

Chapter 34 – The Gamma

"If I had a flower for every time I thought of you...I could walk through my garden forever." — Alfred Tennyson

Kiya

"... I've been exonerated?"

"Yes."

I didn't know what to feel. Should I feel anything? Sitting next to the Gamma on the plain bed, I stare at the floor as my mind registered the news. The air is silent around us, our breathing echoing. Should I be happy? Angry? Scared? Shocked? Enraged? Disappointed? My mind cannot process a single emotion, blank as a newly purchased canvas. All I could do is just sit there, unable to look Kwame in the face.

"How long?"

"Excuse me?" He asks.

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“How long after I passed did you all find out the truth?”

Kwame sighed heavily. I knew it is a loaded answer he is about to give. “Three years ago.”

Gaining the courage to look him in the face, I notice his eyes were glued to the floor. He couldn’t look at me at all. “Who killed Luna Ess—Celeste and Nuria, then?”

“He went by the Rogue King. It didn’t take us long to figure out that he was related to former Alpha Jonathan.”

His words left me dumbfounded. “Related? You mean he was...”

“Neron’s estranged uncle.” He revealed. “It is an act of revenge against his brother. Upon his capture, he confessed to everything, including framing you. They acquitted you of all suspicion and crime after his execution. But by then, it was too late.”

I couldn’t believe what I was hearing. Neron’s uncle killed his sister-in-law and his niece to get

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back at his dad. And for what? For petty revenge? I was framed and tortured over petty revenge! I breathed in sharply, folding my hands in my lap.

“Wow,” I mutter. “I didn’t expect that.”

“Neither did we.” Kwame chuckled. “But, yes. You’re exonerated, and your punishments were voided. But there is not much we could do since you’re...dead.” ²

“And I want to stay that way.” I retorted. “I don’t want Zircon Moon to know I’m alive. Look, Kwame,” I was facing him with my bent leg on the bed. “I have a very happy life here and I don’t want anything to mess that up.”

“I can see that.” He gave me a warm smile. “You look healthier and lively. Garnet Moon gave you hope. And I don’t want to take that away from you. Your happiness is here...not with us.”

“I agree.” I nod. “They turned a dying wolf into the woman you see before you. I can’t repay them enough for feeding, housing, and accepting me as part of their family. I love it here.”

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"I could see it in your eyes." Kwame's smile widened. "I'm happy for you, Kiya. You deserve the absolute best. Always. I wish Zircon Moon would have seen your potential before we snuffed it out. I'm glad the pack didn't smother out your hope for good."

"But, if you don't mind me asking, how did you survive? No one could have survived that fall from that cliff..."

I smile small, my eyes burning with unshed tears. "It's a long story. But our Moon Goddess helped me out. She gave me a second chance at life. It is because of her I'm still here today."

The man looked as if he wanted to say something, his mouth opening, and closing, but remained silent. His eyes held many unanswered questions that he wanted to ask. But Kwame couldn't bring himself to speak. What was stopping him? This is the only time we'll ever see each other...

"Kwame," My smile turned into a frown. "Know that I cannot forgive Zircon Moon for what they did to me. I can't forgive the Lanes, the Omegas,

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and everyone else between, especially Neron and his father. What they did to me was on par with what monsters and devils would do to their victims. There is too much hurt, anger and pain for there to be forgiveness.”

“I don’t blame you. If I was in your position, I wouldn’t forgive them either. I couldn’t forgive myself for not helping you out sooner.” He looks at me with concern. “Do...do you hate me, Kiya?”

I shake my head. “I don’t. You and your family saved my life. You stopped Neron and your mother got me out of there. I would be dead right now if it wasn’t for your bravery and belief in my innocence. I’ve come to terms with that, with the help from my therapist. Yes, I held some anger for you for not standing up to Neron sooner, but you helped a meek slave seek her freedom. You did all you could do, and I’m alive today because of you and your family.”

He gasped in relief, blinking back his tears. “You sure know how to make a man tear up, Kiya.”

I chuckled. “There is nothing wrong with crying. I hope talking with me eased some of your

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burdens. I hope you find an answer to your rogue problem.”

“We’re looking at every other avenue in case this alliance falls through the cracks. But, talking to you and finally getting the answers I was seeking is the highlight of this trip.”

I smiled at him, happy. I wish I’d gotten the chance to know Kwame back then if our lives weren’t so different. We could have become good friends. It is a shame that we both missed out on a potential friendship. He is a great person.

“I don’t want to keep you away for long,” I pat my thighs once, hopping on my feet. “But, thank you. Really. For all that you and your family did for me. Give them my thanks when you see them again?”

“Yes. I will.” He nodded, his smile matching mine. “It would surely make my mother feel good when she hears you’re alive and well. Your death devastated her, so I hope this can bring some light back in her eyes.”

My heart lurched. I didn’t know Mrs. Dubois was

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affected by my death. I wish I could see her in person and hug her, but it's just not possible. I still remember her grief-stricken face that night, begging me to not jump. But, if I hadn't, I wouldn't have this life now.

Before Kwame left the room, I hugged him as tight as I could around his muscled stature. It took him a second to reel in from the shock, but he hugged me back, burying his nose in my hair. His muscular arms caged my body against his, protecting me from the outside world. A single tear slid down my face as I basked in his smoldering warmth. It is a hug I felt both of us needed. The hug told me of his appreciation, happiness, and hope. Goddess, I didn't want this moment to end.

I think he was waiting for this moment to see me again. I don't hate Kwame. I respect him. I wished he was my mate and not Neron. But the Moon Goddess had other plans.

His mate, whoever she is, was lucky to have him.

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The end of the day rapidly approached and the three wolves from my old pack left my territory. I could finally breathe in relief, knowing I was safe to roam around the territory without their presence. I was sitting on the front steps of the packhouse with a bottle of water, watching the sunset paint the sky with orange, pinks, and purples. I was watching the creation of beautiful art right before my eyes. A lot had been on my mind since I spoke to Kwame.

“Some burden is lifted off your shoulders.”

Phoebe took a seat right next to me, smoothing out her purple summer dress. “I assume your talk with your old friend went well?”

“I don’t know if I’d call him a friend,” I answered, my eyes still on the sky. “But he helped me out a lot and put himself at risk for me, so perhaps I should?”

“He left our territory happier than he had arrived. Your talk did the both of you some good.” Her pearl-white smile showed itself to me when I glanced at her. “Do you forgive him?”

“Yes.” I glanced back at the sky, fixated on a

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marigold-colored cloud. “I never hated him. He did nothing wrong. Thinking back, he’s done his best to look out for me. It restricted him a lot because of his best friend, but he would sneak me food and water every chance he got. His parents or his little brother would sneak me soap to shower if I’d run out or give me a warm blanket to sleep with if nights got too cold.”

“They are compassionate people.”

“They are.” I agreed, humming at the memories.

“They made my life as a slave more bearable.

They knew the consequences of helping me but did it anyway. If that’s not courage, I don’t know what is.” I set my bottle down on the stair under my knee, folding my hands on my lap. “I pray to the Moon Goddess to watch over them and protect them.”

“But as for everyone else...” I huffed. “I’ll never forgive them. Not by a long shot. I told Kwame this when we spoke. He never put his hands on me, but his friends and everyone else did for years and they enjoyed it. They bring nothing but bad memories.”

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“Forgiveness is a process that cannot be rushed.”
She placed her hand on my shoulder. “But it is all up to you. Your life, your choice, Kiya.” 

“Yeah, I know.”

“Come on.” Phoebe hopped on her shoes and offered me a hand. “Let’s do some magic training before dinner. What do you say?”

I smirked, my mood lifting. Taking her warm hand, we both walked to her home, practicing our abilities until we were mind-linked for dinner.

Chapter Comments

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MadeULQQk2

both Kwame & Kiya needed this talk -> closure..

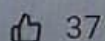


green rose

you can't take back 8 years of abuse!!



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