

Chapter 77 - The Woman

"Choice is what enables us to tell the world who we are." - Barry Schwartz

Kiya

My body demanded sleep after my panic attack. The cell was cold, but Phoebe was warm. She held me close and I rested my head on her bosom as I slept. Our cuffs were removed when the blonde-haired woman from earlier checked on us, conveniently ignoring the puddle of vomit in the room's corner.

She said nothing.

There weren't any windows in our holding cell, making it easy for us to lose track of time. We didn't know how long we had been down here. The sunset from earlier was a distant memory, so perhaps it was nightfall?

I went from trainer to kidnaped in twelve hours.

It was just the three of us, Violetta, Phoebe, and me, trapped in this dark place. But it didn't mean we had to be miserable. We made use of our time through conversation.

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Violetta's an avatar like us. Of Amphitrite, the Goddess of the Seas. She awoke several years back but has a tough time connecting to her true self. Sadness ached in my heart as she talked about it. Her past was painful, something Phoebe and I understood.

Was it common for avatars to have shitty childhoods?

Another hour rolled by, or what seemed like an hour, when the cell door opened again. This time, the blond woman had a man flanking her right. He was dressed...oddly. Who wears a violet and black suit in this place? Especially one with a tailcoat? In his hands were three dresses of assorted colors.

"Get up." With little resistance, the three of us stood with our backs pressed to the wall. "You three are to change into your new clothes."

The blond woman held the cuffs as the man tossed the dresses to us. Thick strapped and passed the knees. I didn't like it. The only difference between this dress and the slave dress I burned five years ago was that this was pure white.

Not only that, but they sewed crystal rhinestones all around the chest area, swirling around where my breasts were to be. Phoebe's dress was purple, and

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Violetta's was blue, both plain. Why was mine so different?

"No." Violetta snapped. "I'm not wearing this."

"Don't be difficult, girl." The man warned, red eyes narrowing on Violetta's form. "Wear the damn thing and come peacefully."

"Fuck being peaceful!" She threw the dress to the ground. "You expect me to strip down and change in front of you and her?" She pointed to the blond woman. "Like hell, I will! I want out of this place!"

I didn't see it coming.

I don't think Phoebe or Violetta saw it either.

In a blink of an eye, the man was behind Violetta, restraining her arms behind her back. It was like watching a bird trying desperately to escape its trap. The woman continued to be combative, profanity springing from her mouth. I think she recited the entire Urban Dictionary.

"Lady Nadia." Nadia, the woman with tired eyes, fished something out of her dress pocket and held it up for us to see.

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It was a syringe!

She quickly walked over to the pair and plunged the needle in Violetta's neck, injecting her with a clear liquid. My fellow avatar's combativeness soon ceased, she looked like a shell of her former self. She didn't faint or fall, she became... compliant. Horrifically obedient.

The man looked our way. "Unless you two want the same treatment as your friend, get dressed." We watched as Nadia clasped cuffs on each wrist and helped to drag Violetta out of the room, like two people taking care of their drunk friend. The door shut behind them, leaving Phoebe and me alone.

Neither of us said anything. The shock was too great. Did they drug her? With what?

There was shuffling beside me, I turn to see Phoebe stripping down to her underwear, "This is worse than I thought."

"Phoebe, what the hell is going on?" I demanded, clutching the white fabric of my dress. "Do you know what just happened?"

"You know how sedatives work in hospitals? Well, that thing they injected her with was a kind of sedative. I don't know if it was natural or concocted

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with dark magic, but I'm not in the mood to find out." Her breaths were shaky as she slipped on her new clothes. "It's like I'm reliving my childhood."

"Hey," It was my turn to comfort her, "We're going to get out of this. They, whoever the hell they are, can't hold us here forever." Giving hope to my friend was the only way we would get out of this with our heads intact. We didn't know what these people were capable of, and judging by what they did to Violetta, they were capable of a lot.

We were going to have to fight our way out of here.

I hoped the others back home were working on our rescue. Because of the distance, I couldn't connect to any of them. Many of them were injured during the ambush. I hoped they were doing alright.

My chest ached at the thought of Neron and that horrific injury he received when he sacrificed himself to protect me. That big, perforating hole in his stomach left a lasting image in my mind. My hands were no longer sticky, the blood was dry. However, that didn't make the situation better. I wanted, desperately, to wash away the reminder that I couldn't save him.

If Neron died after I disappeared...

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Shaking the horrible thoughts out of my head, my clothes, merely a sporty top, and leggings were discarded to the side as I donned the white dress. It brushed my knees, revealing the faded scars on my calves.

There was something about wearing this dress that felt perturbing. A sensation lingered, crawling up my skin like a spider. Artemis growled deep within me at this foreign feeling. Protectiveness was her best trait, and she was ready to commit.

After five minutes, Nadia and the man came in with cuffs. "Arms out." He demanded.

Phoebe, trembling in fear, held out her arms first. Thick, silver cuffs clamped around her wrists and instantly, I could see my friend weaken. She was half the woman she is, like all her power drained away. I, too, became accustomed to the feeling because when the cuffs were clamped around my wrists, I felt less than half of the werewolf I am.

Artemis whimpered weakly, her howl less than a newborn pup's. That's when I knew. It meant these cuffs were meant to weaken me. Weaken *us*. Weaken *the avatars*. Every avatar in this facility had these cuffs, making them susceptible to whatever command these brutish folks have. These people know we have the capability of freeing ourselves, and they took extra precautions to make sure it

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didn't happen.

Oh, Goddess.

After the cuffing, they separated Phoebe and me. She was taken away by the man and Nadia took me. From my peripherals, I glimpsed her side view. Her face twisted briefly as if she was fighting mentally. How curious. An internal battle whilst she was complacent in this crime.

It was just the two of us walking down the darkened hallway after leaving the dungeons, with her icy hand wrapped around my upper arm. "I'm sorry."

I stopped, arched an eyebrow, and stared at her incredulously. "Excuse me?"

"I'm sorry," Nadia repeated, pale blue eyes full of remorse. "This shouldn't be happening. None of you should be here."

"You sure didn't look like that when you drugged my friend!" I retorted, pissed off. "Why the hell should I believe you, *Nadia*?"

"Because I'm one of the few people here who want you and the others to escape."

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"Why kidnap us then? Didn't you send Cerberus after us?" My anger crackled around me at the recent memories of bloodshed and death. "That...that *thing* killed people. It hurt people, and for what? This bullshit?"

"I didn't send Cerberus," Nadia whispered with a face cast down. "My mate did."

My brain short-circuited.

Her *mate*?

"...What did you just say?"

"My mate sent Cerberus after you. He commands him because he created him with the blood of our strongest avatars." She explained, her head darted from left to right, watching out for anyone who might walk by, "You know about mates, right? You're a werewolf."

"And what if I am?" I growled. "You're telling me that your mate orchestrated my kidnapping, and you didn't do a damn thing to stop him?"

"I couldn't," Nadia growled back. "He's hellbent on righting all the wrongs he and his kind suffered in this hidden world. He is a vigilante drunk on his twisted sense of justice. My words, the words of his

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soulmate, were not enough to stop his lunacy. Please understand that I've tried, over and over to get through to him but he's...my love is too far gone in his darkness."

"If this was your way of garnering sympathy for that deranged man, then forget it!" I jeered, crossing my arms. "How many of us avatars are here?"

"In this branch? Including you and your two friends, twenty. In others, there are many more."

"Great." I groaned. "Your mate gets a kick out of kidnapping avatars, huh? So, what is he? A werewolf, like me? What are you?"

"I'm human. Him? Half a werewolf. Or, at least, was."

What the hell? How could someone be half a werewolf? My face held all the unasked questions that Nadia seemed to decipher. "My mate is a hybrid. Many of the men and women here are hybrids too."

Hybrids. The offspring of two different species. Knowledge about hybrids was very minimal. Hybrids were never talked about like they didn't exist. I knew interspecies relations occurred, Jacqueline and Abigail were mates, and Abi was a human, but why did hybrids feel the need to hide? Better yet, why

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kidnap avatars?

"I know you have so many questions, Kiya, but I cannot answer them."

"How did you know my name?"

"As I said, I can't answer that." She grabbed my arm again. "I need to take you to him."

"I don't want to see your sleazy mate! He's the reason I'm here in the first place!"

"Lady Nadia." Our heads jerk to the side to see the blond man that took Phoebe walking towards us, daggers sent in my direction. "Is she giving you trouble?"

"A little, but—*Lucien!*" Suddenly, I was yanked out of Nadia's grip. Attempts at removing my arm from him proved to be futile because his grip was like an iron clasp.

"Our Lord is not a very patient man." He growled at me. "You have two choices, walk willingly or I inject you and drag your limp body. The latter is more fun."

Believe me, I wanted to fight. I wanted to claw at

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Lucien's disgusting face, but I would rather keep the control I have left than have an unknown substance inoculated in me. Having something like that floating around my body was bothersome.

I surrendered. Lucien dragged me down the hallway. I turned back to look at Nadia, who stood like a statue. Our eyes met briefly, conveying a silent message that I couldn't decipher. The entire time we spoke, Nadia emitted a strange vibe.

The vibe between her and Lucien was different. Nadia's vibe was more resistant while Lucien's vibe was serious. Two different people on opposite sides of the spectrum, perhaps?

There had to be a way to know more about this. With kidnapped avatars, hybrids, and much more, this facility was plethoric in mystery. Things need to be uncovered, and one might hold the key to our escape.

After a minute of walking and climbing stairs, we both made it to a door, thick mahogany with blackened, unknown symbols embedded in the wood. The door opened, and I was shoved inside before it closed, sealing my only chance of a getaway.

The room was dark. Cold. Chills nipped at my bare

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flesh and swam down my spine. I shouldn't be here!

Because the very darkness that surrounds me watches me hungrily. Wolves were apex predators, but now, I was the prey.

To a beast shielded by black.

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"The determination to win is the better part of winning." - Daisaku Ikeda

Neron

"I told you, son. All you had to do was hold on to her. Look at where the alternative has gotten you."

I was lying in bed with a hole in my stomach. It was bad enough Kiya was missing, but to have my father berate me on my choices was on another level of irritation. As the pack was in a state of disarray, he still had the energy to bother me. Good Goddess.

"Really, Dad? No 'Are you alright, son?' At least show that you're worried about me." I say sarcastically, pushing myself up into a sitting position. The pain was horrible. Think of fire burning through flesh, and that's how my stomach felt now. With every movement, more pain rocketed through my nerves, but the pain was nothing compared to what happened with Kiya.

I shielded her from the attack. I'd do it a million times over if it meant her safety. The worry and agony in her beautiful brown eyes wound my heart. The panic in her voice and the desperation as she

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tried to stop the bleeding. A part of me died in battle, knowing I hurt her by getting hurt.

Now, she was out there somewhere in the hands of that colossal beast. Onyx howled in misery for his missing mate and anger that it took her from us. I didn't give a fuck about my pain, I needed Kiya back safe and sound!

"You're an Alpha, Neron. You will get through that. It'll take more than a hole in the stomach to kill you." Dad cleared his throat, crossing his arms as he leaned against the wall at the hip. "Now that you had a taste of the danger, let it serve as a lesson for you to keep your valuables close."

"Kiya is valuable, Dad, but she is not an object. How is it ethical to sacrifice her for the pack?"

"A pack cannot run properly without their Luna. I don't know how many times I have to say it for you to understand. Kiya could throw tantrums all she likes, but the fact remains was that this pack needs her. You need her. What happened today will continue to happen the longer she rejects her fate."

"The attack wasn't her fault and you know it," I growled at him. "It's the fault of whoever or whatever sent that thing to burn down our home."

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You may be my father, but I will not sit here and listen to you place the blame on her. I won't do what you say, so drop it."

A mixture of disappointment and anger contorted my father's aging face. Just by our familial bond, I know he doesn't agree with me, but I stand firm on my decision. I could run this pack without a Luna. Sure, there was faultiness here and there, but I'd rather burn alive in the flames of hell than force Kiya to remain at my side forever. The pack was important, but she was more so.

"You'll regret this, son."

"And if the time comes, I'll deal with it. Respect my mate or get the hell out of my room."

Dad scoffed, muttering something under his breath about disrespect, and left. I pushed myself off the bed and walked towards the window. Dr. Jackson accommodated me with the best room in the hospital, but it was not needed. Not if I could look out the window and see the partially burnt oak trees. The fire hasn't destroyed the entire territory, but the damage was still heavily present.

I noticed something white perched on a branch. The sky was darkening, but I could see the white as clear

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as day. Its golden eyes stared into my soul, watching. I arched an eyebrow.

Huh, never thought I'd see a white owl. Owls normally weren't around wolf territories.

"Pardon my intrusion, my Alpha." Nurse Amara came in. "But Alpha Anthony of the Garnet Moon Pack was on the phone and he demands to speak to you."

I cursed to myself. No doubt the warriors contacted him about the situation. I could feel the exploding rage from the receiver of the phone. Walking to my bed, I gestured for Amara to give me the phone. After she left, I held it to my ear.

"Alpha Neron, speaking."

"Don't fucking act cordial with me, Neron. I entrusted you to my little sister's safety, and I had to hear from my Beta that she has been abducted right off your territory?"

There was no room for us to act as Alphas. At this moment, Anthony was a worried elder brother. "Yes, she was. I take full responsibility for her disappearance. The witch, Phoebe, was also taken."

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"Yes, I'm aware of that. I wasn't aware she left my territory until one of my other Deltas informed me. Regardless, this is a serious matter. Two of my members are missing. Are there rescue plans in place?"

"Right now? No. My fighters and yours suffered heavily from the fight, and I've lost a few. My men and women are being treated by my pack hospital staff, including myself and your team."

Alpha Anthony sighed over the receiver. Despite the distance, I could feel the weight of his anguish. If I was in his position, I'd react the same way. *"Right, right. I apologize. However, I can't sit by. My parents are aware of what happened and are preparing to head to Nevada at once."*

"Will I be seeing you?"

"Yes. I cannot sit by while my little sister and Phoebe are somewhere out there alone and afraid. Who knows what could be happening to them?"

The very thought boiled my blood. If Kiya was hurt, I'm burning this world to ash.

"If you're staying, I'll have the Omegas prepare rooms for you and your parents. We can discuss rescue plans once you arrive."

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"Very well. I've heard from my warriors they're recovering fine, so that's a breath of relief. But yes, we'll see you soon, Alpha Neron. Rest easy."

On the 'click', the phone call ended. My hands covered my face as I sighed hard, watching the lights from the sky grow darker. Kiya's presence affected me because nothing felt the same without her. It was colder, lonelier. I couldn't feel her, which worried me tremendously.

Nothing was going to stop me from finding her.

And I wouldn't rest until I do.

Later That Evening

I'm still in pain, but I was well enough to move. Valerian and Kwame were also healing well, bringing a smile to my face. If I lost my best men, I don't know what I'd do. Seeing them with their families was warming. A man's family could heal their soul quicker than medicine could.

We're all at the packhouse, watching the black vehicle roll into the front yard. The Garnet Moon warriors stepped up to greet their Alpha, their former Alpha, and Luna as they exited the car. I

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watch the former Luna fuss over the warriors like they're her children and the former Alpha convinces her to not baby them so much. I chuckle silently.

"Alpha Neron." Alpha Anthony firmly shook my hand. "Good to see you alive and well."

"Thank you." I nod. "Will your pack be alright without you?"

"Beta Dwayne and Beta Female Olivia will handle business alongside my Luna. It's in good hands." He turned his head to Beta Jacqueline. "Dwayne says to call him as soon as you're able. The poor lad is worried."

"Aww, he cares!" Jacqueline chortled. "Can't wait to hear his yelling at how I wasn't careful and whatnot."

"Let us go inside. I've cleared space in the common room for us to chat."

We all sat in the common room after I've been introduced to Anthony's parents, but I could already feel the tension in the air from Lyra and Ashley. Both were glaring, their wolves sizing each other up. Ashley and Steven wanted to be part of the mission to rescue their daughter, but I was not sure if they'll

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remain alive to see it if both sets of parents continued to stare daggers into one another.

I might have made a mistake.

"Could you tell me what happened before my daughter and Phoebe were taken?" Lyra asked me.

Ashley growled. "You mean, my daughter."

"Mom, please," Raina sighed, "This is hardly the time. We need to focus on developing a plan."

"*Your* daughter?" Lyra smirked scornfully. "You don't deserve the honor to speak those words, not after what you've done."

"*Mi Cielo...*" Nikolai whispered while grasping her hand. "You can pick a fight later. Kiya is counting on us to work together. My only solstice is that she's with Phoebe. They have each other."

Lyra sighed, bright eyes burning with tears. Patting her mate's hand, she turned to me. "I apologize, Alpha Neron. Just tell us what happened."

We told them the entire story. Starting from the moment Kiya awoke as Selene's avatar to Phoebe's arrival just before the battle with Cerberus. When I

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spoke about the date Kiya and I had, Alpha Anthony gave me a look of pure disapproval. Not just him, but Nikolai and Lyra too.

I felt like a kid asking for their parent's approval to date their daughter. After the shit, I've done? They have every right to believe that I was unfit to be anything close to Kiya's partner or mate.

Hell, I don't believe it either. At one point, my father came in to listen. The tension between him and Nikolai was palpable since they had a history. After it all, I allowed the Guerreros to digest everything in silence.

"The women are in the hands of a fucking cult."
Alpha Anthony growled. "And we don't even know where the fuck they are. How the hell are we going to find them if we don't have a clue on where to start?"

"There might be one person who could help us,"
Lyra mentioned, all eyes now on her. "Phoebe has a friend."

"A friend?" Sapphire asked.

"A friend," Lyra repeated. "She met him after you all left to come here and has taken a liking to him. He's

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also a witch. Maybe he could help us.”

“...But can we trust him?” Galen raised an eyebrow.
“This is the first we’ve heard about him.”

I agree with Galen. Tensions were high and I don’t feel comfortable having outsiders on my territory at this fragile time. But Kiya’s and Phoebe’s lives were at stake. The danger only heightens the longer we wait for something to happen.

“If this friend of hers could help us locate the women...then I welcome it.”

“*Are you sure, Neron?*” Valerian asked me through our link. “*We don’t know what he’s capable of.*”

“*This is our only shot. We have nothing, Val. No clues and no direction. Anything that gives us a chance to locate Kiya, I’m willing to take.*”

“*You really care about Kiya.*”

“*I love her, Val. I can’t lose her again.*”

“Okay.” Nikolai nodded, pulling out his cell phone.
“He gave me his number to call him in case anything happens. His name is Endo.”

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*"There's no escaping me, my love. Surrender." -
"Surrender" by Evanesence*

Kiya

The darkness was cold. Frigid like the midst of a snowstorm.

Someone was here, following my every move. I could not see their eyes, but I could feel them. Their heavy, foreboding presence made the hairs on the back of my neck stand erect.

"Who's here?" My shaky voice asked. No response. This was getting worse by the second. Times like this I wish I had night-vision because I couldn't see a damn thing. Only my unsteady breathing was heard, echoing between the unseen walls.

"Scared of the dark, little Moon?" A deep, rumbling voice purred from the black. My heart almost stopped, frozen in shock. "I promise I won't bite...*much*."

I touched the cold door behind me, trying to feel for the knob. Once located, I found that it wouldn't

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budge. My desperation grew the harder that I pulled. My breathing staggered and sweat glands worked overtime. "Let me out!"

"I won't. I just want to talk to you, my dear." Footsteps. Left, right, front, behind? The illusion of surround sound forced my fight-or-flight mode to act. I chose flight before, but the tables have turned as my body fought. But the developments bothered me. How could a human be this fast to surround me?

Unless...he wasn't human. This was Nadia's mate? A coward hiding behind the darkness? Calming my staggered breathing, I shut my eyes and growled as deep and loud as I could.

"Isn't it common courtesy to see the person you're talking to? You could see me, but I can't see you. How is that fair?"

"Adds to the illusion of mystery and it's fun! I can't have any fun while we chat?"

"No." I snapped. "Show yourself, coward!"

Something slithered past my feet, slimy and scaly. The sudden surprise made me jump right into a cold body. Thick arms locked around me, the strength of this being was unmatched—he's stronger than me!

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His arms shuffled. One wrapped around my stomach and the other around my collarbone. He presses my back against his hard chest, trapping me.

The slithery thing wrapped around my ankles and calves. One loop around turned to four before I saw something in the darkness that paralyzed me in fear.

Two glowing red eyes stilling my heart. It stared into the depths of my soul, searching for a piece to take a bite out of.

"Don't be rude, Little Moon. I'm in a good mood and ruining it would cost you and I don't want to mar your lovely skin." He snarls in my ear, warm air tickling the lobe. Involuntarily, I shook in his arms. "Your scent is intoxicating. So sweet. How many wolves grow weak in the knees from a single whiff of it?"

"So, you know I'm a werewolf. What else do you know about me?"

"I know you've been through pain. You've been through torment, agony, and horror. I also know that you hold enough anger to tear the earth in two." He chuckled, his deep voice sending shards of ice to my core. "Scent carries emotion few could detect. I'm one of the lucky few that could and my, my...all

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those dark desires make your scent much sweeter.”

I’m disgusted. I felt violated! Like a worm, I tried wiggling out of his grip. But his hold only tightened. “Shhh. There’s no need to fight. I will not harm you unlike some people in your past.”

“You know nothing about me!”

“I may not know everything about you, Little Moon, but that could change.” Light, feather-like touches trace the curvature of my neck, resting at my pulse. “Did you know that blood carries memory? If I wanted to know more about you, my dear, all I have to do is sink my teeth into your neck and I’ll have what I need.”

No.

Oh. My. Goddess.

He’s—!

“Y-you’re a vampire?” I asked, my voice shaky once more. “N-Nadia told me you’re half a werewolf!”

“Ah. Nadia. My mate doesn’t know when to shut up, does she?” He snarled in contempt, his fingers stroking my chin. I wanted to puke. “Yes, I’m a

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hybrid. A werewolf and vampire, or how many like to call me, an abomination.”

“Why are you doing this to her?” I demanded, gritting my teeth in fury. “She’s your mate! She loves you more than anything and you treat her like trash?”

“She is of use. She helps to take care of you and the rest of my avatars, does she not? I wouldn’t throw her away like garbage! Even garbage is useful once recycled.”

“You’re a monster.” He was no different from Odessa, using Darien only for the bond. It infuriated me even more.

“Proudly so, Little Moon.”

“Stop calling me that!” I tried and tried, but this bastard’s hold was pure titanium. Must be that vampiric strength, and since he was a hybrid, it was the joint strength of two creatures.

Something else didn’t sit right with me. Werewolves carried a particular scent. One could tell who a werewolf is just by the wolf marker in their natural smell, but he doesn’t have one. Could he be lying? I took huge whiffs to be sure, but I couldn’t tell.

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"Sniffing to see if I have a wolf, huh?" He laughed again. "Don't waste your breath. I killed my wolf a long time ago. Stupid mutt became a nuisance, always interfering in my plans. Always caring about others before himself. It annoyed me."

My heart dropped and my throat went dry. He killed his wolf? That's impossible. Wolves were the better half of us. They were the yin to our yang. Our best friends, confidants, and partners for life. I could not imagine living without Artemis. She is my rock. I love her so much, and to lose her would devastate me.

But to kill your wolf willingly? That's on a new level of insanity!

"How could you?" I whispered, furious. "The Moon Goddess blessed you with a wolf and you killed him?"

"Never liked him. Why keep around dead weight?" The fingers that caressed my chin soon wrapped themselves around my throat, squeezing. "Don't ask questions you aren't ready to hear the answers for, Little Moon. I wouldn't want you to get nightmares on my watch."

"Fine, then answer this. Why did you kidnap me?"

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"Simple. I need you." I felt his chin rest on the top of my head, hunching over a bit to meet my height.

"The avatars I have are unique. Their powers are extraordinary, their gods certainly picked the right ones to carry out their duty. But the avatar of Selene is a rare commodity and if I see something I like, I will have it."

"Oh, so I should appreciate the fact that you've been stalking me?"

"I call it 'an intense observation on an individual,' and we've met before."

"Funny, I don't recall ever seeing you before." *Yeah, Kiya, because he is covered in a cloak of mystery, you dumb bitch.* I thought to myself.

"Don't think too hard, Little Moon." He pats my head condescendingly. "All will be revealed in due time." Suddenly, my head was forced to tilt to the side, exposing the left side of my neck. "All this useless chatter has built up quite an appetite, and I have my eyes on a pretty little thing in my arms."

Cold kisses trailed up and down my neck, forcing a shiver through my body. Whimpering, I continued to fight. Continued to struggle. How could I escape the arms of a strong hybrid? I was supposed to be strong here, and I couldn't remove myself from this pervert!

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Fingers tightened around my throat again, now cutting off my oxygen supply.

"Stop. Struggling." He growled against my neck. I could feel the shaping of his teeth, followed by the growth of fangs. "I wouldn't want to accidentally tear out your throat. Can't afford to lose my prized possession."

"Stop!" I shouted, panicked. "You can't do this to me!"

"I won't do anything so barbaric, my Moon. Just a sip of your nectar of life and I'll let you be on your way."

"I prefer all my blood in my body, thanks!"

"Shhh..." His other arm forces my hips back, pressing against his flesh. "I promise it won't hurt. You just might enjoy it."

"W-Who are you?"

"Who am I?" Faint growls echoed in my ear. Not the growls of a wolf, but the growls of an inhuman. I closed my eyes, forcing my mind to focus on something else and not the man about to sink his fangs into me. "Remember my name, my dear,

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because you'll be hearing it a lot in your dreams and your nightmares. My name is Osiris. Your Master."

He sunk his teeth into the supple skin of my neck. The fangs found themselves drawn to my jugular vein, piercing, and stealing my life essence like a thief in the night. My blood flowed rapidly in his mouth. Judging by the rapid gulps Osiris was taking, he took more than a measly sip he originally claimed. His arms tightened in a life-threatening hold, possessive and demanding.

My world spun like a spinning top, but not from the blood loss. But from the sheer pleasure that rocketed through my body. His deep guttural moans vibrated against my flesh, joyous. My legs buckled and quivered while small, pathetic moans were heard.

From *my* mouth.

My body was betraying me. It was infuriating how a vampire's bite could feel so good. Osiris knew every nerve and fiber in my body and played them like a skillful guitarist. They danced under sinister strings of his crossbars.

He's the puppeteer, and I was the puppet.

As my blood continued to leave my body faster than

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my heart could keep up, I began sinking into my darkness, blacker than the one surrounding me. I couldn't stay awake. My body lost all the will to fight, preferring to stay in the haze of pleasure than the reality of my prison. What did this mean from now on?

The red eyes in front of me disappeared. But when I felt another pair of sharp fangs, forceful and relentless, pierce my neck was when I finally succumbed to the darkness behind my eyelids.

Osiris

I shouldn't have taken so much.

Then again, did I care? She tasted exquisite, it had blessed my tongue with the finest and purest of all wine.

Such power. Such magnificence flowing through her crimson essence. A simple sip sent me in a whirlwind of desire, losing myself in her sweet delicious blood.

I knew for a fact that Kiya was to be mine. I would *make* her mine.

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Through her blood, I saw her memories. All of them. Blood carries more memory than the earth's oceans, and a droplet could reveal all about a person. Poor, sweet thing. She had dealt with more than the average human. My non-existent heart pounded for the first time, for the woman unconscious in my arms.

We're kindred spirits. We've both been through hell and back and emerged stronger than our tormentors. We aren't weak. We can destroy *all*.

She was to never leave me!

I picked Kiya's body up, bridal style, and walked back to my seat after sealing her wound with my tongue. My sweet pet, Pepi, slithered next to me, taking refuge around my arm. I rested my little Moon on my lap, her head on my shoulder. Rubbing circles on her back, I kiss her forehead as I'd do with a lover.

I'll treat her better than that *Alpha* ever could.