

The Alpha's Secret Luna

#Chapter 24: New Beginnings and Old Shadows - Read The Alpha's Secret Luna Chapter 24: New Beginnings and Old Shadows

Chapter 22: New Beginnings and Old Shadows

The morning light filtered softly through the slatted window blinds, casting pale stripes across the quiet infirmary room. Sophia's breathing was steady now, calmer, her fever finally relapsing. The faint pallor of exhaustion remained, but her bright blue eyes, sharp as the moon on a plane winter night, shone with an eager restlessness that had previously seemed impossibly distant.

A soft creak from the doorway heralded the arrival of another presence. Brynhild stepped through, her silhouette framed against the dim light of the corridor beyond. The tone of authority and concern she always carried softened as her gaze fell on Sophia.

"How are you feeling?" Brynhild asked, voice low and steady as she crossed to the bedside and settled onto the chair beside Sophia. Her eyes settled on Sophia coolly. There was something about her eyes though that Sophia couldn't place. It was like Brynhild saw her but also didn't see her? She wasn't sure and besides that was an issue for another day.

Sophia turned her head slowly, managing a small smile tinged with weariness. "Better. Definitely better," she said softly. "I'm hoping I don't look like trash anymore. It's... a relief not to feel like I'm about to die every second."

Brynhild chuckled. "You don't look like trash at all."

Sophia rolled her eyes. "Tell that to the ogre that is bent on making my life a mess."

"Ogre?" Brynhild asked her.

"The one whose name shall not be mentioned."

"Ronan?" Brynhild asked her, intrigued.

"Ronan is nice unlike his friend."

"Orion?"

"Who else? I feel better though, especially without him here."

Brynhild smiled but didn't say anything regarding her calling Orion an ogre. "Good. We all feared the worst when you collapsed out there." She paused, her gaze gentle but probing. "Do you feel able to sit up for a moment, or maybe talk a bit?"

Sophia pushed back the blanket and swung her legs over the edge of the bed with surprising steadiness. "I think I can manage," she said, rubbing the sleep from her eyes.

Brynhild nodded approvingly. "Take your time. No rush."

Sophia's fingers absently traced the worn wooden armrest as memories skittered at the edges of her mind. The faintest smile touched her lips, and she muttered, mostly to herself, "That whistle Tobias gave me... it saved me. I swear, if I hadn't had that, I don't know if I'd even be here right now."

Brynhild let out a soft chuckle, shaking her head. "It's no surprise. That whistle is more than just a trinket. It's enchanted, a blow signals Orion and in time, we can firm a rescue team, we do have one on standby though but the whistle... wherever it's blown, no matter the distance, it leads us. It's a lifeline for us, the pack's silent alarm."

Sophia's eyes flared with sudden curiosity. "The creature, Brynhild, what was it? I thought it was a bear at first but then it looked more like a wolf but again, it looked like neither. If I didn't have the whistle, only the goddess knows what would have happened to me. I saw my eyes flash right before my eyes. And why the fuck is it so huge? And those teeth..."

Brynhild laughed, a genuine sound that softened the lines around her eyes. "A Skylur. A creature that's the stuff of legend, a mix between wolf and bear, it's cunning and brutal. It's also always hungry and my husband says it carries a lot of diseases. He hounded me when he thought I was injured yesterday but thankfully, that was a false alarm. Few have lived to tell their tales after crossing paths with one. And it's extremely rare to find them also."

"So I'm part of the few that lived to tell the tale?" Sophia asked Brynhild who chuckled.

"A very lucky one."

Sophia shook her head once more in disbelief, the vividness of that night flashing again in her mind. "It was so huge, so fast. I barely knew what hit me...or how I didn't get ripped apart."

Brynhild's glance flicked toward the window as if expecting the shadows of another beast to lurk there. "Luck was on your side. And Tobias was close enough to hear your call."

Sophia nodded, voice dropping. "He gave me that whistle and told me to go ahead with my path while he handled his business. Well...he tried to come with me but I ensured he

went on his part. I...I tried to follow him but... I got lost. I don't understand how though. It was like he just disappeared."

Brynhild laughed again, the sound lighter now. "That road can twist even the best of hunters around. You did well to survive on your own. And Tobias didn't use just one road. The path to the black market is confusing and tricky because it's a secret. If you are not in on it, you'll get lost."

"Oh," Sophia said with wide eyes. "That explains why I got lost."

"Did you think Tobias was hurt?" Sophia asked, eyes fixed on Brynhild now, searching.

Brynhild's gaze softened. "We feared the worst when the whistle was found near the fallen Skylur. We didn't know if he had been attacked."

Sophia's fingers clenched tightly, as though squeezing those memories into existence. "He... he insisted I take the whistle before we parted ways. He had business to do but promised he'd find me again when he was done."

"Tobias said that?" Brynhild asked her, shock written in her face.

"Why do you sound so surprised?" Sophia asked her.

"It's because I am. Tobias isn't kind. He hardly seems interested in conversations except it has to do with making money." Brynhild told her.

Sophia frowned. The person she met sounded different from who Brynhild was talking about.

"Is this the same Tobias?" She asked Brynhild.

"It is. Tobias is a bit like my husband. He is only familiar with friends but with strangers, nope. He finds it hard to relate with them. He wasn't even seen as a kind person to most people in our pack and he has been with us all his life." Brynhild explained.

"That's weird because he seemed kind to me. He even joked with me." She told Brynhild.

"Tobias telling a stranger a joke? Wow, never thought I'd hear this any day. But then again, I think it's because it's you, you've only been here for a few days and you've elicited different and various emotions in our members." Brynhild said to her.

"Are you sure it's different? Orion seems the same to me though." She told Brynhild.

"Believe me, Orion is the one behaving more differently."

"Anyhow," Brynhild said as she stood up, "I came here for two things and the first is done."

"What's the second?" Sophia asked her.

"Showing you a place to call your own." Brynhild said as she extended her hand to Sophia to assist her.

Sophia hesitated, then grasped Brynhild's hand, pulling herself upright with a tentative smile.

"I'd like that." She said quietly. "A place to call my own."

Brynhild's smile broadened, warmed by the fragile hope. "Good. I'll show you to your new quarters. When you're stronger, I'll walk you through the pack. There's much you need to see."

As they exited the infirmary, the daylight pouring faintly through frost-coated windows felt less harsh, less alien. The pack compound, with its woven paths and sturdy stone, awaited like a vast, unexplored continent.

They crossed the sprawling courtyard to the Residence Hall, a solid, timbered building that stood as a beacon of safety and community within the wild expanse of Nirvana. Brynhild walked with confidence, her cloak swaying slightly around the gentle curve of her belly, the weight of her pregnancy adding a measured pace to their steps.

Inside, the scent of polished wood and fresh herbs mingled with flickering candle flames arranged purposefully along the walls. The quiet murmur of activity hinted at a living heart nestled in the building's depths.

At the doorway of a well-appointed chamber stood Serena, the Keeper of Residences. She was mid-thirties, her dark hair streaked gently with silver feathers just like Brynhild's but a different colour from Brynhild's. Her eyes were sharp, pulling equal parts command and kindness in their gaze.

"Orion told me you'd be arriving soon," Serena greeted, wiping her hands on a linen cloth as if she'd just finished minor repairs.

Sophia cast a wide look at the room she was to call home, a small yet elegantly crafted cabin room, with high windows that welcomed the morning light. The walls were finished in soft pine, adorned with handwoven tapestries depicting the eternal moon phases, while a sturdy bed sat beneath a carved alcove.

For the first time in weeks, Sophia felt a flicker of something like peace. "It's beautiful," she murmured, stepping carefully to the window to peer out at the shimmering frost catching the sun.

Serena's smile was warm. "That's the hope. You'll be safe here."

Brynhild, who had been silently watching, suddenly furrowed her brows, lips pressing in thought. After a breath, her silver gaze turned to Sophia.

"Tell me though," she began, voice gentle but probing, "why did you decide on your home being next to Orion's?"

Sophia froze, her eyes snapping wide open in horror. "Next to his?" she breathed, voice rising in disbelief.

Brynhild nodded. "Wasn't that what you wanted?"

"Orion said that was what you wanted." Serena said to her.

Sophia's cheeks flushed scarlet, a black streak of embarrassment flushing her pale skin. "That fucking bastard. I specifically requested one far from his home. I'll kill him, I swear I will."

"Who are we killing?" A voice asked suddenly from behind Sophia who screamed in shock as she ran to hide behind Brynhild.

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Tip: You can use left, right, A and D keyboard keys to browse between chapters.