliver tries to reassure me.

I don’t enjoy the rest of the trip, afraid someone else might be following us. When we finally reach the airport, I have to stop myself from staring at people.

“Aurora, we’re fine. I don’t sense any other wolves in the area,” Oliver says, placing his hand on my lower back. “We’ll be okay.”

We say our goodbyes to Carter and walk into the airport. My stomach starts to growl once we get past the TSA agents.

“We still have 20 mins before we have to board. I’m gonna get a muffin and a hot chocolate from the coffee shop. Do you want anything?” I ask, grabbing some cash from my bag and stuffing it in my pocket.

“Sure, just a coffee. Black. Two sugars.”

I nod and go off to fetch our drinks while he takes a seat at the bar. When I come back, there’s a pretty blonde girl sitting next to him, desperately trying to get his attention. Oliver smiles and nods politely but I can tell he’s getting annoyed. Reyna starts growling, angry another girl is flirting with him. I calm her down and watch for a moment, curious to see what he does. After a few minutes, Oliver seems to get concerned and starts to look around for me, no longer paying attention to girl at all. I try to keep a straight face as I walk back with our drinks and treats.

“I was about to go look for you,” he says getting up and kissing my cheek. “You scared the crap out of me.”

“I got you a croissant,” I chirp, handing him his drink.

“Pourquoi? Parce que je suis français? {Why? Because I’m French?}” He teases.

My mind goes blank for an instant and I feel my knees go weak before I finally manage to form a sentence. “I-I have no idea what you just said but yes.”

I steal a glance at the girl. Her eyes look me up and down, judging all my imperfections and probably wondering why the hell Oliver isn’t looking at her instead of me. There’s no denying she is prettier than me and I feel self conscious under her gaze. Oliver notices and presses his lips against mine, kissing me sweetly.

“Eres la chica mas hermosa aqui (You are the prettiest girl here). Stop comparing yourself to other girls. They’ve got nothing on you,” he smiles, taking my hand. “Come on, nena. We don’t want to miss our flight,” he smiles.

Pleased, I give the girl a triumphant smile and walk besides Oliver. She glares at me and heads in the opposite direction.

“I see you made a new friend,” I tease.

He rolls his eyes and shakes his head. "I hate you for leaving me alone with that chick. She wouldn't stop asking where I was going. And when I didn't tell her, she thought I was playing hard to get and just kept going!"

I laugh. "Poor little French boy. Too handsome for his own good."

He shuts me up with a kiss, leaving me breathless when he pulls away. I'm a deep shade of red and he has an amused look on his face.

"There are at least 10 guys staring at you right now. I had to show them who you belong to," he winks, grabbing my hand and kissing it.

I follow him mindlessly to our gate and we board our plane. My stomach is in knots as we take our seats. After 18 long years, I'm finally going to meet my twin.

## **The Ivory Queen Chapter 58**

\*\*\*Aurora's POV\*\*\*

I've never been on a plane, so needless to say, I was glued the window the entire trip. Oliver laughed as I pointed and stared at the tiny snow covered world below us. When we landed, Oliver could hardly keep up with me as I ran to Celina's gate.

For the next 15 mins, I watch countless planes land on the strip and try to predict which one was hers. I grow anxious when the clock reads 3:20 and her plane has still not arrived.

"What if something happened? What if she didn't get on the plane or maybe—"

"Aurora calm down. Flights are late all the time. Besides, it was Thanksgiving weekend and it snowed. The airport is extremely busy since everyone is traveling for the holidays. I'm sure Celina is just fine," he says, pulling me into a hug.

Suddenly, I feel Reyna's growing excitement.

She's here! She squeals. Our sister is here! I can sense her!

I turn around in time to see a girl who looks just like me come out of the passenger boarding bridge. Our eyes meet and we both freeze. Words cannot

describe the emotions going through me as I look at her. Her silver grey eyes stare at me with so much love and I feel a sob escape my throat. Before I know it, we're both sprinting towards each other, eager to hug for the first time. Tears stream down my face as I wrap my arms around her and she kisses my cheeks.

"Oh my goddess! Oh my goddess!" she weeps into my shoulder, her body trembling. "Finally, we're together!"

"Tell me it's not a dream! Tell me you're real!" I sob, kissing her cheeks and rubbing her back. "I can't believe it!"

We hold each other a little while longer, grateful to see each other for the first time. When we finally pull back, I see a woman standing next to us with tears in her eyes. She has short curly brown hair and the same chocolate eyes Emiliano once had. Another sob rolls through me.

She looks just like him.

I reach for her and she holds me, cupping my face. "Por fin hija, te conozco. Estas hermosa! Tienes los ojos color miel como tu mama! {I finally get to meet you sweetie. You're beautiful. You have your mother's honey eyes}."

Another sob escapes me when she compares me to my mother. "Gracias tia. Te paraces tanto a Emiliano. {Thanks. You look just like Emiliano.}"

"Pues deberiamos. Somos gemelos.{Well we should. We're twins}," she giggles, giving me another tight squeeze. "It so good to see you hija."

She has a thick Mexican accent just like Emiliano and Karina whenever they spoke English. I hear Oliver come up behind us and I quickly wipe away my tears to introduce him.

"Tia, Celina, this is Oliver, my mate. Oliver, this is my tia Valentina, Emiliano's twin sister. And this my sister," I say gesturing toward them.

Tia Val extends her hand out to him and smiles politely. "Nice to meet you," she says.

"Placer de conocerte {Pleasure to meet you}," he replies and Valentina smiles with shock at his perfect Spanish.

Oliver reaches for Celina's hand and she smiles coldly at him.

"You have two strikes against you. Third strike and I kick your a\*s. Got it?" she snaps before smiling sweetly. "But it's so nice to meet you, Oliver."

He stares at her, completely dumbfounded, and I stifle a chuckle.

"Who's hungry?" he finally manages to say and we stop by one of the many airport restaurants for a very late lunch.

After gathering our stuff from baggage claim, we rent a car and drive out to our destination. I have to fight my childish urges as I've never seen snow before. We manage to find a cute little hotel on the outskirts of the town. I squeal with excitement as I get out of the car and grab some of the snow with my gloved hands and throw it in the air. Celina and my aunt look amused at my reaction.

"You've never seen snow before?" Celina asks, smiling as I continue to play with the fluffy white snow.

"I don't get out much," I laugh as I get on all four and roll around on the white clouds of snow. "I've never seen the beach either..."

"You live in California! How is that even possible?" She chuckles.

"Emiliano was little overprotective and didn't really let us leave the pack all that often. Karina didn't let me leave at all after he died," I shrug and grab some more snow, molding it into a ball and chucking it at Oliver.

\*\*\*Aurora's POV\*\*\*

I've never been on a plane, so needless to say, I was glued the window the entire trip. Oliver laughed as I pointed and stared at the tiny snow covered world below us. When we landed, Oliver could hardly keep up with me as I ran to Celina's gate.

I start to laugh but stop when I notice the sadness in everyone's eyes. I immediately try to back pedal, not wanting to ruin the happy mood.

"I-I mean, the beach was too far anyways," I say, forcing a smile.

"Let's get checked in," Oliver says, trying to help me out. "We can play when we're all settled in."

We check in to two separate rooms, one for Oliver and I and the other for Celina and my aunt. It's after five when we finally get settled.

"How are you feeling?" Oliver asks as he plops down on the bed.

"I keep thinking this is all just a dream and I'm going to wake up any minute back at Lluvia Blanca," I say, sitting next to him.

"Lluvia Blanca can kiss my French a\*s," he says, kissing my hand. "They're never going to hurt you again, I promise."

I lay my head on his chest and listen to the sound of his heart beat.

"It's crazy how much she looks like you. It's like she's an exact copy of you but there are some clear differences I've noticed since meeting her."

"Oh yeah? Like what?" I ask, propping myself up on the bed with my elbow.

He grins. "Well for one thing, you actually like me and she clearly doesn't."

"That's not true. She just doesn't know you all that well. And I may or may not have told her you rejected me, among other things," I admit. "But she doesn't hate you or anything..."

"That doesn't make me feel any better," he mutters.

"Whatever," I laugh. "So what else is different?"

"You two are complete opposites. You're shy and quiet whereas Celina seems very outgoing... and loud," he chuckles. "She's also very straight forward and opinionated. You, on the other hand, keep everything to yourself and are a complete mystery," he says, leaning closer so that his hot breath tickles my face. I bite my lower lip to hold back a giggle. "But that's okay. I'm going to figure you out eventually," he smiles, before pressing his lips against mine.

He deepens the kiss, slipping his tongue in my mouth and rolling me onto my back, trapping me beneath him. Reyna purrs with excitement when I feel his hand slip under my shirt and travel towards my breasts. Oliver caresses my mounds gently, rubbing and teasing my aching pert n\*\*\*\*s between his thumbs and forefingers. I moan with pleasure as the desire starts to build up in my core.

In a split second, Oliver pulls my top and bra off, leaving me bare and at his mercy. His mouth latches onto one of my dark brown peaks, softly suckling me into a frenzy. I arch my back, running my hands in his hair to pull him closer. He lets go of my n\*\*\*\*e and makes his way down my torso, taking special care to kiss every scar I have.

“So perfect,” he murmurs quietly. “So beautiful..”

I feel butterflies in my stomach and I bite my lower lip as he gets dangerously close to my s\*x. Oliver looks back up at me, as if asking for permission to proceed. I can hear my heart pounding in my chest and I pant with anticipation.

Yes, I want this.

I unbutton my jeans for him while he pulls back to remove his shirt when we hear a knock at the door.

“You’ve got to be kidding me...” he groans, putting his shirt back on.

I sit up and put my bra and shirt back on, red as a freaking tomato and trying my best to slow my breathing. I go to the door and find Celina grinning at me.

“Oh, did I interrupt something?” she chuckles when she notices my disheveled hair and swollen lips.

“Yes,” Oliver calls out.

“No,” I snap. I grab her hand and pull her into the room. “Come in.”

She plops down on the bed and sighs.

“Where’s our tia?” I ask as I sit beside her.

“She’s taking a nap. We’ve been up for a while and she’s beat.”

“I’ll give you two some privacy,” Oliver says, grabbing his coat.

“It’s ok, you can stay. Besides, there’s nowhere else for you to go. It started snowing pretty heavily outside,” Celina reassures. She turns to me now. “Ok, let me ask you some questions! I know general stuff about you but I want to know more! Please?”

Olivier runs to the chair in the corner, clearly intrigued. I nod and Celina starts to think of her questions.

“Okay, I’ve got one. What’s your favorite childhood memory?” She asks, wiggling her eyebrows.

A particular memory pops into my head and I smile.

“When I was 6 years old, we went to this pumpkin patch on the outskirts of the city. Halloween was just around the corner and while we didn’t really celebrate it, our family always went out together to pick a pumpkin for our house. The patch had a corn maze, wheel barrow and tractor rides, scarecrow making stations and of course, pumpkins. Anyways, Mia and I went to the scarecrow station and made a really scary scarecrow,” I say, smiling at the memory. Our scarecrow was about as intimidating as a squirrel but we thought it was scary.

“So with our scary scarecrow, Mia and I hid in the corn maze and jumped out at Chava when he walked through it. I can still hear him screaming like a girl just thinking about it. The look on his face was \*chef’s kiss\* priceless!” I chuckle.

“Dad – I mean Emiliano, however, didn’t find it very funny and we weren’t allowed to help pick and carve the pumpkin anymore as punishment.” I sigh.

“Back then, Chava was a really good older brother and he didn’t want us to feel left out. He took out his allowance and bought us each our very own tiny pumpkin so we would have something to carve and decorate. And even after we scared him, he pushed us around the entire pumpkin patch in the wheel barrow and held Mia’s hand when she was scared to go on the tractor. He was always looking out for us, you know? I loved that little pumpkin he gave me.”

I have to take a deep breath to keep from crying.

“That actually makes me hate him more,” Celina grunts. “He loved you and yet he was able to hurt you so easily. Just like that!” She says, snapping her fingers.

“I don’t see it that way,” I whisper. “Memories like these help to remind me that there was once some good in him. It gives me hope that there might still be some kindness, just very well hidden.”

“You truly are amazing,” Oliver mumbles, more to himself than to us and I blush.

“So what’s your favorite memory?” I ask Celina, trying to ease the tension.

“Tia Valentina and her husband, Danny, have a son named Diego. He’s like a year older and practically my brother. Anyways, Danny is the supervisor for this packaging company and when we were like 5 or 6, he used to bring home these giant boxes big enough for Diego and I to climb in and play with. We would make cities out of these boxes, cutting out holes for windows and doors. We would use blankets, pillows, markers and any other item we could find to make our houses pretty and comfortable,” she laughs.

“We always had to make the hospital first because we knew by the end of the day, one of us would end up there and it was usually Diego,” she smirks. “We were so competitive with each other and we would have these house making competitions. Tia Val was always the judge and she would decide which one of us had the most creative house.”

“I loved making those houses because no matter how much we fought over who’s house was better, at the end of the day, both of us would curl up together in one of the boxes and fall asleep, any anger and frustration melted away. It was beautiful.”

“I’m glad you and Diego get along so well,” I smile. “I’m glad you weren’t alone.”

“I’m sorry it wasn’t the same for you,” she responds, her voice quiet.

I shrug. “I had thirteen good years so I wasn’t always alone.”

She sighs, tracing patterns on the mattress. “Are you always this positive?” She asks, shaking her head and smiling.

“Yes, she is. It’s infuriating when you try to argue with her,” Oliver grunts and I stick my tongue out at him.

“Okay, next question,” she says, putting her hand on her chin and tilting her head in thought. “Ooh I got one,” she giggles, looking over at Oliver. “You’re going to hate this question!”

He frowns, crossing his arms over his chest. “Then don’t ask it.”

She bounces up and down on the bed with her excitement. “No, you’re really going to want to know.” She turns back to me and smirks. “Aurora, who was your childhood crush and why?”

Oliver’s frown curves up at the edges and he looks amused. “Yeah, Aurora. Who was your crush?” he mocks.

I blush and grab a pillow to bury my face into. “No, you really don’t want to know,” I squeak, burning with embarrassment. “You’re going to hate me.”

## **The Ivory Queen Chapter 59**

\*\*\*Aurora’s POV\*\*\*

“Why? Do I know him?” Oliver asks, raising his eyebrows.

I nod. “Unfortunately, you do...”

“Well tell me who he is so I can properly kick his a\*s!” He jokes and I chuck the pillow at him. “I’m kidding, Aurora. But I am.... curious.”

“Fine!” I huff. “But you guys have to answer too!”

They both raise their hands in surrender and I sigh with annoyance. Stupid question!

“Ok, I used to, as in Past Tense, have a crush on my former Alpha’s son...” I say, heat rushing to my cheeks. I grab another pillow and bury my face into it.

“You liked Javier!?” Oliver asks with shock and I nod shyly into the pillow.

Celina laughs. “Wow Aurora, you sure have a thing for Alphas,” she grins. “That makes two of us.”

Oliver rolls his eyes and chucks the pillow I threw at him back to us. “So what was so great about Javier?”

We can hear the jealousy in his voice and laugh at him. I finally take my face out of the pillow and fidget with my hair, suddenly very conscious of how Oliver is looking at me.

“Chava and Javi have always been best friends and he was practically at our house all the time growing up. Javier and I very quickly discovered we loved to mess with Chava and we became really close,” I giggle as a frown tugs at Oliver’s lips. “I’ve always been a little shy but not when it comes to dancing. I love to dance. Dad taught me everything I knew and I used to dance with Javi all the time as kids. He was my partner at every quinceañera and every dance.”

I steal a glance Oliver and notice he’s clenching his jaw with annoyance.

I better wrap this up.

“Long story short, it was my first spring dance and I was just six grader. Middle school was not my shining moment. I was a little nervous because I didn’t have a lot of friends and didn’t think anyone would want to dance with me. All the other girls were on the dance floor with cute boys while I was on the sidelines... alone. No one had asked me to dance so I was just trying to be invisible.” I fidget with the pillow and a small smile tugs at my lips.

“Javi saw me, though, and he asked me to dance. I don’t know why he did it. He was an 8th grader at the time and very popular among the girls. He could’ve dance with any girl he wanted but he chose me. Perhaps he did it because I was his best friends little sister, but regardless, it was really special to me.”

“Javi?” Oliver says in a high pitched, mocking tone, making me laugh. “I’m going to kill him,” he huffs and I stick my tongue out at him.

“Shut up!” I giggle. “Celina, you’re next. Who was your crush and why?”

“His name is, drum roll please.... Angel Guerrero,” she giggles. “Now there’s a fine piece of man. He’s also a future Alpha but from our neighboring pack,” she says wiggling her eyebrows. “We first met when we were kids at a pack Christmas party. I accidentally walked into him and spilled my drink all over him and he got mad for like a split second and then.. I don’t know, he just smiled at me. In like an instant I was head over heels for him. First guy to ever make me blush! Anyways, we snuck out of the house and had a snow ball fight until our parents came to find us.” She smiles happily. “He goes to the same college as me and we hang out all the time. It’s too bad he’s not my mate. I really like being around him.”

"I'm sure whoever your mate is will make you blush again," I giggle and turn to Oliver. As if on cue, Oliver winks at me and I blush immediately.

"Thank you for rubbing your mate in my face," Celina says, rolling her eyes. "Now Oliver, your turn."

\*\*\*Aurora's POV\*\*\*

"Why? Do I know him?" Oliver asks, raising his eyebrows.

"Yeah, who was your crush?" I tease.

"I told you, I wasn't allowed to look at another girl who wasn't Adeline," he shrugs, his voice laced with slight irritation.

"That doesn't mean you didn't like another girl. Tell us!" Celina insists.

After we berate him for a bit longer he finally snaps.

"Ok Keoni!" He huffs, crossing his arms over his chest and leaning back in the chair. We both give him amused looks, waiting for him to elaborate. He sighs with annoyance. "She's ummm... Kehlani's older sister..."

Celina and I both roll over and place our faces in our palms and grin at him. I know I should be a little jealous, but I'm amused with how flustered he is. Oliver is always the one teasing me.

"Well don't stop there! Tell us what you liked about her!" Celina squeals, urging him to continue.

"I hate this conversation..." he mutters. "Well... uh... she was the warrior trainer for Cerulean Sea. When I would go for training with Wesley, she was always there. Most people treat Alphas with a certain level of respect and maybe even a little fear, but not her. She didn't give a rat's a\*s who I was. She was a total badass and completely fearless. I admired that and I felt the urge to impress her. When it came time for us to spar, however, she handed me my a\*s. She never let me live it down," he chuckles.

A badass, huh? Nothing like me. I'm the biggest chicken there is... I must have been a huge let down given how afraid I was when we first met.

I frown slightly but quickly cover it up before he notices. "Kehlani never mentioned she had a sister. How come I've never heard of her or even seen her around Cerulean Sea?" I ask him.

A hint of sadness flickers in his eyes so quickly I almost miss it. "Well, I suppose you wouldn't see her. She passed away a few years ago," he shrugs. "Rogue attack."

"Rogues are the most vile creatures to plague this planet," Celina growls, balling up her fists.

"Agreed," Oliver sighs, looking over at me.

I get up from the bed and curl up in his lap. He reacts by wrapping his arms around me and pulling me close. After a few moments of silence, he starts to chuckle and look up at him in confusion.

"So Javi?" He mocks. "Really?" The jealousy is incredibly entertaining. "Just another reason not to like Lluvia Blanca," he mutters.

His masculine stupidity manages to lighten the mood and I'm grateful for it. I narrow my eyes at him but my lips betray me as they curve into a smile. "Shut up. You liked Kehlani's sister."

"Yeah but it was more admiration than a crush. You on the other hand cannot say the same. Do you still like him?" He asks.

"Oh this is fun," Celina interrupts and we both glare at her. "Oh no, please continue. I'm intrigued."

"No, I do not still like him! It was just puppy love, you i\*\*\*t! I'm in love with you!" I snap, smacking his chest. "Now leave me alone. You're annoying."

"You literally came to sit on my lap. I did not place you here," he smirks. "You came to me!" I move to stand up but he tightens his grip on me and refuses to let go. "No I'm kidding, don't go," he retracts, resting his chin on my shoulder and kissing my cheek.

I roll my eyes but ultimately stay.

"You know, he's kinda growing on me," Celina shrugs. "Guess he's not a total a\*\*\*\*e," she mutters, rolling over on her back and staring at the ceiling.

“Excuse me?” Oliver snaps.

“You heard me.”

I almost choke on my laugh, earning me a glare from Oliver.

“Okay, next question!”

We spend the next two hours asking questions and sharing stories, learning more about each other with every passing minute. Tia Val comes in around 9 o’ clock and we order in some pizzas.

“So I think we need to go over your shifts and what you two need to expect,” Valentina says, taking the last bite of her slice. “I’ve explained some of the details to Celina but Aurora, are you familiar with any of the details of your shift?”

I nod my head. “I have a book that kind of explains what happens.”

“Excellent so then I’ll quickly explain so we’re all on the same page. The full moon will be at its peak just a few hours before sunrise, around 4:30 am. We’ll need to leave the hotel at 4 am.”

Celina and I groan while Oliver slips out his phone and begins setting some alarms.

“I see you’re both wearing your medallions. This is great, you’ll need to be wearing them during your shift. You will take each other’s hands and activate your Earth and Air elements before being transported to meet with Moon Goddess. No one knows for sure what happens during your meeting with Her. I think it’s different for every set of Ivory twins. Now when your meeting is done, the shift takes place. Just relax, let your wolf take control and don’t fight it. The first shift is always painful but just breathe, the pain will pass on it’s own.”

“I’m so nervous,” Celina admits, pulling her knees to her chest. “I wonder what Moon Goddess will say...”

“You’ll find out soon enough,” my aunt reassures. Her face suddenly turns very serious. “There’s one more thing I have to mention.”

The tone of her voice makes me nervous and I feel my heart rate accelerate. Oliver notices and holds my hand to calm me down.

Valentina sighs. "I've already explained this to Celina but I need to tell you too. Since you are the first born daughter of Queen Sofia, you are technically heir to the throne and a future Queen. Your wolf will be extremely territorial compared to Celina's. Once you complete the shift, you'll need to establish a kingdom within the next three years."

"A kingdom?" I ask, not fully understanding what this meant. "But, I'll be a Luna soon. Does that count?"

Valentina shakes her head. "That's not enough. Your instinct is to rule and lead. You will never be able to sit on the sidelines as just a Luna. You are a Queen by nature."

I shake my head fervently. "No, you don't understand. I can't lead people. I barely manage to speak at Alpha meetings as it is."

"Leading is in your blood. Trust me. I would be left in awe at your mother's ability to dominate a room full of Alphas. She'd turn them into puppies in an instant," she chuckles. "Mija, there is nothing to fear. Your wolf will know what to do when the time comes. I just wanted to give you a heads up of what lies ahead."

"What about Sol De Oro? Can she go back and rule that kingdom?" Celina asks, her eyes filled with hope at the thought of returning to the place our parents once called home.

Our aunt's face falls at the mention of the old Kingdom. "No mija. You can't go back there. There's nothing left to rule. When your mami died, the kingdom fell with her. The surviving packs got absorbed by the neighboring Kingdom, Estrella del Monte."

My heart shatters at the news. Tais truly took everything from me.

Valentina reaches for our hands and holds them tightly. "Do not be sad. You are Royals in your own right. Now everyone get some rest. We have a big day ahead of us."

## **The Ivory Queen Chapter 60**

\*\*\*Aurora's POV\*\*\*

I wake up to the sound of Oliver's stupid alarm going off. I got very little sleep last night, the thought of forming my own Kingdom terrifying me to my core. I was not a Queen. I could not possibly handle the pressure of leading a bunch of packs and their alphas. I still didn't think I was good enough to be Luna of River Moon!

As we get dressed, Oliver notices my growing anxiety and tries to comfort me.

"You're very cute when you frown but you're ten times prettier when you smile," he teases, cupping my cheeks in his hands and kissing the tip of my nose. His stupid comment brings a smile to my face and my cheeks tinge red. "Look at the smile!" he chuckles. "Beautiful."

"I scrunch up my nose and try to pull away but he holds me in place and presses his lips against mine.

"We have to go," I murmur.

"Just a few more seconds please," he says, kissing me softly and I start to melt in his arms. "I can't wait to see your wolf."

"Me too," I say giving him one last kiss before pulling away. "Now let's go. Moon Goddess awaits."

We meet Celina and my tia in the lobby of the hotel and drive deep into the woods. Luckily for us, it stopped snowing earlier in the morning and so the night is peaceful and quiet.

We pull over and walk into woods, finding a clearing nearby. My stomach is in knots and Celina takes my hand. Valentina orders Oliver to remain in his human form while she goes behind a tree to shift. Her silver wolf has gorgeous turquoise eyes just like Emiliano and I fight back tears as she comes closer. The silver fur on her body has a metallic gleam to it and I'm reminded just how beautiful silver wolves are. Her eyes begin to glow and she multiplies before our eyes. Soon there are at least 15 identical copies of herself and they encircle us, keeping guard while Oliver remains outside the circle, also on high alert.

"Ok, Aurora. It's time," Celina says, taking a huge gulp of air and releasing it.

We begin to undress, leaving only our medallions hanging on our necks and hold hands when we're finished. Celina stares at the scars on my body for a second, her eyes glued to the target shaped scar on my stomach. Tears well up in her eyes.

"What did they do to you?" she whimpers.

I give her hand a squeeze, forcing her to look up at me and I give her a reassuring smile. "I'm ok," I mouth and she nods her understanding. Despite the snow, I'm not cold at all.

Just relax, Reyna encourages. Focus on the earth to activate your element.

Taking a deep breath, I close my eyes to concentrate. I focus on the trees surrounding us and feel an overwhelming sense of peace wash over me. I feel the frozen ground beneath my feet, visualizing every grain of earth. Suddenly, a jolt of energy flows between Celina and I, forcing me to open my eyes.

The snow covered forest is replaced by a gorgeous green pasture and we see a forest out in the distance with a river flowing by it. Celina and I are still holding hands but are no longer nude. Our feet are bare while plain white dresses hang off our shoulders. Above our heads, the floating fire and water orbs dance in unison.

Where is Moon Goddess?" I ask, looking around tentatively.

"I don't know," Celina shrugs before pulling on my hand. "Let's go to the stream. I don't know why but I feel like that's the way to go."

We walk for a few minutes across the pasture, stopping at the edge of the forest next to the stream. A gentle breeze flows through the trees and a beautiful voice whispers our names.

"Aurora.... Celina..."

Suddenly a beautiful woman appears standing in the water. Her silky black hair flows freely in the wind and her creamy pale skin glistens in the moonlight. She wears a white dress with pretty blue designs on the hems and is also barefoot.

\*\*\*Aurora's POV\*\*\*

I wake up to the sound of Oliver's stupid alarm going off. I got very little sleep last night, the thought of forming my own Kingdom terrifying me to my core. I was not a Queen. I could not possibly handle the pressure of leading a bunch of packs and their alphas. I still didn't think I was good enough to be Luna of River Moon!

"Hello Aurora. Hello Celina," She says, her voice smooth and velvety.

We instinctively kneel before her. "Hello Moon Goddess," we reply in unison.

"You may stand," she chuckles and we both jump to our feet. She smiles brilliantly at us and I can't help but blush.

She's so pretty.

"You have waited many years for this day," she says with a sad smile on her face. "Unfortunately, evil has kept you apart."

"It's alright, Moon Goddess. We're together now and that's all that matters," I reply quietly.

"Such kindness in your eyes, Aurora. I'm glad the pain could not take that from you," she smiles, turning to Celina. "Your hope never faltered, Celina. You held onto hope that you'd see her again. That's beautiful.

Your lives were plagued with hardships you should have never endured alone but I created you to be strong and resilient. Your kindness and your hope have kept you from growing bitter and cruel and I am truly proud of you. But your journey is not finished. You must both learn to face your past before you can take on your roles as guardians. So what better way to do it than together?"

I'm nervous now. There are a lot of things I would rather not face again.

Moon Goddess smiles at us. "It seems both of you are frightened but there is nothing to fear. The past has already happened. I only ask that you learn to deal with the things that have happened to you. We'll start with Aurora."

She grabs both of our hands and a large white flash blinds our eyes for a split second. When our vision returns, I start to cry with horror as I realize where we are.

We're inside my house, my old house in Lluvia Blanca. On the night it all began. I hold back a sob as Emiliano appears into view, furiously looking through the drawers and cabinets for something. I'm startled when I hear Emiliano's thoughts.

"We can hear his thoughts?" I ask Celina who looks equally confused.

"Where did Karina put it? I know she's upset about this trip but she has no right taking Aurora's medallion and her mother's letter!" Emiliano thinks as he continues to search for it.

Karina took the box even before he died?

A very confused and sleepy 12 year old me comes tip toeing down the stairs carrying a suitcase. Just as I remember, he absentmindedly instructs me to go outside and wait in the car.

We follow my younger self out to the car but I steal one more glance at Emiliano as I know it's the last time I'll see him alive. Younger me grumbles about wanting to go back to sleep as she shoves her suitcase in the car when the all too familiar rustling sound of the trees startle her.

We watch as the rogues surround younger me. Emiliano comes running out, his thoughts full of fear.

"No, mi niña no!" He cries as he shifts quickly and jumps to my rescue.

I close my eyes, not wanting to see how he was killed but Celina shakes me. "You need to see it. She wants you to see it."

I open my eyes and watch as Emiliano fights off the Rogues. Younger me is curled up on the floor, eyes tightly closed and mouth clamped shut.

I run up to her and scream. "Open you eyes! Scream! Call for help! Don't just sit there! They're going to kill him!"

Celina grabs my arms and pulls me back. "She can't hear you, Aurora. Just watch."

The rogues are highly skilled, narrowly avoiding Emiliano's attacks. Finally, one manages to sneak up on him and pounces on top of him while two more tear into his front paws and knock him to the ground. A fourth Rogue sinks it's

canines into his throat. The other rogues step away, knowing he'll bleed out on his own. Younger me opens her eyes and screams, effectively sending the rogues scrambling to avoid being caught. My younger self curls up next to Emiliano and weeps, staining herself in his blood.

His mind is so clouded but we manage to hear his last thoughts "I'm so sorry mija. I love you."

I let out a scream when I realize his last thoughts were of me. I run up to younger Aurora and screech in her ear. "Why didn't you scream? Why didn't you save him?" I cry, falling to my knees and grabbing Emiliano's fur.

"You couldn't have saved him Aurora! This was not your fault. Look at me," Celina says, kneeling beside me and cupping my cheeks. "You can't blame yourself for this. This was not your fault!"

"It's my fault," I mutter, refusing to believe her and Celina kisses my cheek.

"No, it's really not," she reassures.

The nightmare is not over, however, and we hear Karina and Chava rush out of the house. Her blood curdling screams send shivers down my spine and her thoughts become overwhelmingly loud.

"No! You were supposed to stay inside! I hid the box so you would stay inside! It should have been her, not you! You weren't supposed to die, she was!" She thinks as she weeps over Emiliano's corpse. "My babies... now what am I going to do? Oh Goddess, what have I done?"

As her thoughts register, Moon Goddess brings us back to the stream.

"She knew about the Rogues," I say through gritted teeth, still kneeling on the ground. "She was ... she was working for Tais...She-She killed him and she let me take the blame!"

My head is about to explode with anger and something else and I want to scream. My breathing becomes labored as I struggle to get air into my lungs.

"She knew..." I'm whimper. "Karina.... never loved me....s-she....didn't want me...."

There's a lump in my throat and I fight to contain my pain.

“Let it out, my child. Don’t hold back,” Moon Goddess reassures. “You have just learned that the only mother you ever knew was not only aware of the truth of that night but also helped orchestrate it. She tortured you willingly.”

A small sob escapes my throat as I struggle to breathe.

“She took Emiliano from you. Your brother, your sister, your pack. Everything. She betrayed you. She betrayed Emiliano.”

I scream at the water.

“What do you feel?” Moon goddess asks.

“I-I don’t know ! I don’t know!” I scream. “I’m angry!”

“Why?”

“Because I still love her!” I reply truthfully. “Because I thought it was my fault that he’s dead! Because I’m just angry at... everything!”

Another sob rolls through me and I wrap my arms around myself, rocking back and forth.

“Commit to this moment, Aurora. You are coming to terms with your past. You were just a child and yet your pack painted you as the villain. For years, they called you a murderer and while you adamantly denied it, a part of you believed it to be true. You thought the only thing you deserved was pain and you took it willingly from them. You grew up in that basement, forgetting what it felt like to be loved. But my child, the night you’ve spent the past five years blaming yourself for ... happened through no fault of your own. You could do nothing to change the outcome. Karina may not have loved you but you were loved nonetheless. Emiliano never left you. He gave you his strength and his courage to forgive and live in his absence. Never forget what he taught you. You could do nothing to save him. You were not his killer, you were just his little girl.”

I let out a sorrowful wail that rumbles through the trees, pain pouring out of my heart. I weep for what seems like an eternity until I have not more tears left to shed. I heave and pant, sucking in air until my lungs feel content. An sense of peace slowly starts to wash over me and I muster up the strength to look Moon Goddess in the eyes. She smiles at me.

“I’m free,” I whisper.