

Chapter 51 - Lost II - The Royal Hybrid

Hayden's POV

It had been over 12 hours since they fell into their 'magical coma' as Zaya had so nicely described it. 12 hours where I had walked from one bed to the other to make sure that they were both okay and had everything they needed. 12 hours spent holding each of their hands to let them know that I was there and that they weren't alone.

12 hours where I felt more lonely than I had ever felt in my entire life.

Both Zaya and Doctor Taylor had left me in the room alone to go do some research just in case she would end up waking up as a wolf but seeing as this wasn't a common issue amongst wolves, the number of papers on it was very small and therefore there was a huge lack of knowledge. That only made it more difficult for us to learn what to do or what to expect.

"You are one special mate that is for sure," I mumbled as I pushed some of her hair out of her face.

Nothing with her was ever certain and I learned that very quickly. From her being the double hybrid to her having two mates and missing a wolf that she had to get from her own twin... And now Lucas was dead, and she and Gabriel were in a freaking coma because she got a wolf transferred into her... It all sounded so surreal and yet this was the reality I lived in.

Nothing was simple nor was it ever certain, but one thing was for sure and that was that wherever she went in life, I would follow no matter what obstacle we would end up facing.

I no longer cared that I had to share her with Gabriel.

I did at first and the thought of it, especially the thought of both of us fulfilling the mating process with her, annoyed me to such a point that I for a second, only a second, had thought of killing him. But now, I couldn't imagine our days without him, and to be completely honest I don't really remember how it was before he joined in. He cared for her, and he cared for me. He didn't necessarily show his affection for me like I didn't for him either, but we knew it was there.

I went to wet another cloth and place it on Gabriel's forehead. The water felt especially cold on my warm hands and when I wrenched the cloth I watched as the excess water fell from it and landed back in the bowl with a very soothing sound.

I gently pushed aside his small locks of hair before I placed the now cold and wet cloth on his hot and burning skin.

“You better wake up when she does,” I grumbled. “I don’t need her to feel guilt over you playing sleeping beauty,” I huffed and hid the fact that I myself felt the guilt enough as it was.

I couldn’t do anything but wait for them and that had hit me harder than I had thought it would. I was nervous, scared even, of the outcome and I couldn’t even reassure myself that everything would be okay because, to be frank, neither of us knew what to expect.

If she were to wake up while he continued to stay in this state... She wouldn’t be able to handle that on top of everything that happened with Lucas.

Lucas... I had barely had any chance to even think about him. The day he first came to me I knew something was off. I had gotten to know about the legend and the curse a little before our meeting, so when he approached me with a small smile and sad eyes, I knew that something was up and that I wouldn’t like it one bit. And I was right.

“Hey,” he said dragging it out a bit as he walked to my side.

“Hey Luce,” I smiled. “What’s up? Do you need something?”

He shifted his weight from one foot to the other as he crossed his arms over his chest almost as if he tried to make himself smaller.

“I actually do, yes,” he said in a low voice. “Can we go somewhere perhaps?”

“Sure, lead the way,” I mumbled a bit sheepishly and followed him when he began walking toward Zaya’s tower.

I followed in silence up the many stairs I had climbed only a few days ago and once we reached the top, he slouched down on a chair I hadn’t noticed was there the last time I was here.

“Sit down please,” he chuckled. “I’m not going to bite.”

“Luce, I have known you most of my life and we both know that that is a fucking lie,” I laughed. “Now, why did you bring me here?” I asked as I looked around. “I thought Tati was up here today.”

“She was, well she has been for the past few days, but mom finally convinced her to get some sleep and I thought this would be the safest place to talk, just you and I.”

“I must admit, I don’t like where this is going,” I sighed. “Why all the secrecy?”

“Because what I am about to tell you is something only a few besides you will get to know,” he shrugged.

“I am guessing Tati is not one of them?”

“No, not for now at least...” he trailed off. “How about I start at the beginning?”

“Sure, whatever suits you.”

I leaned back in my chair and searched his face for any clue that would give up what he was about to say, but I found none.

“The moon goddess appeared to me a few years back and told me about this curse and what my role in it would be,” he began.

“So, you knew? All this time?” I asked shocked.

“I did yes, now I knew I would at some point die, and back then we hadn’t found Tatiana yet, so I made a deal with the moon goddess herself. She would grant me a bit of strength so that I could manage to live until she would return home,” he sighed. “I couldn’t just die without ever seeing how she turned out to be. If she was still like me, or if she was still the same kindhearted girl she was back then.”

“Is that why you were out searching so much? Because you knew you had some sort of what? Deadline?”

“You could say that I suppose. Now that she is home, the moon goddess came to me again so when my dad came and brought me home from the mission I was sent on after her return, I knew that my little secret was out and that I had to start preparing people of what was about to happen, which is what I am doing now,” he admitted. “I am dying Hayden, and it is happening a lot faster than people know.”

I felt my heart sink. Ever since I came to this pack and became a part of it, Lucas had been like a brother to me.

“How fast?” I whispered.

“Two weeks maybe?” he sighed. “I honestly don’t know. All I know is that she will come for me when the time is up and I would like to by then, to have told everyone in the family.”

“But not Tati?”

“Tati doesn’t know the full version of this,” he stated. “No one does.”

“I’m not following,” I said and pinched the bridge of my nose to try and stop myself from tearing up.

“They think I am dying because of a curse, which to some length is true, but what is also happening here is that I am dying for so much more than just that. Tati is as you know by now, supposed to have two wolves and she has only connected with one and the reason for that is simple. I should have never lived. I should have never been born in the first place and the wolf I have within me does not belong to me.”

The wolf he has does not belong to him? Then who does it...

“It belongs to her?” I asked, answering my own question.

“It does, and if I do not give her that wolf then she will die as well. As it is now, we are both just hybrids and as the legend states, a hybrid is not the one who can carry the magic that we both have within us. She has the gene of the two-faced wolf which makes it possible to save her, so for her to live...”

I felt my heart break into a million pieces at the thought of losing her, but not just that. I finally understood what he was trying to tell me. He was going to give up his life for her to be able to continue living hers.

“And you are not telling her this, why?” I asked, feeling slightly angry.

“Because I need to use this to get her to accept. You see, we can’t transfer my wolf into her unless she gives us consent and I doubt she will accept it if she has time to try and find another way. But the truth is-“

“There is no other way, is there?” I interrupted.

“No.”

When he first told me that and informed me that I had to keep it a secret, I had a hard time facing Tatiana after. Then Gabriel came to me once Lucas had informed him as well, and it made it a bit easier for me since I then had someone to share it with. Soon after that both of my dads knew and then the Luna and Alpha did as well. Everyone knew besides Tatiana and when we found her on the hill, holding on to Lucas’s dead body as if her life depended on it, a part of me broke. A part that I won’t ever be able to get back. Lucas was a big part of my life. He had helped me train and guided me in such a way that he basically shaped me into who I am today and now I had to keep on going without him. I had to mourn him, something I hadn’t had time to do yet, but something I knew I would get to do once everything settled down a bit.

I have him to thank for a lot of different things and now I have him to thank for my mate being alive.

I looked over at her resting face and smiled. If there was one thing that he had taught me, it was to find the light in the dark and now, she was my light.

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Tatiana's POV

Their true heir. Me. The one who was formerly known as the two-faced wolf. that must be what she was referring to.

"What happens now?" I asked, not really sure on what foot to stand on or how to react.

"Now, we do what was always meant to happen," Rama said as if what was going to happen next was the most obvious thing ever.

Amara lifted her head, locked eyes with me, and sat down, Rama did the same next to her and looked up at me as well.

"Hold out both of your hands, palms out toward us."

"Like this?"

I lifted my hands, palms out to them so they were right in front of their snouts.

Without telling me if I did it right or explaining anything about what was about to happen, both of them rested their snouts against my palms. I didn't know what to expect but what happened was not even near what I had thought.

Suddenly the light around me began to grow, the darkness getting smaller and smaller by the second and from the spot where they connected their snouts with my skin, a bright light appeared. So bright that I had to turn my head to the side in order to see just a little of what was going on.

First Rama's eyes started to glow bright red, her eyes seeming so very alive as I watched the red color turn dark and then bright. Then Amara's eyes did the same, the ice blue color piercing through everything. By now the darkness around us had completely vanished and was replaced with a light that on one side was red, and on the other was blue.

"Nos unum sumus," Rama chanted.

"Idem sumus," Amara continued.

"Hybrida duplices iterum vivemus," I finished catching myself off guard.

I didn't even know what I was saying as I said it nor did I understand what it all meant, but for some reason, I knew at that moment what I had to do.

The light started to flash and dance in front of me and then. As if it had never happened the light disappeared as fast as it had come.

“What just happened?” I gaped completely amazed.

“We became one,” Amara said and let her tongue fall out of her mouth.

“I figured as much, but,” I paused trying to think of what to say. “What did I say?”

“You said the spell to bring us home,” Amara spoke, her tail starting to wag.

“We are one, we are the same, the double hybrid will live again,” Rama explained. “That is what it means, more or less that is.”

“I-“ I was cut off as I noticed they both started to fade away like leaves being picked up from the ground by the wind and taken with it. “What is happening? Where are you going?” I exclaimed trying to reach out for them, but all I managed to grab a hold of was my own hands as they both collided.

“We are going home, and so are you. We will meet again. Don’t worry, it has all been taken care of now and people are waiting for you.”

“Home?” I asked just as another bright flash appeared making me close my eyes.

I gasped for air, suddenly feeling like I couldn’t breathe. I opened my eyes as my body shot up into a sitting position, pulling on something that was stuck to me.

“Hey!” a familiar voice yelled. “You are awake!”

I looked around confused still gasping for air. I wasn’t in the same place as I was before, no, this was one of the pack’s hospital rooms, and the thing I had tucked on showed to be an IV that was stuck in my hand.

“Tati,” Hayden’s voice spoke gently as he closed the gap between us, wrapping his arms tightly around me. “God, you had us all worried,” he cooed as he buried his head in my neck. “And you are not a wolf!” he exclaimed overly excited.

A wolf? Why in the world would I be a wolf...

I blinked a few times, trying to adjust to all the colors in the room. I should have been out of it, I should have been confused over everything that had just happened, but the soft scent of my mate filling my nostrils made it impossible for me to be tense. Every single muscle in my body relaxed as I wrapped my arms around him, holding him in place.

“I just experienced something that I don’t even know how to explain to you,” I muttered.

"It's okay," he cooed again, his voice incredibly soft and tender. "I have a feeling I already know."

"How?" I questioned and pulled myself away just enough to look at his face.

"Zaya had an idea of what you were going through. What you both were," he sighed. "God dammit I have been worried," he said shaking his head. "You've been asleep for-" he paused and looked at his watch. "13 hours more or less."

"13 hours?" I exclaimed before the words he had said processed in my brain. "What do you mean when you say both?"

"Oh," he whispered and looked to the side, my eyes following the direction he was looking at.

On the bed next to mine was Gabriel. He looked like he was asleep. Was that how I had looked too?

"Why is he like that?" I asked suddenly feeling panicked. "Why?" I asked again, trying to push Hayden aside to get to him.

"Hey, you need to relax until Zaya, and Taylor has checked you out," he stated and pushed me back into bed.

"But-"

"No but's."

He shook his head at me and tucked me under the covers before he turned around and walked to Gabriel's bed.

"He went down a little after you did."

He took the cloth laying on his head and went to wet it in the bowl on the nightstand before he turned back around and placed it where it had been only a second ago. It was very weird to see him so caring when it came to Gabriel, but it was also a very important thing for me to see. I knew they in some way cared for each other even though they didn't want to show it, but when it really came down to it, they showed it without further hesitation and it warmed every single piece of my heart to see that. And the fact that they did it, not for me, but for each others sake, only made it better.

"He has been burning up with a fever ever since then," he mumbled. "I had hoped he would wake up when you did, but since he is still laying here..."

"Is he like that... Because of me?"

"It's not your fault," he turned to me and said with a small smile playing on his lips. "Seeing as your second wolf is the one connected to him, he had some of the same effects as you. She was fighting him just as she was fighting you."

"Fighting? But we didn't fight?"

Or did we?

"Zaya said your wolf would try you, to see if you were the alpha of them and that if it turned out to go the wrong way in which she wouldn't bow down to you, then you would have turned into a wolf until she would."

"Oh, so that is why you..." I trailed off. "But we didn't fight. I told her straight out what was important and that if she wanted to fight then I'd fight her with everything I had. She even talked about Gabriel, so I don't understand why he's still like that."

"Maybe Zaya knows something," he murmured. "Nevertheless, you should get some rest."

"Some rest?" I chuckled. "Didn't you just say that I was asleep for what? 13 hours?"

"Yes, but that took a lot of strain on your body so you might need it," he pointed out. "Being in a coma is not the same as sleeping."

"Yeah, yeah," I grumbled and looked back at Gabriel.

I could feel the difference from before. Before I didn't feel anxious about stuff that involved him. Yes, I felt a connection with him and yes, I did worry about him but compared now? Now, every cell in my body was nervous, shaking almost, from not knowing what was going on with him or when he would wake up. I wanted to see his smile, I wanted for him to look at me with those wonderful eyes and I wanted him by my side just as much as I wanted Hayden.

I felt complete. For the first time ever, I felt utterly complete, and I knew it was because I had gotten Rama. And the person I had to thank for that, wasn't here and wouldn't ever be back.

"I hope it's not on my behalf that you are crying love," a dark voice grumbled.

I looked up at his face and to my surprise, he was looking back at me. I hadn't even realized that I had started crying until a sob mixed with a small laugh escaped my mouth.

"You are okay," I stated while swallowing back my tears.

"Of course, I am," he groaned as he tried to sit up.

“No, no!” Hayden protested and went to push him down. “The same rules apply to you here. You need to lay down and rest.”

“Dude, let me at least check on my mate,” he scoffed. “She is crying for god’s sake.”

He looked back at me with a pained expression on his face and I knew that he felt the same change that I did. We could finally feel each other the way I had felt Hayden from the beginning and God was it nice.

“Nope, not like this, however, I will do you one better.”

Before I could ask what, he was talking about, he moved the chair from between the beds and pushed some machines back against the wall. He winked at me as he unlocked the wheels on my bed and pulled it until it was side by side with Gabriel’s. He locked the wheels once again to make sure that the beds wouldn’t scoot away from one another and then he told me to move to the middle while he was holding up my IV.

I did as I was told and as soon as I got in reach of Gabriel, he pulled me close to him, taking in my scent.

“You smell wonderful love,” he whispered.

“Doesn’t she,” Hayden chuckled as he took off his shoes and climbed into bed behind me so that I was now in the middle of both of them.

With Gabriel’s one hand holding mine and Hayden’s resting over my side while spooning me, I felt as relaxed as ever and when the relaxation turned into a slumber, I didn’t even try to fight it.

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Gabriel’s POV

I was looking at both of them as they slept, however creepy that sounded.

I was tired myself, but I was too amazed by the sudden feeling that had appeared to even remotely try to fall asleep. This was what it felt like? To look at that one person and just know instantly that whatever was to happen you would guard that one person with your life not caring if you came out of it with your life intact. To know that wherever this one person would go in life, you would follow without asking any questions.

I had only had that with one person before, but not to this length and that person was Hayden. How we managed to grow so far from each other was something I before didn’t even bother to question, but now given our current situation, it was something that was stuck on my mind daily.

“You look like someone whose mind is about to burst,” Hayden grumbled slightly from behind Tatiana. “A penny for your thoughts?”

Just a simple sentence like that did it for me. Neither of us had ever given much thought to each other over the past years and now everything was about to change. It was different and maybe we were on the brink to return to what we once had.

“Want me to be honest?”

“Neither of us will get anything out of a lie, so yeah I suppose,” he said and popped his elbow under himself for support so he could see me.

“I just thought about back then, when we were kids,” I mumbled and let the thought hang there for a second to see if how he would react.

“What about it?”

“Just how we grew apart and how neither of us cared to ever try and fix it,” I shrugged. “It’s stupid I know, but it’s been bugging me lately.”

He let out a deep breath and I couldn’t figure out whether he already got tired of this conversation or if he simply didn’t wish to speak about it.

“Yeah, it’s been bugging me too,” he admitted slowly. “But I didn’t want to bring it up in case...”

“In case I didn’t feel the same?”

“Yeah...”

“What did happen between the two of you?” a small voice asked.

I looked down to see Tatiana looking up at me with those amazing blue eyes that I just couldn’t get enough of.

“Were you eavesdropping?” Hayden chuckled and leaned over to kiss the top of her head.

“I don’t mean to pry, and you don’t have to tell me if you don’t want to. It’s just something I have been thinking about since our first encounter,” she said slowly. “You have always been so cold toward each other and I couldn’t help but wonder why.”

I looked over at Hayden who just nodded at me, and I took that as him telling me to go for it.

“Well, there’s always two sides of a story and I think we might have seen things differently but from my point of view, I guess I was... Jealous.”

I gritted out the word, not feeling particularly proud to admit it, but that was the truth.

“Jealous?” Hayden asked sounding just as shocked as I felt when I admitted it.

“Yeah,” I laughed dryly as I scratched the back of my neck. “I felt left behind. You and I were inseparable and we always put each other first and then suddenly we weren’t and I barely saw you. When we first got here you got it all. There was a family waiting for you, a family that really wanted to have you, and I was put into a family who already had like 9 pups at the time. So, I was forgotten a lot and whenever I saw you, you were smiling and playing with both of your dads, and I was just...”

“Lonely?” he finished for me.

“Yeah, and to top it all off I was grieving, and you just seemed like you had forgotten it already. That you were fine, and I was just... Filled with chaos.”

“I wasn’t... I hadn’t forgotten at all, but I guess my dads they just... They did their best to make me feel at home I suppose.”

“I already know that you weren’t born into this pack, but I don’t know how you got here?”

She looked up at me with eyes that told me that I didn’t have to tell unless I wanted to. I didn’t really enjoy talking about it so when Hayden took over, I felt utterly relieved.

“We were born into the Hollow Crest pack. Back then, before your mom had managed to fight down Tyson, he had invaded our lands and killed everyone who dared to as much as look at him in the wrong way including our Alpha and Luna who of course didn’t back down under the pressure from him. As your mom already told you, he was ruthless and did whatever he saw fit to gain the power he so desperately wanted.”

“He was a tyrant,” I added in a sour voice.

“Then the day came when your mom brought down justice over him. Many of the rogue wolves he controlled chose to bow down to Talia and go off to live on their own or to join the royal pack, but the other half of them...”

“They wanted to finish what Tyson had begun?” she asked, her voice sounding sad.

“Exactly and one out of the ten last packs that Tyson had dealt with was ours. Years went by and the horrors still continued around the lands as the rogues continued to do their bidding. Of course, it got better during your mom's ruling, but the rest of the rogues still serving under Tyson, were hard to find and put down, and to change something that had been going on for nearly two decades was not something that could be done over a

short period of time. And then one day, I think it was about a year after you had been kidnapped, the rogues saw their opportunity to take down our pack. The alpha, that took over for our former alpha, had died of sudden illness and had left our pack defenseless. The rogues had heard of that and saw their chance.”

“It was a bloodbath,” I said and shook my head.

“Gabriel and I were out playing on the fields. Both of our dads had been called to the border. We had all heard the stories of what still happened around in other packs that Tyson had left his mark on, and we knew that word of our alpha’s death had scattered around quickly so we were in need of extra protection. That is also when we sent someone to the royal pack to ask for help. But the help came too late.”

“My mom was a warrior,” I sighed. “She ordered me and Hayden to go to his mom in their house and hide until this was over. She gave me a hug and a kiss, nearly squeezing me to death before she let me go. That was the last time I saw her.”

“My mom managed to hide us in a hidden space behind one of our walls, a space we had built after the first time Tyson came around and she managed to do it just in time before they broke down the door,” Hayden said, and I could see the pain on his face as he remembered every single detail over again. “I didn’t see any of it thanks to Gabriel holding me down, but the sound of how she fought them before they slit her throat is a sound I will never forget. She knew there wasn’t time for her to hide and that there wasn’t enough space for her to hide with us, so she distracted them enough and ultimately ended up giving her life to save us.”

I watched in silence as Hayden spoke. The pain in his voice from the memories flooding in brought back my own pain.

“And they didn’t look for you?”

“They did, but they gave up after a while,” I nodded.

“When the royals came half of the pack was already burning. Most children had been slaughtered as well as all of the warriors of the pack. Only a few kids and women were still alive. Five kids to be exact and Gabriel and I were two of them. We were found in that small space by pure accident because I couldn’t contain my cries any longer. They took care of us, made sure that we weren’t hurt and then they guided us out of our home. I don’t remember much of that as Gabriel made sure I couldn’t see any of what had happened inside the house, but once we came outside, we saw all of the horrors that had happened while we had been hiding.”

“I saw both my mom and dad on the field when we drove away,” I grumbled. “Another image I will never be able to erase. Sometimes I blame my mom for not just hiding with us, but as a warrior now myself, I know that it would go against everything she had ever worked for.”

"I'm so sorry you ever went through this," she whispered, and I looked down at my little mate who had tear-stained cheeks. "I shouldn't have asked," she sniffled.

"No, you have every right to know about this. We know about what you went through and seeing as we haven't exactly been the nicest to each other it is only natural to ask questions," I cooed as I stroked her cheek to get rid of her tears.

"But still... I shouldn't have butted in."

"As Gabriel said, you would have eventually found out, and it is not exactly something we planned on hiding from you," Hayden said softly. "It is just not something that is easy to talk about."

Then Hayden looked at me and sighed.

"I was in pain all the time, I still am as I imagine you also are, but when we were younger, I was just so happy to feel all that warmth and love. I needed it and because of that, yes, I maybe forgot about you a little. But then I saw that you were chosen to be a warrior very early. Something I myself wanted to be after everything that had happened, but when I saw them pick you and when I heard them praise you for how good you had already become at such a young age, I myself got a little... Jealous."

I could see it took him the same amount of strength to admit to it as it had with me, and I couldn't help but laugh.

"I didn't laugh when you said it so why the-"

"Because I find it funny that we were jealous of each other for completely different things," I chuckled. "I wanted the family, love, and attention you got, and you wanted to be chosen as a warrior trainee and get the attention from them that I got."

"When you say it like that," he huffed and rolled his eyes. "Nevertheless, I just assumed you had become too busy for me, so I was hurt and held a grudge."

"That is one long ass grudge to hold," I snorted.

"So, just to sum things up here," Tatiana slowly began. "You haven't spoken to each other for years because you were both butthurt and too stubborn to ask the other what the hell went wrong?"

"Could you maybe not make it sound so stupid?" I grumbled and looked down.

"You make us sound so..." Hayden began but was cut off.

"Idiotic? Foolish? Or maybe just like two hurt children longing to find a place they belonged?" she interrupted her voice softening when she said the last sentence.

And that is in reality what we were. Two scared kids who had just lost everything they had ever known. Their parents, their home, their safe place...

"Well," I said clearing my throat. "We have a place we belong now," I smiled and grabbed her hand.

"And you are not as much of an asshole as I thought you were," Hayden grinned.

"And you are not as much as a stuck-up snob that I thought you were," I smirked.

"We good?" he asked and held out his fist like we did when we were kids.

"We good," I said and let my own fist meet with his.

Chapter 54 - Lost II - The Royal Hybrid

Tatiana's POV

The next few days were kind of a blur. Hayden and Gabriel were training, together this time, which only showed that a little goes a long way. It made me happy to see that they had buried that hatchet but just because they had put all the previous things and issues aside, didn't mean that they couldn't pick on each other, because they would. A lot. They would come with some unnecessary comments to each other here and there or pick on each other whenever possible, but I stopped commenting on it. As my mom would say, boys will be boys and besides, I didn't have the time to constantly correct them on their behavior.

I was occupied myself with my own training as I needed to get more control over my powers. Control I didn't even have over the powers I had before all of this happened, and that was only half of it, so now that I had been given them all, I had absolutely none and it didn't help that I couldn't focus at all. Zaya was after me constantly, telling me to lose whatever was on my mind and focus on what was in front of me, but with my brother's funeral coming up, it was kind of hard to think of anything other than that.

I tried my best, I really did, but sometimes your best just isn't enough and in this case, it wasn't.

"Can we not do this today?" I grumbled as I let my hands hang by my side clearly giving up.

"You need to at least try and form this orb," Zaya said as she walked past me. "We set a schedule for learning the basics and we are almost past due."

"You have had a long time to master all of this magic stuff, but I haven't," I huffed. "Besides it is hard to focus when I know that we have to bury Lucas tomorrow."

I wanted to hide just at the thought of it. I was not ready for it yet nor did I want to say goodbye for good, but I knew we had to. We had already postponed it until both Gabriel and I was feeling better after the entire wolf transferring thing happened.

“I know,” she said, her voice unchanged. “Which gives you even more reason to master this today. Remember that your magic is strengthened by your emotions. Think about what he gave up in order for you to live.”

“Don’t go there,” I spoke through gritted teeth. “Don’t go use his name or what he did like that.”

“Why not? It is the truth, isn’t it?” she continued with a smug smile on her lips.

“Stop,” I warned. “Don’t go there.”

“He gave up his life so that you could live. He died, Tatiana! For you! He gave the wolf you needed in order to-“

“I said stop!” I yelled out as I waved my arm.

From my hand, a small blue and white ball flew with the speed of lightning and Zaya barely managed to duck in time, or it would have hit her straight in the face.

“Oh my... I’m so sorry,” I gushed and ran over to the spot on the floor where she was crouching.

“See, I told you they connected with your feelings,” she smiled.

“You look awfully cheerful for someone who nearly got their head blown off,” I scoffed. “Why in the world would you do that.”

“To prove my point and to make you see just what you can do with the little training you’ve already gotten,” she stated and pointed to the wall behind her that now had a giant hole in it.

I looked out of the hole and down toward the ground only to see Hayden and Gabriel along with my dad standing at the bottom of the tower, looking at the crumbled pieces of brick in front of their feet. ‘

“Sorry!” I yelled down at them making them look up.

“You did that?” my dad yelled back.

“It was an accident,” I frowned making Hayden and Gabriel look at each other with skeptical facial expressions.

“Be careful not to piss her off,” Zaya grinned at them when she appeared next to me. “Don’t worry, we will clean it up!” she yelled and pulled me from the hole. “Come on, we got a little more work to do.”

“Isn’t it enough that I nearly took off your head and crushed my dad and my mates under the rubble?” I whined as I shook my head.

“Close but no,” she chuckled. “You need to do what you just did, but you need to do it in another way. Hold out your hands, the palms facing each other. Then you move them in and out while concentrating.”

I did as I was told and began to move them, but nothing happened.

“Focus Tatiana,” she spoke. “Remember what you just felt, picture in your head what you want the magic to take form like, for example, the ball you made before.”

“Easier said than done,” I gritted out.

I closed my hands so that they were palm to palm and as I imagined a small white and blue orb forming in my hands as I pulled them from each other, I felt the first spark and to my surprise, the little orb started to take form.

“Good! Now focus! Go ahead and make it bigger,” she demanded.

I pulled my hands further away from each other, stretching it a bit, and just as the orb started to grow, my focus disappeared, and I was blown back by the force the magic let out when it busted.

I landed straight into the bookshelf behind me with a loud thud before I hit the ground.

“Ouch!” I exclaimed as I sat back up rubbing my lower back. “What the hell was that.”

“That is what happens when you don’t focus. You can either end up hurting yourself like you just did or the people around you like you almost did before.”

She must have noticed the frown I had on my face when she came over to help me up.

“This is why we practice,” she smiled. “Trust me, you aren’t the only one who nearly took off someone’s head while training. I did so too, and my mom had many bruises on her body to prove it,” she chuckled. “That is when I learned that control is the key.”

“But it is so difficult to control magic,” I groaned as I stretched my back.

“It is not the magic you are supposed to control my dear,” she pointed out.

“Then what is it?”

"It is your feelings. When you feel, you give fuel to your magic and so if those feelings become too much or you feel smug about it like you just did, you give it too much fuel and it will end up exploding in your head," she said as she waved her arm in front of the hole I previously created, and just like that the hole was gone. "What I just did, looked rather easy didn't it?"

"It did," I nodded. "But I am guessing it wasn't?"

"Exactly. I used a lot of magic just for that, and had I given it more fuel than I did, it would have made the hole bigger instead of fixing it. Either that or we would be covered in bricks by now," she grimaced. "Picture yourself a fire. You want to make it burn so what do you do?"

"Uhm, I find wood first, right?"

"Yes, and then what?"

"Put something between the wood that is flammable," I said.

"And then? How do you light it?"

"With a lighter?" I asked.

"Yes, now imagine that the lighter is the exact amount of emotions that you need in order to make this fire," she began.

"Okay?" I asked not quite following where she was going with this.

"But then you get cocky, and you want your fire to be bigger, so you pour some gasoline onto the fire, and then what happens?"

"You lose control of the fire?"

"Exactly," she nodded. "That gasoline is your emotions when you don't focus enough and if you let them through you will lose control and burn it all down."

I got what she was saying and all, but I couldn't help to stare at her like she had lost a piece of her brain. Did I actually hit her when I sent that first orb flying?

"Okay, don't look at me that way, I know it was a very bad example, but it is an example nonetheless," she mumbled. "I'm better at doing magic than I am using metaphoric."

"I'm not judging you," I said and held my hands up in defense. "But now that we have this entire thing over, can we just call it a day? I think I did enough damage already," I frowned as I rubbed my now very sore tailbone.

“Yes, we can stop for now,” she chuckled. “Go put some ice on that,” she ordered.

“Yes ma’am,” I grinned and went for the door.

“And don’t ma’am me,” she yelled after me. “I am not my mother.”

“But you sure are starting to look like her,” I shouted back knowing it would annoy her for the rest of the day.

I ran down the many stairs and out the door and nearly stumbled into my mom who was on her way inside.

“Dear God!” she shrieked as she jumped back.

“Oh, sorry,” I chuckled while trying to regain my balance. “I didn’t see you there.”

“With the speed, you had on I doubt you would have seen much,” she smiled. “Where are you headed?”

“Oh, nowhere in particular,” I shrugged. “Just away from here, I suppose.”

“The magic is hard on you,” she more stated than asked.

“Yeah... What are you doing here?”

“I heard from your dad that you nearly crushed them with flying bricks, so I had to come and see for myself.”

“Don’t worry, we fixed it,” I said and pointed up to the tower where the hole had been only minutes back.

“I see,” she said, and a small line appeared between her brows.

“What’s wrong?” I asked, afraid to know the answer.

“Maybe you should postpone this a bit?” she proposed. “Just until everything with Lucas’s funeral settles?”

“I would agree to that, but Zaya seems to think otherwise. I think she wants me to use all of this to gain control easier,” I shrugged.

“If would make sense seeing as your emotions are heightened now,” she sighed. “But just, please, be careful. I know how hard it can be to control your emotions and when it comes to magic...”

“I know mom, I know,” I assured her even though it probably wouldn’t help much.

I could see it on her face as well as on her body. She barely slept the past few days and when she finally did, she didn't sleep more than a few hours at a time. We were all worried about her and she knew it, but despite it all, she kept going. As she so proudly said every time we tried to remind her to take care of herself, she was the Luna and she had to take care of others. That she had an entire pack relying on her and she was not wrong, but she needed to lean on us too sometimes. No one could handle that much pressure alone though I think she would beg to differ.

Chapter 55 - Lost II - The Royal Hybrid

Tatiana's POV

Despite going to bed early the day before, I looked like I had gotten no sleep at all. The bags under my eyes were prominent and only getting darker as the days went by.

I had managed to make it a little better with a nice hot shower and some coffee just to spike my energy level, but I knew that the only real remedy for this would be a good nice long night of sleep. Something I highly doubted that I would get any time soon.

The black dress hung nicely next to the closet in the corner. The shoes to match had been polished and placed right underneath. It was impossible not to see it, to notice it. It was impossible to ignore and so, also impossible to forget what was about to happen no matter how much I wanted to. Despite all of that we also had the whole Killian thing we needed to take care of. So far Chad wasn't speaking, and I, after my last little break down was not allowed to come anywhere near him which I didn't blame anyone. Had it been up to me I wouldn't have allowed myself in a room with him either.

No matter how much I tried to blame it on my wolf, I knew that it probably only acted like that because of the feeling towards him I have kept locked away. He, after all, was one of the people who had caused me so much pain in the past.

Zaya had explained to me, that it hadn't been Rama causing the trouble seeing as I didn't have her at that time. The one who did all the bidding was Amara who had, thanks to my many feelings and emotions getting loose, been overpowered by the magic running through my veins and so she snapped because I did.

A small knock on my door made me snap out of my thoughts.

"Yeah?"

My mom peeked inside, barely opening the door.

"I just wanted to check on you," she said offering me a small smile, but it didn't reach her eyes in any way.

She looked so tired. It was easy to see that she had lost weight and the already dark bags that were under her eyes yesterday were even more prominent and dark today and yet she still managed to stand. She still managed to check up on everybody else.

I admired her for that, I really did, but I also thought it was one of her biggest flaws. The not knowing when to ask for help or when to take care of herself and I couldn't help but wonder if anyone had had the time to even check up on her.

I knew dad was circling around her whenever he could, but I also knew that he had a lot of stuff to deal with on his own. I was happy that they dealt with what was going on. Not only did they deal with it together, but also alone which I for one think is what is important to be allowed to do. Whereas dad would go hunting or training the pups, mom would go out to the gardens and enjoy the life the flowers would bring.

I had overheard a lot about how to react when losing a child, a lot of the chatter from the pack villagers at the moment was about that and all of them seemed to have different concerns. Some were concerned that mom and dad's relationship wouldn't last after the death of their son, that it would end up breaking even the unbreakable bond they had while some were concerned that my mom would be the only one who would end up breaking, maybe even going to extreme measures to see her son again.

Truth be told, they didn't know that I was there to hear, but as rough as it was, I also knew that for one, my mom would never do such a thing. Not when she cared so much about everyone around her and me and dad. And secondly, they would last. If there was anything they could do, that was it, no matter what they went through because as far as I knew, they'd already been through hell and back.

"If you are checking in on me, then who is checking in on you?" I asked with my right brow lifted and watched as her already tense body stiffened.

"You are too observant for your own good," she sighed. "I am the adult here you know."

"Yeah, but you are also a mom, and today..." I trailed off. "You look beautiful," I said trying to divert the conversation.

"Thank you," she smiled vaguely. "You aren't dressed yet?"

"No, I wanted to sit here and just breathe while I could I suppose," I sighed and stared into the mirror. "Also, my dress is with lace so I was waiting for either Hayden or Gabriel to come and tie it in the back since I can't reach myself."

"I can do it for you?" she more asked than stated. "Since I didn't get to tie your shoes when you were little, the least I can do is tie your dress, right?"

She sounded nervous, and to be completely honest, I felt very nervous. Despite being here for some time now, the only two people I had had some trouble bonding with, were

my parents. I didn't know if it was because I secretly held some sort of grudge against them or if it was simply because I had been too busy, but whatever the reason was, it kept me at a distance from them and a distance I would like to go away.

"Sure," I said offering her a smile to ease her a bit. "I'll just go put it on."

Before she could say anything, I scooted the chair out, got up, and took the dress with me to the bathroom.

It was a beautiful black dress, something I wasn't exactly used to be wearing but something I knew that I had to get familiar with as time would go by. It had long sleeves and a small V-neck and from the shoulders and down to my waist the lace was hanging gracefully, ready to be tied in to saturate my waist.

"I'm ready!" I called out.

Mom came walking through the doors with her heels in her hand. I guess she grew tired of wearing them inside.

"You look beautiful," she cooed as she began stretching and pulling the bands.

"I don't think I have ever worn something this pretty," I smiled. "I just wish it was for a different occasion."

Mom hesitated a bit before she answered me. Her lips were in a thin line, her brows furrowed so they met in the middle, and it was clear to see that she was thinking of how to say whatever it was that she wanted to say.

"Just come out with it before that vein in your neck bursts," I chuckled.

"Huh?" she said surprised.

"I can see that you are thinking about something. Out with it!"

"No, it can wait I suppose. Now is not really the perfect time to be talking about this," she muttered.

"Maybe now is the perfect time?" I asked. "Maybe it will be good to have some other conversation before we have to go out with our brave masks on and face everyone."

"It is just... I was thinking that the next time you will wear this, is at your mating ceremony," she shrugged. "No big deal."

"Mating ceremony?" I nearly choked out. "What ceremony?"

“Here we have a ceremony where you state to the pack that you will take your mate, in your case, mates, and that they will take you as well. Seeing as you are Royal and the only living heir, you are the one who will take over in my place when you get a bit older and are ready and both Hayden and Gabriel will become alphas and take over for your dad.”

“How will that work?” I asked not really bothered by the rest of what she said. “The two alpha thing I mean,” I clarified when she gave me a look of confusion.

“I honestly don’t know, but I’m sure everything will be fine. Besides, on the bright side, it simply means more protection for the pack,” she shrugged. “I see no reason why the pack won’t accept it.”

“Accept it? What do you mean accept it?” I asked and had to suck in a breath as she tightened the band once again.

“Here we present ourselves and the pack accepts you as their ruler. With Tyson, they were forced into accepting, with me and Shane they were a bit skeptical, but it worked out perfectly and I am sure it will with you as well. Hayden and Gabriel basically grew up here and you are the rightful heir.”

“But I didn’t grow up here? What if they count that as a bad thing and might think I’m not the ruler they need? Not only that, but I also am a woman and I have not one, but two men by my side.”

“Then it is the foolish old men clinging to very old traditions that need to be updated,” she chuckled. “Trust me, honey, you will do just fine, and the pack already loves you. Remember that.”

I tried to smile, even though I suddenly felt extremely worried. What if they didn’t accept me? Or my mates for that matter. Then who would take over?

“There you go,” she said as she tied a nice little bow. “All done and ready. Now, look how beautiful you are.”

Her voice started to waver a bit and when I looked up in the mirror and my eyes met with hers, I saw the silent tears that started running down her cheeks.

“Oh, mom,” I sniffled as I turned around and put my arms around her, pulling her in for a tight hug that she clearly didn’t expect.

“I’m sorry,” she whispered.

“I am too,” I mumbled, trying to keep my tears in place.

“I just miss him so much,” she cried.

“We all do, mom,” I said and tried to keep my voice steady, but failed miserably as it broke. “We all do.”

I couldn't contain myself when I felt her body beginning to shake under my arms and my tears just started to flow down my cheeks. I knew why she started to cry now. I knew why this was so particularly hard for her and probably for dad as well.

After all, Lucas and I were twins. Yes, we had our different personalities that on occasions still were so very similar, but our looks... Looking into my eyes was like looking into his and I knew that when people had eye contact with me these days, that is what they saw. Or more, that was who they saw. They saw him.

That was also the only thing giving me just a little comfort. The fact that even though I might not be able to be around him or hear his voice anymore, I would still be able to see him because I would see him and be reminded of him every day when I would look into a mirror. That was my comfort even though it to some degree might also end up being a curse.

Chapter 56 - Lost II - The Royal Hybrid

Tatiana's POV

It was quiet. The only thing that could be heard was the birds chipping and singing as they flew over our heads before they formed a triangle in the sky and continued flying ahead. To be so free that you could fly anywhere... Go anywhere you wanted... I wondered if Lucas was able to do that now.

We were surrounded by the entire pack that had come to give Lucas their last blessings to send him off. It was odd, really, at least for me. I had never experienced a pack getting together to make something like this special.

Under Killian's ruling, the only ones who were even allowed to go near a funeral were the ones in high standing as they could provide more for the deceased than the low standing. I was never invited to such things despite my rank, but here... Everyone came no matter if it was the alpha's family, a farmer, a warrior, or a simple mom staying home with the pups. Everyone was welcomed with open arms, another thing that just showed me how a pack should really be.

I had Hayden and Gabriel by my side, mom and dad were walking in front of us, and Uncle Kyle and Ryan were behind us. Everyone was waiting for us to reach the front rows, the only row with chairs that hadn't been taken. Zaya was standing in front of the casket, the white satin casket that my brother's body was now laying in, as she was waiting for us to take our seats so she could begin the ceremony.

My mom and dad took the two first chairs, Hayden, Gabriel, and I the next, and so on. I knew this was a funeral but a thing that had caught my eye when we were walking down

the middle, was that it almost had a setup that looked like a wedding. I didn't question it out loud because I knew why. This wasn't meant to be a goodbye but rather something to celebrate the life he had and wish him good luck in the next.

"Today we are saying goodbye to a man we all have known since he was little. Many of you grew up with him, some of you have taught him and all of us have loved him. He was a kind and spirited guy, who always had a goal in his life. He was carefree, loving and as you all know, he always gave a helping hand whenever needed. Lucas spent most of his teenage years, not only rebuilding packs and villages around our lands after they had been destroyed by the former ruler of the Royal pack, but he also searched with his father over mountains and seas to find his sister who was taken away from us. A sister who has now returned and got to spend time with her brother before the inevitable would eventually happen," Zaya spoke and locked eyes with me. "We are here to remember who he was as a person, to remember what he offered to all of us and what he sacrificed for us to have an even brighter future. Many of you have questioned what happened since the son of the alpha has died and after discussing it with him before he took his last breath, he told me to inform you of the reason at his funeral."

Zaya took a deep breath, her eyes flickering from mine to my mom's as she kept on her speech.

"As many of you already know, Lucas was a hybrid, a thing we for long thought was a legend. But it turned out to be a curse that would end up not only taking his life but also his sisters. And so, to spare her, he gave the ultimate sacrifice."

Zaya continued to inform people of the heroic way Lucas died and as she spoke my thoughts went back to one of the last nights, I had with him.

I had been reading the same page over and over again, trying to finish it, but every time I reached a certain sentence, my mind turned blank, and I had to start over.

Had someone not been knocking on my door, I would have thrown the book across the room, aiming for the window.

"Come in," I called.

Lucas's head peeked inside with a concerned look on his face.

"What's wrong?" I asked, curious as to why he was looking at me that way.

"What's wrong? I should be the one asking you that. You do know that I can hear you from across the hall, right?"

"Hear me?"

“It sounded like you were about to kill someone in here with your grumbling and huffing,” he said as he stepped inside and closed the door.

“Oh,” I said gaping at him. “I did that out loud?”

“You did,” he chuckled. “What seems to be the problem?”

“This stupid thing,” I mumbled and wiggled the book in the air. “I have been stuck on the same page since forever.”

“Stuck? As in can’t read any further or?” he chuckled. “Is there something wrong with the book?”

“I don’t know, it is just... I just somehow can’t get past the sentence...” I trailed off as I flipped through the pages to find the one, I had been stuck on. “Ah, here, ‘And with the last breath, the angel let go of the last string that kept him bound to the life he was about to give up’.”

As I read it out loud, I couldn’t help but shiver.

“What is wrong with that sentence?” he questioned as he plopped down onto my bed.

“I don’t know, but it doesn’t sit well with me, it is like it is too close to me for some reason,” I said. “I don’t know,” I sighed and tried to shrug off the bad feeling that had settled in my stomach.

“Listen,” he began as he got up and pulled the book out of my hands. “You are coming with me now, we will go for a walk, and then-“

“I don’t really feel like going out,” I shrugged.

“Hmm.”

He looked deep in thought before he plummeted back onto the bed and scooted up, so he was now by my side.

“Lay down.”

“What?”

“Lay down and close your eyes,” he said again. “Don’t question it, just do it.”

“Okay,” I said in a curious tone dragging it out a bit, but I eventually did as I was told.

I closed my eyes and listened to the silence until he cleared his throat. The next thing I knew I heard him flipping pages and when I was about to ask what he was doing, he began reading the book to me.

“ And with the last breath, the angel let go of the last string that kept him bound to the life he was about to give up. He did so with full knowledge of what was about to happen, but in his eyes, dying for the one he loved the most in the world, seemed like the perfect way to go, even though he died for the devil himself.”

I was snapped out of my little daydream when Hayden gently nudged me in the side.

I looked at him with questioning eyes before he eyed the place where Zaya was standing waiting patiently for me to join her.

“Oh,” I mumbled and got up from my chair and with hesitant steps walked up next to her.

I took a deep breath as I looked out over the crowd sitting in front of me, waiting for me to say something.

“I tried to prepare a speech for today, I really did. But whenever I sat down with a pen and paper in front of me, my mind went completely blank. Because how do you write down words to describe a person you love so very much when all you really wanted to do was to say it to them in person? How do you, knowing that you will never have times like that ever again, reminisce everything you have either been through or done together? You can say that you will miss them, and that life will never be the same without them because it won't, but that won't even remotely reach the things I wish to say to him or say about him.”

I covered my upcoming sob with a cough and turned my head to wipe away the tear that had escaped my eye.

“He was wonderful, in every single way possible,” I continued. “He was loving, caring and he never gave up hope. He was what many looked up to and what many now aspire to be like and for that, I am very proud. He made his impact on everyone around him and he left a fingerprint in this world, in our world and our lives, that will make sure that even now when he is gone, we will forever remember him.”

I looked down and caught my mom as she herself tried to hide the tears that ran down her cheeks and caught dad as he took her hand to prevent her from it. He said something to her, probably telling her to stop hiding her pain, and then he looked back at me.

“He let me live. He died so that I could live, and I gave him a promise that day on the hill, a promise I will now give to you as well. I will do whatever I can to become the queen you will need one day and the queen you deserve. I will do everything in my

power to grant us safety and make sure that our pack is a safe haven. I gave him that promise because he gave the ultimate sacrifice and I intend to keep it. I intend to make the best out of what he gave.”

I looked down, my tears now wetting my hands that were clenched together in front of me. Zaya gently hugged me from the side and with silence I did a small bow, turned to his casket, and placed my hand on top of it, feeling the cold wood on my palm.

“I will make it right,” I cried. “I promise I will.”

Chapter 57 - Lost II - The Royal Hybrid

Tatiana's POV

It had been a week since the funeral, and everything seemed to slowly get back to normal. We were all still grieving, no doubt about that, but we also had a life we needed to get back to because all the upcoming problems didn't wait for anything or no one.

People came up to us the first few days after, wishing us their best along with their condolences. Despite the fear I had that I wouldn't be accepted within the pack, people came up to me and told me how they looked forward to seeing what kind of queen I would become. It was really odd for me to get such positive comments from people. Going from being a freak to being the future queen Luna was really something, but it didn't come without doing the hard work it required.

Losing Lucas only put everything into a bigger perspective, and I knew that no matter what kind of work I had to do, or how many nights I had to spend training, I would. I now not only had made my brother a promise, but also the rest of the pack and for ones the people given that promise was actually looking forward to seeing it and wishing me the best.

Kathleen and I had been spending quite a lot of time together too. I learned from her that she had been volunteering to go on missions regarding Killian's whereabouts and she even proved her loyalty when she interrogated her own brother.

It had hurt in my heart to see the hatred she now carried toward him, especially after I had lost my own brother, but I wasn't going to be the one who would try to push her back to him. After all, he wasn't a good person and all he wanted to do, was to do Killian's bidding for him in order to gain more power himself. She had told me how he even out loud during one of the interrogations had said that, if it would mean that he got more power, he would even go as far as sacrificing his own sister to get it and that nothing was going to stand in his way.

I had seen the hurt in her eyes as she spoke and as I could not remove the pain or make him take back those horrible words, I simply just hugged and wished her the best

on her upcoming mission before we both returned to Zaya's tower where Kathleen would watch my training before her departure.

The past few days had on my account been filled with training, along with more failures and only some success, but hey a little success counts too, right? As for today, it wasn't any different.

Kathleen had left for her mission earlier this morning; Hayden was training the pups and Gabriel was training amongst the warriors so we all had our own stuff to look after.

"You did good today," Zaya smiled. "You are improving very fast."

"You call this doing good?" I laughed as I pointed to a broken table, the small holes in the walls, and a bookshelf that was no longer attached to the wall or attached at all. Only a few books on it had managed to survive my many attacks and how I did not know.

"It is better than a few days ago," she pointed out. "At least this time you have made holes that went through and through."

She let her hand run over the shattered bricks and I watched once again as she fixed it all as if it had never happened before.

"I don't think I will ever get used to seeing that," I yawned.

"If you keep breaking it, I am sure you will get used to it at some point."

This time it was her who laughed before she yawned as well.

"It is getting rather late," she hummed. "You should go to bed so we can get an early start in the morning."

I had already regretted that I told her that we had no time to spare for this. I missed sleeping in and what I missed, even more, was being out and around with those I love.

After the funeral, I had spent every waking moment in this tower. I didn't even leave to eat as the food was being brought to me. I took my promise very seriously but as my mom had told me a few days back, I needed to remember that there was more to life and now that I had a life to live, I should go live it as well.

"Do you mind if we start a bit later?" I asked slowly.

"I thought you wanted it to be bright and early?"

"I do," I assured her. "But I miss having breakfast with the others and two hours won't matter much, right?"

She bent down and picked up the books that were still whole.

“Two hours will matter,” she said. “But I sometimes forget that you have a life other than this and that I am not my mother,” she frowned.

“Your mother? She was the elder witch before you right?”

“She was, I’m surprised you remember me telling you that,” she grinned.

“Of course, I do,” I chuckled. “She was a good one, wasn’t she?”

“She was the very best to ever exist, but she took her duties very seriously and it ended up being brought over to me when I started to show my magic powers. Every morning, every noon, and every night was spent practicing spells and potions. I sometimes need to remind myself that even I have more to life than just having my head stuck in that old book,” she laughed. “Tomorrow after breakfast then. Now off you go.”

I nodded slowly and with a smile, I exited the room. Zaya was tough and she kept to the rules a lot, but she was fun, and she cared a lot as well. You may not notice it at first but all she ever did was for everyone’s best. Yes she could be strict as hell and she reminded me a lot of one of the teachers I had in my own pack, but the difference with her was that whenever you had done something right or good, she would reward you whereas in the old pack all you’d get was another job to do and one they expected you to do even better than the last.

I reached my bedroom, the dim light of the moon lighting up the area with my bed. I didn’t even bother undressing. I was tired, no, not just tired, I was mentally and physically used up for, not only the day, but the rest of the week and so when I let my body hit the softness of my mattress, I instantly fell asleep.

The hall was filled with darkness in one half and light in the other. The ground beneath my feet was soft, so very soft that it almost felt like it wouldn’t be able to carry my weight even though it did it without any problems. The air was still, there were no scents to smell and in all, it felt as if there was no weight to the place, almost as if I was floating and gravity had suddenly disappeared. It was not a place I had been before and when I finally took a closer look around I discovered that I wasn’t alone.

People were walking all around me with their heads down not looking up even when passing me. It was as if they didn’t notice I was there.

I took a few steps forward, walking towards the lighter side when I noticed a figure staring at me in the distance.

“Hello?” I asked as I waved.

The head of the person quickly bend down and before I had the chance to stop them, they had turned around to walk away.

“Hey! Wait up!” I called and ran after them, but the distance didn’t seem to close in between us. “Hey! I just want to know where I am! Can you tell me? Please?!” I yelled as I began running but no matter how fast I tried to run, I still didn’t get any further.

“He-“ I was cut off by someone stepping right in front of me.

Looking up, about to give a scolding for scaring the shit out of me, I lost every word I had been prepared to say as I stared into the face of my brother.

“L-Lucas?” I stuttered out. “What-“

“There is no time,” he rushed. “Tati, you need to wake up!”

“Wake up? What are you talking about?” I laughed dryly as I shook my head. “Is this a dream?”

“This is nothing like a dream! You need to wake up! Now!” he yelled as he grabbed my upper arms and began shaking me. “Wake up!”

I sat up panting, panicking slightly as I tried to reach for the nightstand to turn on the light. My fingers grabbed the switch but no matter how I turned it, the light wouldn’t turn on.

“What the...” I mumbled.

I flicked with it a few more times until I suddenly felt someone else’s presence. Someone was here, in my room with me. I held my breath as I flickered the light one more time to throw off whoever was in my room and make them believe that I hadn’t felt them yet. As I flickered it my left hand went to the top of the drawer where there was a small hidden space, just big enough for my pocketknife to be placed. Once I curled my fingers around it, I pushed the small button and made the blade appear before I let go of the lamp, turned around as fast as I could, and pointed the knife out into the room.

“Who is here?” I asked through gritted teeth.

It was quiet and the only thing I could hear was my own breathing until I suddenly held it in again as I scouted the darkness of the room and then another’s low breathing made itself present.

“I will not ask again,” I threatened.

“I didn’t expect you to wake up,” a way too familiar voice said and when they stepped out of the corner and into the still dim moonlight shining through my windows, my eyes widened in shock and my heart started to pound.

“Why are you here?” I asked. “Shouldn’t you be elsewhere? How did you even manage to get here?”

Despite the tone of my voice, I didn’t lower my knife. I didn’t know why, but when I as much as thought about lowering it, my body wouldn’t comply and with the dream I just had... It wasn’t a dream. I was sure of it.

“I knew that would be your first question. Now... Why don’t you ask me what you really want to know since you aren’t lowering your weapon?”

“Why are you here?” I asked again, this time with a steadier voice. “What I want to know is just that, and also, why do you have that in your hand? How do you have that?” I asked as I nodded toward the silver dagger from Zaya’s tower.

“Simple enough,” Chad chuckled. “I came to do what I have been asked to.”

Chapter 58 - Lost II - The Royal Hybrid

Tatiana’s POV

“Of course, you would be the type to try and kill someone in their sleep,” I huffed.

“If I would have killed you, I would have already done it,” he grinned. “But you suddenly waking up was not exactly a part of the plan.”

“What plan?” I questioned as I took a step to the side trying to get closer to the door but still remain a certain distance from him.

“It is something I know that you eventually will figure out,” he smirked.

“How did you get out? As far as I know, you were locked up pretty tight in that little new cell of yours,” I asked, my eyes focused on the dagger.

How did he even get that? No one could get access to Zaya’s tower without her permission and no one within their right mind would dare to steal from her... One tiny nick of that dagger and any wolf would pass out. The amount of concentrated silver in it would simply paralyze one’s body and leave them as good as dead if in the hands of an enemy, and here I was, standing in front of one of mine and one who of course had the dagger in his possession.

“I had a little help,” he hummed as he began taking a few steps forward making me look to the door, ready to make a run for it even though I knew that he would reach me before I reached it.

“Don’t come any closer,” I threatened, my voice suddenly beginning to fade.

I cleared my throat and blinked a few times as he came even closer. I wanted to move. I wanted to run, or call for help.

Stay away, was what I wanted to say, but for some reason, the words wouldn’t leave my mouth and when I looked up at his face, my eyes showing the confusion I felt, he grinned from ear to ear and that was when the realization hit me.

“Did you know that just one tiny little poke with the tip of this thing, will make it hard for even the strongest alpha to stay awake?” he asked as he admired the knife.

I wanted to shake my head, but I couldn’t. I wanted to bolt for the door, and scream for help, but no matter how much I wished for my body to move or do anything, it simply couldn’t comply. I was frozen, literally, and I knew that before long I would collapse to the ground. I tried to focus, to feel where exactly he had poked me with the knife, but the silver poisoning slowly taking over, made it impossible.

“You... W-won’t,” I tried to force out as my knees began to cave in under me.

“I won’t? What are you trying to say?” he asked in a smug tone. “I won’t what?”

“O-Out of he-here,” I staggered out as I finally felt my arms too limp to take off from the fall.

“I won’t make it out of here?” he laughed. “Are you sure about that?”

Black dots began forming in front of my eyes, and I watched as his feet moved closer to my face, I in the distance could hear shouting before a cloud of grey dust erupted around me and then everything turned black.

Hayden’s POV

I woke up unexpectedly in the middle of the night, feeling a weird sensation of numbness in my entire body and it felt as if a cloud was starting to form in my mind and a stone pressing on my heart. Everything tingled, but not in the ‘your foot is sleeping’ kind of way. This was worse and way more uncomfortable. It felt as if my body had a hard time moving on its own, feeling incredibly heavy even though nothing seemed to be wrong. I didn’t quite understand what was happening. Even my eyes started to feel heavy and it didn’t take me long after that to realize that it probably wasn’t something that happened to my body directly.

“Tatiana!” I yelled and jumped out of bed, nearly crashing straight onto the floor, but I managed to drag myself towards the door.

I had only just opened it and when my eyes scouted the hall for enemies, I noticed Gabriel struggle to hold himself up further down in the hallway, leaning against a wall for support. He turned around, slowly, when he heard me come out of my room, and the second I saw how much he struggled to uphold himself or even make his body move I knew that whatever was happening to me, was happening to him too.

“Something is wrong,” I said through gritted teeth, the sound barely coming out.

All he could do was nod as he looked towards the door, that we knew our mate was behind.

“Tatiana,” he called, his voice fading in the end.

One foot after the other we dragged ourselves toward her bedroom while trying to call for help, but soon our voices turned into whispers and then nothing. I was desperate. I wanted to see her, to hold her, to make sure that no harm would come to her, but I knew that this didn't just happen out of nowhere. No, someone had planned this, executed it, and their goal... was her.

“Hayden...”

“Hay...”

“Den...”

Someone was calling me but who?

“Hayden!”

“Wake up!”

“Hayden!” Zaya’s voice yelled, my eyes finally opening, and I sat up with a loud gasp as if I had been kept from breathing.

“What happened?” I panted as I tried to catch my breath and looked around confused at the fussing going on around me.

I was in the hallway on the floor, with Gabriel lying next to me unconscious. Zaya was standing above me while people were running back and forth from left and right.

“Are you okay?” she asked worried her eyes flickering from me to Gabriel. “Can you move your fingers? Your legs? Can you move anything at all?”

I wriggled them and nodded as I continued to look at her frantic facial features and it was then I remembered.

“Tatiana!” I exclaimed and tried to get up, but my body wouldn’t let me and so I fell straight back again, the back of my head slamming against the floor.

“No! Stay down!” she warned and pressed her hand against my chest to keep me still. “The silver is not completely out of your system yet,” she frowned.

“The silver? What silver?” I mumbled confused and grabbed my head. “What happened?” I asked as I tried to look past her and into the bedroom whose door before had been closed but now was wide open.

“Chad escaped,” she sighed. “He somehow got his hands on my dagger from the tower...” she trailed off.

“Where is she,” I growled.

“I... I don’t know.”

“What do you mean you don’t know? What happened?” Gabriel who finally had woken up growled furiously from my side.

“I mean that Chad not only got his hands on my dagger but also a few of my potions, including one that will make you disappear,” she said and looked down.

“When you say disappear?” I asked now feeling incredibly anxious, especially since I couldn’t feel her through our mate bond anymore, hell I couldn’t even feel Syx.

“I mean that they literally went up in smoke,” she said. “I have been working on this potion for the past years trying to perfect it. It is meant to get you out of a dangerous situation if that ever were to happen and...”

“You got it to work,” I finished.

“Yes.”

“And he got his hands on that,” Gabriel said.

“Yes.”

So, the feeling I had when I woke up...

“How did he manage to do that?” I croaked out. “I thought...”

“So did I, but that apparently wasn’t the case,” Gabriel sighed finishing my thought for me.

“That what?” Zaya asked.

“I thought I felt the way I did because of Tatiana,” I explained. “But if I have silver in my system too then that clearly isn’t the case,” I said and shook my head.

I was right there... Right in front of her fucking door... Had I only been a bit faster than I could have possibly...

“Don’t even go there,” Gabriel said in a low voice. “It won’t help”

“But it is true,” I pointed out ignoring the fact that he knew what I was thinking.

“There is no need to go blame yourselves,” Zaya said slowly. “You couldn’t have done anything no matter how much you tried to fight it. That blade is like no other. It can make even a full-grown strong alpha bend down to his knees and even in some cases make him unconscious.”

“See?” Gabriel said and patted my back. “We couldn’t have done anything. How did you say he got out?”

But was that completely true? Was that really the case?

“We still don’t know how he broke out or how he even managed to get into my tower. It should be impossible to intrude and neither of my barriers has alerted me of a break-in, so I don’t understand how...” she trailed off.

“Then I have another question we need to find an answer to,” I said slowly. “How the hell did he manage to get to the both of us and Tatiana without anyone noticing?”

Gabriel looked at both of us as if the answer to all of our questions was so very clear.

“What?” both Zaya and I asked at the same time.

“I don’t think he did it alone. I think he got some help from the inside.”

Chapter 59 - Lost II - The Royal Hybrid

Hayden’s POV

“You think we have a mole?”

“How else would you explain this? It’s clearly someone who has access to her tower and the prison section so it can’t be anyone from the outside because our Luna would have felt that the second, they stepped foot on the pack land.”

It made sense because he was right. No outsiders could come here without her knowing and even if they did, they wouldn’t know where our prison section was or that Zaya had barriers on her tower, let alone how to come past them. It had to be someone within the pack... Someone we trusted...

“This changes things a lot,” Zaya sighed. “I’ll go inform the Alpha and Luna and in the meantime, I need both of you to let Doctor Taylor take a look at you. Neither of you are to step foot outside your rooms without his clearance, am I clear?”

“You can’t expect us just to sit back when our mate is missing,” I hissed.

“Especially not when we know she is probably being taken back to Killian this very instant,” Gabriel exclaimed. “Do you have any idea what he will do to her?”

“I do,” she said sternly. “But what good will you two be if you end up overexerting your bodies and end up probably being killed because you lose the ability to fight back.”

“But what if we can?”

“Fine, I’ll ask this one thing then,” she said and looked from me to Gabriel. “Does either of you have contact with your wolf right now?”

And by then I knew she had us. I didn’t have contact with Syx at all, hell I couldn’t even feel him and when Gabriel didn’t speak either, I had a feeling he couldn’t feel his.

“Good, I take your silence as the answer I need. Now, do as I said.”

“Okay,” Gabriel responded with a nod. “But the second we are-“

“We will find out who did this and bring her back,” I interrupted and watched as Gabriel nodded.

“I know,” she said and turned around to leave.

I looked over at Gabriel who was already staring at me.

“You are not going to wait, are you?” he asked me

“Nope,” I said and popped the p before I tried to get up. “And I’m assuming you aren’t either.”

“Of course not,” he grumbled and got to his feet.

“Silver poisoning or not, I will not let her be in his hands ever again,” I said as I shook my head. “I promised her Gabriel...”

“Then we better get going,” he sighed and looked around. “But we need to be discreet about it. Otherwise, she will try to stop us,” he said referring to Zaya.

“That or my dad’s will,” I snickered and nodded towards my room. “I have a way for us to exit without getting seen. Follow me.”

I had never done this before. I wasn’t the type to break any rules let alone not follow an order, but this was something else and I didn’t care what the consequences of it were I would take it as it came. Right now, my love was in danger and there was no way I was about to let her stay that way if I could do something about it.

I closed the door behind Gabriel as he came through it and turned toward the window.

“Now what?” he asked.

“I have vines hanging from the roof, past my window and all the way to the ground,” I explained as I opened the window and looked out.

He came to my side and looked out with me before frowning.

“They don’t look very secure.”

“They are. I used them a lot when I was younger and wanted to watch the grown-ups train,” I shrugged. “Getting scared now, are you?”

“Of course, I’m not getting scared!” he huffed but I could see the sweat forming on his forehead as he looked down.

“Wait,” I paused. “Are you by any chance afraid of heights?”

“No,” he stuttered. “That would be...”

“Absolutely okay,” I interrupted and gave him a reassuring smile that looked like it threw him off a bit.

“You’re not going to make fun of it?” he asked shocked, clearly not believing me when I shook my head.

“Why would I? You might be Tatiana’s mate, but in some weird ass way you are mine too and I wouldn’t make fun of her fears so why should I do it of yours?”

“You really never cease to amaze me,” he muttered.

“Do you want to go down first or last?”

“Last, no first! No, wait...”

“Okay how about I go first to show you that there is no danger?” I chuckled lightly.

“See, now you are making fun of me,” he pointed out.

“No, I simply found that cute,” I said before I could even stop myself. “Okay, never mind that, is this what we do?”

“Yeah, you better go first.”

I swung my right leg over the window frame and leaned out just enough to get a hold of the vine. Then I made sure to find a steady one for my foot to rest on as I swung my other leg out.

“Dammit what if you fall?!” he exclaimed looking a little pale.

“Gabriel, you need to calm down. You are usually collected and calm, what the hell...”

“This is different! You could fall and die! Have you seen how far there is down?” he asked as he stuck his head out next to mine to look down.

“Hey!” I said and got his attention over to me instead. “Look at me. Good. Breathe!” I demanded and watched as he took a few deep breaths. “Good, now you need to remember who we are doing this for okay? It is either this way or the way straight down to Doctor Taylor, so which do you pick?”

“This one obviously,” he answered quickly sounding a bit more like himself.

I nodded and continued my way down, and once I was close enough to the ground, I closed the rest of the gap between the ground and me by jumping. Once my feet connected with the ground I looked up and gestured for Gabriel to crawl down. He hesitantly followed my steps throwing one foot out after another, clinging to the vines as if his life depended on it, making a few squeals here and there, and once he was close enough to the ground I asked him to jump which he refused at first but did after a few seconds.

“See that wasn’t so hard, was it?”

“Shut up,” he grumbled and began to walk. “Come on, we don’t have much time before they notice that we have gone.”

"Where are we even going?" I asked. "We have no idea where he took her and seeing as they literally went up in smoke, he didn't exactly leave a trail behind them for us to follow."

I knew it had been my idea to leave in the first place, but standing here now with absolutely no clue on where to go first, I had to try and think rationally despite the fact that every single nerve in my body still was numb and on edge.

"Somewhere where we can hopefully track her scent and once that happens, we can only pray to the moon goddess, that the silver has left our systems enough for our wolves to come out. Until then, we have to do this on foot."

We kept walking, no, we actually more like snuck around the houses and gardens to stay out of sight and once we reached the furthest border to the south I knew we had to make a run for it.

"If we manage to get into the forest and down to the lake, we should be far enough and we can start our search there," I said.

"That would be a good idea, but we need to keep in mind that a search team will be sent off soon enough so I think we need to get further away than the lake in order to get a head start," he pointed out and made a run for the next bush.

I looked around, making sure that no one was in sight as I made a run for it too and once I was next to him, I looked at him.

"What do you suggest we do then?" I asked. "Again, as you so nicely said yourself, we don't have our wolves yet so the distance we have to go will be on foot, and if we need to get far enough away..." I trailed off.

"I hear you, I do, but if we get caught we will not only get the biggest scolding of our lives, but we will also miss the chance of possibly catching a scent. We have to push ourselves, you know like we did when we were kids in our old pack and we snuck out to see the warriors. We ran like hell to even try and catch up with them, and this is what we have to do again, just not to catch up, but to make sure we don't get caught."

I was about to answer when I heard voices in the distance calling.

"You think they are calling for us or for reinforcement?"

"I don't know and I don't plan on sticking behind to find out," he said and looked around. "The coast looks clear. As far as I can see, and according to the time, the guards on the southern border are about to change shifts so in about 20 seconds we have to make a run for it."

I nodded and prepared for the sprint of my life. We had to at least get into the forest without being noticed in order to actually have a chance.

"Let's go!"

Chapter 60 - Lost II - The Royal Hybrid

Tatiana's POV

My body was so cold from lying on the bare concrete floor with nothing but my pajamas on. I was confused and quite frankly couldn't think straight which only made everything so much harder. One moment we had been in my bedroom and the next I woke up here.

My body was feeling exceptionally numb, and I had a hard time to even open my eyes as they felt so unbelievably heavy. I just wanted to sleep but I knew I couldn't. I knew I wasn't safe.

Not here.

I had to remember what happened before but as I tried to force myself to remember, my mind kept jumping between a few images and that was it.

I remembered Chad being there. I remembered that he had somehow escaped, but how did he manage to do that and how did he manage to take me with him without getting caught?

I tried to stretch my arm and when I finally managed to move it just a little, the sound of chains jiggling met my ears.

My eyes that were slowly adjusting to the dark room followed the sound and it was then it became clear to me why I was feeling so weak. Silver chains... He had used silver chains to keep me tied down like a dog.

"I see you are awake," he said, his voice echoing around a bit, making it hard for me to determine where his voice was coming from. "You shouldn't try to move too much, the chains will only weaken you every time they get to clench down on your skin," he warned.

"Why do you care?" I asked in a voice so low that I wasn't sure if he had even heard me.

"I care because there is so much you do not know," he chuckled dryly. "You think I am the bad guy, don't you? You always have. I mean, not that I blame you one bit. After all, I did spend most years tormenting you in every way I possibly could."

"If you aren't the bad guy," I paused trying to gather the strength I needed to speak. "Then what are you exactly?"

"I am here to help you. To make sure that you survive what is about to happen," he muttered and stepped out of the darkness so I could finally see him. "It is essential that you survive, otherwise we won't just have your pack suffering, but mine as well."

He looked me up and down before he crouched down in front of me wriggling a key in the air.

"If I remove the cuffs from you, will you then stay down as a good girl until I have told you what I need to tell, or do I need to wait with removing them until after my story?" he asked and looked into my eyes.

They showed nothing but serenity and the feeling I got in the pit of my stomach was the pure intentions that radiated from him which confused me even further but it wasn't a feeling that I had any intentions of following. His suspicions were right. I would run for the door the second he'd cut me loose.

"What a dumb question to ask," he sighed. "Of course, you won't stay. The minute you get your strength back, you will bolt out of here. I guess we ought to do it the hard way then."

He leaned back until he was now sitting on his ass, crossing his legs in front of him, his eyes never leaving mine as he did so.

"I am not who you think I am. I had to make you believe that I was the bad guy, that I was working with Killian and doing his bidding to get you back, but in reality..." he paused and looked down, his fingers suddenly fiddling with the key. "I had to make it believable Tatiana," he sighed. "Otherwise, he would have seen right through me."

"I don't understand..."

"You were never an only child Tatiana," he said slowly.

"I know that, but what does that have to do with anything?"

"I am not talking about your actual family," he said as he shook his head, while I let the words, he had just said sink in. "I'm Killian's son and rightful heir to the pack and if he gets his way now, there won't be a pack for me to take over."

"You're lying," I huffed as I stared at him in disbelief.

"Why would I lie? Think about it! How else have I been able to get away with so much shit, how else could I outrank you? Me? A beta's son against an alpha's daughter?"

“Because I was a freak? You said so yourself and you made damn sure that everyone else also thought so,” I pointed out. “You seriously expect me to believe that you are Killian’s son? Then what about Kathleen? You mean to tell me that she is not your sister then?”

“No, she is not. She is the betas daughter as she has always been,” he shook his head and scooted a bit closer to me.

“I need something else in order to believe you,” I sighed. “This sounds so surreal.”

“When you got to the pack, you needed to believe that you were the one who could take over from Killian when he got too old to be an Alpha and that that was the reason to why you had to train all the time so my dad made an offer to a lower standing wolf, promising him that if he took me in and pretended to be my dad, then he would become the bate and so he accepted.”

“And Kathleen? Does she know?”

“As far as I know, no. She is clueless about this but there are so many other things she isn’t clueless about,” he said slowly. “Things we need to talk about that you probably won’t believe.”

“Such as?”

“She is not who you think she is... She works for Killian and has been all this time. She didn’t come here just for your sake, hell I’m pretty sure she never even once really cared about you. She knew that you were her mission. This, your friendship, was nothing but a backup plan.”

“A backup plan for what exactly?”

“For if you ever escaped or found out the truth. That way you wouldn’t question if she came with you and that way Killian would still know your every move.”

What the hell? Did he really expect me to believe that the one friend, my best friend, I had had through most of my life, really wasn’t a friend? No, this was Chad. I needed to remind myself that he would say anything to save his own ass. Even throw his sister under the bus if it meant safe passage for himself. He was selfish and a liar... Wasn’t he?

“I don’t believe you,” I whispered.

“I know you don’t, and I don’t blame you for that, but you need to. You really need to start believing me Tatiana because of the things Killian has planned... It will wipe out not only your entire pack, but I am also very certain that it will end up being the destruction of mine too.”

He looked sincere... The same look in his eyes, the pleading look that begged me to believe him, and even though a small part of me wanted to believe him, my other part, the part that hated Chad more than anything, wanted to tell him to go to hell.

“Why did you take me then?”

“Because the message that I came to deliver to her, was to kill you. That was the only reason to why I came. I know I said stuff before, but I had to play along for as long as I could otherwise, she would rush with the plan and just take you out the second she had the chance to, and I simply couldn’t let that happen.”

“But everything you said in the barn...”

“Everything I said was to trigger you and for you to know the truth. In order to defeat Killian, I needed you to have both of your wolves and the only way to do so was to tell you that you had two mates and let the rest play out and just hope it would play out right, which it did.”

“So, you knew all along? You knew that my brother would die?”

“I did,” he admitted. “Who do you think led Zaya to the place that held the information about the hybrid curse and the double hybrid?”

I never got the story of how she knew, she had only said that she had gone out on a search and that was it, so I really could know whether or not he was telling the truth.

“Did she know? That you were the one helping her I mean?”

“No, of course not,” he chuckled. “If she had known that the tip was coming from me, she wouldn’t have followed it and you know that just as well as I do.”

I was conflicted and the feelings inside of me that were still torn didn’t exactly help nor did it help that I couldn’t ask Amara or Rama for guidance.

“I know that you may find it hard to believe me and I know that I am the reason for that mistrust and for that I apologize, but I can’t undo what has been done. I can only now fight for what is right and do my part in making sure that what is about to happen, won't. But I need your help.”

“What is your plan?” I asked.

I needed to buy myself some time to think and the only way I could do that right now was to keep him talking. If he was lying, he would at some point further into his story slip up, right?

"I managed to steal the dagger from Kathleen while she was sleeping. She had taken it the last time she was in the tower with you. Also, the reason why she volunteered to help interrogate me, was so she could give me intel. She gave me some for when I had to escape for when the big battle would happen, but I used that intel to escape now. Her plan was to kill you with that dagger, then while your mates were weakening from your death, she would kill them too, and then, Killian and his warriors would do the rest," he explained. "They won't come, until you are dead because you, now that you have both of your wolves, are the only one who stands in his way. You are the only one who can stop everything, but we need to play this smart."

"And I am guessing you already have a way to go on about that?"

"I do, but it requires your trust, something I know I don't own or have the right to even ask of you," he said as he bend over and flipped the key into the lock of the chains and with one swift movement he unlocked it, and I felt the relief on my skin when the chains fell to the ground. "But I'm asking you anyway. You can choose now if you want to believe me. If you do, I will tell you my plan, and if you don't, you can kill me right here on the spot."

He then did the one thing I had not expected from him. He bend down, all the way down, so his head was touching the concrete floor, and as he did that he stretched out his arms in front of me and opened his hand revealing a silk scarf.

"I can't do much to prove my loyalty to you, but I can do this," he mumbled.

"What is it?"

"Take it, and you will see," he said as he continued to stay in his bend-over position.

I grabbed a hold of the silky scarf and let the end of it run through my fingers, and even before I had opened it to see what was hidden in it, I knew what it was. As I unfolded it and let the scarf fall to the ground I saw that I was right. He was giving me Zaya's dagger.

"Why are you giving me this?" I asked shocked.

"You are the future queen, Tatiana," he said as he got up. "I want to rule my pack with dignity and pride. I want to show my pack how a leader should be, and I would love to do that as your future ally. This is the only thing that can truly kill you and it can easily kill me, so by giving you this I give you the power over my life and I hope that you will help me to make our future and everyone else's future better than what it looks like now."

I looked at him and studied his facial features to try and see any form of deception, or manipulation but despite my efforts, I didn't see any. All I saw was the same as before

and it annoyed me to a point where I did the one thing I had never expected myself to do. I made a deal with the devil.

"Fine, I am in. Now, what is your plan?"

He looked at me, shocked at first but as his shock wore off, he began explaining his plan to me. I didn't like it one bit but deep down when I was looking at it logically and rationally, I knew this would work and I knew that by the end of this conversation, I would have agreed to it.

"I don't like the idea of hurting them," I sighed and shook my head. "Not like this at least. It will kill them Chad. You know that right?"

"We don't have another choice, Tatiana. I know that it is rough and that it will be tormenting not only them but also you, but you need to remember why we are doing this. We are doing this because it in the end will save them and that is what matters. This is the only way."

I knew he was right, but the thought of hurting my mates like that... To hurt them to such a degree... It broke me from the inside out and I could almost feel my heart break as I pictured their faces in my head.

But... A little pain for a little while in order to be able to save them so that they can live the rest of their lives in peace, wasn't it worth it?

"Okay, I am in," I nodded slowly and watched as a genuine smile, maybe even the first genuine smile I had ever seen on his face, appear. "When do we begin?"