

Chapter 31 - Lost II - The Royal Hybrid

Tatiana's POV

She merely stood there, not speaking, barely even moving as she had what obviously was some sort of internal battle. The anger radiated off of her and her eyes locked on Gabriel who stood only a few feet away. Before she could finish whatever thought went through her mind, I jumped between the two of them just as she took a step forward.

"No," I snapped. "You don't get to do that."

I don't know where my sudden anger came from. I would have understood it had it been Hayden she had fronted, but Gabriel? I shook my head at myself before I focused back on the scene that was about to blow up in front of me.

"How can you side with this moron?" she asked through gritted teeth. "He is nothing more than a dog following his orders."

"I'm not," I told her as I tried to convince myself as well. "Just because I don't want you to attack him doesn't mean I approve of his way to speak to you."

I made sure to turn my head towards Gabriel as I spoke, and I watched as his grin turned into a frown. Weird.

"But that doesn't mean that he isn't right," I added. "And deep down, you know that too just like you know calling him a moron and a dog won't help shit so he isn't the only one who's done something wrong here."

She looked from me to Gabriel with a shocked expression before her eyes flickered over to Hayden who stood ready to jump in if needed.

Her shoulders sank as she let out a deep, sharp breath.

"You have changed," she pointed out. "You have never spoken to me or anyone in that tone before."

Her head tilted to the side and amusement rolled over her face.

"And then because of him out of all people," she chuckled, and I knew she was trying to blow on the already burning wood that was between us. "I would have understood it had it been your mate, but your bodyguard?"

She huffed as she lifted her hand and examined her nails.

"Funny thing, don't you think Hayden?" she smirked as her eye flickered to him, waiting for his response.

She wasn't just blowing on the wood, no she was pouring gasoline onto an already burning fire.

"I know you are hurting right now Kath, but this-"

"This what?" she asked in an innocent voice. "I am simply asking because before you came here you weren't even able to stand up for yourself and now you are standing up for a mere stranger."

"Stranger or not, he is a part of this pack, my pack, and he is my bodyguard so of course, I will defend him when someone crosses a line," I argued. "But I also defended you."

"You call keeping me from my brother defending me?" she sneered. "And you call yourself my best friend."

"I am your best friend."

"And he is my brother! He is my blood, something which you are not!" she yelled. "Not that you would know what that means anyway."

Her words stung. It was like she had slapped me across the face with a piece of burning iron and held it there for a few seconds just to make sure I felt the burn.

"Enough!"

Hayden's voice boomed loudly across the area the same second that Gabriel pushed me behind him.

"You are crossing a line there Kathleen!" he growled at her, no longer caring about how I would react to it.

"Oh, excuse me? Which one of you two is her mate again? I seem to have forgotten."

Her voice was sharp and filled with venom. This wasn't the Kathleen I had grown up with. No, this person in front of me was a stranger.

"Kath..." I said in a begging voice.

"You know what? I should have never come here with you," she spat. "Just leave me be for now, okay and please oh princess, let me know in due time when I will get to see my brother?"

She shifted and ran off before I even had the chance to try and stop her and for the first time in a very long time, I felt a pain in my chest, the same pain I felt the day Killian locked me in that basement and left me for days.

My right hand instantly went to my chest and my left to my mouth as small hiccup seeming sounds left it. Pure panic went through every vein in my body. The panic of being left again, the panic of losing a loved one, and the panic of the dark taking over once again.

My knees started to shake underneath me and before I had the chance to stop it or warn the two guys next to me, I collapsed onto the ground, sitting with my knees firmly in the cold and damp grass.

“Hey! It is going to be okay,” Gabriel cooed.

“You need to breathe,” Hayden said frantically. “Look at me, please.”

I wasn't even aware of the fact that I have forced my eyes shut and closed them so tight that my entire forehead scrunched up until I felt two different sets of hands on me.

I slowly opened my eyes and stared at the two men crunching down on each side of me, worry written all over their faces. Both of them had one of their hands on each of my arms and the other one on the sides of my head slowly drawing small circular motions to calm me down.

“Breathe,” Hayden reminded me again, his eyes filled with worry and his voice with sadness.

When my eyes darted to Gabriel, he nodded also telling me to breathe and as if I breathed for the very first time, I let in the air that my lungs so desperately needed, and with that my hiccups turned into small sobs that made my entire body shake.

“It is okay,” Gabriel reassured me or tried to at least.

I couldn't form a word, let alone a sentence so I did the only thing I could. I shook my head.

She had left. I didn't know if she had left the pack land, but she had left, and I wasn't sure when she would be back.

Sure, we had had a fallout or two growing up, but never one this bad.

We had made a pact back then. If one was ever mad at the other, we fixed it right away. We never left and never went to bed mad. Never.

But we were only kids back then and now... I guess time really has changed. We are no longer who we were, but did that really have to be such a bad thing?

My sobs slowly disappeared little after little all while my breathing went back to normal. The circular motions they traced along my skin had done the job.

I was calm.

“That’s better,” Hayden sighed in relief when he felt that my breathing slowed down.

Even though I wanted to go to my bedroom and stay there for the rest of the day more than anything, I quickly dried my eyes and my cheeks and got up from the ground and as both of their hands fell from my arms by my sudden movement, a shaky breath escaped my lips and I suddenly felt cold. I quickly shook it off me, knowing that it would have to be a question for another day.

I had never really been able to do whatever I wanted, and that hadn’t changed, however, this time it wasn’t out of fright of what could happen if I did what my heart desired, no, this time it was because I had a responsibility. I had people to protect, I had my pack that right now needed not only my attention but also protection. I was the one who ran away, I was the reason why Killian was on a hunting spree and so I was the reason why he would go to the lengths that he did. He knew I would come here and knowing him, I should have known he wouldn’t just back down. Especially not after everything I had learned about not only my powers but my entire family’s powers.

“You don’t have to act all tough,” Hayden frowned as he got up from the ground and placed his hand on my arm.

“It’s okay to feel whatever you are feeling,” Gabriel chipped in, and I couldn’t help but notice the small glance that Hayden shot him.

“I don’t have time to sit and mope around,” I sighed. “Not anymore.”

I walked towards the barn but was stopped by Gabriel’s arm.

“What exactly do you think that you are doing?”

“Getting some answers,” I told him and shook his arm off. “Alone.”

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Tatiana’s POV

“Have you reconsidered?” I questioned as I pulled a chair up so that I could sit in front of him.

“You came back faster than I had imagined,” he chuckled. “Caved in so fast?”

“That is bold coming from someone who begged me not to leave him in here alone just a few minutes ago.”

His grin disappeared for a second but just as fast as his mask had gone, it was back up.

“My sister is right you know,” he smirked. “You really have changed.”

My eyes narrowed at the mention of Kath as I involuntarily let go of the chair and took a step back. I couldn't help myself as I just stared him down.

“Don't be so surprised,” he huffed. “I am a werewolf after all, and this place isn't exactly soundproof just like you didn't exactly whisper.”

“I find it unsettling how you can find your sister's sadness so amusing,” I shot at him. “After all, you were the cause of our fight, but you already know that.”

“I find it weird how she suddenly seems to be so interested in me, that is all,” he shrugged.

“You are her brother so why wouldn't she?”

“The brother she kept pushing aside for you, you mean?” he snorted. “Someone who isn't even bound to her by blood like I am.”

“Maybe if you hadn't been such a dick all the time-“

“Then what? I could have hung out with you two? I'd rather be the dickhead then,” he chuckled.

“Well, you succeeded with that for sure,” I said as I looked at the still empty chair in front of him.

It was a bit too close to him for my liking.

Chad was one of the few people I knew that you could never fully trust, not with anything, and even though he was chained down, you could never be sure that he wouldn't try anything. I grabbed the back of the chair, the soft fabric caressing my skin, and pulled it behind me before sitting down.

“Didn't want to be that close to me huh? Are you scared that I would bite?”

“No,” I stated. “I just don't trust you.”

“Same thing,” he huffed.

“Not really,” I smiled. “You definitely would bite if you got the chance, but even if you couldn't, I wouldn't want to be too close to you.”

“Oh, Cassie you are hurting my feelings here,” he fake pouted.

I decided to let it go when he once again called me the wrong name. I knew he did it on purpose. He wanted a reaction from me and not so long ago he would have gotten it, but times are different now. I was different.

“I would say I’m sorry, but I’m really not, so are we done chitchatting?”

“You really have changed huh? You are no longer the little weak freak that you were before. Don’t get me wrong,” he quickly added. “You are still a freak, but you are a freak with a mouth now.”

“Are you done?”

“Afraid that I will get under your skin?” he teased. “Or are you afraid that your little boy toys out there will come in here and rip my head off? You do know that they are both listening in closely, making sure that I don’t hurt you, right?”

I rolled my eyes in response and leaned further back into the seat, trying to hide the fact that I suddenly felt uncomfortable.

“You know, that isn’t very ladylike,” he huffed.

“I don’t think you should be the one talking about manners now, should you?”

The way his lips curled into a grin made my skin crawl. His eyes roamed my body and the intensity alone from it, made me feel utterly naked.

This was Chad’s way of doing it. It was his way of avoiding questioning from other people. I remember even when we were younger, he did the exact same thing and had people feeling so uncomfortable that they without further questioning, ran for the hills just to get away from his hollow gaze.

It didn’t matter if it was one of the elder warriors or the teacher from our pack school, one look and they all scrambled so of course, he wanted to see if I would do the same.

He considered me weak after all.

“That isn’t working on me,” I clarified while humming a light melody to distract myself.

“Are you sure?” he grinned. “It worked on you so well when you were a kid. All the things I could make you do without barely trying.”

His eyes narrowed, the hollowness closing in trying to intimidate me even further as his eyes suddenly darkened.

"I made you stay in that crawl space, remember?" he asked. "For an entire week even. You didn't dare to come out and whatever food was brought to you if any was given at all, you gave to me. You even took the fall for some of my mistakes too," he laughed.

"Not for some, for all of them," I corrected. "But that won't happen this time. Back then I was scared, I'll admit that much, but I wasn't scared of you. No, I was scared of Killian and what he'd do if he found out that I didn't treat you right. After all, if I didn't do as you suggested you would snitch to your dear dad who would then tell our dear Alpha."

I once again rolled my eyes at him before continuing.

"But this is why I also know that you eventually will snitch again. But this time... It will be in my favor."

"Don't flatter yourself, Cassie," he frowned. "You aren't as intimidating as you want to be. Just because you suddenly have a house, and a pack to play family with doesn't make you any stronger than you were before. You are weak. And you will always be that. Weak."

The sound of growls could be heard from outside and I knew it was only a matter of time before they had enough and would barge in here either beating him up or 'accidentally' killing him.

"Stay out there," I calmly said before I looked Chad directly in the eyes.

I had enough.

I heard enough.

"This wasn't what I came in here for, and you thinking I am weak is a huge mistake on your part. Now cut the crap and the unwanted small talk and start telling me something at least somewhat useful to me or I will walk out of here again and leave you to rot."

My voice had changed completely. The soft undertone was now gone and replaced with a low growl I'd never heard come from me before nor was prepared for and the look on Chad's face told me that he wasn't either.

"You wouldn't," he shrugged regaining his composure. "After all, we are family."

"You and I," I snickered as I got up from the chair. "We are not family nor will we ever be and seeing as you want to continue this charade, I might as well save myself the trouble and leave now."

I lifted my right leg and rested my foot on the seat of the chair before pushing it backward with one smooth kick. I didn't look back as I walked at a normal pace towards

the door. I wasn't that desperate for information, especially not when all he wanted to do was play games with me.

Games... He hadn't changed since he was a kid, but we weren't kids anymore and this time I could play the game too.

"Where are you going?"

I didn't answer. I just kept my pace steady, and my head held high.

"Cassie," he sneered frustrated with my lack of response and when my hand rested on the door handle, my fingers slowly gripping it, ready to pull it down and walk out of there for good, he called out.

"God dammit, Tatiana!" he shrieked this time sounding quite panicked.

A small grin crept up on my face. The thought of him being left alone in here was his trigger. He was a guy as social as they came with a love for freedom just like anybody else and the fear of imprisonment. The fear I remembered seeing on his face whenever he tormented me in the crawl space for fun and the door would suddenly shut closed. The pale face, the panic in his eyes, his frantic movements, and the sweat forming on his forehead. He always tried to hide it or mask it, making sure that I wouldn't notice, but I did, and this was the very same fear that I knew I had to take advantage of in order to get what I wanted.

And now... I had him.

I had him exactly where I wanted him and the frown on his face when I turned around with the grin still up, told me that he knew that just as well as I did.

Game over Chad.

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Hayden's POV

I didn't like the thought of her being all alone with him in there in the first place, and it didn't help one bit that we were being able to hear all of the things he would say to her, trying to force a reaction out of her. Had she not told me to stay out here I would have barged in probably breaking the door in the process. I watched the door intensely as the before so very loud voices became quite and all we could hear was mumbling.

"Don't you think we should go in there?" Gabriel asked from beside me in such a low tone that I doubted whether or not he knew that he had talked out loud.

I turned to look at him with a funny expression plastered on my face. He was unable to stand still, his face twisted up in a frown made out of worry. I felt a pang of jealousy inside my chest at the sight of him and the way he worried so much about someone that wasn't even his.

To worry about someone was one thing, I mean after all, his job was to protect her, but the way his muscles tensed, his jaw closed shut and his legs lost the ability to stand still, was not normal. It was not an 'I worry about you because it is my job' kind of way. No, it was the exact same way as I reacted, and I did not like it.

I knew Gabriel. I knew how little he cared, not only about stuff, but about people as well and this was way out of his character. It was the first time since back then, that I had ever seen him care about someone to this degree. And then her out of all people.

I didn't blame him though. She was amazing, kind and brave but she was my mate, and I couldn't shake the feeling that something was going on inside that head of his. Something that shouldn't.

"What is the deal with you?" I asked a little harder than I had intended.

"What?" he murmured not really listening as his eyes were glued to the door probably still trying to hear what was going on inside.

A growl erupted from the debt of my throat catching him and myself quite off guard.

"I asked you something," I sneered when his narrowed eyes met with mine.

"And what did you ask?" he questioned in a mocking tone.

"I asked what your deal is," I repeated.

"I am afraid I need you to clarify a bit there," he huffed and turned his head back to the door.

"Don't fucking look away from me when I am talking to you," I snapped feeling my anger radiate off of me as I grabbed the collar of his shirt, pulling him close to me. "Why do you care so much all of a sudden, huh? This is just another job for you, so fucking act like it."

"And don't I do that?" he asked, completely unbothered by my outburst. "Aren't I here despite the fact that I want to be elsewhere? Don't I make sure that she is safe and sound? Is that not what my job is?"

"I see the way you look at her," I grumbled letting go of his shirt and pushing him backward.

“Who?”

“Don’t act stupid, you know exactly who I mean,” I snorted, getting annoyed. “I don’t know why you do what you do but let’s be clear about one thing here. She is my mate. Mine, not yours.”

“I know that,” he grumbled and took another step back as if I had hit him straight in the face. “She is nothing more than a job to me,” he huffed trying to play it off, but I could see the way his eyes flickered with hurt.

“Nothing more than a job, huh?”

I knew I should have let it go but I simply couldn’t. His reaction only confirmed what my mind was trying to tell me. Something was going on.

We werewolves were known to be territorial and especially about our mates. I never quite knew to which degree until this very moment.

My blood was boiling, my hands getting clammy, and Syx was trying to push through to take over, while I tried my hardest to keep him back.

‘Let me out’

‘No.’

I awaited his answer, but he simply stood there staring into the distance ignoring my entire presence which only pissed me off even more.

‘He wants what is ours,’ Syx growled baring his teeth.

‘We can’t lose control’

Not now. Not again.

And he knew I was right. He huffed and backed off and I felt my body calm down a bit as he stopped fighting me for control.

“Gabriel,” I pushed.

“Nothing more,” he confirmed in a distant tone. “Can you handle it from here or do I need to stick around making sure that you two don’t fuck it all up?”

The tone in his voice had changed once again and this time the softness from before when speaking to her was gone, leaving only traces of aggravation.

“I-“

“Good,” he interrupted and turned around to leave.

He managed to take a few steps away, when the barn door suddenly opened with immense force. Gabriel stopped in his tracks just as my head turned to the side to see what was going on and what my eyes landed on was something I had not expected to see.

Tatiana came out of the barn, but not on two legs. No, she was on all fours and covered with her black and white fur, her eyes like lightening. Her teeth were bared, and a snarl escaped her mouth as she proceeded to trample around us almost as if pacing.

“What happened in there?” I asked horrified trying to figure out what the hell was going on, without approaching her.

The only response I got was a growl before she took off so fast that had I blinked I would have missed it.

"Tatiana!" I called after her but it was too late.

Despite her lack of words, I had been able to sense it. She was beyond mad, but not at us as I knew she probably would have been when learning about our little controversy. No... Whatever Chad had told her, had managed to piss her off to such a degree that she had involuntarily shifted.

I wanted to run after her to ensure that he would remain safe, but I knew that it wouldn't make it better. What she needed now wasn't to be guarded, no, she needed peace and quiet to think everything through and once she was ready, she would come back and probably knock everyone off their feet with whatever she just learned. For her to react this way... It had to be bad.

'Amara,' Syx whimpered distraught.

Gabriel who finally managed to move again, rushed past me and over to where Tatiana had left Chad only to stop abruptly, turn to me and with a shocked voice said, “I think we need to call Alpha Shane... And the doctor.”

I walked to his side to see what he was talking about, and I was taken aback with what met my eyes. The inside of the barn was completely shattered. Remains of a chair had been flung around, wooden legs and the back of it scattered all over the place, boxes that before was nicely piled up had been knocked over and Chad... Chad was on his knees, arms to the sides being held by the chains and looked okay at the first glance. But looking closer you could see the blood running from the side of his head and bruises already forming around his jawline.

“What the...” I trailed off not really knowing what to say.

How had we not heard her shift? Had we been too focused on each other to even notice that she was tearing this entire place apart?

“What did you say to her?” Gabriel growled.

He flew across the barn and stopped right in front of Chad, grabbing him by his shirt, making him moan out in pain by forcing him to stand despite the chains keeping him down.

“What the fuck did you say to her?” he yelled.

I knew I should stop him, but the grin spreading across Chad’s face stopped me from interfering.

His tongue slowly poked out from between his lips and licked the stream of blood away that was currently crossing his face while he looked up at Gabriel.

“Wouldn’t you like to know,” he chuckled.

The satisfying look he had on his face when he tilted his head to look past Gabriel and straight at me, set me off and I lost control.

Within a second, I stood beside Gabriel and while he held him up, I let all my earlier frustration along with the current one out, curled my hand into a fist and let it connect with his face. The loud cracking sound made me grit my teeth and almost made me flinch had it not been for my anger rising with every second passing by.

“I believe he asked you a question,” I snapped seething with rage. “What. Did. You. Say. To. Her.”

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Tatiana’s POV

I ran and I kept running until my legs began to give in.

I reached a small lake surrounded by trees and flowers wherever my eyes went. It was beautiful, so utterly peaceful as the sound of birds singing reached my ears. I decided that here was fine. I was far enough away to be alone, but not so far that I would be in danger.

Chad’s words kept ringing in my head, making the world spin around me. It wasn’t possible... Was it?

No. No, it simply couldn't be.

Everything that would come out of Chad's mouth had to be a lie. It always was, so why would this time be any different?

Once a liar, always one... Right?

I didn't believe what he said, or at least I didn't want to, but why did it feel like a part of me was happy, relieved even, to hear it? Like it had been waiting for it? Like some missing piece finally found its place... Could it really be?

'Amara... Did you know? Is it true?'

'I don't know,' she sighed clearly as distraught as I. 'Maybe I have felt it without noticing but...'

'You aren't sure?'

'I wish I could tell you what you wanted to hear Tatiana, but I simply can't. I neither can confirm nor deny. I should have been able to feel it if it was the case, but then again maybe I am not the one who is meant to feel it.'

'That was what I was afraid you would say.'

I shook my head, trying to focus on the picture-perfect landscape in front of me relying on that to calm me down.

But it didn't work. My heart was beating so fast that it felt like it was about to pop out of my chest. If it was from the running or the anxiety rising within me, I did not know. I found some shadows near a big old tree just down to the lake. The huge branches covered out so far, that I could lay down and rest just on the edge of the grass and still be able to feel the lake's cool water with my paws.

I closed my eyes and let everything that had just happened flow through my mind.

Why have you come?" I asked him.

"I was sent to clarify a few things and return with the answer. I don't think they expected me to be caught, hell I didn't expect to be caught," he chuckled.

"And what things are you referring to here?" I questioned even though I had my suspicions.

"We needed to see the level of security I mean after all this is the royal pack," he shrugged. "And I was sent to see just how difficult it would be to retrieve you."

"It didn't go quite as planned now, did it?"

“That part, no, that didn’t go as planned, but…”

I waited for him to continue his sentence but all he gave me was a low chuckle.

“But what Chad?”

“You do know the stories about mates, right?” he asked all of a sudden, his tone changing. “How every wolf has a soulmate out there?”

I simply nodded waiting for him to get to the point.

“Well, as you know, every wolf has a missing piece, a piece in the form of a mate. That mate will complete them, and make them feel safe as they have an absurd want and need to protect them from everything. That mate, no matter how long they have known their other half, will get a special place in their hearts and a bond will be made if that mate is accepted. But you already know about that part since you found yours,” he snickered. “Now in certain situations where a mate is being rejected, if it does not lead to their deaths, a second chance mate can occur. It doesn’t happen often, but it certainly happens, I myself have seen it once before.”

“Where are you getting at with this?”

“Patience,” he huffed. “Do you want me to tell the story or not?”

I sighed and waited for him to continue.

“Good, now you know about legends too and how some of them are true. You and your brother are excellent examples of this. The legend of the hybrid, however this time it was twins which are even rarer than the hybrid itself. Now, why do you think that Killian chose you and not your brother? Why do you think he didn’t take both of you considering that both of you have incredible powers?”

“I was told my brother was saved,” I simply answered.

“If there is one thing you should know by now, it is that whatever Killian wants, he gets,” he snorted. “If he wanted your brother too then he most certainly would have gotten him as well. So, I’m asking again. Why didn’t he? Any clues at all?”

I opened my mouth to speak but truth be told, I had no clue whatsoever. I knew he was right. Killian always got what he wanted, no matter if it was a big or little thing.

“He wanted my powers? I mean he spent all those years trying to-“

“Wrong,” he sang. “Well not completely. Yes, he wanted you for your powers or more exactly he wanted you for the power of cloaking. But don’t you think there was

something else? Haven't you noticed, let's say, anything that's different from you than your brother? Something that only you have?"

I thought for a little while, but even though I hadn't fully registered what it could be, my lips parted and I heard my own voice as it spoke.

"My fur," I muttered in a questioning tone.

"Good job," he nodded. "Finally got something right."

"But why? What does that have to do with anything?"

"You really don't know do you?" he snickered clearly satisfied with the confusing look on my face. "And here I thought that your family had already filled you in on everything, but I guess I was wrong."

"Know about what?" I asked, trying to sound as casual as possible but failed a little as my voice broke.

"The other part of the legend of the hybrid?" he said as a matter of fact. "Maybe you have heard of it by its original name. In Duplici Hibrida."

Hayden's POV

"You tell me that she went to talk with him and then ran off?" Shane asked.

"Yes."

"You were supposed to be her guard," he pointed at Gabriel as an angry look appeared on our alpha's face. "You were supposed to protect her."

"She told us not to interfere," I spoke, not really knowing why I suddenly defended this idiot. "Had I known it would turn out this way I would have. We both would," I said as I looked at Gabriel who looked at me shocked.

"Don't worry honey," Talia cooed. "She will be back. If she wasn't safe, Hayden would feel it."

"Not if she is far away," he protested. "After all they haven't completed their mating bond."

"What a time to bring that up," my dad muttered. "Listen, we can send someone out to look for her if it will calm you down?"

"No," Talia said rather harshly. "She ran for a reason. She needs space."

“Moon goddess above,” Alpha Shane breathed as he started to pace around the room. “Do we at least know what he told her? What could be the cause of this?”

“No, he is staying silent until she is back. She is the only one he is willing to talk to,” Gabriel spoke while shaking his head slightly, clearly not mentioning the beating I had given to Chad when he refused to speak.

I again couldn’t help but noticed the way he constantly shifted his weight from foot to foot. He was worried again and this time, it for some reason didn’t bother me as much as it did before.

“Shane!” my dad Ryan called as he came to the room. “Zaya has returned... Why are you all standing here with such expressions on your faces?” he asked as he came to a halt.

“Tatiana ran off after our prisoner spoke to her and what he said, we have no idea of.”

“I think that I do,” a soft but stern voice spoke from behind us.

We turned around and watched as Zaya came through the corridor and walked toward us with hasty steps.

“And before I say anything, I want to let you know that Tatiana is fine. She is at the lake up north just when you pass the hill,” she assured us.

“You saw her?”

“No, but my magic felt hers,” she smiled but just as fast as it came, her smile faded. “I have a feeling why she ran.”

“And why is that?” I asked, feeling my heart skip a beat as I took a step toward her.

“Have you ever heard of In Duplici Hibrida?” she questioned looking me deep in the eyes.

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Zaya’s POV

Hayden and the rest looked at me like I had three heads.

“In Duplicia what now?” Gabriel asked.

“In Duplici Hibrida,” I corrected him and looked to my alpha and Luna who waited patiently for an explanation. “I’m afraid that I need to discuss this with our Alpha and Luna in private.”

“No way,” Hayden argued. “She is my mate. I need to know what is going on so I can help her the best way.”

This only gave me even more reason to tell them while alone. Especially since the unhappy look on Gabriel’s face told me that he was the second one.

“I’m afraid that I have to, however as soon as everything has been discussed, we will let you know,” I assured them. “You have my word,” I said as I bowed my head slightly.

“Come on, let’s leave them be,” Ryan gushed and grabbed Hayden’s arm.

Kyle nodded and followed his mate’s steps and grabbed Gabriel’s arm pulling him along.

“It’s about time you two got some food anyway, don’t you think boys?” he chuckled trying to brighten the mood.

I waited until the doors behind them closed before I turned to my Luna and Alpha who were waiting patiently.

“Why all this secrecy?” Talia asked as she brought me in for a hug. “And hello to you. You have been gone for quite some time.”

“Trying to find out about a legend that no one really knows exists, takes a lot of work and even more time than I had first assumed but I did it, and just in time it would seem.”

“A new legend?” Shane asked. “Is it this thing you were talking about before?”

“Yes,” I sighed. “In Duplici Hibrida, roughly translated it means the double hybrid.”

“The double?” they both exclaimed.

“Have you noticed anything at all that is different from Tatiana to Lucas?”

“Not much, I mean they have so different personalities, and besides from their powers...” Shane trailed off.

“I don’t think they have been together long enough for us to notice any differences,” he added after a moment of silence.

I looked at Talia who looked deep in thought. Her eyes suddenly widened, and her mouth gaped a little as if she already knew what I was referring to.

“Their fur,” she yelped and swatted Shane on the arm who yelped out in surprise. “He is one full color, but she is both black and white.”

“Exactly, which is what makes her so damn special.”

“Where are you going with this?”

“She is the double hybrid. This legend is about her,” I told him.

“I got that much, but what does this involve besides her having a two-colored fur?”

“Normally you can have a two-colored fur when in wolf state, however not as she does. Hers is cut straight in the middle, not one single hair out of line, and considering that she is a hybrid I knew something had to be behind it. In Duplici Hibrida is the legend of the double hybrid. It is said that the one in question will have not only one but two wolves which is why her fur is cut straight in the middle. One black, one white. Two wolves, one person.”

“I’m afraid I still don’t follow,” Shane sighed as he ran his hand through his hair.

“Two wolves,” Talia whispered, the shock in her eyes enhancing.

“Someone please explain this to me because I am lost...” he pleaded.

“Not only is she one of a kind and one of the most strong creatures out there, even stronger than an alpha like yourself, but as you then know... Every wolf has a mate, a soulmate torn from them when their soul was once created. So, having two wolves equals....”

“Two mates...”

“You are telling me that my daughter has two mates?” he nearly yelled a little too loud for my liking considering that the walls had ears.

“Yes.”

“No, that can’t be! I have never heard of such a thing,” he said shaking his head.

“But think about it honey, it makes sense,” Talia pleaded. “This is why you wanted to do it in private right? Because of Hayden?”

“Partially yes, and also...”

I was cut off by shouting coming from the outside followed by the shrieking sound of metal bending.

“What is going on out there?” Shane exclaimed already running for the door.

“I think I know,” Talia spoke and bolted for the door just like I did.

“This was why all along wasn’t it?” she asked, clearly using her powers to know what was taking place and who was fighting who.

I only nodded.

Hayden’s screams and curses could be heard very clearly even before we reached the front of the house.

“I don’t know what the fuck you are talking about,” Gabriel shouted back.

“Don’t play fucking dumb with me! I heard what they just said, and it has to be you! There is simply no other way.”

“You make absolutely no sense!”

We bolted through the front doors only to see a crowd already forming around the two of them but that wasn’t what I noticed first. The railing on the side of the stairs we were standing at had bent, almost completely broken in the middle and I guessed from the way that Gabriel supported his back, that Hayden had sent him flying.

“Hayden!” Kyle yelled trying to reason with his son as he soon also emerged from the house, but it was no good.

The anger he felt reached us all and it was easy to tell that he was only a few seconds from shifting.

“Don’t try to get in the middle of it,” I advised everyone in a low tone.

“I asked what the deal was with you,” he snarled. “And you told me that it was nothing. It was a good thing I didn’t believe you, huh?”

“Could you talk to me in a language I understand? Anyone here willing to translate what this asshole is saying?” Gabriel yelled out, stretching his arms towards the crowd in pure frustration, but no one spoke.

“Hayden,” I began in a calm voice but he wouldn’t even let me continue.

“Don’t. This was why you wanted to do it in private wasn’t it,” he growled as he once again launched for Gabriel, managing to hit him square in the face and knocking him to the ground. “Had I not been passing by to go to the kitchen, then how long would you have kept this from me? Does she even know?” he snarled.

“No, she most likely doesn’t.”

Everyone was quiet around us except for Gabriel who once again was at his feet.

“For fuck sake, will someone fill me in here?” he screamed while wiping the blood from the side of his mouth.

It surprised me that Gabriel out of all people hadn't even attempted to fight back yet but I also knew that it could only be this long.

“You are my mate's mate!” he snapped, and the confusion was written all over his face.

The inevitable happened and soon the sound of fabric being ripped apart could be heard, and the next moment, Hayden was on all four.

Gabriel was prepared and seeing as he was one of the fastest shifters in the pack, he quickly stood on all fours as well ready to defend himself.

Growls and snarls could be heard all over the yard as they circled around each other and the crowd that before had gathered was quick to scatter in order not to get caught up in their business.

Not even the Alpha or Luna protested at this as they both knew they shouldn't interfere. Not with this. After all, this was a territorial fight and one they would eventually have to have.

“What does he mean? Shouldn't we stop them before they hurt each other?” Kyle asked worried as Ryan tried to see his way through this situation and tried desperately to figure out what the hell was going on and what he had missed.

“No. First of all, they won't hurt each other, not without hurting someone else, and secondly, the only one that can stop both of them now without getting hurt is-“

I didn't even get to finish as a shadow of black and white flew past us and landed between both the guys with a growl that made them instantly back away.

“Her,” I finished with a small smile playing on my lips.

Her eyes looked from one to the other, her teeth barred slightly as small snarls escaped her. Instantly both Hayden and Gabriel's ears laid down and only a few seconds later did they back away to shift in private still not taking their eyes off each other.

Tatiana looked toward her mother who had already been inside to get her some clothes along with some for the guys.

“Let's let them work this out,” Talia sighed and urged for everyone to get inside.

“Yes, let's,” Shane agreed. “We need to await Lucas's return anyway and figure out what the hell to do with this,” he muttered.

Chapter 36 - Lost II - The Royal Hybrid

Tatiana's POV

After everyone had left us to do our business, a heavy atmosphere had laid itself around us. Hayden and Gabriel were standing back-to-back not looking at one another. It was easy for me to see who had done the beating and who had taken it. Gabriel's right side of his face was completely swollen and bruised while Hayden's knuckles had taken some damage, a few of the small scrapes still bleeding.

I looked around when I felt eyes on me, and I shivered. People passing by gave us weird and questioning looks and to be completely honest, I didn't blame them. Not after the show, we had just put on.

"Can we go somewhere?" I asked in a shaky voice while picking on my fingers. "Maybe somewhere a little more private?"

"Sure."

"Why not."

"Cold," I muttered before turning around and began walking towards the only place I could think of.

The beautiful lake.

I hadn't even expected them to answer me, and let alone follow me, but they did.

In heavy silence, so silent even that you could hear a pin drop in the grass, and the amount of tension filling the air and the empty spaces between us didn't exactly help my anxiety either.

The further I got to the lake, the more I could breathe and the quicker my legs moved. You could have called it desperation, but I didn't care. I was not only scared to talk about this with both of them just minutes after the bomb had dropped, but I was also scared about the outcome and where it would leave us.

"We are here," I announced in a calm voice.

"It's..." Gabriel began.

"Pretty," Hayden finished.

I didn't turn around to look at them as I just continued to let my eyes glide over the soft surface of the lake. Besides the constant bird chipper, it was quiet and so peaceful that I doubted even those two could get mad.

"It would seem that we have some things we need to discuss," I started as I continued to stare ahead. "First of, I would like to apologize to the both of you. I felt your anger Hayden, and I get you. I understand and I am under no circumstance mad at you for reacting the way you did. I actually am surprised you didn't kill him," I muttered under my breath. "But he is not at fault for this and neither are you. I am. I was the one born to be something I didn't even ask for. I was the one who turned out to be your mate and now I apparently am the one who is destined to have not just you, but him as well, something you neither asked for, was prepared for or signed up for."

I turned to look my mate in the eyes. Eyes I had expected to be filled with anger and resentment, but all I saw was confusion.

"I won't blame you if you decide that this just isn't what you want, nor will I blame you either," I said with a soft smile as I looked at Gabriel who had the exact same expression as Hayden. "I won't force you to do anything at all."

"Do you feel it with him?" Hayden asked after a minute of silence.

"I don't," I admitted. "Not the same way as I do with you that is."

I avoided looking over at Gabriel as I said it, but even without looking, I could feel his disappointment.

"Explain please?" Hayden sighed while pinching the bridge of his nose.

"Amara is Syx's mate. She loves you and him and she adores you as I adore you. But I have another wolf, a wolf that is being suppressed or imprisoned in me for some reason I don't know and because I don't have the connection to her yet, I can't feel the same things for him that I feel for you. I will admit I feel a pull. It's small and distant but it is there and now that I know why. It makes more sense. I feel safe around him like I do with you, and I know it hurts to hear but... God, I am terrible at this," I chuckled, looking up at the sky, trying to hold in my tears. "I just found out about this myself and from Chad out of all people," I said and wiped a tear that escaped. "But you... You should have found out from me. And I would have told you, I would have processed this with both of you. I know that whatever I say now, won't take back what happened or the fact that you both are hurting. I never meant for anyone to be hurt. Never. And I'm so, so, very sorry."

"You have nothing to apologize for," Gabriel spoke as he scratched the back of his neck. "I should be sorry. I felt something from the beginning, and I didn't tell either of you about it, not even when you straight up asked me about it, because I knew that she was your mate, and I honestly to the moon goddess only thought that it was some sort of physical attraction. I never in my wildest imagination would have thought that this would be why."

He looked to the ground and took a deep breath before he turned to Hayden.

“I won’t be the one that splits you up. I would rather take the rejection over ever causing either of you that kind of harm.”

His words hurt me, and I felt a pull in my heart as he spoke, but they also in some way made me happy because it showed that he cared.

Did I want to reject him? I didn’t know. I didn’t know anything at that point.

“I’m sorry mate. Despite everything that’s happened in the past I would never do this to you,” he mumbled again this time looking Hayden directly in his eyes before he turned to me. “Let me know when you feel your other wolf, yeah? I doubt a rejection will work properly if you do it now.”

He gave us both a small smile as he turned around.

“I’ll let you two talk the rest out. I’m not needed here.”

I stood there, dumbfounded, my body wanting to move but my feet standing still. My mind was racing, filled with questions without answers. Should I let him go? Should I let him walk? Should we let him walk? He didn’t ask for this any more than we did so why should he be the one to suffer?

For the longest time, I didn’t say anything. I couldn’t and even if I could, I wouldn’t know what to say. Even Amara had hidden and tucked herself away to the back of my mind and Hayden stood with glossy eyes staring right at the spot that Gabriel had been standing at only seconds ago. He wasn’t talking or moving either.

Chapter 37 - Lost II - The Royal Hybrid

Tatiana’s POV

“Wait,” Hayden called out in a groggy voice, and I watched as Gabriel’s body came to a halt.

I looked at Hayden a bit surprised, my mind clearing up, every single thought that had previously roamed through it, stopped and everything became silent. Even my breathing stopped as I waited for whatever he was about to say.

“You can’t fucking say shit like that and just leave. Can’t you see that you are making her upset?” he asked waving his arm at me while clearing his throat.

Hayden looked at me and for the first time since we found out, he walked to me with two long steps, put his arms around me, and pulled me in for one of those warm and cozy bearhugs.

"I'm sorry," he mumbled against my ear. "To the both of you actually," he said a bit louder.

"Why are you-" I began but Hayden just held his hand up stopping me from continuing.

"There is one thing neither of us has thought about in this scenario," he sighed. "If you reject Gabriel, it won't only affect him, but his wolf as well. So badly that his wolf might actually die and eventually Gabriel himself can be weakened so much that he will die as well."

"Wait, that happens?" I questioned in shock.

I had heard about something happening to a wolf when rejected. That they would be weak and for a long time, not be able to regain their full strength, but I had never even for one second imagined that something like this could happen.

"It does, a lot actually," Gabriel shrugged.

"Don't you shrug at me," I scolded. "I'm all new to this but you aren't, and you knew and were ready to risk dying just so that I..." I stopped talking, not really knowing how to continue.

Gabriel's eyes, on the other hand, widened so much that I thought they'd pop out of his head as if I had suddenly said something wrong.

"What?" I asked.

"I see you now understand the second reason to why I'm not just letting you go," Hayden mumbled. "Why I in fact can't."

"I am again missing something here," I pointed out, stating the obvious.

"It is not just my wolf," Gabriel frowned looking incredibly guilty.

"You might be the one to reject him, but your wolf has not and probably won't agree to it considering it is her mate which means that she will be affected."

"So, if I reject him... She might... die?" I asked choking on the word.

"Of course, you would think of her first," Hayden said shaking his head. "But that isn't the point here."

"The point is that so will you."

That was right. I hadn't even given that a thought.

If my wolf died... I could risk dying as well.

"But I have two wolves, right? So maybe that doesn't apply to me," I shrugged.

"Now it is you that needs to stop shrugging as if this is nothing," Gabriel sighed.

"It is not a gamble that I am willing to take," Hayden stated.

"Neither am I."

"So, this might be a stupid question but is there then no way to reject someone without dying?"

"I don't think I explained myself too well here," Hayden chuckled. "If my wolf and I agreed that it would be best to reject you, then we would be fine, and you would be left with the heartbreak and pain. In most cases it will be an Alpha or other high-standing wolves rejecting their mate if they are from the lower end, seeing as they won't be seen as strong enough to fill the position they have to fill after mating. Seeing as they, the rejecters, have a great amount of power, they could survive it even if their wolf and them didn't agree on the rejection itself. However, seeing as you have two wolves and we have yet to know how your other wolf will react to Gabriel..."

"Then there is no way to know if she will agree to reject him or be the one hurting," I finished.

"Exactly."

I tried to let it all sink in for a moment. It was a lot to process all at once and the many thoughts that before stopped roaming in my head, were now back with different questions.

"Are you saying..."

"I am not saying yes... not yet anyway, but..." he trailed off as he fiddled around with his fingers before a small smile played on his lips. "Do you remember what my mom used to tell me when we were kids and there was something I didn't like but hadn't tried?" he asked as he looked straight at Gabriel.

His mom?

Gabriel chuckled lightly while shaking his head.

"Yeah, you don't know if you like it if you haven't tried it," he smiled.

"Now get up and get moving young man," they both said at the same time before bursting out laughing.

This was something I hadn't experienced before and definitely the first time they both had relaxed in each other's company.

I wanted to ask so badly, not only about Hayden's mother but also about what happened to them in the past. It sounded like they were so close so whatever it was...

I quickly shook those thoughts out of my head and decided against it. I didn't want to test fate. The fact that they were both calm and relaxed right now was enough for me.

"I will give this a try," he said at last with a small nod. "I must admit I don't like the idea of it, and we have a lot of shit to figure out, and rules to set but if it can... If this can work out, then maybe we can all end up happy."

"And not dying," I frowned, clearly speaking without thinking.

I smacked my hand over my mouth and waited for them to say something, anything at all really, but they didn't. Instead, they both looked at me like I had grown an extra head before they slightly chuckled to themselves.

"That too," Hayden snickered. "Don't want anyone dying today," he said as he pulled me close.

I looked around and for the first time since this morning, I felt myself smile. A genuine one. If only this could work out, then that could really be something.

Something wonderful and absolutely extraordinary.

"We should probably go home," Gabriel said after a while as he looked up at the sky. "We need to see how that waste of space is doing after what you did to him."

"Yeah, about that," Hayden began as all three of us started walking. "What in the world did you do to him?"

"To Chad?" I questioned. "Hmm, I don't really remember," I said honestly and tried to think back. "I remember that we began talking, or well I did, and then when I was about to leave after getting tired of his games, he just started to spit everything out as if he got paid for it, and then... Everything at some point just turns black. When I try to think about it or remember, then all I see is a blank space in my memory."

"We should talk to Zaya about that when we get back," Hayden stated. "That blockhead can wait."

Chapter 38 - Lost II - The Royal Hybrid

Tatiana's POV

We had headed straight to the pack house side by side. You'd think that we would all be silent after everything we had just discussed and been through, but to my surprise, Gabriel and Hayden were chatting away in front of me while from time to time turning around to make sure that I was with them.

It didn't bother me one bit that I wasn't in the conversation with them. The fact that they were talking at all just made me happy. At peace even. It felt... right.

We were almost at the front of the pack house when we passed the barn house and I had to stop as my eyes met with the destruction I had caused.

"Did I... Did I do that?" I whispered taking in the damage, not only to the door but to the part of the inside of the barn that I could see as well.

"You did, but it's okay," Hayden assured me.

He reached out and grabbed my hand and gave it a small squeeze.

"And Chad? You said he was hurt right?"

They both shared a look, one that I didn't understand the meaning of, but I didn't like it.

"He is alive right?" I asked panicked.

Not being able to remember anything at all really got my nerves going and just by the look of what I did to the building... I didn't even want to think about what I had done to him, someone I so deeply despised.

"Oh, he was talking shit when we got to him so alive... Yes. Unharmd, no," Gabriel frowned waiting for my reaction. "But don't worry, we will get to the bottom of this."

"Why don't I remember?" I mumbled

"Have you asked Amara? Perhaps she can shed some light over it?"

"I would if I could but after we shifted back and the fight you two had, she has kept herself in the back of my mind. I don't think she wants to answer now either."

"Maybe she is drained from the sudden shifting?" Gabriel pointed out in a questioning manner.

"I don't even remember shifting," I shuddered. "It's like whatever happened... It wasn't me and I don't think it was Amara either."

"That is because it probably wasn't," a woman said.

I turned around to see a woman I had not seen before. She was beautiful and looked familiar to me.

“My name is Zaya,” she said with a small bow. “I am the elder witch for your family, and I believe we have a lot to discuss.”

“This time I do hope that we are allowed to be present?” Hayden huffed.

“You are and you have my deepest apology for before,” she nodded. “The both of you.”

“I don’t need to be-“ Gabriel began.

“Oh, yes you do because from the look of it this is no longer a two-person bond but a three, am I correct?”

I looked at Hayden, waiting for him to respond as I did not want to jump to any conclusions.

“You are,” he said sounding a bit hesitant. “We just have some things we need to figure out and some rules to set.”

“That sounds like a marvelous plan, but for now I am afraid that we have a little more pressing matters to deal with. Now please come with me,” she smiled and started walking.

“But Chad?”

“He will be fine,” she chuckled. “I wouldn’t worry as much about what you did. Rather what those two did.”

“Those two?” I asked and looked at them. “What did you do?”

“It is nothing really-“

“Gabriel, what did you do?” I demanded.

“I didn’t do anything but hold him up,” he defended raising his arms.

“Mhm.”

“It is true, I swear! Hayden did the hitting,” he snitched, and I watched as Hayden’s eyes turned big in disbelief.

“Hayden,” I scolded. “Why?”

“Because, as Gabriel told you before, he was still talking shit when we got there and I really needed him to shut up,” he scoffed. “Thank you for that by the way,” he huffed at Gabriel who just flashed him the biggest smile I had ever seen.

“The holding or the snitching?” he asked sounding rather amused.

“Both.”

“You are very welcome,” he grinned.

I looked at Zaya and simply shrugged. I couldn’t do anything else but that.

“Boys will be boys,” she laughed. “Now, shall we?”

“Yeah,” I smiled ignoring the two guys giving each other the gloomy eyes as we walked.

Chapter 39 - Lost II - The Royal Hybrid

Tatiana’s POV

“What is this place?” I mumbled as she took us through a dark corridor that led to a flight of stairs.

“This is my tower,” she smiled. “I don’t know how much you have heard about your family history and what led up to your mother regaining the throne?”

“Not much,” I shrugged. “Especially not something that had anything to do with this. I hadn’t even heard about you,” I said. “Sorry,” I added quickly.

“No need to be sorry, sweetie,” she chuckled. “Well, seeing as I am the elder witch, I share the responsibility of teaching you with your parents. Let us just start from the beginning. Is that fine with you?”

“Perfectly fine,” I said popping the p making her smile before a small frown appeared on her face.

“You did that too when you were a kid,” she mumbled. “Well, when your mom had just been born, an evil man, her uncle Tyson, burned down her home and killed her parents in order to take over the royal pack. He thought he had killed her as well but her mother our lovely queen that you have been named after had saved her. Protected her until her last breath was drawn,” she spoke as she grabbed the railing and started to ascend the stairs. “He was ruthless, and he did it only to get powerful. You know of the ring and necklace I assume?”

I nodded in response.

“Well, he wanted to have both of them in order to unlock their powers, but seeing as your mother had the necklace that her mother had hidden with her, it was impossible. And so, after many tries on his own, he would use me to get to her which I of course refused.”

Her voice turned grim and even though I could only see her back, I could sense the expression of pain on her face.

“Before me, we had an entire coven protecting the Royal family. My mother herself was the elder witch and back then when Tyson took over, she tried to fight against him by not only warning the current king and queen but also using her magic against him after he managed to kill them. She did not want to comply under any circumstances and for that, he killed her and the rest of the coven with the last words for her to hear, that he would use me, her only daughter for his vendetta.”

“How horrible,” I gasped. “I am sorry you went through all of this.”

“This is nothing compared to what your mom went through,” she said shaking her head. “Well, I eventually gathered enough strength to warn your mother and as you know he was defeated, and the rest is history.”

“I think I have a lot I need to catch up on,” I sighed.

“Don’t we all,” she chuckled. “This place is by the way the place he kept me locked up and the place I escaped from thanks to your parents,” she added.

“But why would you want to stay at a place like this?” I mumbled as my eyes glided over the many dark steps we still had to climb.

“Because us witches draw most of our powers from emotions like for example happiness, but the best one to draw from is actually pain and sadness. This place holds every single emotion I have ever been through. Everything from my childhood, to me losing my mother and entire coven, all of my friends just gone... To me being imprisoned and tortured until finally being set free ready to begin at new. It makes it the ideal place to have my little nook.”

“Oh.”

It was all I could really say. There was no way for me to comfort her over something that happened so long ago and besides, she didn’t sound like she needed it anyway.

“It’s okay,” she assured me. “I have turned this place upside down ever since. There are now no signs left of what happened here. Your parents and this pack became my new family and I have ever since then not been on my own. We are almost there.”

It made my heart ache to hear everything that she had been through, and I suspected that I had only heard a quarter of it. And yet here she was, standing so strong not even letting the past scare her because she had already faced it... She had already lived it... All of that, only because someone sought out power that didn't even belong to him... the same thing that Killian was now trying to do.

"What happened to this man? Tyson?"

"Your mother sent him back to the light with the moon goddess so that he could be stripped from his wolf, that poor creature..." she huffed. "Stuck with a man like that..."

"The moon goddess? Like she spoke with her?"

I was so surprised and so eager to get my question answered that I nearly stumbled over a step I had missed. Had it not been for Gabriel's hand steadying me from behind, I would have tumbled back.

"Your mother is a direct vessel to the moon goddess herself, something that both you and your brother are as well," she said as she turned her head to look at me. "Don't worry though. It is something that you will learn to control in due time. Your mother took years to master it, and now that she has, her powers are finally complete."

"So, our powers aren't complete yet?"

There was a long break, the silence filling the narrow staircase before a small sigh left her lips.

"No, and they probably won't be for a long time, but until then we can do whatever possible to make sure that you can control the ones that you do have. We are here," she spoke just as she stopped in front of a brick wall.

It was a dead end. The staircase led us to nothing at all.

"Here where?" Hayden asked. "There is nothing here?"

"Oh, but there is," she chuckled. "But only I can access it. It is my way to keep intruders out of here. Not only does this place contain most of my magic, but it also contains the royal family's prized jewels, magic heirlooms, and files over every legend that has ever been."

With a wave of her hand, the brick wall slowly began to flicker as it morphed into a wood-looking substance. A substance that suddenly hardened and with a creaking sound slowly opened. Inside was completely different from the staircase. The staircase was cold and dark, only lit up by a few torches here and there but inside... It was beautiful. So very bright. So very warm.

The room was round, the walls a light beige color, and in every little nook there were plants and herbs, bringing life to the room.

“You make potions?” Gabriel asked as he took a look at a shelf filled with small vials.

“I do yes, mostly for healing, but I can make others if necessary.”

She walked over to a table and tapped it lightly with her finger. For a minute I thought she was unsure of what to do until a big and heavy-looking book appeared on the table that before had been empty.

“How did you...”

“Magic,” she smiled. “I use it to protect everything that has the ability to cause not only good things but also harm.”

“Why would you keep stuff that could possibly harm someone?”

“If I don’t, then who? It is my job to make sure that this knowledge, that these spells, won’t ever fall into the wrong hands. I’m doing now, what my mother did back then, and this is her grimoire.”

“Grimoire?”

“Yes, I don’t expect you to know what it is,” she said with a soft smile playing on her lips as she started to wave her finger in the air, making the pages turn. “To make a long story short, this is what you could call a spell book or a magic book for that matter. It contains spells, recipes for potions, and even prophecies.”

“Prophecies? As in the future?”

“Yes, my mother carried the sight, a sight that was passed on to the elder witch generation after generation and so now that sight belongs to me. It can show a glimpse of the future and that gives us the possibility of either changing it or protecting it. However, the sights are not always precise and some of them can even be tricky to decipher.”

“Did you see what happened back when I was kidnapped? Did you know that it would happen?”

“It is complicated,” she said shaking her head. “I saw that people, bad people, would come for your power one day, but-“

“And you couldn’t stop it?”

“No, you see a sight will only give a few details and hints on what will happen, not when or where. We tried to keep you safe, both of you, by always having someone with you, but I think your mother already told you all of that didn’t she?”

“She told me some, yeah,” I mumbled suddenly feeling a bit sick.

“Are you okay?” Hayden asked me just as Gabriel stroked my arm with his hand.

I had completely forgotten that they were even there until he spoke up.

“I’m fine, I just... It must be a terrible thing to carry,” I sighed looking at Zaya whose eyes widened before she burst out laughing.

“Did I say something amusing?”

“No, I am sorry it is just,” she cleared her throat trying to compose herself. “Here I was waiting for you to lash out on me for not being able to save you or use my powers properly but you... You really are your mother’s daughter,” she said wiping a tear away.

“Why would I blame you? You just told me that you don’t get to see a time or date, so what happened really isn’t your fault,” I shrugged. “It is no one’s fault but Killian.”

“Killian,” she muttered to herself. “Another ruthless man that has done nothing but harm people in order to gain the power he has. I don’t have to tell you about how he can be because you already know first-hand.”

“Do you know him?”

“I know of him,” she corrected. “While being away trying to find the answers to your powers, I also learned a lot about this man. A man killing for fun, stealing power that didn’t belong to him, and breaking apart packs.”

She shook her head, clearly trying to get rid of the images in her head.

“You know,” she spoke after a short break. “I saw you when you returned home.”

“Like in a vision?”

“Mhm,” she smiled. “I saw you in your mother’s arms, Hayden right behind you and so I knew I had to figure this whole thing out before I returned. For you.”

She looked back into the book flicking another page or two before laying her hands flat on the old and golden paper, smoothing it out a bit.

“Ah, here we have it,” she cooed, and I couldn’t help but look down in awe as letters appeared in the book one by one spelling out the first sentence.

'De Duplici Hibrida Legenda'

Chapter 40 - Lost II - The Royal Hybrid

Tatiana's POV

"How does it do this," Hayden mumbled mesmerized as the letters kept forming on the page.

"Purely magic," she chuckled as she looked down. "It is a spell that takes whatever is in my mind and puts it down in writing. How else would you think it would get here?"

"I don't know," he shrugged. "By using a pen maybe like a normal person."

"Oh, with all the spells and potions we put in here, it would simply take too much time if we were to write every single word down ourselves," she pointed out. "As you can see, this is not a normal book and I am not normal either."

"That makes sense," he nodded.

"Oh, be careful not to touch that," she warned Gabriel who was looking at a shelf with weapons on it.

She didn't even have to turn around to see where he was standing. She simply knew.

"What is all of this?" he questioned as he pulled his hand away.

"Silver daggers made to hurt werewolves and besides it is magic cuffs made to block magic."

"Were those used on you?"

"They were yes," she said with a frown and I watched as Gabriel quickly moved away from the shelf with a small shudder. "Now, let's try to focus on what we need to do here. You wanted to know about this legend, right?"

"Yes."

"Good," she said and moved her hands.

"This is what I am right?" I asked as I read the first few lines, not that I understood the meaning of them.

'One born by royal blood.

One soul, divided in three.

One forced by the bonds.

One to be set free.'

“Correct,” she nodded. “It means the legend of the double hybrid. The legend of a hybrid in itself is very rare and only happens every 500 years. Now, this is a completely different legend and is said to have only happened two times before which is why it has been so hard even to find out anything about it. This took me over 5 years to gather.”

“Only two times?”

“Yes, once a millennium ago and the time before that, as in the first time it ever happened, it is said that it was the moon goddess herself.”

“Shut the front door,” I exclaimed. “Are you serious?”

“According to the records, yes, I am very serious. The last time it happened it showed to be, of course, the at that time, current hybrid. A young woman named Cecilia. Your ancestor. This legend is about her.”

“Really? Does it tell us anything about her powers?”

“Sadly no. It doesn’t tell us much about her personal life, but it tells us a bit about the legend she was born with and what became of it. From what I could find, she died at a very young age.”

“How young?”

“After her nineteenth birthday.”

“How?” Hayden asked before I could. “If it says that,” he added quickly.

“It does. That was one of the few things I could actually find and it explains the origin of the legend of the double hybrid.”

“It’s origin? Didn’t it come from the moon goddess?”

“Yes, and no. According to the legends, Cecilia was a beautiful soul, a free spirit loved by everyone around her. Including her own mate, an Alpha from another pack named Andreas. However, she showed to love him more than he did her. In his pack, they had a witch as well, Cara, not one like me or quite as powerful, but she did indeed have power. She was madly in love with Andreas and him in her. However, his mate bond with Cecilia made it impossible for him to be with Cara. She was not happy about that, in fact, she was heartbroken the day he told her that he had to leave her because breaking their mate bond could possibly end up killing him. Back then, rejection wasn’t

well known as well as its consequences. As you may already have guessed, he didn't leave her fully."

"Did he leave Cecilia instead?"

"Not quite," she muttered and flipped another page as letters formed anew. "When they learned that Cecilia was special and had two wolves and two mates, Andreas became vivid and was not willing to wait for this other mate to come around. He simply did no longer see his need or duty to stay with her when another man could do it instead. Filled with desperation he went back to Cara begging her to forgive him for ever leaving her and begging her to find a way to separate the two of them without his own wolf dying. He thought now that Cecilia had two wolves, maybe the one bonded with his could be extracted and leave Cecilia with only one wolf. The one bonded with her second mate."

"I don't like where this is going," I gulped.

"And they did just that. Remember when I told you that we witches draw our powers from emotions? Well, Cara, she drew every emotion she ever had all at once. She took her heartbreak, and her loneliness, and created a spell from dark magic without even knowing it. A spell that would temporarily paralyze a person, almost putting them into a light slumber."

"But that is not all the spell did was it?"

"No," she said shaking her head. "The spell would disrupt the inner bonds with one's wolf and one's body. In this case, it tore Cecilia's bonds apart, not only to one of her wolves as it was planned but to both of them. She separated them and when doing so she put the wolf bound and mated to Andreas into herself and left the other to perish as she had no way of mending the bond between it and Cecilia."

"And that is how she died? Just like that? Torn apart literally speaking..."

"It is yes," she sighed. "And that is also how the hybrid legend itself became."

"What do you mean?"

"Before it ever had anything to do with a hybrid, the legend had another name. It was called the two-faced wolf or Doubus Lupum. Cecilia and the moon goddess were the only ones to have ever had that. Two wolves I mean," she explained. "But the hybrid was caused by Cara's careless acts and it went against everything within the laws of magic. There has to be a balance. Always. You take some and you give some."

"I'm not sure I understand?"

“Cara created the hybrid by mixing a wolf with her own witch genes?” Gabriel asked as he too came to look at the pages.

“Yes, that is what I am saying.”

“Then how did the hybrid end up back in the royal bloodline? I mean, Cecilia was from the royal bloodline, but Cara wasn’t?”

“As I said, magic requires balance. You take some, you give some,” she muttered as she flipped another page. “When the royals learned of their daughter’s demise and how Andreas and Cara had killed her for their own gain, they along with the witch coven bound to the royals, did a ritual to get in contact with the moon goddess. Back then they didn’t know that the Luna or Alpha could do it on their own. However, the moon goddess had already done something by then. She had during the night visited both Andreas and Cara to inform them that she would take back what had been taken for granted. In this case, what she took was Andreas’s wolf, and not only did she take back Cecilia’s wolf from Cara, but she also stripped Cara from her magic, leaving them both as they had left Cecilia. Helpless and defenseless. But at least they were spared, and they were given the opportunity to live a normal life whereas Cecilia had been left to die.”

“That still doesn’t explain it,” I said shaking my head.

“It does in a way. The moon goddess stripped them from their wolves and gave their wolves another chance. Neither of them had done anything wrong, so they got bound to someone in the next generation. But seeing as Cecilia’s wolf now carried magic, something that would be highly sought out with the power it held, she had to protect it and couldn’t just give it to anybody.”

I watched as she with a snap of her fingers closed the grimoire and turned to me with a serious expression on her face.

“She kept the wolf safe until 500 years after when someone she saw as worthy to be the next hybrid was born. However, since the wolf was originally one out of two, a normal wolf wouldn’t be able to carry all that magic on its own. She had to wait for the next two-faced wolf to be born to carry it on. That is how not only the legend of the hybrid but also the legend of the double hybrid came to be. And the person she was waiting for? That person is you.”

“Then I have just one question,” I stated in a low voice.

“Go on.”

“You said that no normal wolf could be a hybrid. That they couldn’t carry all that magic, right?”

“Yes.”

I could sense it even before my eyes met with hers. I didn't have to ask to know the answer, but I couldn't help it. I needed to hear it out loud.

"Lucas... He is a normal wolf with the hybrid gene..." I trailed off trying to compose myself. "What happens when a wolf can't carry all that magic?"