

The Last Spirit Wolf by Elena Norwood Novel Full Episode

Read Chapter 21

Chapter 21

-Vera-

My eyes are closed as I feel the rush of adrenaline leaving my body. I'm breathing heavily and there is ringing in my ear from all the exertion. As my heart begins to settle, I open my eyes and sit up; all the muscles in my body straining. Everyone that was in the clearing has gathered around Noah, Eli, myself and the beast. Now that it is visible, some are eyeing it curiously, fearfully; others are brave enough to poke it to verify that it is indeed dead. The beast doesn't bulge. Lying next to me is Noah, still in his lycan form. I place my hand on his forehead, beckoning his eyes open.

We did it.

We actually did it.

A loud howl of joy erupts from someone in the crowd that has formed, and several quickly follow; I smile at their outburst. All the wolves start turning to human form and screaming at the top of their lungs. I tend to forget how nudity-friendly wolves are. [Search the website](#) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

I lower my gaze, ashamed by the scenery and focus on Noah who is intently looking at me. His black lycan eyes are slowly fading, revealing the hazel eyes I like so much. He's getting ready to shift as Lucas jogs over in his human form to give his friends some clothes. I cover my eyes, still sitting on the floor as Noah and Eli quickly put on some clothes.

Noah places his hands on my cheeks, causing me to lower my hands from my face. His eyes are filled with more love and... pride?... than I have ever known from anyone.

"You did it, Vera. You fucking did it," and without warning, he kisses me.

The kiss is everything I ever hoped a kiss could be, and then some. Fireworks are erupting in my mind and my entire being is on fire. How could I ever even think to go on a lifetime without this?

I deepen the kiss, causing a fire to pool in my belly. If we continue like this, I might not even care that we are in the middle of a clearing, with a dead beast, and all of the pack members surrounding us.

Noah breaks the kiss and puts his forehead on mine; we're both exhausted and injured. borderline hyperventilating, but none of that seems to matter right now.

With the dead beast on the ground and everyone cheering around us, it feels like a huge weight has been lifted for both of us.

The crowd starts moving in sync, drawing our attention. Noah helps me up just as Sofia appears in the clearing, followed by Alex, each with a baby in their arms.

Her dress is a mess, blood crusted at its hem, her face puffy and her usually impeccable hair in disarray. It is also clear that the twins have literally just been born; they haven't even been cleaned properly. Sofia looks swollen, teary, and most importantly, weak. "Brothers and sisters. There will be a time to celebrate. For now, we gather around the pyre and bring our warriors home."

The look on everyone's faces fall. The relief and happiness from defeating the beast had temporarily blinded us to the reality of the situation: the high cost at which we obtained this victory. Just thinking about our wolves lying on the ground, lifeless, devoid of their souls, causes a knot to form in my stomach.

Her words had the intended effect as the crowd is dispersing, following their Alpha's command. I say still, looking directly at her as her eyes scan the crowd. They land on me, and the minute our eyes lock, I can tell her tears are about to fall. Not wanting to show any more weakness to her pack, she turns her head and leaves the clearing with Alex close behind.

I turn to the lycans and without a word they know to follow me. I let go of Noah's hand, feeling guilty I hadn't thought about the aftermath of the attack.

Deciding to make myself useful, I make my way back to the clinic to assess the chaos that ensued the battle.

When we get there, my heart breaks; beds are filled with wolves, some even having to wait seated on the floor to be taken care of. The elders who once were doctors and nurses have also come out to help.

As I make my way through the corridors, the clinic is not only packed, but there is no order; everyone running around without a clear plan. Where is Doctor Owens?

I find Violet tending to the wounds of one of the warriors; there is a deep cut that nearly severed his leg. Violet has managed to stop the bleeding but he will need to be wheeled up to surgery as soon as possible.

"Where is doctor Owens? Who's running the clinic?"

She looks at me with sympathy in her eyes.

"He's in surgery."

Well, that isn't strange at all. I give her a questioning look, not understanding the sad look on her face.

"Vera," she places her hand on mine, "he is in surgery."

It takes me a moment to understand what she's saying... this can't be happening.

"He heard about what you were going to do and he wanted to be there just in case... just in case you needed him."

We exchange a long look; one I know all too well. The situation isn't likely to turn in his favor. I start to panic.

"Go, I got this. O.R 4."

I take off, running through the halls, navigating through all the people crowding the clinic. I reach the stairs and sprint to the third floor. I enter the surgery room, straining my muscles even further, just as everyone is taking off their gloves and I hear the distinct, long beep of the machine, indicating there is no heartbeat.

"Time of death, eighteen forty-two."

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Chapter 22

-Vera-

I crumble to the floor as the surgeon's attention falls on me, my legs giving out. My heart feels like it's going to hammer out of my chest.

This can't be real. The only father I've ever known can't be gone. I crawl closer to the table, tears beginning to rim my eyes. When I get close to the table though. I notice something odd.

"This... this isn't... doctor Owens?" I turn my hopeful eyes to the surgeon as he comes around to kneel beside me. His kind eyes are smiling, but there is so much sadness in them.

"Vera, I presume. No, this isn't doctor Owens, this is Nathan, he was one of the warriors at the border when the beast attacked."

We both look at the lifeless body of the warrior; the tears that had begun to form in my eyes now falling to my cheeks.

"As for Dr. Owens's, his surgery went well; he's recovering from the anesthesia in a makeshift recovery room we prepared in his office."

I start crying even more. Full on, ugly face crying. All of the emotions of the day, all of the feelings I had been avoiding in order to complete my task, come back at once. I barely even notice when the doctor gently helps me up, guiding me to a chair just outside the O.R. He's holding me while I let it all out.

After about five minutes. I'm finally beginning to calm down and the doctor hands me a bottle of water. I take it and down it in one gulp.

Now that all the adrenaline has left my body, I realize how banged up I really am. My thigh and calf muscles are on fire, my back and rib cage area hurt more than I can describe. I might have a broken rib or two, and my head wants to explode.

While assessing the state of my body, my hand goes to where my head is especially tingling; I feel blood. I have a cut which I measure with my fingers, it's no more than six centimeters, right in my hairline. It isn't very big, but it is quite deep. The doctor moves to get supplies to clean me up but I grab his arm and stop him.

"No, please, many are in far worse shape. Go help them first, I'll clean myself up."

He gives me a long look. He comes closer to me and hugs me gently, whispering in my ear,

"Thank you." He says simply, and walks away.

I'm confused about the exchange. I'm the one who should be thanking him. In fact, I don't even know this doctor but judging from his age, he's probably a retired doctor that came to help out.

After gathering the supplies I'll need, I make my way to Dr. Owens's office, needing to make sure he's ok.

When I step into the room, one of the nurses, also one I don't recognize, is checking on him. As she notices me, she gasps and nearly drops her chart.

"Sorry," I start, "I just wanted to check on him." She composes herself quickly.

"Oh, honey. It's okay. He's doing just fine. He was injured by the beast in the clearing when he was trying to help one of the warriors. It punctured a main artery in his leg but they managed to clip it."

I smile at this. I'm not the least bit surprised that he was there trying to help people. Dr. Owens is one of the kindest and caring people I know. The nurse moves towards me,

"Here, let me take care of that for you."

She grabs the supplies from my hands and direct me to sit on the chair at the side of Dr. Owens's bed.

She begins working on cleaning my wound, disposing of dirty gauze after dirty gauze. I'm entirely filthy from the battle.

"It'll need stitches. I'll be right back with some anesthesia." She says after she's done with the clean up.

When she comes back, I'm still sitting in a chair next to my mentor, energy draining from my body fast. She makes quick work of the anesthetic by injecting my forehead with it. She proceeds to further clean, stitch, and bandage the wound.

"I know I don't have to tell you this, but take it easy. With a wound like that. I'm surprised you didn't lose consciousness."

I smile at her and thank her, genuinely grateful that I didn't have to stitch this up myself. She grabs her chart and leaves, closing the door behind her. I lean into Dr. Owens's bed and grab his hand. I stay like this for at least an hour, processing everything that had happened.

I felt different. I don't know what felt different, but something definitely was. My dreams, visions, now felt like a distant memory, stored somewhere in my mind. I had more questions than answers. Why was I the only one that could see the creature? Why did I manage to see it even when I wasn't there? How do I make sense of everything I saw in my visions? Is any of it real?

I get up to leave when I feel myself dozing off; I also wanted to check on Sofia before I head to the pyre. It still isn't time for me to rest. Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

When I exit Dr. Owens's office, everyone turns to me. The doctors, nurses, and even the injured wolves stop what they're doing and make way for me, bowing their heads. It is the sign of outmost respect in the pack, normally only exhibited for the alpha. I make my way through the hall and exit the clinic, turning briefly one last time to look at it.

Everyone still had their heads bowed.

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Chapter 23

-Vera-

I head to the pack house, where I'll find Sofia in the top floor. As I make my way through the halls, I no over yet.

When I reach the Alpha's room, I hesitate before knocking on the door. What if she's asleep?

*Come in, I hear in my head. It's Sofia.

"The woman of the hour," she says softly as I open the door.

everyone regarding me just like they had in the clinic; I don't know what to make of it but I don't really care right now. I'm exhausted and the day isn't even

Her room is the largest in the pack house, naturally. It's not so much a room as it is a suite, with floor to ceiling french doors and a massive balcony outside. Her bed sits facing the northern wall, in between both french doors. I make my way to her. She's sitting on her bed with the twins napping to her side; she has a bunch of her lap.

"Alpha." I salute her.

We exchange a long look and then break out of character. I rush to my best friend and hug her tightly. If there is a moment to break protocol, it is now, after everything we have been through.

"Oh, V. Thank you, thank you, thank you." Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

We both begin to tear up. In one day, Sofia had her twins, we were attacked by a beast of folklore, and When we separate, we both grab tissues that were on the bed and compose ourselves. "Oh Goddess, look at them."

up from what I can only describe as a magic induced coma.

The tissues come in handy since I'm crying again, looking at Sofia's babies. I crawl to bed next to them and ouch one lightly on the forehead. "They're absolutely perfect, Sof."

"Aren't they?" She's sniffing again and I grab her hand.

"You did such a good job, mamma."

"Oh please, if it wasn't for you..." she cuts off to blow her nose but her eyes are rimmed with tears, "if wasnt for you, none of us would be here right now."

Her words hang as we stay like this, looking at the twins; their tiny chests breathing in and out in complete relaxation, completly oblivious to the peril circumstance of their birth. Sofia really did do an amazing job at keeping it together while we were attacked, and doing all of this without any real medical intervention like an epidural; to me, it further proves her position as Alpha.

"I named her Rose, and he's John."

"John Allen," a memory of Jade Waterfall under a new moon comes to me, "like your ancestor."

Sofia frowns.

"Yes, how did you know?"

I'm not sure what to answer her so I stay silent. How do I even begin to explain to her everything I saw, and most importantly, why? My silence is very telling, and she continues,

"Well, we will have some time to talk about that. For now, please go and get some rest, take a shower. It will take about two hours to get the pyre ready."

"How many?" I ask flatly.

Sofia lowers her gaze. "Forty-six."

Forty-six of our wolves, of our warriors, of our brothers and sisters... dead.

The pain I feel cannot be described, so I can't even imagine what Sofia is going through, having a connection to all of the pack all at once. She not only felt their deaths, but she now feels the pain and loss of their loved ones; their mates, their kids, siblings and parents. There are many reasons why the Alpha is regarded as the strongest of the pack, and not all of them are physical. Please visit Jobnib.com and search the book title to read the entire book for free. Sofia is enduring all of this while also navigating all of the emotions that come with being a mom; I am truly in awe.

Still, I worry that it might indeed be too much for her. Knowing her the way that I do, I'm sure she will drown all of her sorrow in tireless work. I worry even more knowing that I won't be here to support her through this; Sofia will need a friend now more than ever and our connection has always been easy beccause we grew up together.

"Please take it easy on yourself Sof," I advise her, "there was nothing you could've done, and what's more important, look what you have given the pack," I look at baby John, "a male Allen heir."

This clan has always thrived under Allen leadership; in fact, its darkest days have always come under the leadership of some other fool who thought they could lead this pack. Sofia was a surprise baby, the only one the Moon Goddess blessed her parents with. To say that the entire clan was disappointed it wasn't a boy is an understatement. Some members even deserted the clan, thinking the Allen dynasty was definitively over now that there was only a girl to inherit the Alpha position.

It fills me with pride to be able to say that Sofia has been anything but a disappointment.

"Well, let's not get ahead of ourselves, I'm gonna teach Rose how to kick a*s just like her momma." Sofia blows her nose once again, distracting me from my thoughts. "Now, I have a surprise for you, it's in your room. Please go shower, you seriously stink."

We look at each other in a silent conversation that only we are able to have, perhaps because of how close we've been ever since she found me. The heaviness of the day is weighing on both of us.

I hug her one last time and exit her room, not before taking a long look at the twins again. I can't explain why, but I have a feeling that this mythical beast appearing and the birth of Allen twins cannot be mere coincidence.

My feet are barely lifting to step as I approach my room; every part of me simply hurts. When I'm about to turn the doorknob, I know exactly what gift Sofia is referring to.

I groan inwardly. My Alpha and her dirty, dirty mind.

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Chapter 24

-Vera-

I open the door and Noah is laying on my bed, facing the ceiling and fast asleep. He's breathing softly, carelessly. My heart warms at the sight. He's wearing new clothes, no doubt procured by the warriors who probably have his same build; dark blue jeans and a simple black t-shirt. I had to admit, no one ever made simple look so good. Not wanting to wake him, I tip toe to my bathroom and notice it's been used. He probably used my shower and changed right here, waiting for me.

I get the tub ready; a nice, hot bath with some healing herbs might be enough to ease the pain in my muscles. I don't heal as fast as the rest of the pack because I haven't connected to my wolf yet, so I've always had to be extra careful. That's what turned me into a good fighter; while others were careless about their injuries knowing they'd heal in a day's time, I had to be smarter and faster because I didn't have that same luxury. In fact, so many in training had been wounded to a point where it would be fatal to me. Training to them was just that, but to me, it was sometimes life and death.

Starting the shower, I take a good bath first, scrubbing every inch of my body, ridding it of all the filth and dried blood that I have accumulated through the day. I had plasters of blood, dirt, and goddess knows what else smeared all over me; my nose crinkling every time I had to be aggressive with the scrub to get rid of them.

When I'm done, I enter the bath and submerge. I sigh in contentment; this is exactly what I needed. I submerge everything but my face, being mindful of the stitches I have in my forehead.

*

I take this time to meditate as usual, only this time I'm trying to focus on the visions or... dreams*... I had. They're more like a foggy memory now, and I can feel myself losing the memories of them as more time goes by. Maybe meditating on them, trying to recall them, will keep them fresh in my memory.

After about 20 minutes of my breathing exercises, it is clear that my mind is too tired for this right now. I can't remember anything significant, only snippets of what I *maybe* saw. I know there is some great significance to this, but I can't bring the memories forward despite my best attempt.

Letting about 10 more minutes go by, I get out of the tub, towel myself dry, and get dressed in a red dress, traditional for wolf funeral ceremonies. It's a simple satin wrap dress with short sleeves, that reaches just below my mid-calf. I pause to look myself in the mirror, my fingertips. going to my face.

I look pretty banged up. The still swollen stitches on my forehead do very little for my complexion, as I look like a sick mid-century orphan. My dark circles are more prominent than before, even if I did just wake up from a very long sleep. How long was I asleep for, anyway?

I quickly fix my hair, brushing through all the knots and tangled mess. It looks half decent when I'm done, at least its back to being straight.

I contemplate putting on makeup to disguise how bad I feel on the inside, but choose not to. This isn't a time to pretend to not feel like shit. All of the pack feels like shit too, just like me.

When I open the bathroom door, Noah is still asleep and I consider leaving him here for the entire ceremony. He's been through a lot already just these past few weeks, I'm sure he needs the rest.

As I'm looking at him and weighing my options, the ceremonial horn blows off in the distance, signaling that the Pyre Ceremony has begun.

Noah jolts up from the bed and is quick on his feet, his eyes are a tired red.

"Wha-what's that?" He's frantically trying to put his shoes on, "Another attack? Vera, where-" his eyes land on me.

We stay like this for a while, him staring at me. I can see the veins on his neck rapidly pumping blood; his jaw drops to the floor.

"Wow..." He finally manages when he composes himself.

I smile gently enjoying the overt compliment, but then again, he's my mate, he's not the best judge on how I actually look.

Taking a few steps, I reach the middle of the room and extend my hand towards him.

"Come on, we have a ceremony to get to. Don't bother with the shoes, you won't need them." Indeed, all of our ceremonies are done without any shoes on, connecting directly to the ground. [Search the website](#) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

He takes my hand and pulls me towards him, embracing me gently but securely. I take a deep breathe, inhaling his scent and committing this feeling to memory. He smells like the forest. which doesn't make sense; no one should smell like the forest itself. "I'm so sorry, Vera. For everything. If we hadn't come here, this would have never happened."

I hug him a little tighter.

"None of this is your fault, Noah. Not yours, not Eli's, not Lucas's. Those wolves died with honor, defending their own. That is what this ceremony is about, not placing blame."

I meant every word. None of the other wolves in the pack thought any different. The fact was, if that thing was out there there was no guarantee that it wouldn't eventually come for us, too.

We stay like this for a while, both of us drawing comfort from each other and then, hand in hand, we walk out of the pack house, into the open field towards the pyre.

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Chapter 25

-Vera-

The ceremony is set up with a pyre in the middle of a huge, open field, surrounded by trees. The moon today is especially bright and there are no clouds to dim her. The bodies of our fallen warriors are carefully wrapped in linens and placed in the pyre. There are

far too many and my heart gets heavier and heavier as we approach.

Noah and I reach the Ceremony and most wolves already seem to be here. Notably, I cannot see Eli or Lucas amongst the crowd. I turn to Noah to ask but he seems to already know what I'm thinking. "They'll be here. They just didn't know if our presence would be welcomed after everything that's happened."

Content with the answer, we deepen ourselves into the crowd, but same thing as before, everyone seems to make way for Noah and I.

We make it to one of the empty blankets on the grass and sit.

"This is interesting, observing wolves from up close." Noah breaks into my train of thought.

"How so?" I ask, genuinely curious. I hadn't thought about this before, but just as wolves are taught all sorts of horrible things about lycans, it makes sense that they are taught the same of wolves. "Well, first of all, the wolves I grew up reading about would've killed us first and asked questions later."

"Well, aren't you glad we aren't all monsters." I chime in, albeit sarcastically.

"Yes, yes I am." He smiles at me and kisses the back of my hand. My stomach does a flip and I'm certain. If I was in healthier conditions, I'd be blushing. I swallow nervously but he doesn't seem to catch it, he's lost in his thoughts. "Tell me what else isn't like your books." I ask.

He turns to look at me.

"You know, lycan society isn't like this, at all. What wolves have... that camaraderie... that kinship... is what lycans pretend to have, and they will claim you guys are the barbaric, back stabbing beasts. In reality, that's most of the lycans I know, specially the higher you go on the political food chain."

"How does that work? Do you guys have an Alpha, or...?"

"We have a King that presides over a Council. Although 'king' is a hefty title for that jackass," he looks at me with a sly smile, "this stays between us, of course."

"Of course." I declare. It doesn't go unnoticed how good it feels to be actually connecting to Noah, mate bond aside.

"King Alistair appointment himself after overthrowing the previous King. We are like wolves in that regard, we respect and follow power. But from what I heard; it wasn't a clean fight. The previous king. King Alexander, was an elite fighter, an apex predator. There's no way Alistair... King Alistair... could have won cleanly. So, in the end, he had to take over despite peoples' protests."

"What about the Council? Shouldn't they have stepped in and removed him?"

"Should have, yes. But they were too vested politically. I'm not sure what it was, but King Alexander had done something unforgivable, apparently. Even the Council supported the coup."

We stay silent for a minute, Noah consumed in his thoughts.

"You know what else is interesting?" He starts again, "we are sold this idea that everyone outside lycan society is living out in the woods like actual animals. That everyone but lycans are poor. But," he extends his arm and motions towards the pack house, "this, all of this, is more advanced than anything we have back home."

This confuses me because to my knowledge, we aren't even the most technologically advanced pack in the region. "What do you mean with 'advanced' exactly?"

"The clinic for instance. It has advanced machines and decent medicine..."

I jab him in the ribs and he laughs.

"Say 'decent' referring to my clinic one more time and I'll use you to start the pyre." I glare at him just to land my point home. He's cradling his ribs with one hand, still laughing.

"In all seriousness," he continues, "all, absolutely all, of what we are sold about werewolves is a lie. I'm just wondering why that is." Search The website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Again, we stay silent, both lost in our own thoughts.

The second horn blows, signaling it is time to light the pyre. It is the most solemn moment of the night. All wolves gather around tightly. We all look like red flowers fallen on a vast, green carpet of grass.

Sofia steps closer to the northern end of the pyre, a symbolic point for the warriors' journey ahead; this is where the fire must begin. She's wearing a magnificent red, long sleeve, off shoulder wrap dress, with a beautiful tail dragging behind her. The dress is as grand as her position entails.

As the prayer begins, we all lower our heads and Sofia utters the ancient chant in our minds. Once finished, she lowers the torch onto the pyre. It spreads quickly, making smoke rise up to the moon who watches us intently. There is no doubt in my mind that the Moon Mother is witness to our grief.

Everyone moves on about, talking to each other and remembering the fallen warriors. Kids are now allowed to come out and are running around back and forth, chasing each other and playing. To them, who don't know any better, this is just a bonfire ceremony that allows them to stay up past their bedtime.

Noah and I have once again found ourselves on an empty blanket on the ground, only now I can spot Eli and Lucas making their way towards us.

When they reach us, they greet us and sit. I'm about to tease Eli about how his arm hasn't fully healed yet, when I notice a warrior come up to us, kneel, and put a canine in front of me.

Then another warrior approaches and does the same thing, and then another, and then another. Soon, there is a line of wolves, warriors and non-warriors, waiting to do the same. The three lycans are eyeing me confused, but I'm too stunned to turn away.

This isn't part of this ceremony, but it is part of a ceremony, and it is the biggest honor in any pack. An honor only awarded to very few wolves, and all alphas at that.

I am being recognized as the pack's strongest warrior.

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Chapter 26

-Vera-

"But isn't it a little, I don't know, gross?" Asks Lucas when I'm done explaining the events of the Pyre Ceremony.

"It's not gross, it's an honor, Lucas." I've had to point this out to them a few times already.

"Ok but did you have to pick up and keep all of them?" Asks Noah.

"I mean how did you want me to pick which ones to leave? That'd be a very big insult to all of the people that gave me their canines." "Well and how are they going to hunt now, toothless?!" Eli chimes in, and all three lycans burst out laughing.

I roll my eyes; the joke isn't even funny.

"They'll grow back, obviously."

They've all stopped laughing and are looking at me, so I explain further.

"I've done hundreds of canine removals, guys. If you lose a tooth in wolf form, it grows back."

They're all staring at me in disbelief. I smirk, turning my back to them to continue packing. How's that for being the superior species?

We all proceed to pack what we will need for the trip back to the lycan territory. The lycans have decided to stay a few more days, conferring with our elders about what they have found out about the chimera.

The elders have dissected the beast and concluded that such a fantastical being was created purely by magic; when they opened up its insides, the beast was comprised of many gruesome body parts of all kinds of creatures. Please visit Jobnib.com and search the book title to read the entire book for free. The light that was shining at the top of its head ended up being a mythical stone used in very ancient witchcraft, hence when it was cracked, the link to the magical source of its power was broken.

I, for one, need to make sure everything around the clinic will be running smoothly once I leave. After everything that happened, Violet has been named interim Head Physician, even though she's a nurse. She knows this clinic and its doctors like the back of her hand.

I'm on my way to see Dr. Owens now and check on his progress. I enter the physical therapy room and just as I suspected, he's already walking on his own.

"See?! This old man still has the strength of a youngling!" He declares triumphantly.

Sam is holding his cane to one side as Dr. Hartman overlooks Dr. Owens's recovery.

"Quite remarkable, I must say. At this rate, you won't even need the cane."

"Did I not tell you?! Oh! -" He spots me, "Vera, come look! A little nick to the artery won't be enough to hold this old man down!"

"I didn't expect anything less." I smile and go over to him, watching as he takes a few more steps on his own. Dr. Hartman intervenes and grabs his arm.

"Ok, ok. That's enough for today. It's clear you're making a fast recovery but don't get ahead of yourself."

Sam passes the cane to Dr. Owens, who doesn't seem to want to take it but eventually relents. Even if he's already walking again, his young years have indeed long passed, and he is aware of it.

"Sam, it's ok. I'll head back with Vera."

With that, Sam takes off to her rounds and I go over to Dr. Owens, offering my arm for added support.

"You're the only one I'll accept this from."

"I won't tell if you don't." I wink at him as he places his hand inside my elbow.

We walk outside the pack house towards the inner gardens. Since he's been in recovery, Violet and the other staff members barricaded his office so he couldn't go in and work. [Search the website](#) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Once we reach the gardens, we sit on one of the benches in front of the fountain. The gardens are modest, but oh so beautiful. The fountain in the middle is made from green tiles, reminiscent of Jade Waterfall. There are hanging plants, benches, and all sorts of flowers adorning every corner.

"I'm glad you came to see me today, I don't know how long until you guys start on your journey." He reaches for something in his pocket. "I wanted to give you this during my farewell party, but well, I didn't get the chance."

"Oh, Dr. Owens, you don't have to..."

"Vera, you can call me Michael. You know that."

He's always preferred I use his first name but, at least in the clinic, it feels too informal.

"This belonged to my wife," he opens a little jewelry box, "It was given to her by her mother, who received it from her grandmother, and so on, you get the point."

I'm looking at the opened jewelry box. Inside there is a dainty, gold necklace with what appears to be an emerald pendant.

"I don't understand..."

"Vera, you know my wife and I... our Moon Mother never blessed us with a child... and then my wife passed away and nothing made sense to me anymore. Until I met you."

He clears his throat, the emotion getting to him. "Anyway, if we'd had a daughter, this would've been hers. My wife and I never had that luxury, but I did."

I can feel my eyes rim with tears, I'm speechless.

"I can't possibly take this, Michael. I'm flattered, I love it, and I love you, but I can't... this was your wife's."

"And she'd want you to have it. Had she met you, she'd see in you exactly what I see. You are the daughter we never had." He takes out a handkerchief and hands it to me, even though at this point we're both tearing up. This is goodbye for us, for who knows how long.

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Chapter 27

-Vera-

"Sofia, we need to talk."

"Vera! I was just coming over to find you." She says cheerfully. She's sitting in her office, b***** feeding one of her twins as she reads some reports. Search The website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"Are you serious? Do you never stop working?"

"Hey! I'm reading Thomas's reports on *his* Alpha duties."

"You mean the one thing you allowed him to take from your hands?" I raise my eyebrows.

The only thing she's allowing him to do is look over the month's meal plans.

"And he's doing a crap job at it," she grumbles, "so, what's up? You seem agitated."

"We need to talk about... I don't even know how to put it." I hesitate for a moment, genuinely confused at how to even start this conversation. "So, I was just talking to Dr. Owens, right? And he gave me this necklace," I touch the dainty emerald necklace sitting in my collar bone, "he told me something that jogged my memory."

She gives me a questioning look, putting all the reports down and setting the baby on the basinet.

"I had a dream, or a vision, about Jade Waterfall, it involved your ancestor, John, and a warlock with my same last name. His name was Victor."

She raises her eyebrows, realization dawning on her.

"What?" I ask.

"No, no, continue. I just remembered something."

"Anyway," I continue, "Dr. Owens told me that there is a legend that the green coloring in Jade Waterfall actually comes from emeralds in the bed rock, and not moss like we were taught. This necklace is a piece of those emeralds, that has been passed down through generations in his wife's family."

"The Harrells." She interjects, but I let her continue. "Dr. Owens's wife came from one of the founding families of this pack, one of the oldest along with the Allens."

We let that piece of information hang between us for a minute before she continued.

"That legend may very well be true, and that emerald may very well be from Jade Waterfall before it was all covered in moss."

I touch the dainty necklace once again. What was that memory of Jade Waterfall again? Oh! Right.

"I saw it, Sofia. I saw it when it still had emeralds in it. In my dreams, that's also why I knew your ancestor's name."

"What exactly were they doing?"

"There was a warlock, Victor -

"Blackwood." She clarifies.

"Yes, Victor Blackwood. He and John Allen were gathered in Jade Waterfall and Victor was chanting some form of... some form of spell... when he finished, he told John 'it is done.'""

Sofia looks at me for a long time, but I know she's not focused on me. She's deep in thought.

"I always thought all those stories were fake." She whispers after a while.

"What do you think it means?" I ask her.

"It means I have to go back to studying my family's history," she says, "when I was younger my father would tell me all these stories that quite frankly seemed too fantastic, so I never paid any attention. I thought it was all lies; stories to boost the Allen name. Now I see it may not be so."

Again, we stay silent.

Both of us are at a loss and out of our depths when it comes to all things magical. But now, it's not only my future that depends on this knowledge, but also the pack's. Everyone here is now aware of the presence of magic, very powerful and very malicious magic. Sofia will have her work cut out for her to ensure the safety of her pack and her twins.

This thought brings along another memory.

The Allen family was once linked with witches and warlocks, some even claim there was intermingling within the species as a product of this closeness. If this is true, then the twins might be an easy target for whatever, or whomever is out there. The fact that I'm leaving knowing full well how needed I might be here makes the pit of my stomach feel heavy. I look at the twins and think of all the things I will miss because I'm leaving; who knows when I'll be able to see them again. Will they be walking already? Learning how to fight? Already shifting to their wolf forms? Or worse, all grown and with their families of their own?

Sofia break me out of my depressive thoughts,

"I'm actually glad you came to see me, V, I also needed to talk to you about something. I have some theories."

"Theories about the beast?"

"Theories about you."

I look at her questioningly.

"So, we know you look human, but you're not. We know you're a wolf, although you haven't connected with her yet. I mean Noah sensed her, before that, I wasn't even sure," she pauses, And now we know you have magic too." "Aren't wolves innately magical, though?" I ask her, skeptical.

"To some extent, yes, not to the extent you exhibit though."

A long pause follows again.

"So, what are you saying?" I'm hesitant to even ask.

"Have you ever heard of a Spirit Wolf?"

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Chapter 28

-Vera-

"Are you ready?"

I'm vaguely staring out the window of my room. The day is unusually gloomy, like my mood. The clouds in the sky threaten rain, but we can't wait any longer. We have to leave today. Someone's hand on my shoulder brings me back to reality.

It's Noah.

"Hey, are you ok?" His voice is laced with concern.

The last two days have been hard. I've said my goodbyes to everyone in the pack; even people I didn't really know came to embrace me and wish me safe travels. I put my hand on his.

"Yeah," I smile, "let's go."

He takes my hand and my duffel bag, swinging it over his shoulder. It's very early, most of the pack members are still asleep, making my departure a little easier.

We reach the bottom of the stairs and walk to the entrance where Sofia and Alex are waiting with the babies.

I go to them and hug each one tightly, then I kiss the twins on the forehead.

"Take this, it's yours." Sofia says to me and hands me the spear with which I killed the chimera.

She had a sheath made for it so that I could carry it on my back. It fits perfectly.

"Safe travels, sister." She hugs me tightly one last time, and we head out.

No one is saying a word. Eli, Lucas, and Noah packed light. Only a backpack prepared by Sofia with essentials; food, hygiene, basic meds, etc. Noah was carrying my duffel bag and had decided to put his stuff in there too. The walk would take us about two to three days to complete, depending on the weather.

After walking all morning in silence, we decided to stop for lunch and gauge the weather. There was a small clearing that allowed enough light to seep through so that it didn't feel like night time.

"It's probably going to rain, there's a cave close by, we should settle in for the rest of the day." I break the silence. All three were unpacking their lunches. In fact, Lucas was already nose deep in his sandwich.

Noah hands me my lunch. He's been extra attentive these past few days, probably perceiving how sad had become.

"The clouds seem to be clearing. We continue." Eli said as he took a bite of the sandwich.

I turned to Noah looking for support, but he shrugs his shoulders.

"I'm sorry, Vera. The Council is expecting us. If we delay ourselves any further, it will look questionable."

I start eating my sandwich without any appetite. They're wrong but I don't even have the emotional capacity right now to fight with them.

When we're done, we resume the walk.

Some six hours later, we reach the end of the forest, the end of wolf territory... the end of my home. My feet feel heavy. My heart feels heavy. I have to fight the urge to cry as I feel myself slipping away from the forest and my family. Noah holds my hand and offers me a reassuring smile. This whole process is easier with him by my side, but it's still one of the hardest things I've ever had to do.

As we are about to step beyond the tree line, I feel a gentle drop of rain on my cheek. I extend my hand to make sure I'm not imagining things, and several fall on my hand. It is starting to rain, just as I predicted.

Eli turns to me, looking at me as if this is my fault. I simply shrug my shoulders, I'm not sure how an 'I told you so' would play out here.

"We're close to the camp, let's wait it out there."

We soon have to run to the camp, the rain heavily pouring down on us. We make it there and I notice it's the same camp the forest had shown me when the lycans had just shown up.

"This is where they all died." I whisper. Only Noah catches it but seems to ignore it.

He guides me to a big tent, proudly displaying at its head the lycan flag. It is a full moon, and a huge lycan beast howling in the middle of it. We enter and there are bunker beds lined inside. Lucas and Eli each pick one like it's second nature, but Noah isn't following suit. "Come, this is mine." He says as he guides me to a second tent within the big tent.

What I walk into is more like a master bedroom than a tent. There is a king size bed in the middle, a desk to the left side, and countless books to the right side. There are maps, reports, targets, and what seem to be chess pieces on the large desk.

"I don't understand... why is this yours and Eli and Lucas are out there in the little beds."

He smiles at me. [Search the website](#) to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

"Because in here, I'm the boss."

I stare at him baffled.

"I'm the commander of this unit... what's left of it, anyway."

He turns grim at the reality check. We are standing on the grounds where so many of his comrades died.

A long silence follows. I feel the urge to comfort him, but I myself don't feel up for it.

"Let's not dwell," he breaks out of his train of thought, "you must be tired."

He digs into the duffel bag, pulling out one of his t-shirts and hands it to me. My clothes are wet from the rain earlier, which only seems to be getting more severe as time passes. I take the shirt from him and he graciously turns around.

Most mates wouldn't turn around, most mates would feel entitled to me, but Noah doesn't; I can't help but thank the Moon Goddess for that. It's not that I don't want him, it's just that right now, I don't have the energy for anything. It feels like I'm in mourning. When I'm done, I do the same so that he can change, although something tells me he wouldn't have a problem with me watching him undress.

With my back turned to him, I go to the wall with all the books and browse them.

There is everything from war tactics, to folk tales, to history books. I reach for one that seemed very old and read the cover. It's about lycan history. Perfect, it will give me something to do.

"Vera." I turn around to face Noah, now in a dry set of clothes, "You're free to anything you find. I have to go talk to Eli and Lucas about what the Council expects from us tomorrow."

I nod my head, already invested in the book I'm going to fall asleep to.

I read the book on the bed for perhaps an hour until the rain has picked up even further and I can't keep my eyes open. I settle in, getting comfortable in the middle of the massive bed, and focus on the sound of the rain.

I can't help but think that such unusually heavy rain is the forest itself, crying for my departure.

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Chapter 29

-Vera-

When I wake up the next day, the rain has stopped completely. It's still probably very early, before the crack of dawn, but I feel more energized already.

I cuddle into the source of warmth at my back; Noah. He instinctively tightens his arm around me, cradling me into him. I let out a long sigh and smile to myself. Despite the circumstances, this seems to be the best sleep I've had in a very, very long time.

I close my eyes hoping I can fall back to sleep, but twenty minutes later, when I was finally drifting off to nap, Eli opens the curtain to the room and loudly yells, "Good morning, ladies!"

Both Noah and I grumble, cuddling into each other even more as if that will make that old man go away.

"If you're not up and ready to go in the next twenty minutes, I'm coming in and cuddling with you." His tone is mischievous, and I have no doubt he will actually do it.

I turn, hugging Noah and burying my face in his chest. He still smells like the forest.

"He's actually going to do it, isn't he?" I ask into his chest.

"Yup."

He's rubbing my back and we stay like this for about five minutes until we hear Eli from outside our tent;

"I mean it!"

We both 'ugh' at the same time and get up from the bed. We get dressed, again our backs to each other. I grab the book I borrowed last night and slip it into the duffel bag. Noah eyes me curiously, "Sorry, I didn't even ask you if I could take it."

"No, no. It's ok. No one has touched any of those books in a long time. Take any you'd like." Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

Noah picks up a large map that sat at his desk and also slips it into the duffel bag. We both take our breakfast to go and head out.

The walk is once again quiet. I'm not sure I understand why Lucas and Eli, even Noah, have changed their demeanor. At least Noah and Lucas seemed a lot more relaxed in the Pack House, now they're just so serious. About two hours into our journey, I feel the air tense and I stop.

Noah notices and stops too, eyeing me with a frown.

"Something... something's wrong." I tell him, wide eyed.

A chill runs down my spine and my hand goes to the spear on my back.

Before I can process what is happening, Lucas, Eli, and Noah have surrounded me, their backs to me. Their large bodies cover my line of vision as I hear a voice,

"Well, well, well, if it isn't the band of deserters," the voice gets closer and dramatically sniffs the air, "and what's this? You brought us a souvenir? How kind of you!"

The other lycans accompanying the voice burst out in laughter, mocking me.

Noah immediately shifts, ripping up his clothes, and launches himself at the voice. I react on instinct, trying to reach out to him but Eli puts his hand on my arm, stopping me. "Settle down, doc. Noah will take care of this."

Eli lets me go and I can see what he means. All the other lycans, some in lycan form and others in human form, have surrounded Noah and this other lycan. They're about to fight.

The other lycan attacks first, Noah easily dodges him and places a right kick to his torso. It doesn't keep him down for long as he launches himself at Noah once again, this time with his fangs bared. Noah is again quick to dodge, but this time, instead of kicking him, his massive lycan fangs go right for his neck.

After about one second of struggling, Noah's enormous jaw crunches down on the other lycans throat; I can hear the sound of bones breaking and blood gurgling in his throat as

the lycan fights Noah for his life. But there is nothing he can do, he goes limp before he can get Noah off of him.

All the lycans surrounding them go quiet. Clearly, that was their leader.

Noah switches back to human form, b**t naked, and eyes them all threateningly. Then he speaks. loud enough for all of them to hear,

"If any of you come to my mate with intentions of harming her, you will meet the same fate as Randall. Is that understood?"

The small crowd begins to dissipate, moving away from Noah warily. The lycans that were in human form had even shifted out of instinct. Lucas goes to Noah, getting him another pair of clothes.

I'm not even looking at Noah, I'm looking at the dead lycan on the floor.

Noah just killed a lycan, a man... his brother... for me?

My heart is beating fast and loudly, I feel like I'm about to faint.

What kind of world am I willingly walking into?

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Chapter 30

-Noah-

I didn't have any intentions of having Vera see this first hand, but I did tell her that most lycans I knew were pieces of shit, none so more than Randall. When I saw him approaching and his eyes shifted. I knew exactly where this was going, and I knew exactly how it had to end.

After leaving and going into wolf territory, we knew that when we came back, we would get a lot of shit from everyone. Lycans are very opportunistic and they would be coming for us just to prove a point. And now with Vera here, as my mate, they would target me even more.

Killing Randall in front of all his friends was a clear message to every lycan here; mess with my mate, and I'll have your head. No doubt the message was understood.

When I was done getting dressed, I looked over to Randall, dead on the ground, and scoffed. Quite frankly, killing him didn't even faze me.

I walked over to where Vera was still looking at Randall and put my hand on her cheek, focusing her attention on me.

"I'm sorry you had to see that, but there was no other way. We are being accused of being deserters. Lycans are opportunistic and they will try to earn some credit by making examples of us..." I pause because I don't know how Vera will take this, "that also includes you."

"I understand," she says flatly, smiling softly at me, a smile that doesn't reach her eyes.

We resume walking. Vera lost in thought. I wish I could know what she was thinking about. Is she thinking maybe this is a mistake? Coming with me? When we were at the pack house, I thought about staying there with her several times. We never got to talk about it, but she simply agreed to come with me. I was too happy to question her as to why.

In reality, had we stayed at the Pack House, there was no guarantee that whatever force created the chimera, wouldn't come back for me eventually. I would never be able to place her pack under such risk again. Too many had already died because of Eli, Lucas and myself.

We continued walking, Lucas first, Vera second, and Eli and I hanging back several steps.

"You worry too much about her." Eli interrupts my sulking.

"Can you blame me? I'm bringing her to live into a den of snakes."

Eli, better than anyone, knows how cut throat our home is.

"She's proven to be very capable, son. If it came to it, I'm sure she would be able to defend herself against the very best of us. She's a woman fit to be your mate."

I grimace at this. That's exactly why I worry. I'm one of the strongest, if not the strongest warrior here. That puts a target on her back, if only to weaken me.

"I'm thinking of taking her to the country side once all this desertion business is taken care of, I don't want her here, Eli."

"I think you underestimate your role here, Noah. the King and the Council would rather see you dead than let you go. Think about your decisions carefully, now they won't only affect you."

Eli steps ahead of me, leaving me alone to think. He's right. The King will never let me go. Sometimes I feel like that jackass has it against me, but I cannot disobey the King's orders.

After a few more hours of walking like this, we reach the castle. It's early in the afternoon and there is still plenty of light to see people's faces as they smell Vera. It makes my blood boil.

She's keeping her head up. We had already talked about how her arrival here might be perceived. What I didn't tell her is that it was so because she wasn't marked by me yet.

It was clear to me that something was holding her back. I'm not one to judge or question her choices, she'll be ready when she's ready. It also crossed my mind that she was holding back because once we marked each other, she could no longer reject me.

As it stands, since she doesn't have my mark, she can still choose to reject me and go back home if everything here becomes too overwhelming. Please visit Jobnib.com and search the book title to read the entire book for free. I couldn't blame her; she was looking out for herself and she was being smart about it. But I also couldn't help but imagine myself going deep inside her and putting my mark on her neck. Just thinking about it made me horny at a time when I most definitely shouldn't be. We were about to face trial for being deserters. Search the website to access chapters of novels early and in the highest quality.

I just hope that Eli's plan to prove our innocence works, otherwise I won't get to show Vera exactly what she's missing.

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