

# Their Hidden Princess – Chapter 131

“And what makes you think I’m not a High Alpha just as you are?” I cut him off. I cocked my head slightly, as far as his fingers would let me. “You saw what I did today. You can’t deny I’m as powerful as you, if not more.”

Kairos growled once more before dropping my chin and walking over to his bed. He sat down and threw his head in his hands, his fingers pulling at the tawny hair on his head.

“You’re not good for me,” he grumbled. “You’ll distract me from what I need to do. From my duty as a Moonraiser.”

I crossed the room and sat down on my knees in front of him. I wrapped my hands around his wrists and shook my head as I pulled them from his hair. “I won’t,” I assured. “I’ll help. I promise.”

“You’ll distract me,” Kairos repeated. “The other two will do something stupid and you’ll play the martyr and try and save them. That’ll force me to go after you.”

“You really think they’re that reckless?” I asked.

Kairos paused for a moment then sat up. He shrugged. “Maybe not Lunerly,” he said. “But Wolfham is a fucking idiot—”

“Okay, okay,” I cut him off, pulling him down so his face was closer to mine. His eyes seemed to have blown out as our breaths mingled in the sliver of space between us. I took a risk as I brought my hand up to cup his cheek. He naturally leaned into it. His deep gold eyes were locked on mine as he did.

The freckles inside them mirrored the ones on his chest.

“Caring for someone is not weakness,” I said slowly. “The inability to open yourself to it, is.\*

Kairos’s eyebrows pinched together, his gaze still locked on mine. I took a deep breath before I spoke again.

“The hardest thing someone can do,” I continued. “Is to open themselves to someone else. Especially when they’ve been closed up their entire lives. When you finally allow someone to creep in, you think it ruins everything.

You think it’s the cause of all your pain. The truth of the matter is, it’s just bringing to the surface the pain you’ve already had. Once you get through that, it’s just sheer bliss.”

Kairos blinked slowly. His hand came up to cover mine with his own. The whole time, his gaze never left mine.

Then, he took a deep breath and glanced down at my lips.

“I really want to kiss you,” he whispered.

“So do it,” I murmured back.

Slowly, gently, he pushed forwards and captured my lips in his own. He held us there as the fire inside both of us roared to life. Once it became unbearable, he slanted his mouth over mine and brought his hands to my waist. He pulled me flush to his chest and he continued to explore my mouth with a slow, burning pace.

His hands slipped lower and dug into my ass and I pulled back slightly. Kairos groaned but let me go. He pushed his forehead into mine as we both caught our breath.

“I want you,” he whispered

“Then you have to have all of me,” I said back. “Maximus and Valentin included.”

Kairos huffed. He sat back on his bed. One of his hands came down to smooth the side of my hair. I nuzzled into it before he dropped it. He stood and helped me to my feet, making sure to press our bodies together one last time before he led me out.

“So, what’s your decision?” I said as we arrived at the top of the stairs.

Kairos licked the front of his teeth then nodded slightly to himself. “Sharing is a big ask,” he said. “But I can try. For you.”

I gave him a soft smile. “That’s all I ask.”

“See you in class, Smith,” Kairos said in response. I smiled bigger.

“See you in class, Teach.”

I ignored the garbled choke I heard as I descend down the stairs and away from Kairos.

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The rest of my Monday went fairly well considering it’s explosive beginning. I went to my classes after leaving Kairos’s house. Luckily for me, I didn’t have shifting that day. I did, however, have a test in History of Wolves.

I was pretty sure I bembled it as I went to the cafeteria for lunch. Loren was reassuringly patting my back and telling me that I probably did fine when a tray was sat on our table. I looked up from sulking to Meg, Maximus's sister, lobbing her leg over the bench to sit at our table. She gave me a small smile.

"Do you mind?"

"Not at all," I said with a shake of my head. I glanced at Loren. She looked confused.

"Don't you want to sit with your friends?" she said, slowly.

Meg shook her head. "I'd like to get to know you guys if that's okay?"

I glanced sideways at Loren. She went back eating, tentatively putting her salad in her mouth as she looked between Meg and I. I shrugged and went back to moving the salad I was forcing myself to eat around my plate.

Luckily for us, Maximus chose that moment to sit next to his sister. Loren dropped her fork to clatter against her plate. She stretched her arms out to him. "Mwwaaxx!" she garbled around food. "Ywour bwack!"

Maximus gently shook her hand before laughing and sitting down. "I am," he said and beamed at me. I couldn't help the way my cheeks warmed. I ducked back into my bland ass salad. Meg chuckled and bumped shoulders with her brother.

We ate in quiet before Max cleared his throat. Everyone stopped to look at him. He turned to face me directly.

"Zora," He said. "If you're free tonight, I'd love for you to come to my room. Maybe we can watch some of those human films you're always talking about?"

"Like Twilight?" I said, immediately.

"Isn't that the one about vampires?" Meg chimed in.

I nodded enthusiastically. "Tell me you've seen it. It's a work of art."

"It's about vampires," Meg said, her nose twisting up. "I'll pass."

"It's so good, Meg, I promise," I continued to babble. Then I stopped and glance at Loren. I frowned as I remembered we had plans to study for High Magiks that night.

"Oh, but we had - oof!"

All the wind left my lungs as Loren jammed her elbow into my ribcage. I glared at her as she smiled back at me.

Then she turned back to Max and his sister. "She'd love to," Loren answered for me.

"It's a date," Max said with a smirk.

"A date," I said back, feeling the heat rise to my cheeks once again.

I went to the rest of my classes before picking up dinner to go from the cafeteria. I brought it back to my room to find Loren buzzing about. Half of my underwear was on the floor and she'd set a matching red lacey bra and panty on my bed. She looked up at me as I walked in.

"Do you think Max is a red or blue guy?"

I laughed and shook my head. "I think we're watching a movie and none of it matters."

"That's so code, Zora," Loren scoffed. "He totally wants to bone you or bang you or whatever term you wanna use."

I waved her off as I set my dinner down and threw my bag on the floor. Despite how strong I'd become, the weight of books in my backpack still made me ache. I started in on my dinner, reveling in the sight of the massive pile of baked beans on top of a potato.

I was about to put the first bite in my mouth when Loren gasped and yanked the fork away from me. Beans slobbered onto the carpet. I scowled at her and tried to grab my fork back.

"Loren, give me my fucking fork back!" "Beans are going to make you fart!" She cried, holding the fork out of my reach. "That would be awful if he was down there at the same time."

"Goddamn it, Loren!" I hissed. I wrestled the fork out of her arm and threw her the finger before diving back into my food. After I swallowed my first bite, I pointed my fork at her.

"Let's talk about your love life, missy!"

Loren's face fell and shrunk away. "Let's not."

"Have you even kissed Ani yet?" I threw back.

Loren shrugged and continued to stare at me. I watched – as her face became redder and redder. Then, I gasped as it hit me.

"You have, haven't you!?"

"It was, like, a peck-!"

“And you didn’t tell me?”

“Ugh, Zora you’re always so busy and-”

I stood up and wrapped my arms around Loren, lifting her up so her feet wiggled above the ground. She laughed into my chest before I put her back down. She looked up at me with her big, purple eyes.

“Congrats, lady killer,” I said. “Thanks,” Loren mumbled. “I meant what I said about the beans!”

I couldn’t resist throwing her the finger again as I went back to my dinner.

An hour later, I was standing outside of Maximus’s room with my quilt wrapped around me and a stomach full of beans. I gently knocked on the front of Maximus’s door. I heard his feet pad across it to open it up. Then, he was standing in front of me.

He was in a nicer version of his training gear; an oversized tee with some band I didn’t know on it and navy track pants. His hair had recently been cut and was tight to his head again. He smiled, warmly at me.

“Hi,” he said.

“Hi,” I replied back. I gestured inside. “Can I come in?”

”Course,” Max said.

I stepped past him and into his room. He’d rearranged it slightly to accommodate the new TV on his dresser. The bed was pointed directly at it, bean bag off to the corner. I looked back at Max. he gave me a smile then gestured towards the bed before closing the door behind him.

I shuffled across the floor with my giant quilt. When I got to Max’s bed, I threw myself on it, earning a chuckle from the man himself. After situating myself on the right side of the bed, I patted the left for him to come sit next to me. He tentatively came to sit next to me then immediately grabbed my hand from where it was shoved under my quilt and sat it in his lap. He intertwined our fingers together and gave me a soft smile.

“Okay?” he said.

“Perfect,” I replied. I leaned in to rest my head on his shoulder before pointing my attention towards the TV.

“Twilight?” I said.

“If we have to,” Max sighed.

“Oh, we have to,” I snorted. “Plus, you’ll like these vampires. They’re less vicious and more sparkly.”

Max laughed again. “Threatening!”

I chuckled along with him as he grabbed the remote and threw the movie on. The opening credits started up and I snuggled further into Maximus.

For once, I felt like a normal person. Just a lady and her man, watching a shitty movie in the dorm of their school.

Things finally felt like they were at peace.

Until Max started asking questions.

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“So, he’s super fast and super strong?”

“Why is that shocking? Aren’t our vampires super fast and strong?”

“Yes, but not as strong as the wolves.”

“Well, this series doesn’t get wolves until the second movie.”

“There’s wolves?!”

“Yeah, there’s a pack in the local native American tribe.”

“Pack? That’s archaic.”

“It’s a story, Max,” I finally huffed. “Can you just watch?”

Maximus grumbled and dropped my hand to cross his arms over his chest. He did not seem to be enjoying Twilight. I, honestly, didn’t blame him. This movie was seemingly glorifying the worst part of our lives at the moment. And badly.

I must’ve not seen the movie since I was a teen because my memories of it were way off. We got as far as the “evil” vampires showing up in the baseball field when I slowly turned to look Maximus in the eyes. I let my quilt fall gently from my shoulders. Max watched out of the corner of his eye as I turned towards him.

I gently wrapped my arms around his neck and slid into his lap. His eyes went wide as I did. His hands slowly grabbed my waist to steady me. He looked up at me as I continued to wind my arms around his neck.

“I don’t want to watch anymore,” I whispered, putting the most sultry voice I could muster on. Max swallowed and I watched his throat bob.

“What do you want to do instead?” he whispered back.

I dragged my arms down from his neck to run over the expanse of his chest. Then, I leaned forwards and licked a stripe up the side of his neck. I felt him shudder under me, his grip tightening on my hips. I pulled myself back up to look him in the eyes.

“You,

“I said back.

That was all Maximus needed to be able to dive forwards and capture my lips in one swoop. He moaned into my mouth and brought his hands higher to cup me right under my breasts. I arched up into him as my mouth continued to suck his tongue. My body pressed against his as my hands slowly raked over his head.

Maximus shoved my shirt up so he could trail kisses down my sternum. Then, he growled before ripping the shirt off me and sucking one of my nipples into his mouth. I ground down on his cock enough that he flipped me onto my back so he could drive himself into me. Despite the layers of fabric, I could feel how achingly hard he was in his pants. His lips moved from my mouth back to my lips. He continued to pull me apart and allow his hands to wander all over me, His hand dipped below the band of my leggings and I keened off the bed with a cry of pleasure.

Then, Max was jerking away from me.

“What – oh fuck,”

I looked across the room to see that the brand spanking new TV that Maximus had purchased for our date, was shattered. And it wasn’t just shattered, it was destroyed.

As if someone had punched it into the wall repeatedly. I looked back at Max.

“Did I do that?” I squeaked.

“I think we did,” Max said slowly.

He pointed at the mirror on the back of his door. It was also shattered and hanging onto the door for dear life. We looked back and forth at each other for a moment before bursting into laughter. Maximus’s head dipped forwards as he chuckled. He finally pressed one kiss onto my stomach before reaching over and grabbing my shirt off the floor.

I sheepishly put it back on and we sat back on the bed, shoulder to shoulder. I snorted nervously. "Guess we have to get that under control," I murmured.

"It makes sense," Maximus mused. "You now have consummated two of your fated bonds. If one of your bonds gave you power, I can only imagine what two would do."

"Make me horny," I said.

I immediately slapped my hand over my mouth. Maximus chuckled and pulled them away. He kissed both of my palms and took my left hand back into his lap. He fiddled with my fingers in silence. I watched as he did, his jaw working in thought. Finally, I reached out and covered my hand and his with my own.

"What's on your mind?"

"Do you know," he started. "Much about your family?"

"Well, I told you I grew up in the orphanage," I said, slowly.

"Right," Max nodded. "But you were never curious? Never looked?"

My breath caught in my throat. I didn't like where he was going. "I mean, a little, yeah,"

"It's just-" He huffed. "With these powers of yours, I think you may be someone high up. Someone important."

I shook my head. "I doubt it."

"Zora," Maximus turned to face me straight on. "I saw you heal Kairos. After fucking snapping his bones into a million pieces. Not only should you not have been able to do that so easily, you fixed it even easier than you broke it. That power, it's - it's unheard of." I fidgeted in my seat. I brought my bottom lip between my teeth and gnawed on it. I couldn't tell him. I had no idea how he'd react. I looked at him. He seemed to be waiting for an answer.

"I know why," I said, softly. I shook my head. "But, I can't tell you."

Max pulled back slightly. "You don't trust me?"

"I do!" I yanked his hands back towards me. "But it's for my safety that I don't tell you. The less people who know, the better."

"It's the vampires," Maximus said. "They're after you aren't they?"

My eyes fluttered shut as I curtly nodded. I opened them and cast my gaze to my hands, still intertwined with Maximus's. I fiddled with his hands.

“That’s what they told me,” I murmured.

“They?!”

Fuck.

I nodded again. “The people who told me what I am,” I continued, trying to keep a tight lip from the things I’d already spilled. I shook my head as I let me eyes flutter closed again. “They knew before me but – I can’t. I cant get you involved. I can’t be sure you’ll be safe yet.”

“You promise you trust me?” Max asked.I looked back up at him and smiled. “More than anything,”

I said. “This isn’t about trust. I’m trying to save you.”

“I can help you,” Max protested.

“Help me by trusting me,” I brought my hands out of his to cup his cheeks. “Trust me.”

I pressed my lips to Maximus’s. What started as simple whispers of trust, turned into a passionate kiss. I kept murmuring to him as he laid me back down on his bed. He slowly unraveled me with his mouth. I hoped that my kisses were silent pleads. “Stop asking questions” and” trust me” all in one.

As I came that night, I cracked one of the windows in Maximus’s room.

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Thorne

Thorne Blythwitch was fucking drunk.

He wasn’t just drunk. He was hammered.

Hammered and lost, actually.

He’d started the night at his house. He and Petyr, mainly Petyr, had thrown a party. It started slow and then soon, there was a large gathering and any even larger gathering of booze. A bottle of wine later, Kairos had arrived home from his Thursday night training that Thorne was supposed to be at.

His appearance had perturbed Thorne so much that Thorne had grabbed two more bottles of wine and ducked out of the house. He spent an hour or so on the patio with some of the

underclassmen. A bottle of tequila came from some girl who'd plopped herself in his lip. She was pretty but he didn't want her.

He didn't really want anyone. Except her.

And he couldn't have her. Because he was a fucking idiot.

That thought made him rip the tequila bottle out of the girl's hands and sulk away from the house all together. It was how he wound up way across campus, empty bottle in his hand and utterly lost. He thought he knew where he was, somewhere close to the alchemy labs. But as Thornesquinted to try and make out a sign, he realized he was nowhere close.

He huffed and tried to one eighty. Unfortunately, he was hammered, and spinning was just far too much at that moment. He stumbled over his own feet and landed face first in the mud of the melting snow. The tequila bottle spilled from his hands and flew across the grass to shatter on the small walkway.

Thorne realized, that was probably the lowest he'd ever been.

He was drunk and lost. His friends had left him. He chopped his only chance with his fated mate. Worst of all, he was alone.

And it was all her fucking fault.

That fucking whore Zora.

Ever since she'd stepped foot on campus, his life had become a fucking nightmare. Even before he knew she was his fated mate, he'd despised her. She was weak and vain and didn't belong in his world.

He couldn't understand how people were getting sucked into her either. She'd won Maximus over and he hadn't really batted an eye. Maximus was the weakest of his friends. He knew that Max would've rolled over for any pussy.

But the, she'd gotten Kairos. Kairos who'd told him over and over how much he hated the fucking bitch. Kairos, the ruthless, cutthroat maniac who'd tried to kill her. And now he was groveling at her feet like a fucking puppy who got attention.

Furthermore, he'd gotten Amara kicked off campus.

Princess Amara who was going to ascend the throne one day. Thorne wouldn't be shocked if Amara had Zora killed on the first day of her reign. Amara was his sister. He cared about her beyond her being the Princess. The slight against him wasn't unnoticed.

Thorne was honestly surprised that Lunerly had let Zora get away with the lies. He knew that Lunerly was also a candidate for Amara's hand in marriage. And Lunerly was one of

the Queen's oldest friends. Some little slut comes on campus and all of a sudden he forgets to be loyal to the name he conquered the vampires for?

None of it made sense to Thorne.

The obsession with Zora Smith was insane. And what did the vampire want with her?

Thorne jerked his head off of the muddied ground. The gears were turning in his head again, clicking into place and finally making sense. He pushed himself to sit up, trying to focus through his tequila riddled brain.

The rumor on campus had been that Kairos had found Amara, all drugged up on vampire blood, wandering around campus. For whatever reason, he went to Zora's roommate with that information. Then, they'd gone to the Headmaster.

Then, Lunerly brought back Amara, coming down from her high. He was the only one besides Kairos who'd seen Amara all drugged up. The only two witnesses for Amara's indiscretion, we're immediately involved with Zora fucking Smith.

Had Zora roped the Headmaster into her plans as well!?

Thorne's heart seemed to be beating in his head as he sat and processed the information. Was no one at this school safe from her? What was she?

He knew what he had to do in that moment. He had to go over Lunerly's head. If he was in with Zora and the vampires, he wouldn't take Thorne's accusations seriously. He'd have to go to the Queen herself.

Immediately, he pushed himself off the ground and did his best to brush the mud from his trousers. It'd gotten pretty much everywhere and he was sure he looked a mess. In his time on the ground, he'd sobered up slightly.

It was enough that he could orient himself on where he was.

He looked to his right and saw the auditorium looming on the cliff above him. Out of spite, he tossed it a double middle finger. Fuck fate. Fuck his fated mate. He was a servant of the Queen, not fate.

He marched across campus to where the staff kept the emergency phone for the Queen. Given that he was the adopted son of the Queen, the staff gave him access for emergencies. This was, of course, an emergency. He wove through the empty, dark halls of the building.

When he got to the phone, he paused. It's shiny red plastic was shining in the one light that automatically turned on whenever someone entered the room. If Lunerly was working with Zora, who was working with the vampires, it was possible he was in on their scheme as well.

Given that he was so closed to the Queen, Thorne was unsure what kind of bullshit he'd be spewing the Victoria.

Thorne had to go outside the circle that he was stuck in.

He had to go to the Wolf Authorities.

He slowly reached out and grabbed the handle, gingerly bringing it to his ear. The dial two went twice before Thorne slammed his hand into the pound sign. The tone went dead then started dialing up again. Immediately, a deep voice was on the line.

"Wolf Authorities, what's the emergency?"

"I know of a wolf spy working with the vampires."

"Err," came the voice. "This is an emergency line, sir. I'd recommend you call the normal line in the morning."

"It is an emergency!" Thorne barked.

"Okay, okay," the operator said. "Can you give a name for the records? The dispatcher will question them as soon as possible." "Yes," Thorne said, confident as ever. "Zora. Zora Smith."

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Zora

On Thursday of that week, my life got flipped up-side-down yet again. I didn't know it as I walked to class, but things were about to get bad. Honestly, bad-er than they already were.

Loren and I had a quick breakfast with Maximus. It'd been simple and easy but I couldn't help the way the hair on the back of my neck was on edge. Maximus had rubbed my back and told me everything was okay and the feeling went away. But just as quickly as it went, it came roaring back as I entered our Alchemy lecture.

The Alchemy professor, Keverow, was harsh and unforgiving. When the feeling had returned as I walked in the room, I paused, immediately. As the hair rose up in my neck, she'd narrowed her eyes at me.

"Miss Smith, may I help you?" she sneered at me.

I shook my head, trying to get my body to reset. "No, sorry," I murmured.

“Then I’d ask you to take your seat, Keverow snapped.

My cheeks heated and I scurried through the classroom to an open seat. Loren slunk in next to me with a frown.

Keverow turned towards the board and waved her hand then began to write notes. I tried to put my head down and take notes but it was like someone had shoved a rodin my back and I couldn’t relax.

Loren put her hand on mine. “You okay?” she whispered. I nodded.

“Yeah, I just keep feeling like something terrible is about to happen,” I whispered back. Loren opened her mouth to speak but we were both cut off by the professor’s shrill voice.

“Miss Smith,” she shrieked. The entire class turned to look at Loren and I. I lifted my gaze to find her eyes pinned on me. Malice was evident in the flare of her nostrils. I blinked at her and she sneered towards me.

“If you and Miss Moonbeam are done chit-chatting,”

Keverow snapped. “I’d like to start my class.”

A few giggles erupted behind me. My face felt hot as I Looked back at the professor and nodded curtly. Besides me, Loren was nodding fervently, also embarrassed.

Keverow gave me one last dirty look before turning her back to me. She finished writing out some formulas then turned to address the whole class.

“Now,” she said. “Today we’ll be working on the metallurgic reactions. These are especially complex reactions and-”

The door to the classroom banged open. It slammed into the wall behind it. Five men dressed in black military gear barreled through the door.”What in the devil-!” Keverow shrieked.

“Sorry for the intrusion,” one of the men grunted. He shoved a piece of paper towards the professor. “We’re looking for the a potential enemy combatant within your class.”

Keverow quickly scanned the paper. She stopped and I watched her hands clench around the paper. My heart started slamming in my chest. I knew what she was about to say, despite myself.

Her eyes scanned the room and immediately locked with mine. They narrowed and I swallowed thickly. “Smith!” she barked. “It seems you are interrupting my class again today.”

“Zora!” Loren squeaked besides me.

The military men stomped up the risers of the classroom atrium. I swallowed thickly and rose out of my seat. Loren was stiff as a board next to me. One of the men grabbed my arm that was hanging loosely next to me. He clipped a handcuff around my one wrist as he spoke and repeated it on the other wrist.

“Zora Smith,” the tightening of the handcuff pinched my skin and made me wince. “You have been accused of working with the vampire resistance. You are hereby detained by the Wolf Authorities of the Greater United Kingdom. You do not have to say anything but it may harm your defense if you do not mention when questioned something which you later rely on in court-“He trailed off as his voice faded into the ringing in my ears. I looked out across the classroom, my heart thudding in my chest. My classmates were wearing a mix of emotions. Some looked shocked, others looked appalled and some even looked angry. The men led me out of my seat and down to the front of the room, The ringing in my ears got louder and louder.

My eyes were locked on my classmates. They learned in and whispered to one another. I felt the rumors beginning to take shape around me. The swirled and curled around me and left as I left the classroom. They scattered across campus in seeds as I was paraded down the hallway and out of the building.

Then men put me into a large, black car. There was a barrier between the front seat and the back seat. One man shoved in the back to my right and the other to my left. I bit down on my tongue as they did. I knew it was better to keep quiet than to start a fight.

I learned that through my years in the orphanage.

Two men got in the front. Their radios were chattering with words I didn't understand in codes I'd never get. As the last door slammed, the car took off. They drove me away from my class hall and into the unknown.

Luckily for me, the unknown seemed to be the campus jail cell. They parked me in and locked the door, keeping my hands in the uncomfortable handcuffs. I slunk down on the bench in the back, completely dejected.

“MOVE!” I heard barked around the corner. The military men skittered out of the way as someone barreled through the jail cell. I also cried in relief when I saw who it was.

Valentin had stormed through the small police force and was trying to pry open the bars of my cell with his hands. I ran to the bars and placed my hands over his. “Don't!” I cried. “I don't need this to incriminate me more.”

“Do you hear what they're saying?” he barked back. “That you're working with the vampires? This is bullshit. Utter bullshit.”

“I know, I know,” I said, squeezing his hand where it was placed on the bars of my cell. “But I have nothing to hide.

No involvement to keep from them. If I cooperate, they’ll let me go, right?”

Valentin’s lip curled into a snarl. He leaned closer to the bars so that only I could hear what he was saying. “They won’t keep you here if you tell them who you are,” he said, quickly. “I could tell them. I would keep you safer-”

“No,” I said quickly with a shake of my head. “It will only make people think I have more to hide.”

Valentin frowned. He dropped his grip on the bars and stepped back. He took in the military men around him. He glared at all of them.

“This is my school,” he spat. “You have no right to come in and manhandle my students like this!”

“Sir,” One of the men cleared his throat. “With all due respect, this is above your level of authority.”

Valentin seethed, his chin tipping up as he continued to glare at the officer. Valentin stepped closer to the guard and I watched him swallow thickly. “Do you know who I am?” Valentin spat.

“Of course, High Alpha Lunerly,” the man sputtered. “We thank you for our freedom.”

“As you should,” Valentin’s eyes darted to look at me then leveled back with the guard. He jabbed a hand towards me. “If I hear one word about her treatment being less than optimal, I will raise the Hells.”

“Yessir,” The guard spat back quickly.

Valentin looked back at me. “I’ll fix this, Zora,” he promised. “Trust me.”

I nodded once to him and then he turned and left. In a flurry of his robes, he was gone. I was once again alone, trapped by cold bars.

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I seemed to have fallen asleep in the cell as the next thing that happened was my eyes slowly fluttering open to the sound of keys. I blinked a few times and saw the door to my cell be wrenched open. I sat up from where I’d bent over on the bench, rubbing at me eyes.

“Get up, Smith,” the guard barked. “Trial starts now.”

I blinked at him in surprise but did nothing as I stood and brushed out my sweatsuit I'd worn to class. I cursed myself for not wearing something mildly sensible to class for once. I shuffled out of my cell, hands still cuffed together. The guard grabbed me by my shoulder and steered me towards the exit.

Instead of leaving, however, we walked through a side door I hadn't noticed the night before. I frowned but the guard didn't seem to care. He wound me down another hall. There was a hum of voices coming through the walls that I couldn't pin down. It sounded like it was coming from around me at all sides.

As the guard opened the door at the end of the hall, I realized the sound was coming from all around me. I was led into an atrium that was full of people. And they were screaming.

The sounds hit my ears and immediately cringed. My head was flooded with a bunch of horrible words and statements. People were calling me a liar, a witch, a bitch.

They didn't stop there.

"Traitor!"

"Fucking whore!"

"Manipulative cunt!"

"You don't belong here!"

"You'll never be one of us, you vampire pawn!"

I tried to tune them out. I tried to believe my truth and realize these were all names that were being yelled because of a false accusation. None of these people thought this about me until yesterday.

Unless, they thought it about me the whole time.

I shoved that thought deep in the back of my mind as I was brought to the front of an atrium. There was a large desk and two side desks flanking it. Guards lined the observers and were holding several of them back. There was a loud slamming of a gavel and everyone slowly quieted down. I looked up and gasped as I made eye contact with the judge.

Professor Keverow was seated at the top of the large desk.

Her hair was pinned back and she had black robe on. She looked even more violent and sadistic than she looked in alchemy class. I swallowed thickly as her eyes narrowed on me. She cleared her throat then addressed the crowd.

“We are gathered here to address the accusations to one Zora Smith,” Keverow said. “I am the honorable Judge Keverow from the Wolf Authorities UK division. I will precede over the hearing but, ultimately, the decision will be held to vote from the audience.”

The slurs and name calling started up all over again.

Keverow let it go for a few moments before driving her gavel down again. I swallowed thickly. All of the odds were against me.

“Silence!” Keverow called for. “Let the preceding begin.

Bring forth the accuser!”

I turned over my shoulder to watch the doors. My heart sunk to my toes as I saw who was walking in. Thorne held his head high as he marched down the aisle. I bit my lip to make sure my tears didn’t spill over the edges of my eyes.

This couldn’t be happening. How was this happening?

Thorne took the desk to the right of Keverow. She slammed her gavel again to get the crowd to quiet down.

One of the guards took Thorne’s hand and pricked his finger with something that looked like a needle. He winced slightly but schooled his face back to neutral as the guard walked away.

“Now, Alpha Blythwitch,” Keverow stated. “We have taken your blood and cast the spell on truth on you. As we will do with all of the witnesses. If you lie to us, you will become violently ill and we will know that you are lying.

Do you agree to tell the whole truth or receive the consequences?”

“I agree,” Thorne said. “Then I ask the student body representative to come forwards with the questioning,” Keverow stated.

She sat back as someone from the audience walked down to the podium. The student was not someone who I’d seen before. They had long brown hair and broad shoulders.

They were dressed in a sensible suit and were holding a stack of papers. They clacked them on the podium and cleared their throat before addressing Thorne.

“Alpha Blythwitch,” they addressed. “Please repeat your accusation for those who haven’t heard it.”

Thorne shifted in his seat then cleared his throat. "I believe," he started. "That Zora Smith is working with the vampires and is a spy trying to return wolves to the enslavement."

Gasps of shock and blasphemy littered throughout the atrium. I resisted the urge to scream at them all that he was lying. Instead, I chewed on my bottom lip until the bitter metallic sting of blood hit my tongue.

"And the evidence behind that?" The student representative said. "Wasn't Miss Smith captured by the vampires?"

"I think it was a rouse," Thorne said, plainly. A slight growl worked its way up my throat. I swallowed it. "If you remember, Smith stated that Princess Amara was working with the vampires. I think that was a distraction to hide the truth that was Smith was working with vampires herself." The student representative hummed. "And what about the claims from Headmaster Lunerly saw both the inebriated

Princess and the entrapped Smith?"

"I would like to remind the jury," Keverow jumped in. "That Princess Amara's treason has already been proven by this court. Her punishment was implemented by the Queen, herself."

"The question, Alpha Blythwitch," the student representative pressed.

Thorne licked his lips and fidgeted again before he spoke. "I believe that Headmaster Lunerly has been compromised as well."

\*This time a growl did spurt from my lips. Fortunately, no one heard it over the absolute uproar of the crowd. There were gasps and sputters from the entire crowd. The volume rose up to a point where Keverow had to slam her gavel down.

"Silence! Silence!" She cried. Then she turned to look at Thorne. Her eyes were narrowed. "Do I mean to assume you're accusing both Smith and the Headmaster, Alpha Blythwitch?"

"No," Thorne said with a shake of his head. "I don't think the Headmaster would fall under this spell on his own. I think that Smith is a master in seduction and has seduced the Headmaster to fall under her spell."

"Spell?" Keverow snorted. "No sort of spell exists to cause someone to go against their species. I believe you received excellent marks in history. Did you not remember Headmaster Lunerly was one of the wolves who freed us?"

“I do,” Thorne said. “But I also believe that Miss Smith is not a wolf. She’s seduced multiple Alphas across this campus. There’s never been a wolf who’s claimed to have more than two fated mates. Miss Smith claims she has three.”

There were a few gasps in the crowd. My heart thudded in my chest. He couldn’t be saying what he was saying.

“Believe,” Thorne continued. “That Miss Smith is the ancient succubus that has been written about in our mythology. I think that she’s working with the vampires to try and take us over. She’s evil and must be treated as such.”

I almost laughed.

What in the fuck was he on about?

## Their Hidden Princess – Chapter 137

The uproar that sparked after Thorne said his piece was voracious. I kept my teeth sunk in my bottom lip to keep myself from laughing. This was insane.

Thorne couldn’t possibly think that I was a succubus, could he?

Keverow slammed her gavel into the desk. “Silence!” she bellowed. “This is absurd! The unprofessionalism in this court room is insane!”

The crowd hushed down slightly but there were still lingering whispers amongst the crowd. Keverow looked down to the lower desk where Thorne was sitting. His chin was still held high. I wanted to smack the smug look off his stupid face.

“Alpha Blythwitch,” Keverow said to Thorne. “This is a serious accusation. Succubi have yet to be proven to exist in our world.”

“I’m certain they do,” Thorne turned to glare at me. “One’s in this very room.”

Again, there were some hushed whispers behind me. I tried to school my face but the anger seemed to be permeating off of my skin. I looked up to see Keverow had one eyebrow raised at me.

“Miss Smith,” she said. “Do you have anything to say to these accusations?”

“So much to say,” I replied. “Some of it isn’t appropriate but I’ll be sure to tell Blythwitch at a different time.”

“Watch your tone,” Keverow snapped. “I won’t have any more of you nonsense today.”

I narrowed my eyes at her but bit my tongue to keep myself from getting in even more trouble than I was already in. Instead, I sighed. "I didn't seduce Val-Headmaster Lunerly. I believe he's my fated mate," I started. "Additionally, I was actually captured by the vampires. They strung me up and bled me dry."

"And do you have anyone to corroborate that story?" Keverow pressed.

"Maximus Wolfham and Kairos Moonraiser," I stated, chin up.

"Very well," Keverow stated. "I call fourth High Alpha Moonraiser and High Alpha Wolfham for questioning."

The main doors to the atrium swung open and my two mates walked in. Each was wearing a different degree of emotion. Maximus looked nervous, eyes darting around the room and throat bobbing as he swallowed. Kairos looked pissed, as per usual. His eyes were locked on Thorne and glaring daggers into his skull.

They approached the bench. The same man that pricked Thorne's finger came back from the shadows. Both Maximus and Kairos held out their hands. The man pricked their palms then returned to the shadows.

"High Alphas Moonraiser and Wolfham," Keverow drawled, amused by something. "We have taken your blood and cast the spell on truth on you. If you lie to us, you will become violently ill and we will know that you are lying. Do you agree to tell the whole truth or receive the consequences?"

"I agree," Maximus said before Kairos grunted in agreement as well.

"Very well," Keverow adjusted the papers on her desk. "The student representative is free to question the new witnesses one by one."

"High Alpha Moonraiser, please take the stand," The student representative said.

Kairos walked around to the desk on the left side of Keverow. He made sure to glare once more at Thorne before he faced the student representative. Maximus moved to stand at my side. He gave me a curt nod, his hand flexing. I could tell he wanted to grab my hand and was fighting against it. I gave him a small smile just as our heartbeats synced up to beat in time. Lub-dub, lub-dub, lub-dub-

"Esteemed High Alpha Moonraiser," the student representative cleared their throat. They seemed to be somewhat intimidated by Kairos. I smirked to myself. That was my man. "I assume you've listened to the accusations listed by Alpha Blythwitch," they continued. "Do you have evidence to refute the claims?"

“Yes,” Kairos said. The anger seemed to be seeping out of his pores. He turned and looked at me. Our eyes locked and I sent him a silent plea. Don’t go off the rails. Don’t lose control. He tuned back to look at the representative.

“I was there when Zora was taken by the vampires,” he stated. “I found the Princess high and reported her to the Headmaster.”

“Describe the scene as you viewed it when you found Miss Smith,” the rep pressed.

“She was strung up,” Kairos said. His tone seemed to change from anger to hurt. I ached to go comfort him but I stood grounded in my spot. His eyebrows knitted together as he recalled the scene. “Slashed in multiple places. Blood was pooling in a bucket below her. They were bleeding her. Keeping her blood for their consumption.”

The crowd gasped. I bit my tongue. I didn’t realize this was such a universal disgust among wolves. There was so much I still didn’t know about my own people.

“There were two vampires,” he stated. “Headmaster Lunerly attacked one and I brought the other one to submit before we helped Zora down.”

“Two?” the student representative questioned. They looked down at their notes. “The statement from Princess Amara’s deposition states that she was approached by three.”

Kairos shook his head. “No, there were only two.”

“Interesting,” the student representative mused. My heart thudded in my chest. I didn’t like where it was going. The student representative stepped from behind their podium. “Why would the Princess lie about a third vampire?”

“The fuck if I know,” Kairos spat.

“High Alpha,” Keverow sneered. “Language, please.”

“Amara is power-hungry,” Kairos continued. “I have no idea why she’d lie about that. Probably something to make herself look better.”

“Or perhaps Miss Smith took care of the third vampire herself?” the rep pressed.

Kairos frowned. “She couldn’t have,” he said. “She was tied up. There was no way she’d be able to do that.”

“Unless she was a succubus,” the rep continued. They paced in front of Kairos. My heart was slamming in my throat. “Then she could manipulate the minds of the vampires. Make them kill themselves, correct?”

“She’s not a succubus,” Kairos growled.

“No?” The rep raised an eyebrow. “Then tell me why you conceded in the third challenge against Miss Smith.”

“What does that have to do with the vampires?” Kairos snapped. “I conceded of my own choice.”

“Or of Miss Smith’s doing?” The rep returned to the podium. The crowd started to whisper among themselves. I sighed shakily. That was their position.

“I did it. On. My. Own,” Kairos gritted out.

“And the wounds from your challenge against High Alpha Wolfham,” the rep sneered. “Did you heal those ‘on your own’?”

Fuck.

When I’d snapped Kairos’s arm and healed him, I’d healed all of him. Maximus was still wearing double black eyes and Kairos looked... perfect.

There was no doubt that I had something to do with it.

Kairos’s jaw opened and closed. He was completely at a loss for words. His eyes jerked to meet mine. He wasn’t going to tell them that I healed him. He couldn’t. It would bring up more questions. I shook my head at him curtly.

He looked back at the representative. They were wearing a smug smirk. They clicked their papers on the podium then addressed Keverow.

“I’m done with questions for this witness. Move to dismiss them?”

“Approved,” Keverow slammed her gavel. “Dismissed High Alpha Moonraiser. High Alpha Wolfham, please approach the stand.”

Max left my side and he was replaced by Kairos. His hand went to his side to allow his pinky to graze mine. “I’m sorry,” he whispered.

I swallowed back my tears and turned towards Max. He was the only one who could save me now.

## **Their Hidden Princess – Chapter 138**

Maximus took the stand and sat down quietly. Both the representative and Keverow were shuffling their papers. Kairos was still trying to lock my pinky with his. I locked as with Maximus as he settled himself. He gave me a soft smile.

“High Alpha Wolfham,” the representative cut through our stares. Maximus pulled his gaze from mine and I tried to swallow the lump in my throat. Maximus nodded at the rep. They raised an eyebrow.

“Esteemed High Alpha Wolfham,” they said. “I assume you’ve listened to the accusations listed by Alpha Blythwitch. Do you have evidence to refute the claims?”

“I do,” Maximus said. His tone was much more careful than Kairos’s. Less angry and more critical. “I wasn’t there on the day of her capture. But I saw Zora after. She had been sent to the infirmary. Her cuts were taking forever to heal. They were clearly made by vampires. She also had a few bites on her.”

The crowd murmured around the atrium. I nodded at Maximus. This was good irrefutable evidence. The student rep stepped out from around the podium again. Any hope I had was gone when they turned over their shoulder to smirk at me. They turned back to Maximus.

“So, you weren’t there on the day in which Alpha Blythwitch saw Miss Smith working with the vampires?” They asked. Max nodded. “Correct. Just the aftermath.”

“And so, what are you trying to prove?” the student rep snorted. I almost got out of my seat and throttled them. They paced again. “You only saw the vampire bites? Not the vampires biting Zora?”

“No,” Maximus was starting to get riled up. “But I saw the bites. Are you saying they were staged?”

The rep shrugged. “They could be,” they said. “What other evidence do you have besides this weak one?”

Maximus took a deep breath. He looked across the room to lock eyes with me again. “I know Zora,” he said. “I know who she is. I know who she wants to be. I’m her fated mate, I’ve seen the depths of her soul and I know she is pure.”

“I’m sorry,” The student rep said. “Are you saying Miss Smith has two fated mates?”

Maximus jerked back to the student rep. “I—”

“Because Miss Smith said that the Headmaster is her fated mate,” The student rep cut Maximus off. Kairos swore under his breath next to me. “Are you implying Miss Smith has two fated mates?”

“I-I-” Max looked at me once more then looked back to the rep. “Yes,” he finally choked out. “She has three.”

The crowd murmured behind us.

“Three?!” The rep balked. “That’s unheard of in the wolf world. And who might that third be?”

“Me,” Kairos spoke up from next to me.

The crowd turned from a murmur to a roar. Keverow brought her gavel down again and demanded for silence. She leaned over her desk to leer at me.

“Miss Smith, is this true?” she snapped. “Are you fated to Headmaster Lunerly, High Alpha Moonraiser and High Alpha Wolfham?”

I looked at Kairos then at Maximus. I wished Valentin was here. I need his strength and support. But he was nowhere to be found. I made the mistake of looking at Thorne. His glare cut me to the core. I couldn’t lie. Not when my men were standing here defending me.

I nodded slightly.

The crowd exploded.

Immediately, people were on their feet, jamming fingers at me in accusations.

“Witch!”

“Whore!”

“Seductress!”

“Traitor!”

“Vampire apologist!”

I wanted to scream. I wanted yell with the full force of my body that I was real and I was a wolf and I loved my people. I wanted to tell them that I’d never felt more at home than when I was with the wolves. That I’d never side with people who tore my family apart. Tore my fated mates apart!

But I did none of that. I sat there and waited for them to be done. Keverow waited as well, completely over the yelled that morning in the atrium. Thorne and the student representative were grinning from ear to ear. They knew they were winning over the audience.

As the final person called me a whore, Keverow sighed. She gestured to the student representative who went back to step towards Maximus. They were wearing this sick smirk as they approached the main desk. They turned towards me and addressed the audience.

“My fellow students,” they said. “The evidence is unrefusable. Miss Zora Smith has seduced, sleep with and worked her way through the wolves of this campus. She has used her ancient, evil magiks to work her way into these people’s minds and make them believe they are her fated mates. Her damage to the wolves is vast. We must neutralize this threat or lest we be subject to the rule of the vampires that our great Queen fought so hard to break us out of.”

The student body cheered. The representative looked amused. They turned and gestured towards me. “This vile abomination!” They cried. “Needs to be put down! Vote for the safety of the wolves and the safety of our freedom!”

More cries echoed through the atrium. Then, two guards surged forwards and yanked me away from Kairos. Their arms pulled and shoved me with such force that I cried out. Kairos immediately was reaching out for me. Another set of guards came forwards.

Then, he was trapped. His eyes locked with mine then his body rippled and shook before his wolf tore out of his skin. Then, the big auburn wolf was in the atrium and the cheers of punishment turned to cries of fear.

“No!” I cried.

The guards slammed a hand over my mouth and wrangled me to the floor. My face pressed against the wood of the atrium floor and I watched as Kairos snarled and snapped at the guards. From over his shoulder, Maximus tore through the air and landed next to Kairos in his own wolf form. His giant black body shuddering as he shook out his fur and snarled at the guards. He took one of them down and was going for the second when he crumpled to the ground with a pained whine. My entire world slowed down to a stop as my body took in the taser the third guard was holding. In slow motion, he jabbed his taser towards Kairos and took him down as well.

I watched two of my fated mates writhe and cry as I was pressed further and further into the floor. The anger and anxiety and worry all washed over me in waves. It set the fire burning inside me to a new height. My body thrashed on the ground but I couldn’t get free. The fire burned hotter and hotter until finally I let out a shriek.

Blinding white light. The fire inside me disappeared slowly until there was only the low hum of my power underneath my skin. I heaved a breath, noticing I was still on the floor but the weight of the guards had been lifted. I opened my eyes and took in my surroundings.

Every single one of the guards who’d been attacking myself and my mates was laying limply on the ground. As my vision came back to me, I noticed a few still twitching. I dragged my eyes over to them and gasped as I saw smoke coming from them. Their hands were all charred black as if they’d been burned by fire.

As I looked around the room, I noticed there was not a flame in sight. Nor was any of the crowd effected. They all were staring at me with horrified expressions. I turned to look at my fated mates then scrambled up from my position on the floor. I immediately rushed and ran my hands over the fur of Kairos and Maximus. They both were breathing heavily, the fur of their giant bodies moving as they went. Once I was sure they were okay, I turned to look at Keverow.

She looked horrified.

“What in the Hells below and above,” she whispered. “What are you?”

As I looked around, I wasn’t even sure I had an answer.

What had I done?

## **Their Hidden Princess – Chapter 139**

The first person to do anything after I blew off all the hands of all of the atrium guards was actually the student representative. They had been over by where Thorne was sitting, utterly aghast at what had just happened. They ran over the guard that had been pinning me down and check his pulse. They looked over their shoulder at Keverow.

“They’re alive,” they stated. “Just knocked out.”

“And handless,” Keverow deadpanned.

“Gods be damned,” Thorne finally whispered.

Once they were done shaking from the aftershock of the taser, both Kairos and Maximus shifted back to their human forms. Maximus looked like he was going to throw up. Kairos grabbed me by my bicep.

“Fix them,” he whispered, hurriedly. “Like you did me. Show them you mean well.”

“I can’t,” I said back and meant it. I felt like all my power had burned out of me in that one burst of light. Whatever strength that came from inside of me had burned out like a battery being spent.

Kairos growled low. “At least they’re alive,” he grunted before dropping his grasp on my arm. “Murder is a bit harder to get out of than burning off someone’s limbs.”

I swallowed thickly. Max moved to stand by Kairos and me. He wrapped an arm around my waist and pulled me close. Across the room, Thorne sneered at us.

“Are you fucking kidding me, Wolfham?!” He yelled. “Your little girlfriend burned off the hands of all the guards and you’re still backing her?! Must be some pussy, huh?”

Kairos lunged towards Thorne but was stopped by Maximus’s arm. Max gave Kairos a pointed look before turning back to Thorne. “Watch your fucking mouth, Blythwitch,” he threw back. “Did you forget she’s your fated mate too?”

“Alpha Blythwitch, what is he talking about?” Keverow sputtered.

“I renounced her!” Thorne threw out. “I severed our bond. I’m no longer under her rule. She can’t control me!”

“This is unprecedented,” Keverow mumbled, half to herself and half to the crowd.

I looked around the atrium. The rest of the students had returned to standing after they’d been cowering under their seats. They all seemed to be looking at me warily, as if I’d explode or fry them any second. I kept my hands balled in fists at my sides. I couldn’t spook them anymore than I already had.

Keverow banged her gavel, and we all turned to look at her. She cleared her throat and placed the gavel down gently. She looked at me then addressed the crowd.

“Given this situation is highly sensitive and highly unusual,” she started. “I’d like to ask the members of the student body jury and assembly to keep what happened here today under lock and key. Until we determine what to do with Miss Smith, I’d like this kept from the public.”

There were murmurs in the crowd but everyone seemed to be nodding along with Keverow. I turned back to her. Her mouth was set in a thin line.

“Miss Smith,” she said, somewhat shakily. “I do not know what you are. I do not know where you came from and I do not know the extent of your powers. Because of this, I do not know the level of threat in which you possess.”

“I’m not a threat, I’m trying to help—”

Keverow held a hand up and I stopped. Maximus’s arm curled tighter around me. Kairos took a step closer to me. Keverow cleared her throat.

“Until Headmaster Lunerly and Queen Luna can accurately assess what you are, I am recommending you stay locked away from the student body,” Keverow said. “And your academics be put on hold.”

“You’re expelling her?!” Maximus snapped.

“Expelling her will be the least of her issues if we find she is masquerading as a wolf, High Alpha Wolfham,” Keverow threw back with just as much tenacity. She sat back and brushed out the front of her robe. “But yes, I am. You and High Alpha Moonraiser should consider yourselves lucky you are expelled as well.”

“Keeping her in a jail cell isn’t going to stop her!” Thorne protested. “You saw what she did. She’s unpredictable and powerful! Bars won’t stop her.”

“Alpha Blythwitch,” Keverow snapped. “I suggest you stop speaking before you dig yourself into a further hole. You will also be investigated for involvement.”

Thorne’s jaw slammed shut and he sent a nasty look towards Keverow before sulking back into his seat. He crossed his arms over his chest and glared at us across the room. It took Kairos shaking me to break our staring match. I turned to face both my fated mates.

“It’ll be fine,” he whispered, quickly. “We’ll get Lunerly. He’ll fix this. He has a in with the Queen.”

“Yeah,” Maximus chimed in. “Don’t worry. We’ll fix this for you.”

I nodded at them but couldn’t help chew on my lower lip. I don’t think this was something even Valentin could fix. I was trapped here. It was either tell them or be kept as a science experiment until Victoria showed up and told them herself.

As if I thought her into existence, the doors to the atrium slammed open. In walked my mother, with Valentin Lunerly flanking her and the whole squadron of the royal guard behind her. I balked at her but sent a silent prayer up to whatever God was looking after me.

“Your Highness!” Keverow squeaked from her desk. “To what do we owe the pleasure?”

“Pleasure?” Queen Victoria Luna scoffed as she took in the guards still twitching on the floor. “I don’t think there’s anything pleasurable about whatever debacle you’ve caused here, Petina.”

I could’ve sworn Keverow’s lip twitched at the use of her first name. She got down from the desk and scurried across the floor to where my mother stood astride me. Keverow bowed slightly then laughed like she should be committed to an institute.

“I assume Headmaster Lunerly informed you of the accusations against Miss Smith?” Keverow said.

“He informed me of the accusations, yes,” Victoria said. “He also informed me that it was my son who went above my head and reported them to the Wolf Authorities.”

“Your Highness” Thorne scrambled out of his seat just as Keverow had. He ran over to where the judge was standing in front of my – scratch that – our mother.

“Not no, Thorne,” Victoria snapped. “I’ll deal with you later. My disappointment has no end for you right now.”

Thorne bowed his head low before taking a step away from everyone. My mother strode closer to Keverow. Her purple-red robes trailed behind her, the gold adornments flashing in the fluorescent lights of the room.

I finally turned to look at Valentin. He looked a mess. His hair was all over the place, the top buttons of his shirt were undone. His robe was nowhere to be found, and he was gripping a gold-handled knife like he was trying to snap it in half. He refused to look at me, chest heaving as he glared at Keverow.

“I believe there is something I should share with you, Petina,” Victoria said to Keverow. “To everyone of the atrium.” She looked up at the rest of the atrium. They were all hanging out of their seats with wide eyes, dying to know why the fuck the Queen had come to our campus.

“It is a secret I have kept since the war ended. It is a secret that I wish this atrium and it’s inhabitants to keep,” My mother continued. “For the safety of the person, as well as the safety of wolf-kind. I wish you all to take an oath of silence to be sealed by my mage, Finare.”

She gestured to one of the men in deep crimson robes in between the royal guards. He was shorter than most the guards with skin as white as milk. I would’ve mistaken him for a vampire had he not had silver eyes so light they could be white.

He stepped forwards and cupped both of his hands in the air. An orb of red light appeared, glowing and pulsing like it had a life of it’s own. Victoria gestured to it.

“Please all seal your oath of silence by speaking ‘I do’ into the air,” she said. “The mage orb will capture it and seal your oath. By breaking it, you will end your life.”

The room was silent for a beat before a couple people finally started speaking. As they did, white lights spun out of their chest and flew down to merge with the orb. Once a few of my classmates sealed their oaths, the rest of the atrium followed. As the room died down to silence once again, Keverow spoke the words. I watched as her own light flew to the orb.

My mother sighed and looked at me. It was a look that told me everything I needed to know. My choice was no longer my own.

She was making it for me. She was telling everyone who I was. Victoria turned back to the address the atrium.

“The reason Miss Smith has powers beyond that of a normal wolf,” Victoria finally said. “Is because she is from the noble and ancient line of the Luna wolf. Zora Smith is Zora Luna. And she is my only biological daughter.”

## Their Hidden Princess – Chapter 140

The entire atrium was so silent, you could hear a pin drop.

The only sound that permeated the space was the huff of people breathing. But I wasn't even sure if the half the atrium was breathing. I know I wasn't when I finally sucked in a breath. I turned to see if Maximus and Kairos were freaking out.

Maximus's lips were parted in confusion. Kairos seemed to be showing no emotion other than the way his face had gone ghostly pale. I turned and locked eyes with Keverow. She was looking me up and down as I'd magically turn into the Princess before her eyes.

Victoria cleared her throat and took a few steps to glance at the atrium again. It shattered the silence and seemed to make everything start to be in motion again. Whispers started up from the crowd.

“Silence,” my mother demanded. Again, the room was stagnant. “The fact that Zora is my daughter should not matter to you. What should matter, is what you did to a fellow student.”

Victoria looked over her shoulder at me. I could sense the anger boiling in the back of her carefully controlled face. It made the skin on my arms prickle with fear.

“This student,” Victoria extended a hand towards me. “Has been ostracized and broken and attacked since she arrived on campus. Not one of you has had any compassion for your classmate.”

Her hand dropped back to hit her side. “The purpose of Alpha Academy,” she continued, voice shaking with rage. “Was to safeguard peace. It was supposed to be a place for our young wolves to learn the things we didn't get to learn, growing up under vampire suppression.”

Victoria gave Valentin a small smile. He was still seething and seemed to give very little fucks about my mother's trip down memory lane. She looked up at the atrium and frowned.

“Alpha Academy was built to raise leaders,” she said. “Not mobs.”

“Your Highness, if I may-” Keverow started.

Victoria whipped around and glared at her as she tried to speak. Keverow squeaked before bowing her head and looking back at the ground. My mother gave her one last scathing stare before looking back at the crowd.

“The jealousy you are all masquerading around as justice is appalling,” she continued your rant. “You saw a wolf with more than one fated mate and thought that she must be evil? Must be put down?”

Victoria scoffed and shook her head.

“Your fear of the unknown is being presented as loyalty,” she snapped. “Loyal wolves don’t turn their backs against their own kind. They bring each other up.”

“She isn’t loyal!” Was yelled from behind me. I turned to see Thorne glaring at me with a hand outstretched in accusation. He looked unhinged and coming apart more and more as time was passing.

“Loyal wolves don’t work with the fucking vampires!” Thorne snapped. “They don’t rat out their Princess for having a drug issue!”

“Watch yourself boy,” Victoria snapped at Thorne.

“I’m tired of her getting away with this shit!” Thorne roared. “She will be our downfall!”

“Finare,” my mother growled.

The pale man who had cast the secrecy orb a few moment ago, stepped forwards. His arm shot out towards Thorne and a ray of white light sailed through the atrium to hit Thorne in the chest. He grunted before he keeled over and slumped to the ground.

There were several shrieks throughout the atrium followed by chaos. People started darting out of the room. I turned to see if Maximus or Kairos were panicking. Neither seemed to move, both glancing at me then turning back to my mother.

Finare stepped forwards again and wound his arms around one another. Another ball of light formed between his hands. He raised it high above his head, swirling his fingers around it, before he cast it into the ceiling. At once, all the chaos subsided as people were frozen in their spots.

Again, the room was quiet.

Victoria stepped forwards and patted Finare on the shoulder. “Thank you,” she said, softly. “You may release them.”

Finare waved his hand lazily and everyone unfroze. They all tentatively turned to look at my mother and her mage, standing in the center of the atrium where the Wolf Authority guards were still littered. Because of me.

I closed my eyes as the panic started taking over me. I shoved it down my throat and turned back to look at Victoria. She was watching me with a careful eye. She gave me a curt nod before turning back to the crowd.

“The vampires are still a real threat,” she said, softer than her previous tone. “More of a threat than you have been to one another. We have intel they are stirring in our country. Their numbers are rising as they gather.”

She clasped her hands and paced across the floor. “Our enemies know far too much about us,” she continued. “They know all of our weaknesses. They know everything. It’s how they used to keep us barred in cages and powerless.”

She paused in the center of the room and turned to stare at Keverow. I watched her jaw tick and her eyes shimmer under the light. “Do not,” she hissed. “Allow our lack of empathy for one another be another thing they can control.”

Keverow swallowed thickly then turned to face the floor. I caught Victoria’s eye and she gave me a sly smile. I couldn’t help but smile myself. Was this what it felt like to have a mother who cared?

“Our enemies are watching us fracture and are laughing at us,” Victoria said, plainly. “We’re doing half the work for them. If we fall, you should feel responsible. This half-attempt at a jury, built to string student up instead of perpetuate any real justice.”

She paused in the middle again and unclasped her hands. She sighed once more before finally addressing Keverow.

“This trial is void,” she said. “I am denouncing you as a judge, Keverow. Consider yourself lucky I don’t terminate your other position at this school.”

Keverow nodded at my mother before swallowing thickly. Victoria turned back to the atrium. “To all of you,” she said. “What you’ve been told her is to be kept amongst yourselves. You are to tell no one of Zora’s royal status, yet you are to keep her from being attacked by her fellow students. Any retaliation or share of information should be considered an act of treason and will be treated as such.”

Victoria turned to look at Finare. She jerked her head to where Thorne was knocked out on the floor.

“Wake him,” she said. “I’d like to have a word with all of my daughter’s fated mates.”

She gave Maximus and Kairos one final look before she turned and left the atrium, with her royal guard in tow. I looked up as the doors slammed at me classmates. Half of them looked at me in awe. The other half with a furious anger.

I swallowed and waited for Finare to be done waking up Thorne before myself, and my four fated mates, left the place I'd been put on trial.