

## The Wolf God's Unwanted Luna chapter 1-10

*Vivian Grey's POV*

My mother's hand was over my mouth before I was even fully awake.

"Don't scream. Vivian, please, don't scream." Her voice cracked on my name. In the dark I could only make out the shape of her, hair loose around her shoulders, her nightgown damp at the collar.

I nodded against her palm and she let go. Both of us breathed too fast in the silence that followed.

"What's happening?" My voice came out small. Younger than I felt.

"He's here. Or he will be by morning." She was already pulling clothes from my drawer, stuffing them into the bag I used for weekend trips. Her hands shook so badly she dropped half of what she picked up.

"The letter came three days ago," she said. "Your father didn't want to scare you with it until we knew for sure."

"What letter?"

She stopped. Long enough for me to finally see her face

"From the Lupus Deus."

I'd heard that name my whole life. In warnings. In bedtime stories meant to make children behave. I never once thought I'd hear it from my own mother, in my own bedroom, with her hands shaking too hard to fold a shirt.

"He's not himself anymore, Vivian. Word is his betrothed died carrying his child, and he blames the Moon Goddess for it, says she took one promise from him and owes him another. So now he's going pack to pack, collecting every unmated she-wolf he can find, looking for whatever mate he thinks she owes him. The letter said every pack has to cooperate when his men arrive. Hand over our unmated daughters, or he burns the territory down and takes them anyway."

My ears were ringing. "I'm unmated."

"I know." Her voice broke completely on those two words. "I know, baby. That's why you need to leave tonight, before anyone official has to make that choice for you."

"Where am I supposed to go?"

"Blue Moon. Gwen will take you in." She pressed something into my hand, a map, soft and worn at the folds, the kind that had clearly been kept ready for a night exactly like this one. "Don't stop. Don't say goodbye to anyone but me. Go now."

I didn't argue. There wasn't time.

She walked me down to the car herself, one hand pressed flat against my back like she could keep me upright through sheer will alone. At the door she pulled me into her arms, hard and fast, the kind of hug that says everything a person doesn't have time to put into words.

"I love you," she said against my hair. "Drive safe. Call me when you're past the county line, and not before."

"I love you too, Mom."

She let go first. She had to, I don't think I would have.

I slammed the door of my rusted-out Toyota, the one I'd bought after grinding away at the pack diner for months. As I pulled out, I caught my own reflection in the rearview mirror.

No one behind me.

Just me. Me and the road.

The farther I got, the tighter my stomach knotted.

I didn't stop much. Just enough for gas and gas-station food that made my stomach lurch with every swallow. I chewed on protein bars and gummy bears, washing it all down with too much coffee and too little water. My body was running on fumes, and my soul? That had been empty for a long time.

Two days on the road. One hour of sleep. Too many hours to think.

I forced my thought away as I looked at the wrinkled map in the passenger seat. I was close now. My fingers trembled as I traced the winding road that led into the woods. The scent of pine filled the car, and for the first time in days, my wolf stirred.

She recognized this place.

The path into Blue Moon territory wasn't marked on any GPS—it was more of an instinctual route, hidden and protected. If you didn't have wolf blood and purpose, you'd get lost before you ever crossed the first ridge.

Ten minutes deeper into the woods, I passed a wooden sign nailed to a tree. Bold black letters carved into the surface read:

PRIVATE PROPERTY. DO NOT ENTER. TRESPASSERS WILL BE SHOT.

Charming.

I kept driving.

A sudden rustle in the brush made my heart slam against my ribs. A massive gray wolf padded out onto the path, coming to a stop beside my window. I swallowed hard and rolled it down.

"Name and pack," he said flatly, eyes flicking between me and the car.

"Vivian Grey," I answered, keeping my voice steady. "Born in Blue Moon. Still registered. I was given permission to visit on family grounds."

My pulse thundered beneath my skin as I reached for my bag, pulling out a worn folder and my ID. He took them, brows furrowed, reading slowly. His eyes shifted between my face and the photo.

"Mark," he said simply.

I unzipped my hoodie, pulling the collar of my shirt aside to reveal the mark etched near my collarbone, three claw slashes crossed by a single line, with two circles underneath. Blue Moon's mark. He looked for a moment longer, then gave a small nod and handed back my things.

The guard stared at me with a flat expression, then gave a subtle nod to the guy up front. That was it, my silent pass through the gate.

I gripped the steering wheel tighter as I eased forward. The dirt path opened into a familiar trail, trees thickened on both sides until the clearing finally came into view... and there it was.

The Blue Moon Pack House.

Almost immediately, Lily bolted down the front steps like a whirlwind, her blonde ponytail bouncing behind her. Her arms flailed in excitement as she rushed toward me.

"Took you long enough!" she yelled, her face lighting up as I stepped out of my car.

She hadn't been lying on the phone. The security was intense. I'd expected wolves patrolling in their animal forms, but most guards were in human form, wearing tactical gear and carrying weapons. I guess they couldn't risk being spotted by humans near the border.

"Alright, now the fun can begin!" Lily grinned and wrapped me in a warm hug.

I sighed, pretending to groan. "Can I at least shower first? Maybe eat something before you drag me into whatever 'fun' you've got planned?"

She rolled her eyes and held me tighter. "Fine, fine. I'll feed you before you call your mom and report that I've been starving you within your first hour here. I can already hear her screaming my name."

She winked and led me up the steps.

Once inside, she helped me settle into a cozy guest room. The hot shower I took was short, but it was enough to rinse away two days of road grime and mental weight. Afterward, I threw on some clean clothes and joined Lily and Gwen in the kitchen. We shared a few laughs and updates, Gwen looking more like herself than I'd seen in years.

Lily disappeared upstairs first, something about finishing a movie, and for a moment it was just me and Gwen and the quiet hum of the refrigerator.

"Can I ask you something?" I said, picking at the edge of the placemat in front of me.  
"About him. The Lupus Deus."

Gwen's smile slipped. She glanced toward the hallway, like she wanted to be sure Lily was really gone before she answered.

"What did your mom tell you?"

"Not much. Just that his betrothed died. That he's blaming the Moon Goddess for it."

Gwen was quiet long enough that I thought she might not answer at all. Then she pulled out the chair across from me and sat down properly, the way people sit when they're about to say something they don't want to say standing up.

"They found her in a library," she said. "His betrothed. Pregnant with his pup, from what I heard. Someone found her on the floor in a pool of her own blood, and carved into the stone around her, moon goddess symbols. Crescents. The kind you'd see on an altar, not at a murder scene."

My stomach turned. "Who carved them?"

"Nobody knows. That's the part that scares people most. Nobody's ever found who did it, or why, or what those carvings were even supposed to mean. Some say the Goddess herself marked the scene, wanting him to know she'd taken something from him on

purpose. Others think somebody wanted him to believe exactly that, wanted him broken and furious enough to do exactly what he's doing now."

"Which do you believe?"

Gwen exhaled, looking down at her hands. "I don't know. I just know that after that night, he stopped being a god anyone could reason with. He swore that whoever the Goddess gave him next, whoever she decided was his fated mate, he'd make her pay for what was taken from him. Punishing the gift to spite the giver."

The words sat heavy in my chest.

"That's insane," I said.

"That's grief," Gwen said quietly. "Insane just looks like that, sometimes."

But my body was screaming for sleep.

The moment I hit the mattress, I surrendered to the dark, but my mother's voice still clung to the edges of my mind. Unmated. The letter. The list. It played over and over until exhaustion finally won.

Then I heard it.

A high-pitched scream sliced through the night, yanking me out of sleep. Before I could register what was happening, shouting followed. Chaos.

My bedroom door burst open.

Gwen stormed in, pale as ash, her brown hair wild on one side like she'd just rolled out of bed mid-panic. Her chest was rising and falling in rapid gasps, and her eyes were wide, frightened.

I jumped to my feet, heart pounding. "What's going on?"

Before she could answer, a robotic voice echoed through a speaker overhead.

"Code Red: All women and children proceed to the nearest safe bunker. We are under attack. I repeat, go to the bunker immediately."

The words took a second to register.

"Vivian, we have to move!" Gwen shouted, grabbing my wrist.

We sprinted out of the room and down the corridor. Other pack members were already running toward the clearing, shouting to each other and forming defense lines.

Then it happened, so fast, I barely caught it.

I turned to look behind me, and saw a massive reddish-brown wolf lunge for Gwen.

"Gwen!" I screamed, but she was already tangled with the beast.

Before I could react, a blur of motion came straight at me.

A man.

Not a wolf.

He charged with terrifying speed, his green eyes locked on me, his black boots barely making a sound on the dirt. I turned to run, but my legs felt like jelly. Where was the agility we were supposed to be blessed with as werewolves?

Right when I thought I could make it, something heavy slammed into my back.

We tumbled.

He grunted as we rolled, and somehow, I landed on top of him. For a moment, we were tangled together, my wrists pinned in his huge hands like I was made of paper.

Panic surged through me. I kicked, twisted, fought to free myself. "Let me go!" I screamed, clawing at his grip. My fingernails scraped his skin, but he didn't even flinch. His face was expressionless, calm, like this wasn't even a struggle for him.

Terror flooded every inch of me.

I lunged forward, teeth bared, trying to bite him. My wolf snarled in my mind, a low guttural sound that vibrated through my bones. But beneath the fear, there was something strange. Something familiar.

No! wrong time, wrong place.

He shifted his hold, wrapping my arms across my chest to stop me from attacking again. I kicked at him wildly, aiming low, but he moved fast and blocked the blow before it could do damage. My heart was hammering in my chest like it wanted to rip through my ribs and escape.

Then he reached up slowly, and touched my chin.

I recoiled, trying to jerk my head away, thinking he might snap my neck. But he wasn't rough. He tilted my face up with startling gentleness... and that's when I saw them.

His eyes.

At first, they were green

Then—black.

Then silver.

Then—

Blue.

A stunning, soul-searing blue that pierced through everything inside me and left me frozen.

And my wolf... she whimpered.

Purred.

My limbs went limp and I felt a pull.

He blinked slowly at me, and something unreadable passed through his expression, soft awe, maybe, or confusion. Then he nodded, as if silently confirming what I was too stunned to understand.

The spell broke.

His eyes flicked back to black. Then to a cat-like green. His grip loosened, like he'd suddenly remembered where we were.

I gasped and yanked free, adrenaline taking over as I scrambled to my feet and bolted into the trees without looking back.

"Release all other she-wolves!" I heard his voice call behind me, deep and commanding.

"We found our little Luna."

## The Wolf God's Unwanted Luna

Vivian Grey's POV

The moment I woke, a dull ache throbbed through my neck in time with my pulse. I didn't move yet. Something warm covered nearly every part of me, heavy in a way that should have felt smothering and instead felt like the safest I'd been in days. That should have scared me more than it did.

There was a thin trail of warmth along my cheek too, running from under my eye to the corner of my mouth, like someone had pressed their face there a moment too long.

Then the memories came back, all out of order. The forest. Gwen screaming. The alarm. That reddish wolf. A pair of green eyes locked on mine right before everything went dark.

I gasped and my eyes flew open.

He was the first thing I saw.

Blue eyes, close enough that I could count every lash, fixed on me like I was something he hadn't decided about yet.

"Who are you?" My voice came out smaller than I wanted it to.

"Where did you come from?"

"Stop," he said, low, in an accent I couldn't place anywhere.

And I did. My body simply listened, before I'd even told it to.

I don't know how that's possible. He hadn't spoken a word of English, but somehow I'd understood every syllable of it anyway, the way you understand a song in a language you've never learned. My wolf went still with me, watching him through my eyes. She wasn't afraid. If anything, she seemed almost glad, which made me angrier than anything he'd said so far.

"Your mate," she said quietly.

Hell no, I told her.

He wasn't even looking at me when he muttered it. "Why would the Goddess send me a mate now? Is this her idea of a peace offering, after taking my Luna from me?" His mouth curled, no warmth in it anywhere. "Then she's about to learn I don't accept gifts from thieves."

His hand found my jaw and tightened until it bordered on pain, turning my face up so he could study it properly, like he was confirming something he already hated.

"Do you know what she took from me to make room for you?" His voice dropped lower, almost gentle, which somehow made it worse. "No. Of course you don't. You're just the apology nobody asked for, wrapped up and delivered like I'm supposed to be grateful."

"Mate? Who was your mate? What gods are you even talking about?"

"Stop talking, woman!"

I shut my mouth instantly. The command hit something in me I didn't recognize, some instinct that listened before my pride could catch up and be furious about it.

"Let's establish a few facts," he said, voice flat. "I'm not letting you go. You might as well accept that now, because your odds of walking out of here alive are not good."

He said it the way you'd mention the weather. Like none of it cost him anything. It cost me everything though, and I hated that some part of me had already started flinching at the idea that this was the same man who'd just called me his.

His hand fisted in my hair and pulled, not gently, until his breath was right against my face. I closed my eyes. Fear and confusion and something I refused to name were all fighting for space in my chest at once, and I couldn't sort out which one was winning.

He breathed me in slowly, a low sound rolling out of his chest that I felt in my own before I even registered hearing it. My body answered him before my mind had any say in the matter.

"As tempting as a mating bond is, and I know exactly what they're hoping I'll do, I'm not going to kill you," he said. "I don't know what you are to me yet. I'm not falling into their trap either. I won't mark you. I won't mate you. For all I know you're one of theirs, sent here to slit my throat the second I'm fool enough to fall asleep beside you."

"And even if you're not," he added, quieter, crueler, "know now that you will never be her. I won't pretend otherwise just because the Goddess thinks a replacement settles a debt."

Each sentence took something from me I hadn't realized I still had left to lose.

My wolf made a small, broken sound in the back of my mind, hurt that he could even imagine us doing that to him. It was a strange kind of grief, mourning a betrayal that hadn't happened and never would.

"I don't know what any of this means," I whispered, barely holding my voice together.  
"But if you don't want me, just let me go."

He didn't answer for a long time. Long enough that the silence started doing more damage than his words had. Where I come from, mates aren't a metaphor. They're closer to a sentence, something passed down and carried out. Rejecting one doesn't just hurt. It carves a piece out of you that never grows back the same shape. He would survive without me. I wasn't sure I'd survive without him, and hating myself for that didn't make it less true.

"Whether you're one of them or not," he said finally, his voice dropping into something darker, "you were meant for me. If you're with them, I'll show you exactly why that was a mistake. If you're not, then..."

He never finished it. He didn't need to. Whatever was left unsaid sat in the air anyway, heavy and certain.

"But you're not leaving," he said. "Not now. Not ever."

My pulse climbed into my throat. One breath he was pushing me away like I was something dangerous, the next he was talking like I already belonged to him completely, and I couldn't decide which version of him frightened me more.

"Why?" I snapped, because it was the only word I trusted myself to say without my voice breaking.

He just looked at me. A hundred questions were stacking up behind my teeth with nowhere to go. Who did he think I worked for. What trap. Why claim me in one breath and reject me in the next.

I picked the only one I thought he might actually answer.

"What's your name?"

Something shifted behind his eyes. Then a smirk, sharp enough to cut.

"I'll humor you," he said, leaning in until his voice landed right against my ear, low and almost intimate. "You can call me the Lupus Deus."

Everything in me went still.

The Lupus Deus.

"Oh my God." The words slipped out before I could stop them. "This cannot be happening."

My wolf, traitor that she is, didn't even flinch. I shoved a wall up between us before she could do something humiliating, like throw herself at the literal god who'd just admitted he might kill me. If I let go of myself even a little, I wasn't sure what was left of me to find afterward.

I should have known the second I opened my eyes. I'd let his face distract me from everything else in the room. Idiot. Stupid, careless idiot.

The room itself was enormous, a bed against the far wall, the center of the floor cleared out like someone had once needed the open space for something I didn't want to picture. The walls were painted a flat, suffocating black. No photographs anywhere. No books. Nothing that told me who actually lived here, or who had.

I found a door and went for it.

Locked.

Of course it was.

I needed out of this room, away from him, more badly than I had ever needed anything in my life.

There was a second door, heavier looking. Maybe an exit.

He sat up on the bed and watched me, daring me without saying a single word. Go on. Try it.

I looked away instead, my mind already scrambling for another way out.

Maybe this hadn't even been his room to begin with. Maybe it had belonged to someone before me.

The thought landed harder than I expected it to. If this had been hers, the woman Gwen had told me about, the one the Goddess supposedly stole from him, that would explain the bare walls. No photographs. No books. Maybe keeping anything of hers around had hurt worse than losing it the second time.

I sat with that thought longer than I meant to, somewhere between guilt I had no right to and something else I refused to name.

He stood and walked toward a third door I hadn't even noticed, which did nothing for my confidence about ever finding my way out of this place. I didn't follow him. I didn't trust my own legs to hold me up, let alone trust him.

"Just so we're clear," he said, pausing near the door without turning around. "If you're working for them, sending word out won't help you. And if I find out you're in contact with them, goddess help you, Vivian, I will kill you."

Vivian.

He said it like he'd always known it. Like I'd never had a single chance to keep it from him. I hadn't told him my name. I was certain of that.

I will kill you.

He said it so plainly it took a second for the words to actually reach me, and when they did, the fear came in cold and total, nothing like the fear I'd felt up to that point. This wasn't a threat meant to scare me into behaving. He meant it. My own mate, standing three feet away, had just told me exactly how this could end.

Them. Who in the hell were they.

The door creaked open. Something in my chest finally unwound enough that I looked up and met his eyes properly, that strange mixed blue that didn't look like any color I had a name for.

Neither of us said anything. I already knew what I looked like. Pale. Wrecked. Out of fight, even if I wasn't out of fear.

Whatever decision he was making, he made it in that silence.

"You can call me Zaliver," he said, and then he was gone, the door closing behind him before I could decide whether I was relieved or not that he'd left.

"Zaliver." I said it out loud once he was gone, just to feel the shape of it in my own mouth, and hated how right it felt there.

Zaliver.

The Lupus Deus.

My mate, who had just promised to kill me if I gave him a reason.

## The Wolf God's Unwanted Luna

*Vivian Grey's POV*

I barely made it to the edge of the bed before my knees gave out, exhaustion finally catching up with every part of me at once.

Me. The mate of a god. What kind of joke was the universe playing.

There had to be a mistake somewhere. I wasn't anyone special, just an ordinary wolf from an ordinary pack. I'd shifted at fifteen, kept my head down, skipped the parties and the casual heat flings everyone else seemed to manage so easily. I used to tell myself I was holding out for my true mate. Lately I'd started wondering if that was just a kinder way of saying nobody had ever really wanted me.

And then he'd looked at me with eyes that held something I couldn't read, a promise or a warning, I genuinely couldn't tell which. The rest of him was the kind of detail I wished I hadn't noticed. I buried my face in my hands and forced myself to breathe. Falling apart wouldn't help my family, and if I ever managed to escape, he'd probably come looking. Men like that didn't let things go. He might even use my parents to pull me back.

I shut my eyes.

Why do you want to run? my wolf asked.

Because he's dangerous, I told her. He kidnaps people. He kills people. He takes whatever he decides he wants.

She pushed gently against the wall I'd built between us, so I let her through.

How do you know any of that's true? she asked. Maybe he deserves a chance.

Did you not just hear him? I shot back. He won't let us leave, but he won't claim us either. He doesn't get to use us to figure out what he wants and then throw us away once he's decided. I don't want a mate who does that.

It hurt to say it about someone who was supposed to be mine, but I wasn't going to lie to either of us just to feel better for a minute.

What kind of life would that even be. Trapped at his side, hidden away, a mate in name only and nothing else.

No. I didn't deserve that. Nobody did.

I wanted real love, not whatever this was. Messy, maybe. Imperfect. But real, and chosen, not something his pack had stolen out of another pack's territory in the middle of the night. This wasn't a meet cute. It was a kidnapping with better lighting.

And what about Lily? The other girls who'd been taken with me? Were they even still alive?

Panic pushed me off the bed and toward the door, or it tried to. The second I stepped forward, something yanked me back like I'd hit the end of a leash I couldn't see.

"What the hell?" I muttered.

I tried again. Same wall, same invisible stop, no matter how hard I pushed against it.

He'd told me to stay. So I stayed, whether I wanted to or not.

And there was still that language he'd spoken earlier, the one that wasn't English and somehow wasn't a problem either. He'd acted like I shouldn't have understood him. I had anyway. I didn't know what that meant about me, or about him, or about whatever he'd done to make that happen.

Eventually I gave up on the door and looked around the rest of the room instead. Huge. Cold. Expensive in a way that didn't try very hard to look comfortable. The window had thick silver drapes, and when I pulled them back I nearly swore out loud.

Steel blinds, bolted into the frame.

A cage dressed up in good fabric.

I lay back on the bed without meaning to, staring at the ceiling, and lifted my feet to look at them. Bare. No shoes. I had no idea where they'd gone.

How long had I even been here. Hours. Days. I had no way to know, and nobody seemed in any hurry to tell me.

I've always loved my wolf. She wasn't some separate thing living inside me, she was my constant, my closest friend, the steadiest thing I had when everything else tilted sideways.

Still, I hadn't expected anyone to come for me this soon. I'd already started preparing myself for days, maybe weeks, alone in that room.

So when the door opened and Zaliver walked in, I was too stunned to move. A second man followed behind him, green eyed and sharp, with the kind of presence that made the room feel smaller the moment he entered it.

I shot to my feet, heart slamming.

"You," I said, locking eyes with the stranger.

Zaliver looked at me like I was the one creating a problem, arms folded behind his back, jaw tight, giving nothing away.

The green eyed man stepped forward, his smile not quite reaching his eyes. "My name is Albericus."

I didn't say anything back. I just watched him the way you'd watch something deciding whether or not to bite.

His jaw tightened. "Watch yourself, little girl."

"Enough," Zaliver said, and the word cut through the room like it had weight to it.

We both went quiet. He gave me one last look before turning toward the door.

"Follow."

My legs moved before my brain agreed to it.

The hallway stretched on, dim and silent except for our footsteps. I had no sense of how big this place was, or where in it we were. Albericus walked behind me, Zaliver ahead, the way someone walks when they've never once had to wonder whether people would follow.

"Where are we going?" I asked.

Nothing.

"Where are you taking me?" I tried again, louder.

Still nothing.

Fine. The silent treatment. I could work with that.

The halls kept turning, left, right, up, down, every stretch identical to the last. Blank walls. Polished floors. No scent of any other wolf anywhere. Just the two of them and the sound of my own steps trying to keep up.

Were they taking me somewhere to talk, or somewhere to end this. My stomach turned over at the thought.

I glanced back once and caught Albericus watching me before I turned away and fixed my eyes on Zaliver's back instead.

What did he even want from me, if not this. If he wouldn't claim me and wouldn't release me, what was left.

My heart wouldn't slow down. I needed some kind of plan. My wolf growled low, unhappy, but I pushed past her. Survival came first.

We stopped at a heavy gray door. Zaliver glanced down at me, and when it creaked open, he stepped aside, clearly expecting me to walk in first.

The room beyond it was bright and sterile, white walls, bare concrete floor. One object sat against the far wall.

A chair.

Not just a chair. Straps on the arms. Buckles at the feet.

"Oh, hell no," I said, already backing away. "No. No, no, no."

I turned to run and walked straight into a wall of muscle and warmth that I refused to believe belonged to him, refused to believe he'd actually bring me to a room like this.

"Sit in the chair," he said. Flat. Final.

My body obeyed before I could stop it. I fought the whole way there, screaming, clawing at nothing, and it didn't matter at all. My feet dragged me forward until I dropped into the seat, shaking.

Tears came before I could stop those either. "How could you?" I sobbed. "I haven't done anything!"

Zaliver stepped in front of me, and for one stupid second I hated how good he looked doing it, even now. My mate. My captor. Both, apparently, with no contradiction bothering him at all.

"Quiet," he said, and there was nothing soft in it this time. It wasn't a comfort. It was an order, and his voice made it clear he didn't plan on repeating it.

I bit down on the next sob. My arms had gone numb, my whole body too heavy to lift, even to wipe my own face.

Albericus stood by the door, grim and silent. Zaliver hadn't strapped me into anything. He hadn't needed to. Whatever was holding me down didn't need buckles.

"I'm not going to hurt you," he said, his voice clipped, almost bored. "This isn't torture, Vivian. It's the fastest way to get the truth out of you, and I intend to use it."

Hearing my name in his mouth did something ugly and warm to my chest at the same time, and I hated both reactions equally.

"I need to know what you know. Who you're connected to. I won't keep you near me if I can't trust you, and right now I don't."

My lips wouldn't stop trembling.

"This will drain you," he said. "That's all you need to know." No apology. No softening. Just a fact, delivered the way you'd warn someone a door was about to close on their fingers.

"So that's it?" My voice cracked, but I forced the words out anyway. "You don't trust me enough to keep me near you, but you trust yourself enough to never let me go. What does that make me? Not a mate. Not even a prisoner you'll admit to. Just something you keep."

He didn't answer right away. When he finally did, his voice was flat, almost amused at my expense. "Call it whatever helps you sleep. It changes nothing either way."

I sat there, shaking, pinned by a weight I couldn't see or fight, and the only thing left in my head was a single, small, useless hope.

I hope I'm still me when this is over.

He didn't look like a man who cared one way or the other.

## The Wolf God's Unwanted Luna

*Vivian Grey's POV*

Zaliver lifted his hands to my face, but hesitated just briefly, as if second-guessing what he was about to do. I knew he could hear the way my breathing stuttered in my throat. His fingers finally brushed my cheek, warm against the path of tears I hadn't even realized were still falling. Slowly, they traveled up to rest at my temples.

That's when the heat surged.

His fingers went from warm to scorching, and I could feel my own pulse hammering beneath his touch. Then he shifted to press against the center of my forehead.

That's when I felt it. Something not physical, not quite spiritual either. It was a pressure, like a silent wave pressing up against the walls of my mind. My instinct flared to resist, to hold my mental barriers firm. But it didn't matter. He didn't crash through; he slipped in. Quiet. Effortless.

I wasn't ready for that.

There was no pain. But it didn't make it any less invasive. It was a strange, uncomfortable sensation, like someone peeling away your clothes in front of a crowd. I couldn't feel his hands anymore, but I knew they were still on my skin. What I felt now was something deeper, him, inside my thoughts, pushing through the most private corners of me.

He was in my head.

And not just drifting through. He was searching, sifting through memories, moments, half-buried thoughts. Everything he touched clung to him, dragged behind like shadows. I could feel my energy draining, my will slipping away under the weight of his presence.

Even my wolf recoiled.

I felt her whimper as his awareness brushed against hers. She tried to shrink away, but there was nowhere to go. She showed him our pack. The woods. Our dreams. Our loneliness. Our needs. Every insecurity I buried, every craving I wouldn't admit to even myself, was laid bare.

I felt naked.

Images spiraled through my mind too fast to follow, memories flashing by like a reel spinning out of control. It was overwhelming. I was losing hold of myself. My focus wavered, my eyes fluttered shut, but not before I caught a glimpse of his expression.

He was watching me closely. His face moved through a storm of emotions: caution, confusion, awe. Then something else, fear, just before my world slipped into black.

His hands snapped away.

The invisible force that had been holding me upright vanished all at once. My body slumped forward, limp. Somewhere deep inside, I hoped I might just fall straight through the ground and wake up in my bed, in my room, and chalk this all up to one long, disturbing dream.

But that hope died the moment his arms caught me.

Warm and solid, they wrapped around me, pulling me close until my cheek rested against his shoulder. Zaliver scooped me up like I weighed nothing, one arm under my knees, the other supporting my back. My body betrayed me again. I wanted to melt into him. And I hated that.

"No," I growled, weak and hoarse. "Put me down."

He didn't listen. Maybe I was too soft, or maybe he just didn't care.

As he carried me, I could feel the strength in every step he took. His grip didn't falter. I wanted to fight, to shove him away, but my limbs were useless. I squeezed my eyes shut, not to surrender, but to gather whatever shreds of mental strength I had left. I needed to regroup. I would fight back.

Because I'd had enough.

Enough of this overpowered jerk thinking he could do whatever he wanted. He took my choices, my body, my mind. He invaded the most private parts of me without so much as a warning because he could. He could have asked me. I would've told him anything. I wasn't hiding a damn thing.

The door creaked open as we approached; someone must have opened it for him. It clicked shut behind us.

Albericus.

"So?" His voice was careful, probing.

I held still, listening for Zaliver's answer. Why had he done all that? What was the point?

"Quiet," Zaliver said, which told me nothing at all. "Just give me time to finish going through it."

My stomach twisted. So he wasn't done deciding what to make of me yet.

I wanted to lift my head and see his face, but it felt like my body had stopped listening.

"And?" Albericus asked, pushing open another set of doors.

Where were they taking me now?

"And nothing yet," Zaliver said, voice dipping into something more curious. "But she responds to Latin when I speak it."

Latin? Latin?! That's what this weird language was?

I felt a sudden, sharp stir of awareness inside me.

"Isn't that right?" Zaliver said, looking down at me.

My eyes cracked open. He tilted his head, his expression caught somewhere between wonder and suspicion. His lips were parted like he was waiting for something.

I wanted to punch him. Really hard. God or not, he deserved it.

But I just stared back at him, too tired to speak. What was the point of having a body if my own mind couldn't command it?

Albericus's voice came again, skeptical. "I've been with you for years and I still can't follow your logic sometimes. Why would she understand it?"

Zaliver didn't answer.

I turned my head slowly to glance at him.

And dammit.

He was beautiful when he wasn't scowling.

Zaliver's arms tightened around me, his grip firm but not uncomfortable. I could feel the way his body shifted with each step, steady and sure, but I kept my eyes elsewhere. I didn't dare meet his gaze, though I could feel it burning into the side of my face. What now?

His eyes had turned cold again, those icy blue depths that didn't just look at me but seemed to look through me. The mood hanging around him was thick and heavy, like a coming storm. And me? My stomach was flipping like it had been hijacked by a pack of jackhammers. Definitely not how I imagined being carried by a friend, assuming Zaliver even qualified as one.

He kept walking with me in his arms, down yet another hallway. The place felt like it belonged in a magazine. Soft blue walls, wooden-framed paintings that looked too expensive to be touched, and delicate little tables with vases full of fresh flowers. Everything about it whispered elegance, except me.

As we rounded a corner, I noticed several doors leading off to who knew where. I caught the sound of voices. Talking. And laughing?

## The Wolf God's Unwanted Luna

*Vivian Grey's POV*

That's when I spotted Albericus, slipping through one of the open doorways into a large room. Toys littered the floor along with tiny shoes. Was this where someone lived? Kids?

By the time we reached the end of the hall, a glass-floored spiral staircase curled upward to yet another level of this massive place. Corridors branched out like arteries from the heart of the home. I glanced up at the stairwell, still stunned. Was this his packhouse?

But that didn't make sense. Zaliver wasn't just some Alpha, he was the Lupus Deus. A wolf god. If he ruled over all, why would he need a single pack? Wouldn't every pack already belong to him?

Before I could wrap my head around it, we entered a spacious living room. Sleek black couches faced towering windows veiled with sheer curtains that poured golden sunlight across the floors. It looked like the kind of place you'd see in a dream. Warm. Alive. Nothing like the black, stripped-bare room he'd kept me in.

Then came the kitchen, a large, open space with a thick wooden table in the center. Zaliver set me down on one of the chairs, then turned to the counters and began pulling things out. I blinked.

Was he cooking?

The moment we entered, the noise in the room dropped. Laughter faded. I glanced around and saw them, two guys and three girls, all staring at us. Or more specifically, at me, while carefully keeping Zaliver in their peripheral vision.

The two guys looked almost identical, like walking mirror images. Both had cream-blond hair slicked back and deep brown eyes, soft, almost cherubic features. Definitely twins. The one on the left had sharper cheekbones, the one on the right a stronger jawline. Their shirts, green and blue, were the only quick way to tell them apart aside from their jeans.

The girls were completely different from one another. Closest to me stood a tall girl with rich dark skin, hazel-green eyes, and a pixie cut framing a striking face. Confident posture, thin lips, a round nose.

Next to her stood someone out of a fairy tale, a tiny girl barely over five feet, fiery red hair, deep green eyes, a heart-shaped face that made her look almost too sweet for this world.

Beside her leaned another girl with caramel-toned skin, long black hair, soft brown eyes, fuller lips. She looked around my age and just about my height.

They were all watching me, curious and cautious. I shifted in my seat.

I turned my attention back to Zaliver. He moved with practiced ease, taking out ingredients I couldn't quite see from my angle. I was still raw from what he'd done to me in that room, the hands in my head, the part of myself he'd gone through without asking. Watching him stand at a stove like an ordinary man didn't make any of that easier to sit with. If anything it made it worse, the gap between what he was capable of and how harmless he looked doing something as small as cooking.

The group near the doorway was still watching us. Or rather, me. Their gazes kept shifting between me and Zaliver, like they were trying to work out what exactly was happening.

My face flushed. I wasn't used to being the center of attention in a kitchen full of strangers and one very dangerous man.

"Uh, hi," I managed.

Smooth, Vivian. Real smooth.

The tall, dark-skinned girl brightened and gave me a cheerful wave.

"Hello! I'm Amber." She pointed around the room. "That's Leslie, that's Angela, and those two are Drake and Blake." She gestured vaguely at the twins without actually saying which was which.

So: red-haired girl, Leslie. Caramel skin, Angela. The twins, somehow still a complete mystery even after a formal introduction. I made a mental note to ask one of them directly later, since apparently nobody in this house was going to make it easy on me.

I gave them a small smile. "Nice to meet you. I'm Vivian."

They all gave polite nods and stepped further into the room.

The twins made a beeline for one of the fridges and came back with bottles, sodas and water. They passed the drinks around, Coke for the girls, one twin keeping the water for himself.

Leslie and Angela leaned against the counter, watching me with a mix of friendliness and curiosity. Amber started toward me like she meant to sit down and start a real conversation.

Before she could reach me, a low, guttural growl ripped through the room.

Zaliver hadn't said a word. Hadn't even looked up. But the sound that tore out of his throat was primal, dangerous, unmistakable.

Amber froze mid-step, eyes wide.

What. The. Hell.

We all froze. The air went thick, sharp enough to cut. Nobody breathed as we stared at Zaliver. His back was still turned, but his head had angled just enough to send a piercing glare straight at Amber.

To the others I was sure he looked like exactly what he was, tall, broad-shouldered, every muscle coiled with quiet violence. One dark strand of hair had fallen loose across his eyes,

and even like that he looked less like a man who'd lost his temper and more like something deciding whether it was worth the effort.

Amber stumbled back a few paces, head low, until she hit the wall with a quiet thud. Her little group traded looks before muttering among themselves, stealing glances our way.

## The Wolf God's Unwanted Luna

*Vivian Grey's POV*

Zaliver didn't spare them another look. He turned sharply, holding a plate, and walked over to the table with that effortless, predatory stride of his. Without a word, he set the plate in front of me. I didn't look at the food, I looked up at him instead.

His expression was unreadable. Lips pressed tight, eyes steady. He crossed his massive arms over his chest like he was waiting to see what I'd do next.

I finally looked down. Five thick pancakes, already cut, syrup drizzled perfectly like something from a diner menu. I blinked. When did he even?

He made these?

"Eat," he said. Blunt. Commanding.

Rude. I was starving, sure, but still. A little manners wouldn't kill him.

I shot him a glare, still simmering from earlier. Now that I was sitting and not worried about being dragged off for torture, my fear had dulled to a sharp edge of irritation. My strength was slowly crawling back up from wherever it had fled, and with it, my mouth.

"I know we're wolves," I muttered, voice laced with sarcasm, "but I do eat like a civilized person. Fork, please?"

The kitchen fell into a stunned silence. You'd think I'd just kicked a puppy from the way everyone looked at me, wide-eyed, horrified, like I'd said something sacrilegious. I glanced at Zaliver. His jaw clenched, face hardening.

To my surprise, he didn't bark back. He turned on his heel and opened a cabinet, retrieving a fork without saying a single word.

He walked back and handed it to me. Then, without breaking that wall of icy silence, he sank into the chair beside mine and folded his arms again.

Too close.

Way too close.

I fidgeted in my seat but didn't move away. Instead, I picked up the fork and dug in. Hunger won over everything else. The pancakes were warm, fluffy, perfect. I didn't stop until my plate was clean. Only then did I realize just how starved I'd been.

When I looked up, Zaliver was watching me with a strange look somewhere between pleased and possessive. He hadn't taken his eyes off me once.

Still not turning around, he ordered over his shoulder, "Get her a bottle of water."

One of the twins jumped to his feet, pulled one from the fridge, and handed it to me, trying not to make eye contact. I took it with a quiet nod.

"Thanks."

"No problem," he muttered. Probably thinking about how he technically didn't have a choice.

I took a few sips, then placed the bottle on the table. Silence settled again.

"So," I started awkwardly, unsure how to even begin.

"What?" Zaliver asked, leaning toward me. Even seated, he was still towering. How was that even fair?

I hesitated, then let the bitterness slip through. "Can I go now? I think you got what you wanted."

Everyone heard me. I didn't care.

I needed to go home. I wanted to go home.

The way he'd dug through my mind, the way he hadn't even asked. He didn't trust me, his own mate. That truth stung worse than anything. He could've just asked. I would've told him anything.

His voice cut through my thoughts, cold and final.

"I already told you, Vivian. The answer is no. I won't repeat myself. Drop it."

I flinched. Not because I was scared, but because my heart twisted at how easily he dismissed me.

I stood up, silent, and walked out of the kitchen, fury bubbling under my skin.

Behind me, I heard a chair scrape back. Then footsteps. Fast. Angry.

A hand closed around my arm, yanking me to a stop. I spun to face him, breathing hard.

"Where the hell do you think you're going?" Zaliver growled, his eyes stormy and locked on mine.

I tried to pull free, but his grip was unbreakable. Fine. He wanted to play Alpha games? I'd change the strategy.

"Let go," I said, voice level.

He didn't.

"No. Now answer me."

I lifted my chin, stared him down.

"I'm looking for the door," I said evenly.

His eyes widened for a second, then darkened. His pupils dilated, swallowing the icy blue until they were almost black.

Power rolled off him in waves, pulsing in the air between us. I felt it in my bones. Cold. Primal.

"I said you couldn't leave," he whispered, each word slow and heavy.

I took a small step back.

That calm tone, the one cloaking all the rage underneath, was more terrifying than any shouted threat. And still, somewhere in the storm that was him, I saw the pull. The conflict.

This wasn't just power. This was possession. Mate bond, deep and wild and messy.

And I wasn't sure which one of us it would destroy first.

"I'm done asking for your permission." My voice trembled, but I didn't back down. "I tried being polite. But you don't have a reason to keep me here anymore. You got what you wanted, so let me go."

I pulled my arm, but his grip didn't budge. His chest rose and fell in steady, sharp breaths. His nostrils flared, and for a second I thought I saw something primal flicker behind his eyes.

"No reason, huh?" he repeated, mockery laced in his voice. A dangerous smile curved his lips.

The room felt colder all of a sudden. Like the air had thinned and the shadows had grown teeth.

He yanked me toward him in one swift pull, letting go of my arm only to wrap it securely around my waist. My breath caught as he leaned in, his nose grazing mine. I froze, too aware of his warmth, of how close we suddenly were. Then, with deliberate slowness, he dragged his nose along my cheek, then back again, until we were nose to nose.

I inhaled shakily, my knees threatening to give out beneath me.

"So being mine isn't a good enough reason?" he whispered, the smirk tugging at his lips anything but gentle.

That did it.

I shoved against him with both hands. "Let me go, you jackass! I'm going home and you can't stop me!" My voice cracked with fury. "You don't want me, Zaliver, so I'll do both of us a favor and rej-"

The world flipped before I could even finish the sentence.

In a heartbeat, I was flung over his shoulder, air whooshing out of my lungs. My scream came out more like a gasp as he moved, no, blurred through the house. Everything became a whirlwind of color and noise, and my hair whipped around me like I was caught in a storm.

I didn't know where he was taking me. I only knew that wherever it was, I wasn't getting that word out before we got there. And some small, traitorous part of me wondered if that had been the whole point.

## The Wolf God's Unwanted Luna

*Vivian Grey's POV*

When we stopped, it wasn't gentle.

He tossed me, not hard, but definitely without warning, and I landed on something soft that sent me bouncing once, twice.

I blinked up at the ceiling, stunned.

A bed.

He'd thrown me onto a bed.

The room was dim, lit only by slivers of daylight slipping through thick curtains. The air was still, but tense. My instincts screamed, every nerve in me suddenly alert. I scrambled back, eyes wide, my breath shallow. The door stood behind him, and he filled the space completely.

He didn't say a word. He just looked at me.

Zaliver stood in the doorway, shadowed and sharp. His lips parted slightly, and I caught a glimpse of canines longer than they should be. His head tilted, exposing his throat, and then he started moving.

Each step was slow. Measured. Predatory.

I watched helplessly as he stalked toward the bed. His lashes cast dark shadows over his stormy eyes, making him look even more dangerous. And yet there was something magnetic in the way he moved, something that rooted me in place, that had my gaze locked onto him even as my brain screamed to run.

I darted a glance at the door. Too far. He saw it too.

He smirked and clicked his tongue softly. Then, without breaking eye contact, he reached for the hem of his black shirt and pulled it over his head.

My breath hitched.

Oh.

My wolf howled low in the back of my mind, restless and pacing. Zaliver's body was everything I feared and everything I craved. Broad shoulders, a chest carved with muscle. His skin looked warm, and I had the most ridiculous urge to touch him.

He was perfection in a nightmare setting.

"Am I to your liking?" he asked, voice deep and rich, taking another step closer.

I was panting. Literally panting.

This was insane. I'd never been in a situation like this. No guy had ever tossed me onto a bed, taken his shirt off, and then looked at me like he was deciding whether to devour me with his mouth or his claws.

I cleared my throat and forced the haze from my head, met his eyes, kept my tone flat.

"You're a solid eight out of ten."

It was dumb. Stupid, even. But I wasn't about to give him the satisfaction.

I expected him to laugh, or maybe scoff.

What I didn't expect was for him to lunge.

He came at me with a flash of fury on his face, and I screamed, rolling just in time to avoid his hands.

I hit the floor with a thud and scrambled to my feet, my hair wild around my face. But before I could make a run for it, a strong hand snatched my wrist and yanked me straight into his chest.

Bare skin met mine.

His arms wrapped around me, and we fell back together. I gasped, bracing for impact, but he twisted us midair so that when we hit the bed again, he landed on top, straddling me.

My wrists were pinned above my head in one hand.

I stared up at him, panting, hair tangled around my face, heart hammering. His weight, his heat, his scent, it overwhelmed everything.

And oddly, I wasn't scared. Not in the way I should have been.

Part of me felt something else. Something dangerous. Something thrilling. Like this was a game I didn't know I'd agreed to play.

He leaned in close, so close I could feel his breath ghosting across my skin, and began to nuzzle my neck with his nose. The drag of it tickled, making me squirm slightly beneath him. My fingers itched with the urge to touch him, but I held back, tense as his arms tightened around me.

"You were going to reject me, weren't you?" His voice dropped low. "Even after I told you that you're mine."

He paused there, his mouth still against my throat, and for half a second I felt something in him still, the way a held breath stills a room.

"Such a thing to say," he murmured, quieter now, almost to himself.

The words landed strangely. Not like a threat. Like something he'd heard before, somewhere else, said by someone else, and I'd just accidentally handed it back to him.

His grip on my wrists didn't loosen, but something in his face did. The fury banked into something heavier. Older.

I stiffened. "N-No, I wasn't," I shook my head quickly, panic sliding into my throat, though I wasn't entirely sure now what I was panicking about. "I didn't mean it. I was angry, that's all. I swear I didn't mean it."

And I hadn't. Goddess, I'd said it out of sheer frustration and fear and fury. It wasn't the truth. Not really.

Zaliver didn't answer right away. He'd gone somewhere else entirely, his eyes fixed on a point just past my shoulder, like he wasn't looking at me at all anymore.

"You smell like rain before a storm," he said, almost to himself, and his voice had lost its purr. It had gone flat. Distant.

I froze, every muscle in my body locking up at once.

This wasn't the same man who'd had his nose at my throat thirty seconds ago. Something had shut a door behind his eyes, and I had no idea what I'd said to close it.

"Let go of me," I said, quieter this time, no longer trying to provoke him. Something about the stillness in him scared me more than the lunge had.

He didn't move at first. When he finally did speak, his voice had gone cold in a different way than before, not heated and possessive, but hollow.

"You don't get to say things like that to me," he said. "Not you. Not yet."

I didn't understand what he meant, and the not understanding was its own kind of fear. "Like what? I don't even know what I said."

He didn't answer that either. His jaw worked once, like he was biting back something he had no intention of giving me, and then, just as suddenly as he'd gone distant, the heat came back into his eyes, dark and sharp again, though something underneath it had changed.

"Forget it," he said.

"No," I shot back, my own anger rising to meet whatever this was. "You don't get to do that. You don't get to go somewhere else mid-sentence and then tell me to forget it. Whatever just happened, I want to know what it was."

"It's not your business."

"You invaded my mind." The words came tumbling out before I could stop them, fury bubbling up from everything he'd done. "My memories. Things you had no right to see. You could've just asked me. But no, you chose to rip through my head like I was some criminal. And now you want privacy? Get the hell off me."

I thrashed beneath him, my pulse racing, my skin burning with the unfairness of it. Zaliver's face shifted, his expression darkening as he pulled back. His teeth were bared, canines gleaming. His eyes shifted from blue to jet black, the storm rolling in fast.

I met his snarl with one of my own, letting my wolf rise. I wasn't going to flinch this time. Not when I knew I was right.

His messy hair fell over his eyes, shadows licking at the sharp angles of his face. He opened his mouth, then paused. A breath left him, slow and heavy, and he pulled back, lifting himself off the bed without another word.

He reached for his shirt and yanked it back over his head, his eyes gradually shifting back to their icy blue, though the warmth never returned to them. The moment was broken. Tension still crackled in the air, but the fire had dulled into something colder and far more unreadable than what had started it.

Whatever I'd said, it hadn't been about me at all. I was almost certain of that now. And not knowing who it had actually been about scared me more than anything he'd done since I woke up in this house.

Then the door swung open.

## The Wolf God's Unwanted Luna

*Vivian Grey's POV*

Albericus stood in the hall, hand mid-air as if he'd been about to knock. Zaliver hadn't even turned, but he'd clearly known he was there. I blinked. How had he sensed him?

Then it hit me. Alpha senses. Of course he'd known. The man probably heard a heartbeat change three rooms away.

"Sorry, man. There's a situation we need to handle," Albericus said without looking past Zaliver.

Zaliver gave a curt nod before glancing over his shoulder straight at me. His eyes burned into mine again, unreadable and intense.

"Use the room however you want," he said, his voice dropping to a low, rich promise. "I'll be back later, to finish what I started."

And just like that, he turned and left, taking the air with him.

I sat there on the bed, still breathing hard, my cheeks flushed and my limbs trembling. My mind reeled from everything that had just happened.

But then, something clicked.

He hadn't ordered me to stay.

He didn't command me not to leave.

I was free.

Hope surged up in my chest. I leapt off the bed and made a beeline for the door. But I hesitated, hand hovering over the knob. What if he was still nearby? What if I ran into him again? The man had speed I couldn't even process. It was like trying to outrun lightning.

Whatever that situation was, hopefully it would take a while. He seemed serious about it, and I didn't want to push my luck.

My gaze flicked around the room. For the first time, I took it all in properly. The curtains were drawn, casting most of the room in dusky shadows. Everything here felt lived in. Personal.

I stepped over to a nearby drawer and pulled it open.

Clothes. Black ones. All of them.

They smelled like him.

It hit me then, this wasn't just a room. This was his room. His real one. Not that empty space I first woke up in. This was Zaliver's domain, and I'd been thrown straight into the heart of it.

There were more signs, casual things scattered around, like he'd just been living here seconds ago. The sheets on the bed were dark blue and rumpled. There were socks, discarded shirts, and the faintest trace of cologne in the air.

I wandered over to the bathroom, cracking the door open. Fresh towels. Clean space. I could work with this.

Back at the dresser, I rummaged through until I found the smallest black T-shirt and a pair of sweats that looked like they might not swallow me whole. Then I paused.

A pair of black briefs peeked out from the corner of the drawer.

Grinning to myself, I snatched them too.

"Might as well steal some dignity back," I muttered, chuckling as I held them up.

Even angry and trapped and tangled in a thousand confusing emotions, at least I still had my sass.

And maybe, just maybe, that would keep me alive around a wolf like Zaliver.

I slipped back into the bathroom, the one that apparently belonged to a man who liked black, silver, and looming danger. The space was dark and sleek, beautiful in a cold, detached way. The shower tiles were pitch black, the rest a molten silver that shimmered when the light hit just right. Everything looked expensive. Powerful. Like him.

I stripped and stepped into the shower, fumbling for the controls until warm water hit me from all directions. Ceiling, walls, everywhere. I gasped.

It was heaven.

A low moan escaped me as the tension began to melt from my muscles. My fingers found the bottles lined up on the shelf, and I recognized the scent immediately. That minty-fresh note that always lingered on Zaliver when he passed too close. I used the shampoo and conditioner without guilt. If I was going to be held against my will, I might as well smell incredible.

The water worked wonders on my nerves, but when I stepped out and caught a glimpse of my reflection in the fogged-up mirror, I didn't bother wiping it clean. I already knew what I'd see. Brown eyes, short unruly hair, a round face I never quite liked. Meeting my mate hadn't changed any of that. No magical glow-up. Just the same me, only now, stuck in some twisted mating game with a possessive god-like Alpha.

I dried off and threw on the oversized clothes I'd stolen from his drawer. The shirt hung off my shoulder like a dress, and the sweats were basically drowning me. I rolled the waistband and tied it up, trying to make it work. The briefs underneath made me giggle a little, though. Wearing his underwear felt like the world's smallest act of rebellion.

Running my fingers through my hair, I shoved it out of my face and took a deep breath. Time to go.

But just as I reached the door, I heard it.

A faint ping. A notification.

I froze.

Please let it be what I think it is.

Spinning around, my eyes landed on a sleek black phone resting on the bedside table, a small green light blinking on the screen. I practically sprinted across the room.

No password.

I blinked. "What kind of idiot doesn't lock their phone in this day and age?"

Our idiot, my wolf chimed in smugly.

The call on the screen had just ended, someone named "Freden." I didn't care who it was. My hands moved fast, heart pounding in my throat as I opened the keypad and typed in my dad's number. My thumb hovered over the call button.

This could be it. My one shot. Just press the button.

But I hesitated.

What if Zaliver could track it? What if calling them meant dragging my parents into this mess? I'd never forgive myself if they got hurt because of me. My throat tightened as I stared at the number, then slowly hit backspace until the screen was empty again.

I sighed and dropped the phone to my lap. "So much for that plan."

Calling 911 was a joke too. I could already imagine the conversation.

"Yeah, so I've been kidnapped by my mate who also happens to be some kind of ancient god. He's got supernatural powers and refuses to let me leave. That counts as kidnapping, right?"

Yeah. That'd go over well.

But then another idea sparked.

If I couldn't call someone, maybe I could track his location. I pulled the phone back up and activated location services, fingers trembling with adrenaline. Maybe, just maybe, I could figure out where the hell I was and find a way out.

The map loaded.

I grinned.

Then I read it.

And my grin vanished.

The Bermuda Triangle.

My stomach dropped.

"What. The. Actual. Fuck?" I whispered.

The Bermuda Triangle?

Everything I knew about it flashed through my head. Planes disappearing, ships vanishing without a trace, freak storms, magnetic distortions, tech failures. A literal no-fly zone. My geography teacher had warned us that even commercial airlines avoided flying near it because of some mysterious storm that happened decades ago. It was supposed to be off-limits. Uninhabitable.

And this is where I was?

"How the hell am I supposed to get out of the Bermuda freaking Triangle?"

Before I could spiral further, the door creaked open.

I spun around and froze. Zaliver stood there, leaning casually against the frame like he hadn't just shattered every plan I had. Like he hadn't just confirmed my worst fear.

His gaze dropped to the phone in my hands, then rose to meet my eyes. Calm. Collected. Cold.

"That's the thing," he said softly, almost like a secret. "You're not."

The air left my lungs in a single, crushing breath.

I was trapped.

Well and truly trapped.

## The Wolf God's Unwanted Luna

*Vivian Grey's POV*

"You see, Vivian," Zaliver's voice cut through the tense silence, calm but charged with certainty, "even if you somehow got past the doors, guards, cameras, and every inch of this place, you still wouldn't make it off this island without me knowing."

He moved toward me with measured steps, his towering presence swallowing the distance between us. I didn't flinch, but every part of me felt the press of invisible chains tightening around my limbs.

When he was close enough, he gently took the phone from my hand. His fingers brushed mine, too soft for someone so dangerous. He glanced down at the screen, then back at me. But I refused to meet his eyes. I just stared past him, through him, as if clinging to the illusion of freedom would make it real.

There was no escaping this place.

No loopholes, no weak spots.

I was caged. Completely.

Forever?

No, no, I couldn't accept that. There had to be a way out. My gaze shifted back to Zaliver, who was now typing something into his phone, his expression tightening with annoyance. When he caught me watching him, his brow rose.

I stayed silent, but my mind spun faster than ever. There was water, tools, a working pack system. This wasn't just a hideout. This place was designed for long-term living. For a community. Last I heard, the Bermuda Triangle was a cursed zone untouched by human governments, left alone for being too strange. But if he had built a base here, kidnapped women from all over the world, then he must've found a way in and out regularly.

And his phone, if it worked, it meant he'd figured out how to get technology functioning in a place everyone else believed was disconnected from the world.

I narrowed my eyes, studying him. "You've built a functioning society here, in a place the rest of the world ignores," I said, steady and clear.

He blinked, clearly caught off guard. There was a reason I'd graduated top of my class, brains were a weapon too. And people always underestimated girls who weren't tiny and delicate. Big mistake.

"My, my," he said slowly, lips quirking with amusement. "You are clever. And here I thought I'd have to explain everything to you."

I hated how handsome he looked when he was being smug. Even when he was rude, my wolf didn't want to snap at him, she leaned closer. I clenched my jaw and looked away. It wasn't fair that he held all the power. Not just physically, but mentally, emotionally, supernaturally.

"So you have a pack," I asked, trying to piece it all together. "And you're their alpha? What's life like in the Bermuda Triangle? How did I even get from Washington D.C. to here?"

He didn't answer right away. Instead, he started moving around the room, picking things up, setting them back down in a way that almost looked absent-minded. I walked over to the bed and sat down. When he noticed, he paused, like he was waiting to see if I'd try something.

Then he spoke, pride woven into every word.

"Yes, I have a pack. And though I rank much higher than a typical alpha, I still carry out the responsibilities of one. Every pack answers to me, whether they realize it or not." His lips curled into a wicked smile. "I'm the Alpha of Alphas."

A strange, hot thrill ran through me. Something about the way he claimed it like the world bent at his feet sent shivers down my spine. It was attractive in a terrifying way. But power like that didn't come free. No one ruled without paying a price.

What did it cost him to gain this kind of control?

He walked over to one of the large couches and sank into it, resting his hands on his thighs.

"After some empty years, I decided to create my own pack while still leading the others from afar," he said like it was the most normal thing in the world. "This island was the perfect place. Setting up a force field? Barely an inconvenience."

Empty years?

I tilted my head, heart thudding faster. He looked like he was in his mid-twenties, maybe twenty-five, but there was no way that was right. The name Lupus Deus had been whispered for centuries.

"H-How old are you exactly, Zaliver?" I asked, my voice quieter than I intended.

He looked up at me sharply, irritation flickering in his eyes. "Does it matter?"

I shook my head quickly, biting back my nerves. Maybe it didn't. But deep down, I felt like it did. Werewolves didn't live forever, we just aged slowly. Still, there had to be a limit. And if his years stretched far beyond mine, what would that mean for us? Would he mourn me when I died? Would he forget me? Move on?

The idea made my chest ache.

He sighed and ran a hand through his hair, pushing back the loose strands that constantly fell over his forehead. For a moment, he looked human. Young. Frustrated. Like someone

who had been carrying the weight of the world too long and was tired of pretending it didn't crush him.

"I don't know when I was born," he said at last, voice lower now. "The first years of my life are a blur. I don't remember a damn thing before a certain point."

I watched him carefully, sensing something off. My gut twisted. He was lying. Or maybe only telling half the truth. But I didn't push.

"I'm old, just not that old," he muttered. "Around six hundred years."

My eyes widened. Six hundred?

I shot to my feet, stunned, and pointed a trembling finger at him. "Six hundred?!"

How the hell was I supposed to process that?

The man who kidnapped me, who claimed me, who spoke like he owned the very laws of nature, wasn't just powerful. He was ancient.

"You pedo-bear! Get away from me, you creep!" I shouted, my voice echoing off the cold walls like a wild, feral thing trying to claw its way out of a cage.

Zaliver didn't even flinch. He rose from his seat with that same slow, deliberate dominance that always made the air feel thinner. In a flash, he was in front of me, grabbing my wrist. My heart stalled. Then, without warning, he pressed my hand against his bare abdomen.

"Does this feel like a damn beer belly to you?" he growled, his voice low and dangerous.

I froze, palm flat against hard muscle and warm skin. Nope, definitely not a beer belly. It was all toned strength, heat, and primal power under my fingers. I shook my head, cheeks burning, afraid that if I moved even a twitch he'd shift his view of me from mate to hormonal teenage molester. Not that I wasn't already regretting that outburst.

He let go of me and took a step back, eyes burning with irritation. Yeesh, someone had a soft spot for their age.

"Sorry," I muttered, finally realizing how immature I'd sounded. I crossed my arms over my chest, trying to summon some dignity.

"No more questions," he said, voice clipped. "Now, do you want to sit here sulking all day, or do you want to see your new home?"

# The Wolf God's Unwanted Luna

*Vivian Grey's POV*

The smugness dripping from his tone made me scowl. He knew I was trapped here. He knew I had no real choice, and he clearly enjoyed rubbing that in.

"Fine," I mumbled, trailing after him as he led the way out the door. I made a conscious effort not to stare at the way those black jeans hugged his hips, and oh goddess, focus.

As we walked down the hall, I bit my lip, debating whether to say something or just stay quiet. Curiosity and maybe stubbornness won.

"Hey," I called out, "what exactly do you plan to do with me now that I'm here? I've got college plans, y'know. I don't intend on being stuck here forever."

He stopped and turned slowly, looking back at me like I was a fly buzzing around his head.

"I know, I know," I said quickly, throwing up air quotes. "You're not leaving, blah blah blah. Doesn't mean I agree." I added a mock eye-roll just to annoy him.

He didn't take the bait.

"How old are you?" he asked instead.

"Eighteen," I said sharply, arms crossing again. "Why?"

His expression faltered for a fraction of a second, just enough for me to see it. Disappointment. Disapproval? I didn't like it either way.

"You're young. You're not going to college," he said bluntly, as if the matter was settled.

What?

"Wait. Wait! Hold up!" I darted in front of him. "What do you mean I'm not going to college? Last time I checked, I didn't need your permission to live my life. Eighteen means I'm legally an adult."

My voice was rising with every word. Who the hell did he think he was?

The male who will shape our future, my wolf whispered, purring at the back of my mind.

Traitor.

Shut up, I snapped inwardly.

"We have colleges here," Zaliver said coolly. "But since there are men, you aren't going. And you won't need to work for anything anyway."

He tried to move past me again, but I stood my ground, jaw clenched.

"Why does it matter if there are guys? I'm not going to stay in this place forever, and I do need to work. You think I'm just gonna sit around all day doing nothing? Is that really what you expect of me?"

And honestly, yeah, that did sound kind of nice, having everything taken care of, not having to stress about money or bills. But at what cost? My freedom? My pride?

There's nothing wrong with being someone's partner or even staying home, but that had to be my choice, not his.

"Look," I said, voice softening just a little, "I don't know what kind of twisted version of this mate bond you're aiming for, but let me tell you what I do know. You said you weren't

going to mark me. That's a rejection, plain and simple. And I'm not going to live with someone who doesn't even want me."

My throat tightened with the words. I curled my hands into fists, trying not to let the hurt show on my face. It was one thing to be kidnapped, but to be unwanted too? That kind of pain festered.

He lifted his head, eyes going skyward, and let out a deep, exasperated sigh. I found myself staring at the strong column of his throat, smooth and begging to be nipped. My gums tingled, the primal urge to claim humming just under my skin.

I licked my teeth, trying to calm myself down. This wasn't the time.

Then our eyes locked, his stormy blue, mine a stubborn brown, and something shifted in the air between us. Heat crawled over my skin like a phantom caress. My face, my arms, my back, all of it felt like it was being brushed by warm hands. It wasn't invasive. It was intimate.

I shivered. My breath hitched.

He hadn't touched me again, not physically. But somehow, I knew it was him. That teasing look in his eyes, the way he tilted his head slightly, he was doing this on purpose.

My eyes widened, lips parting slightly. He leaned in, so close I could feel his breath brushing against my skin. Whatever magic was between us tilted my chin up toward his.

"Let me make one thing very clear to you, Vivian," he whispered, voice low and raw. "You. Are. Mine. With or without the mark."

And then he smirked, the kind of smirk that made my heart leap and my pride want to slap it right off his perfect face.

The worst part?

Somewhere deep inside, despite everything, I didn't hate it.

"They thought they could use you against me. Fools," Zaliver said, a dark smirk tugging at his lips. "They handed me something far more valuable than they could ever comprehend. And the fact that you're still untouched by this corrupted world? That's just icing on the cake. You were made for a god, Vivian."

His eyes flashed with something primal, something possessive.

"And this god will burn the world down before letting anyone take you away. Even you."

His words echoed in my head like a storm. Then, as quickly as the tension had risen, he leaned back. The heat, the tingling that had sparked along my skin under his gaze, vanished. I felt disoriented, like he'd stolen all the air from my lungs and left me floating. With or without a mark, I was his?

Before I could make sense of it, he tugged me gently by the hand and led me down a corridor. We stopped at a room that looked more like a giant den or game lounge than a living space.

The second we stepped in, the chatter stopped. Silence blanketed the air. Heads turned. Eyes landed on us. There were at least a dozen people, tall, fit men and sharp-eyed women dressed in all black. Different skin tones, different builds, but they all had the same poised, alert aura. As one, they stood and bowed their heads.

"Alpha Lupus," they greeted in unison.

I instinctively wanted to shrink behind Zaliver, but I forced myself to stay where I was. My palm started to sweat in his grip, and I tried pulling away, embarrassed. He didn't let go, just squeezed it tighter. Of course they all noticed. A murmur swept through them, or maybe just a collective widening of eyes and raised brows.

Zaliver's voice rang out, steady and commanding. "This is Vivian. My mate."