

The Wolf God's Unwanted Luna chapter 161-170

The Wolf God's Unwanted Luna

Vivian's POV

I couldn't tell if I was more offended or amused, but I was definitely a little bit of both. He was annoyingly talented in the kitchen confident, precise, always completely in control. It was utterly unfair. Not everyone got it right on their first few tries, okay? I shoved the humiliating memory of my last tragic baking attempt into a dark mental closet and locked it tight.

"I'm immortal, remember?" I shot back, sass thick in my tone.

Zaliver glanced over his shoulder, smugness oozing from him like heat from an open flame. "Good cook," he said, pointing proudly to himself. "Bad cook..." His finger aimed straight at me with a grin that showed way too many white teeth.

I stuck my tongue out like the mature adult I was and flopped into one of the chairs at the dining table.

"What does the lady desire tonight?" he asked with a dramatic mock bow, his deep voice rich and theatrical.

My mind instantly went blank. *You. I want you*, my wolf whispered with a hungry ache that made my chest tighten.

"Uh... anything's fine," I muttered, my cheeks warming up fast.

He raised a dark brow but only said, "Anything it is, then."

"You go on up. I've just got one last thing to finish," Zaliver said later, heading toward his office.

I nodded silently and padded upstairs, trying hard not to let the nervous knots clenching my stomach win. But with every step I took, I felt the sheer weight of anticipation building, echoing in my head like distant thunder.

Inside our master bedroom, I went straight to the closet and rifled through Zaliver's shirts. His wardrobe was mostly black, but my fingers paused on a dark midnight blue button-down the specific one I always liked on him. White buttons, sharp collar, amazingly soft fabric. It was completely him in a shirt.

Without thinking too hard, I stripped off my jeans and top and slipped his shirt on over my bra and underwear. It hung loose and long, ending around my mid-thigh. I only did up three buttons, just enough to keep it modest without losing the obvious intent. I rolled up the long sleeves to my elbows and stood right in front of the tall mirror.

The sight hit me far harder than I expected.

His shirt completely swallowed me up, and yet... it made me feel strangely safe. I looked both vulnerable and completely claimed.

Quickly, I ducked into the bathroom, brushing through the tangles in my hair. It was a complete mess, but I let it be. Zaliver liked it like this, wild and real. My fingers trembled when I set the brush down. My whole body buzzed with electric energy, like I was plugged into something far too big for me to handle.

I stared at my reflection, taking in the soft pink hue on my cheeks, the nervous brightness in my dark eyes. My lips were parted slightly, like I couldn't quite catch my breath. Still... I looked happy. Really, truly happy. With him.

"I love him," I whispered softly to the mirror. Saying it aloud helped ground me. "Everything's going to be okay."

I turned off the bathroom light and walked out slowly, my heartbeat a frantic rhythm against my ribs. I dimmed the bedside lamps until the large room glowed softly with warm amber light. It looked almost dreamlike.

Then I climbed onto the bed and sat right in the middle, cross-legged and trying my best not to fidget. Now all that was left... was him.

Two long minutes passed.

Then I heard his heavy footsteps on the stairs.

My entire body tensed, my heart hammering so loud I was sure he'd hear it through the walls. I clenched my hands together and kept perfectly still, though I was trembling slightly.

"Every step you take, every move I make" My wolf started singing internally.

Shut up, I muttered in my head, desperately trying to focus.

The metal doorknob turned.

My breath caught in my throat.

The heavy door creaked open... and then paused for a second before continuing slowly.

Zaliver stepped into the doorway, bathed in the soft amber light.

His glowing pale blue eyes locked right onto me.

And in that singular moment, with the entire world hushed and still, I knew he saw all of me.

"Vivian?"

His voice slid into the room before he did, soft but intensely grounding. The door shut behind him with a gentle click, but he didn't come any closer just yet he stood there, still and watching me. His eyes locked onto mine with a sharp, unwavering intensity. His fists were clenched tightly at his broad sides, his body tense like he was actively trying to restrain something deep and wild.

I exhaled quietly, my gaze dropping briefly to his heavy boots.

"Well... it's definitely later," I said, letting my words hang awkwardly in the space between us. I glanced back up at him, peeking through my lashes, hoping he'd catch the true meaning behind the words.

His stare didn't falter for a second. His eyes looked straight through me, deeper than anyone had ever dared to look as if he could see every single emotion that lived inside me. And maybe he could. I didn't mind at all. I didn't want to hide anymore.

Slowly, Zaliver moved forward, each step careful and deliberate until he stood right at the edge of the bed. He stopped there, silent. The space between us crackled with something heavy, hot, and electric. I could barely hear his breathing, but his heartbeat it was louder, faster than usual.

"You don't have to "

"I know," I cut in gently, offering a small, nervous smile. "But I want to. If you'll let me."

The way his gaze deepened made my chest flutter uncontrollably. Being under his full, undivided attention like that was terrifying and thrilling at the exact same time. I felt completely exposed, seen. But not judged.

His voice dropped into something soft and impossibly low, a sound that wrapped around my spine and pulled tight.

"And what is it that you want exactly, Vivian?"

I held his intense stare, not blinking, not hiding away.

"You," I whispered.

His breath caught sharply.

He shut his eyes for a brief second, and a low sound came straight from his broad chest a low, unfamiliar growl. It wasn't threatening in the slightest. It was warm and rich, like a dark purr wrapped in something far more primal. It sent delicious shivers across my skin and made something stir deep in my own chest, like my wolf wanted to answer him with a wild sound of her own.

The Wolf God's Unwanted Luna

Vivian's POV

When his eyes opened again, they were midnight. Deep and stormy. They matched his shirt, and for a second, I thought stupidly how that must be why I liked that shirt so much.

"You don't know what "

"I do," I said, cutting him off again, firmer this time. My fingers curled around the blanket beneath me, gripping it tight. "I'm sure, Zaliver."

His expression twisted with conflict. He stepped back slightly, his voice lined with something close to desperation.

"But how do you know? How can you be sure this is really what you want? How do I know you won't wake up tomorrow and regret everything?"

Every word cracked open a different fear in him, and I saw it how deeply the thought of hurting me or being hurt by me wrecked him.

So I said it.

"Because I love you, Zaliver."

The silence that followed was absolute.

He froze. His breath stopped. His entire body went still, like I'd shattered time itself.

It was the truth, raw and real, and saying it felt like taking the first full breath after being underwater too long.

Zaliver let out a shaky inhale, his hands rising to press over his chest, eyes wide. Shock and wonder and disbelief flickered across his face.

"You... love me?" he breathed.

I nodded, my heart pounding against my ribs. His breaths picked up speed. I could feel the tension rippling through him, and it was all I could do not to reach out. My hands trembled as I forced them to stay at my sides. I needed to let him process it.

He blinked at me, lost.

"Are you sure?"

"Yes, Zaliver," I said, my voice steady now, surer than I'd ever been. "I'm completely sure that I'm in love with you. And I want you to make me yours completely."

A hint of sass slipped into my tone, mostly because I couldn't help myself. Leave it to me to fall for the one mate in the universe who had god-tier self-control, and now, of all times, he decided to use it.

But tonight, I didn't want restraint.

I wanted him.

He raked a hand through his tousled hair, pushing it back with that usual effortless grace. When our eyes locked, the intensity in his piercing blue gaze nearly stole my breath waves of raw emotion crashing like a storm against the cliffs. His eyes weren't just looking at me... they were claiming me.

"Are you "

"Yes," he cut in before I could even finish. "Yes, I'm damn sure I love you. And yes, I want you. Right here. Right now. But if you're hesitating, if you think I'm the only one "

He didn't get to finish. A deep, guttural growl tore from his chest, so powerful it vibrated through the walls. I flinched at the sound, wide-eyed, a chill running down my spine. His voice was enough to make lesser wolves bow, and yet, it thrilled me. His eyes had darkened into a pitch-black abyss, no longer human, no longer soft. This was the wolf speaking now. Dominant. Possessive. Irrevocably mine.

"This isn't temporary, Vivian," he said, voice thick with meaning. "This is forever. Once you're mine, that's it. No more playful teasing. No more coy glances or letting others think they have a chance. You'll belong to me. And I won't share you."

My heart stuttered in my chest. "Right back at you," I whispered.

Without breaking eye contact, he grabbed the hem of his shirt and pulled it over his head, discarding it with a flick of his wrist. The moment his chest came into view, I forgot how

to breathe. Hard muscle, lean lines, and the kind of body that looked like it was carved by war and fire. My hands gripped the sheets tighter, craving the feel of him against me.

"Once we start, I won't be able to stop," he warned lowly, beginning to strip down. First his boots, then his socks, then his belt. "You've pushed me too far, sweetheart. The beast wants what's his. If you're going to run, now's your chance."

My throat felt dry, but I lifted my chin and met his eyes. "I'm not going anywhere."

That earned me a smirk. A dark, knowing smirk as he slid his pants down, never once looking away. He stood before me in nothing but snug black briefs, and my gaze dropped briefly my core tightened with anticipation.

He climbed onto the bed slowly, one knee, then the other, his movements deliberate and unhurried, like a predator savoring the chase. One of his hands pressed gently on my shoulder, urging me to lie back. The oversized shirt I wore shifted higher on my thighs as I did, exposing more skin than I was used to showing him. But I didn't look away. I couldn't.

His gaze burned into me as he reached down and tapped my knees twice, silently asking for more. I swallowed hard, then parted my legs just enough, keeping my knees together, nerves and excitement tangled tight in my stomach.

He moved in, crawling up until he was between my legs, his body heat wrapping around me like fire. He paused, giving me one final look. A warning. A chance to change my mind.

But I didn't. I wouldn't.

He took a deep breath and let his fingers glide along my calf, slow and deliberate. I shivered. When both of his hands grasped my knees, his touch turned firm, possessive, and then, in one confident motion, he spread me open for him. I gasped, not from fear, but from how boldly he took what was his.

His eyes dropped down, unapologetically drinking in the view like he'd waited a lifetime for this. Wherever he touched, it felt like lightning pulsing through my skin, sparking along every nerve and setting fire to every hidden place inside me.

One of his hands rubbed slow circles up my thigh while the other traced higher, softer, more intimate, and I couldn't stop the trembling in my limbs. When he reached the buttons on my shirt, he hesitated just for a breath before undoing the first one. Then the next.

And the next.

My chest heaved with every breath as the shirt came undone beneath his touch, leaving me open beneath him in every way. Body. Heart. Soul.

There was no going back.

Not now. Not ever.

The Wolf God's Unwanted Luna

Vivian's POV

I bit down on my lower lip, trying to keep still as I watched the way his gaze completely devoured me. Zaliver's expression was one I knew I would never forget. It was intense, reverent, completely captivated. The way his eyes moved over me, slow and full of hunger, made my breath hitch in my chest.

He pulled open one side of the midnight blue shirt I wore, then the other, baring me before him. My arms were spread at my sides, hands clutching the soft sheets as if they could anchor me through the storm in his dark gaze.

His eyes traced the curves of my body, drinking in every single inch like I was something sacred. When his gaze met mine again, it was blazing a dark, electric blue filled with a wild passion that set fire to everything inside me.

"You look exactly how I dreamed you would," he murmured, his voice low and rough with desire. "Stunning. Perfect. Curves made just for me. So damn sexy... and mine."

That final word sent a deep shiver right down my spine.

Then he leaned in and kissed me no gentleness, no restraint. His mouth claimed mine with searing heat, all raw need and primal urgency. I responded with the exact same hunger, opening for him, giving him everything. There was no room for hesitation anymore. I wasn't afraid. I wanted this. I wanted him.

His tongue tangled with mine, tasting, teasing, conquering. My hands slid up and wrapped around his broad shoulders, fingers threading through his soft dark hair while my other hand gripped the strong muscles of his back. I wanted to feel every single inch of him.

When he finally pulled back, giving me a moment to catch my breath, I gasped and he took the chance to trail his lips down to the exact place where his mate mark lay on my skin.

I cried out when his teeth sank into it with clear purpose, my hips arching toward him on instinct. The bite was sharp and possessive, but the way he soothed the sting with a hot sweep of his tongue made me melt even more. His hand found my chest, cupping me through the bra with a pressure that made my breath catch again. My eyes fluttered closed as he moved lower, his lips brushing the upper swell of my other breast, soft and unhurried as he sucked gently on the sensitive skin.

His other hand kneaded me, fingers spreading, testing. It wasn't rough, but it certainly wasn't delicate either. It was... perfect. I arched up into him, desperately needing more. My nipples tightened beneath the bra, hypersensitive against the fabric. Everything in me was responding completely to him.

"Zaliver," I breathed, my voice barely more than a whisper.

He didn't answer with words. His lips ghosted back up my neck, hot and firm, while one of his hands began to drift downward again slow, teasing, intentional.

"Shh...baby I know," he whispered against my flushed skin.

I moaned out loud as he latched onto my mark again, sucking deeply, triggering a wave of heat that rolled straight through me like a tidal wave. Then, his hand slid under the waistband of my underwear, his fingers finding my most sensitive place with shocking ease. My eyes flew open, only to fall shut again under the sheer onslaught of pleasure.

My body arched right into his touch, my hips moving of their own accord, silently begging him not to stop.

Zaliver's fingers moved with wicked skill slow, circling, teasing me until my muscles were tight with anticipation, until I was trembling beneath him, needing, aching.

I clung to his bare arm, nails biting into his skin, and met his gaze. He was already watching me, lips parted, breathing heavy. My mouth fell open as a desperate moan escaped me when he stroked harder.

All I could hear was the rasp of my own frantic breaths, the erratic beat of my heart, and the helpless sounds slipping straight from my throat. I was so close. So close I could almost taste the release I craved.

But just as I was about to shatter completely, he slowed down again, stealing the moment from me and replacing it with a torturous kiss that left me whimpering.

"Please, Zaliver please" I begged, lifting my hips, nearly delirious with the need to finish what he started.

He nuzzled the curve of my neck, pressing soft kisses there before pulling back enough to meet my eyes again.

"Not yet, baby," he growled, his deep voice rough with restraint. "You'll get what you're begging for when I'm buried inside you. Only then."

He kissed me slow, deliberate, and full of absolute promise.

"I want to feel you tighten around me," he whispered against my lips, his grin dark and full of sinful intent.

With a sudden rush of boldness I didn't know I had in me, I grabbed Zaliver's strong hand, twisted it, and used his own momentum to flip us both over. In the blink of an eye, I was straddling him, breathless and completely flushed. My chest rose and fell rapidly, the fire in my blood refusing to calm down as I stared down at him.

He looked up at me, eyes glittering like dangerous blue flame, and lifted his fingers wet from me straight to his lips.

"I always wondered how you tasted," he said lowly, his voice dark with promise. "Now I know... and you're going to make sure I never forget."

A heavy shudder tore right through me. The things this man did to me with just simple words, I don't think I can phantom it.

"You are very wicked, mate of mine," I said, narrowing my eyes down at him before letting a slow, mischievous grin spread across my face. I could feel him beneath me hard, aching, and pulsing right through the thin barrier of his briefs. That kind of temptation? Completely unfair.

But I could be wicked too.

The Wolf God's Unwanted Luna

Vivian's POV

Leaning down, I pressed a warm kiss to his lips, then began a slow descent, trailing my mouth straight down the sharp lines of his broad chest. I looked up through my long lashes as I flicked my tongue across one of his flat nipples, then bit down lightly, earning a low, guttural growl straight from his throat.

"My turn," I whispered against his heated skin.

As I explored his body, my hands roamed every single inch of hard muscle I could reach his chest, his broad arms, the sharp ridges of his abs. My fingers slid lower, inch by teasing inch, until they rested right where I wanted them. His dark smirk widened beneath me.

"Unbelievable, aren't I?" he joked, his breath hitching audibly.

I wrapped my hand around him right through the thin fabric, squeezing gently, and was immediately rewarded with a sharp thrust of his hips and the parting of his lips. Oh, I was definitely going to enjoy this.

Heavy heat pooled low in my belly as I leaned forward again, capturing his mouth in a hungry kiss while my hand stayed between us, stroking him deliberately. His lips were pure fire, his body steel and heat. He pulled me closer, our bodies flush as my fingers teased his bottom lip before I kissed him again, deeply, hungrily.

Then he did something that caught me completely off guard.

He took my hand in his, bringing one of my fingers straight to his lips and sucking it into his mouth slowly. Heat rocketed through me at the insanely intimate gesture. My entire body reacted to it at once. I withdrew my finger and gently traced his mouth with my thumb, marveling at how perfect he felt how easily he unraveled me.

But he wasn't finished yet.

In one fluid motion, he flipped me right back beneath him. His arms braced firmly on either side of my head, the weight of his body pressing deliciously down on mine. I gasped as his hips settled between my thighs, the friction so sharp, so good, it made me whimper out loud.

I hooked my arms around his neck, my legs wrapping tight around his waist, pressing him closer. More. I needed so much more.

He reached down with one hand and found the thin fabric of my underwear, his eyes locked with mine. In one swift motion, he ripped it away and tossed it somewhere behind him. I gasped, my body arching into his as cool room air met my overheated skin.

And then I felt it his last layer being torn away as well.

My heart thundered like a war drum. Every single nerve in my body was alive, tingling and waiting, aching for what would come next. And in that moment, I wasn't nervous. I wasn't afraid. I shivered when I felt the intense heat of him press against me, his length hard and throbbing as it settled between us. My body tensed instinctively. Zaliver hovered above me, his large frame blocking out everything else in the universe. He inhaled deeply, eyes closed, like he was grounding himself.

His abdomen tightened, pressing against mine. The slight movement made my hips shift involuntarily, brushing against him. His eyes snapped open, and for a heartbeat, my breath caught. That glowing, electric blue gaze locked onto mine, filled with deep hunger but also something softer. Something completely sacred.

The weight of his body settled more fully over me, sending a violent tremor straight through my core. Every inch of him pressed into me. Every part of me responded.

I gave him a small, uncertain smile, feeling the hot blush burn my cheeks. He didn't say anything at first. Instead, he leaned down and pressed his lips to my forehead in a long, lingering kiss. His breath warmed my skin.

"You are everything to me, Vivian. My reason to breathe. The reason I keep fighting," he whispered, his words low and raw.

My chest tightened painfully. Tears stung at the very edges of my eyes. If there was ever a moment that defined true love for Zaliver, this was it.

"I love you too," I murmured, my voice shaky but completely honest.

He trembled slightly above me. Through the bond between us, I felt the massive storm of emotions he kept hidden behind walls he never let down not until right now. That wall was completely gone, replaced with a massive flood of emotion: disbelief, awe, vulnerability... pure joy. A deep, unwavering love. I couldn't hold the single tear back as it slipped down my cheek.

He caught it gently with his thumb, brushing it away before leaning in to kiss the exact spot where it had fallen. My heart clenched so hard I thought it might burst.

"I'll try to be gentle," he murmured, his voice hoarse and thick with restraint.

I nodded silently, inhaling deeply to calm myself.

Reaching over to the nightstand, he grabbed a silver-foiled packet. I raised an eyebrow up at him, and he gave me this half-guilty, half-smug grin that made me laugh under my breath.

He had clearly been prepared for this.

But this wasn't just about wild lust or surface pleasure. Not for either of us. What we were doing went far beyond that. This was about absolute trust. True intimacy. The connection of two bound souls who had been through hell and still chose each other, again and again. All we craved now... was each other.

He shifted lower, guiding himself directly to my entrance. The moment I felt the tip press against me, I froze, instinct flaring up again. But I forced myself to breathe and tried to relax into the bed.

I focused completely on his face to ground myself. His jaw clenched tight. His brow furrowed. His lips parted as he let out a shaky breath. Then he looked up at me, meeting my gaze with those impossibly vivid pale eyes.

That look was all the reassurance I would ever need.

And then he pushed forward.

The Wolf God's Unwanted Luna

Vivian's POV

A sharp cry tore from my lips as pain lanced through me. My body stretched to accommodate him, and every nerve felt lit on fire. He didn't stop until he was completely sheathed inside me, filling every inch. My chest rose and fell in rapid gasps. The pain ached, but through the discomfort, I could feel something else blooming something new and powerful.

He kissed me, capturing my cry and swallowing it whole. His lips moved against mine with fierce tenderness, his tongue coaxing me into focus. He stayed perfectly still, giving me time to adjust, to breathe, to feel.

My hands found his arms, anchoring myself to him. I kissed him back with everything I had. Our lips moved together in a rhythm only we understood. Like a song made just for us, woven of touch and feeling and need.

When he finally pulled back, we were both breathless, staring into each other's eyes. So much passed between us in that silence. Love. Fear. Promise. Devotion.

The pain had faded into a dull throb, easily outshined by the warmth he stirred in me.

He smiled and kissed my cheeks, my nose, my temple each kiss gentle and reverent. Then, slowly, he began to move.

I gasped at the sensation, instinct taking over as my hips bucked upward, chasing him. The second he realized I was no longer in pain, something primal flickered in his expression. And then he thrust back into me hard.

"Ahh " I cried out, pleasure crackling through my limbs like lightning.

He didn't hold back after that. Again and again, he moved with growing intensity, each thrust pulling another moan from my lips. We lost ourselves in it completely.

There was no room for hesitation now. I surrendered to him, to us. Let my body respond without shame or fear. Every brush of his fingers, every low groan that rumbled from his throat, sent me spiraling further. His hands roamed my body with reverence, like I was something sacred.

And in return, I poured everything into the way I touched him. The way I kissed him. We were a tangle of limbs and breath and heat, two wolves bound by fate, by instinct, by love.

When he wrapped his arms around me, like he was trying to shield me from the entire world, I let myself go completely.

Wrapped in his embrace, I finally understood what it meant to belong wholly, unconditionally to someone.

To him.

His hands slid beneath me, unfastening my bra with practiced ease. The moment it came off, he buried his face in my chest, lips trailing heated kisses over my skin, occasionally nipping at the sensitive peaks until I was gasping. He was slow, deliberate taking his time as if learning every inch of me was the only thing that mattered. When he sucked on my nipples and then blew over them, a delicious shiver shot through me, making my back arch off the mattress.

Everything he did was maddening in the best way. I was no longer just reacting I was unraveling.

Driven by a need I could no longer control, I sat up and straddled him, refusing to let go of the rhythm we'd created together. His head fell back, his mouth parting in a moan I didn't quite hear, but I felt it in every part of me. A storm began to rise inside me, starting from the tips of my toes and spreading to my chest, wrapping itself around my heart.

And then... something deeper stirred.

I couldn't stop staring at him. The way his body moved beneath mine. The way he looked at me like I was everything. It wasn't just physical anymore it was something else entirely. Something primal. Eternal. Soul-deep.

I began pressing kisses along his shoulder, trailing up his neck. My gums ached suddenly, and I knew what was coming, but before I could prepare myself, he thrust into me hard and deep. My breath caught, and the sharpness of his movement pushed my canines out. I gasped as he moved again, faster, rougher, his rhythm driving me mad with need.

Just when I thought nothing could top the bliss tearing through me, it did. A white-hot burst exploded behind my eyes as my body trembled around him, tightening in a way that made him growl my name like it hurt to speak. It wasn't just pleasure it was overwhelming. Earth-shattering.

And then instinct took over.

Without thinking, I threw my head back and bit into his neck. My teeth sank into his skin as a tidal wave of something massive and ancient crashed over us. I felt him tense, and for a second, I thought I'd hurt him but instead of a growl of pain, a moan of utter bliss left his throat. It was deeper than anything I'd heard from him before. Raw and unfiltered.

He snapped his hips up again, harder than before, making me squeak from the intensity.

And suddenly everything changed.

Voices. So many voices filled my head all at once, but they weren't just noise they were clear, familiar somehow. I could feel them. Know them. Like they were part of me. It only lasted a heartbeat, but in that moment, I was connected to something bigger. Older. Wild and powerful.

And then Zaliver moved. His mouth brushed against my skin, and before I could even blink, he sank his teeth into me. Not gently. Not asking. Just claiming me right back.

We stayed like that, wrapped around each other, long after the storm had passed. He pulled the covers over us, his arms strong and sure around my body, my head rising and falling with the steady beat of his chest. His heartbeat... it matched mine. Exactly.

His fingers traced lazy patterns up and down my back, and mine wandered across his thigh. I couldn't help it his body was impossibly firm, impossibly perfect. What was I supposed to do? Pretend it didn't exist?

We were quiet for a while, just breathing, existing in the aftermath of something I couldn't quite name. Then he broke the silence.

"You marked me," he murmured into the darkness. There was no edge to his voice. Just a quiet statement.

"I guess I did," I whispered, shifting to look up at him. "Are you... mad?"

The moment our eyes met, I knew the answer. His expression was soft, his pale blue eyes full of warmth and amusement.

"No. Never," he said, and I heard the absolute pride in his voice. "Now the whole world knows I belong to you, just as much as you belong to me." He leaned down to kiss me, slow and sweet.

I grinned up at him, a low growl teasing the back of my throat. "Damn right. You're mine."

He chuckled smoothly. "So... we still have some cond "

Before I could finish the thought, he flipped us over, pinning me beneath him with a wicked gleam in his eyes. I laughed out loud as he silenced my protest with a kiss.

And later, as sleep gently pulled at me, cocooned in his warmth and the lingering hum of our bond, I felt it again that newfound strength pulsing through me like a second heartbeat. I was different now. Complete in a way I hadn't known I was missing.

His arms tightened around me. A soft kiss landed on the side of my face.

"I love you too, my little cloud," he whispered against my skin. "I love you too."

Chapter 166: Luna of All Wolves

Vivian's POV

I stirred awake to the softest touch brushing down my cheek, barely there yet unmistakably real. A slow drag moved from the corner of my eye, skimming along my jaw, then pausing at the corner of my lips before gliding teasingly over my bottom lip. The pattern was all too familiar.

Without opening my eyes, I parted my lips slightly and nipped playfully at his finger. The sharp inhale I earned made me smile. When I finally blinked my eyes open, Zaliver's face was just above mine, his electric blue gaze soaking me in with a look that made my heart stutter. There was a rare softness to his features, like I was something precious.

"Morning," he said, his voice low and full of warmth.

I ran the tip of my tongue over the pad of his finger before releasing it with a sly grin. He narrowed his eyes with mock warning, but the amused sparkle dancing in them gave him away.

Grinning wider, I looped my arms around him and pressed myself closer.

And then wait.

"You're naked, idiot," my wolf chimed, her voice blissed-out and lazy like she'd just woken from the world's most satisfying nap. She was sprawled in my head, one hind leg twitching every few seconds in total contentment. Even the beast was unusually quiet, still and completely satisfied.

That's when last night's memories hit me like a sudden flash flood.

My mouth dropped open, but before a single word could slip out, Zaliver leaned down and kissed me thoroughly, stealing my breath and with it, any coherent thought. When he pulled away, my pulse was racing, skin tingling, and I was officially awake.

"Yup," I whispered, completely dazed. "Definitely awake now."

I kissed his broad chest and curled straight into his warmth. He wrapped his arms around me like I was something he never wanted to let go of, then gently rolled me right on top of him.

"I'm glad to hear that," he murmured.

I shifted slightly and felt him against me.

"I can tell," I muttered under my breath, my cheeks heating up fast.

His laugh vibrated beneath me, deep and delighted. He pressed a kiss to my forehead, then smiled up at me like I was his whole world. And honestly? In that quiet moment, it felt like I truly was.

Yeah... it was going to be a good day.

"Scratch that. Screw this day. No, seriously screw everything," I grumbled, shuffling down the driveway like I'd been hit by a massive freight train. "Especially you."

Beside me, Zaliver smirked, entirely too pleased with himself for someone who had absolutely ruined my ability to walk normally. He reached the car way ahead of me of course he did and held the door open with mock gallantry.

I gave him a scathing look as I took slow, deliberate steps, every single muscle in my lower half screaming in absolute betrayal.

"Oh, sure, you're happy," I muttered. "You're not the one walking like a busted marionette after getting jackhammered into oblivion."

His grin turned downright wicked. "It wasn't a jackhammer. Just me."

My glare intensified. "Not helping."

He closed the door gently behind me like the proper gentleman he pretended to be, then slid into the driver's seat and started the engine. His hand found mine almost instantly, fingers lacing together like we'd been doing it for a thousand lifetimes. He brought our joined hands up to his lips and kissed the back of mine so softly.

Since last night, he hadn't stopped touching me. It didn't matter where we were in the kitchen, brushing past me at the sink, or now in the car he always found a subtle way to connect. A hand resting on my waist. Fingers gently brushing my cheek. His touch was constant, grounding... and really, really distracting.

"I am sorry about the walking part," he said, clearly not sorry in the slightest, "but I can't lie. There's a certain pride in knowing I gave you that kind of pleasure... over and over again."

At the red light, he turned to look at me, and those piercing pale eyes locked directly with mine.

My stomach flipped upside down.

Even after everything after all the battles, the doubts, the heavy weight of who and what we were he still had the absolute power to make me completely breathless with just one look.

And I knew without a single doubt: whatever severe storms were ahead, we'd face them together.

Still limping or not.

"You really think you can charm your way out of everything, huh?" I teased, giving Zaliver a mock glare.

His answering grin was far too pleased with himself, the bright morning sunlight catching in his eyes and making them look almost transparent like glacial crystal.

"I mean... I did, didn't I?"

I couldn't help but laugh out loud. He was utterly impossible.

Today, Zaliver was just dropping me off at the pack training field. He'd promised to pick me up in a couple of hours, enough time for me to do some light stretches and ease the lingering tightness in my limbs from yesterday. Goddess knew I desperately needed it.

The drive there was quiet, but not in a bad way. There was just something... slightly off. Not between us no, that bond felt stronger than ever after last night. It was something deep inside me.

A low, strange buzz had taken residence at the back of my mind, like I was standing right in front of a locked door I didn't know I had, and something incredibly powerful was knocking from the other side. It wasn't painful. Just frustrating. That nagging feeling when you know you're forgetting something crucial, but no matter how hard you try to grab at it, it keeps slipping right through your fingers.

Only, I knew I hadn't forgotten anything.

When we pulled into the training field, I stepped out of the car and immediately noticed something very strange.

Instead of bowing normally, every single wolf present dropped to one knee. All at once.

I froze, my eyes darting over to Zaliver for some kind of logical explanation. He didn't say a single word. He just stared straight ahead, his expression completely unreadable, his large hand tightening reassuringly around mine.

I turned back to face the field and inhaled sharply.

Each of them slowly raised their heads... revealing glowing silver eyes.

The air stilled around me, thick with ancient purpose.

And then, as if one single breath moved all their mouths together, they spoke in powerful unison.

"We bind our lives and loyalty to Luna Vivian. We fight, breathe, and shall bleed for the Luna of all wolves."

My knees nearly buckled under the sheer weight of their oath.

Their emotions crashed into me like massive waves fierce loyalty, unshakable faith, a devotion so raw I felt it settle deep into my very bones.

It was overwhelming, but something inside me something ancient and deeply instinctual rose up to meet it.

I didn't hesitate for even a second. The words flowed out of me as if they'd lived in my chest all along, just waiting for this exact moment.

"And I, in return, promise to you that I shall protect and cherish our pack our family."

The collective howls that followed sent a profound chill straight down my spine. Dozens of powerful voices rising high into the open sky, claiming me, honoring me.

The Wolf God's Unwanted Luna

Vivian's POV

When it quieted down, their glowing eyes were normal again, but the strange feeling hadn't left me. That weird current from earlier now pulsed softly behind the wall in my mind. Like whatever ancient power stirred deep in me had merely gone dormant again... waiting.

Zaliver moved closer, that intense gaze of his soaking in every single inch of my face like I was the most breathtaking thing he had ever seen.

"That," he murmured softly, his lips just a breath from mine, "was absolutely perfect."

He brushed a quick kiss to my mouth, lingering just a second longer than necessary before pulling away. I could feel how his energy buzzed right under his skin, like he was ready to burst from pure pride.

I blinked up at him. "What on earth just happened?"

He turned toward the warriors who were beginning to stand up, saying, "That is something you'll be seeing a lot today. Wolves from every single class and pack will pledge themselves to you now. And depending on their rank, your responses will need to adjust slightly."

I looked out at the massive group again, still completely stunned. "These were the warriors?"

He nodded. "Yes. The strongest among us. They've claimed you as their Luna, and you swore to protect them. It's a sacred bond."

"But... why today? Why right now?" I asked, trying desperately to make sense of the sudden timing.

Zaliver's lips lifted into that devastatingly confident smile of his. "Because now they know without a single shadow of a doubt that you're mine. We're fully bonded. That makes you their Luna not just of this specific pack, but all packs. They wanted to be the first to show their absolute loyalty."

My mouth parted, but I had no words left.

I'd woken up this morning thinking I'd just stretch out my sore muscles and maybe ease the tension in my shoulders.

Instead, I was officially the Luna of all wolves.

And every single fiber of my being felt it.

"B-but... you said 'all packs.' I thought... just this one " I started to say, completely confused, only to be cut off by a dark smirk spreading across his maddeningly gorgeous face.

"Sweetheart," Zaliver said with that smug glint in his eyes, "you weren't mated to the god of all wolves just to be handed one little territory. You're getting the whole damn deal."

I blinked. "Wait, what?"

He chuckled smoothly. "Think back to what you told me the night I marked you."

I gave him a look that screamed *seriously? That's your reference point?*

"All I remember is a lot of 'please no' and way too many 'oh my gods,'" I muttered, heat creeping up my neck fast.

He grimaced dramatically but kept right on going. "No, you said and I quote, 'No man should have all this power.'"

My breath hitched as the memory returned in a rush.

"And you said..." I whispered, "'I get to share all this power with you.'"

His pale eyes softened as he nodded down at me.

"I know you've got a million questions, and we'll get to all of them. But not right now. Right now, Venom's waiting." He motioned toward the distant tree line.

I turned to see Venom, standing like a silent statue beneath the trees, his arms folded behind his broad back, his golden eyes fixed on us even from that distance.

"Okay... I guess I'll see you later?" I said, still trying to catch up with the rapid pace of everything.

Zaliver leaned in suddenly, catching my lips in a kiss that nearly buckled my knees completely. My whole body reacted at once muscles tightening, stomach swooping, heart leaping. I wasn't ready for him to pull away, so I didn't let him. I bit gently at his bottom lip.

He growled out loud, deep and low, and wrapped a large hand around the back of my head, dragging me in even closer. His mouth claimed mine again, this time with that intense kind of need that scorched through every single nerve in my body, leaving me breathless and slightly unhinged. I barely managed to stay on my feet.

When he pulled back, I gasped like I'd been drowning and finally surfaced for fresh air. My lungs felt raw and cool, my heart thundering like wings in flight.

"Later," he said, his voice husky and his eyes shadowed with something intensely primal before he finally turned away.

I stared after his back, watching as he disappeared, wondering if later meant later today... or just some undetermined later in the vast, eternal sense.

"I don't care," my beast yawned lazily in my head. "As long as one of those 'laters' involves him screwing our brains out."

"Preach it, sister," my wolf added dreamily.

"Honestly? Same," I muttered under my breath, my lips twitching up.

I turned to head toward Venom but let out an embarrassing yelp when I saw him standing right behind me.

"Mother of !" I slapped my hand over my racing heart and glared up at him.

Venom immediately bowed his head, guilt flickering across his usually unreadable face.

"I apologize, Luna. I didn't mean to startle you. I should've announced myself properly. I'm... quieter than wolves," he said in a low voice that practically melted into the morning breeze.

"No kidding," I muttered, still trying to calm my frantic heart. "I couldn't even hear your heartbeat..."

For a split second, something completely unreadable passed through his golden eyes, like a sharp twitch of pain or was it deep regret? I couldn't quite tell.

I started walking toward the same open space where we trained yesterday. "Well, let's get started "

"Actually," he interrupted with a low hiss, immediately clearing his throat as if realizing how threatening it sounded. "I was thinking we'd try something very different today."

I turned toward him, deeply curious. "Different how?"

"Now that your senses and power are completely aligned, your energy is... volatile," he explained calmly. "You're bursting with raw strength. You need a different kind of training to help your body and mind adjust to the balance shift. If we keep doing what we did yesterday, you might snap something or someone."

That definitely got my full attention.

"So what exactly do you have in mind?" I asked slowly, already feeling the subtle shift in the air around him.

His lips twitched, but it wasn't a true smile.

Oh boy.

"Like what?" I asked curiously, watching him hesitate in place.

He opened his mouth, then closed it like he'd changed his mind entirely. Then tried again. Still nothing out of him.

"I'll tell you," he finally said, clearing his throat awkwardly, "but, uh... I'll do it while we stretch. You look like you need it anyway, yeah?"

His tone was meant to be light, but the subtle embarrassment clinging to his words made me grin. Poor guy looked like he hated saying that out loud.

I felt my face flush pink. "Yup," I mumbled, pretending not to notice how flustered he looked.

We spent about twenty minutes going through a full warm-up routine. It felt amazing to stretch out, my tight muscles unwinding with each pull and twist. I hadn't realized how tense I actually was until right now. By the end of it, I felt looser, lighter, almost eager for the challenge.

That's when Venom casually mentioned the massive obstacle course.

Chapter 168: Old Eyes and Familiar Hearts

Vivian's POV

At first, I thought he was joking. But he wasn't. I braced myself to complain, but to my surprise, the idea sparked something in me excitement. I actually wanted to do it. The running, the climbing, the jumping it all sounded kind of... fun?

By the time I reached the end of the course, my breathing was steady, not even the slightest bit winded. I bounced over to Venom, a small burst of pride swelling in my chest. He hadn't looked away the entire time I was moving. His arms were folded across his broad chest, his posture still as a statue.

His golden eyes met mine, unblinking and calm, but beneath the stillness, something stirred. Like he was studying me. Really studying me. There was something unnerving in how quiet his gaze was. Too knowing. Too still. I felt like he could see straight through me.

Those were old eyes, I thought. Eyes that had seen far more than they let on.

"Well?" I asked, trying to shake the feeling crawling down my spine.

He tilted his head slowly to the side, and without meaning to, I mirrored him. It was weird like my body responded instinctively. I didn't want to look away from him, like he was holding some strange gravity over me.

He blinked, shook his head slightly, and a few strands of white hair slipped from his tied-back bun.

I blinked too, snapping out of whatever haze had just taken over me. What... was that?

"Sorry," he hissed under his breath. "I've got a theory I want to try out tomorrow if you're up for it?" he asked, almost sheepish now.

I shrugged easily. "Sure. What kind of theory? Please tell me it's about me not needing to work out anymore, because honestly, I'd be so down for that."

The corner of his lips twitched. Barely. But it was there. A smile. Almost.

He opened his mouth to reply and that's when I caught it his teeth. No, not just teeth. Fangs. Definitely fangs.

My breath caught in my throat. Something cold slithered down my spine. How had I missed that before?

"Wow," I whispered to myself. "Why am I just now seeing that?"

"Your mind has expanded. That's why," my beast murmured inside me, her voice low and thoughtful.

"I'm sorry," Venom said suddenly, pulling my attention back to him. "But no, that's not the theory. You are, however, probably going to finish sooner than expected."

"Really?" I asked, rocking slightly on my feet. "Why's that?"

He unfolded his arms and clasped his hands behind his back. His movements were slow, deliberate.

"Do you have any medical training?" he asked, completely out of nowhere.

I blinked. "Uhh, no?" I said, completely thrown off. "Unless wrapping a bandage decently counts?"

"Hmm." His expression didn't change. "Alright. Thank you for coming back today, Luna Vivian. I'll see you tomorrow."

And just like that, he turned and walked off calm and collected, vanishing into the shadows before I could press him for answers.

I stared after him, baffled.

"What was that about?" my wolf asked, just as confused.

"I have no idea," I muttered, still watching the path he disappeared down.

"Weird snake," my beast added dryly, narrowing her eyes.

I chuckled under my breath. "Maybe just a little."

After some time, I stepped out to see my friends and immediately when they saw me, they said:

"We bind our lives and loyalty to the Luna of all wolves. We give our lives and support to all of your choices," Mark, Hannah, and the other guards recited in perfect unison.

Their voices rang with sincerity, their gazes steady and proud. My chest tightened with emotion.

"And I, to you," I replied softly, "will support and protect you as long as I breathe."

As the last word left my lips, Hannah let out a happy squeal and waddled toward me, arms flung wide. Her flower-printed shirt stretched over her swollen belly, and when she hugged me, I definitely felt it press against me.

"Oh my goddess, you're mated!" she shrieked, grinning like a lunatic. "This is amazing!"

I laughed, blushing so hard my face could've ignited. There was no hiding it now. But seriously... why did everyone act like getting mated was some kind of huge public announcement? Was there a universal celebration for having sex I didn't know about?

"Yup," I mumbled, still laughing. "And look at you! I swear it feels like forever since I last saw you. Your baby's grown so much!"

Mark came up behind her, resting his hand lovingly on her bump, pride shining in his eyes.

"Hey, Mark," I said, grinning. "Have you two finally settled on a nursery style, or is Hannah still changing her mind every three days?"

He let out a relieved sigh, running a hand through his short hair. "We finally settled on the last one."

Johnson snorted next to me, clearly not buying it.

I turned to him with an arched brow. "What?"

"Only because I refused to keep returning their crap every time she changed her mind," he grumbled, wagging a finger at Hannah. "I swear, my sister treats me like her personal errand wolf."

"Maybe because you look like a donkey," Mila muttered just loud enough for everyone to hear.

Johnson's glare could've melted steel. "Seriously?"

"Damn," Courtney muttered, trying and failing to hold back a laugh. Luke shook his head with a faint smile playing on his lips.

Before the banter could spiral further, Hannah slipped out from under Mark's arm and waddled quickly well, as quickly as a very pregnant woman could into the kitchen. She returned a second later holding something behind her back.

With a smug smirk, she handed it to Johnson and stepped back.

Johnson looked down, confusion written all over his face. "Why are you handing me ice?"

"To cool down that burn," she said sweetly.

The room erupted in laughter. Johnson's scowl deepened, but the twitch at the corner of his mouth betrayed him.

"I missed you guys," I said, wiping a tear from my eye as the laughter finally died down.

"We missed you too," Johnson replied, still half-scowling, half-smiling. "It's been so boring without you. And I'm sure Luke's been missing Alpha taking over his body, right, Luke?"

Luke shot him a death glare. "If we weren't in the presence of our Luna right now, I'd deck you."

"Oh no," Johnson said mockingly, raising his hands and shaking them. "Look at me shake."

I laughed even harder. These idiots... They hadn't changed a bit. And honestly? That was comforting.

"Do you want to stay for lunch?" Mark asked suddenly, his tone warm and casual.

"If you don't mind," I said.

"I'll start cooking then. Hey, Johnson, where did you leave the steak?" Mark called as he turned toward the kitchen.

"Why the hell should I know?" Johnson replied, trailing after him with the bag of ice still in hand.

"Because you were the last one seen with it," Luke added, following them in.

"Got no proof," Johnson said smugly.

We rolled our eyes in unison at the ongoing bickering.

Chapter 169: Pink Mists and Whispered Secrets

Vivian's POV

"These are your teeth marks, you ass!" Mark shouted from the kitchen. "It's not even cooked yet!"

The sharp slap of a palm meeting skin echoed through the house.

Hannah sighed beside me, resting one hand on her belly. "Living with Johnson is like living with another pregnant woman. I actually feel bad for Mark sometimes he's got both of us to deal with."

"I thought Johnson lived in the pack house?" I asked, tilting my head in confusion.

Hannah nodded, but Mila answered before she could.

"He does. But since Hannah's five months along, he's insisted on helping out. Says he's not leaving until at least two months after the baby's born."

There was a softness in her voice, something quiet and fond. I caught the faintest flush on her cheeks. Huh.

"Aw, that's sweet," I said. "He really cares about you."

Hannah snorted. "Yeah, when he's not trying to steal the last slice of pizza or begging Mark for foot rubs."

"As long as he's not knocking on my door every five minutes at the pack house, I'm good," Mila muttered.

Courtney nudged her with a mischievous smile. "Oh come on. Don't act like you don't like his knocking."

I raised an eyebrow, a slow grin spreading on my face. Was that a blush I just saw dust Mila's cheeks?

Oh yeah. Something was definitely going on there. And I was living for it.

"Because they're mates," my wolf murmured with certainty, her voice curling through my mind like smoke.

My eyes shot toward Mila, but she was too caught up in bickering with Courtney to notice the way I was staring.

"What? How do you know that?" I asked her silently, mentally pressing for more.

"Just look at them," she replied, a low hum of knowing in her tone. "Can't you see it? That soft glow they give off when they're near each other kind of like a hazy pink mist? Mates have a certain... aura. You'll learn to pick up on it."

A quiet "Cool" slipped out of me before I even realized.

Courtney's head snapped in my direction, curiosity lighting up her face. "What's cool?"

"Don't answer that," my wolf warned sharply.

"Why not?"

"Just trust me. Not yet."

I clamped my lips shut, hesitated, then quickly changed the subject. "Nothing. Hey, Hannah, did I ever ask what you're having? Like... boy or girl?"

The topic shift worked like a charm her entire face lit up as she bounced in her seat like she was spring-loaded.

"We're having a little girl!" she practically squealed. "I'm so freaking happy! I can't wait to go shopping again and then eventually give her the full rundown on surviving high school without losing your mind."

Her eyes misted over, and I couldn't help but smile.

"Congratulations! Do you have a name picked out yet?" I leaned forward, genuinely curious.

"A developing mind link," my wolf whispered again, more to herself than to me.

The conversation slid into the expected whirlwind of names, nicknames, and all the possible futures this baby girl might have. We were deep in baby talk when Hannah suddenly paused. Her posture shifted just slightly, and my gut instinct screamed something was coming.

"So..." she began, stretching the word out. Her eyes locked onto mine with suspicious innocence, but the gleam behind them made my skin itch. She leaned forward like a predator.

"What?" I asked warily, sitting up straighter.

Mila and Courtney glanced at her too, sensing the tension or maybe just intrigued.

"You knooow..." she sing-songed, and I frowned harder.

"No, I don't. What?" I asked again, already regretting it.

Hannah huffed, rolling her eyes like I was being dense on purpose. "How. Was. The. Sex?" she blurted without shame.

"Umm... you know... private?" I replied sarcastically, giving her a look that clearly screamed back off. If she thought I was going to give details about that, she was out of her mind.

Mila and Courtney burst out laughing, though they tried to disguise it behind some very unconvincing coughs. Hannah groaned dramatically, running her fingers through her platinum hair like this was absolute torture.

"Oh come on! Don't do this to me," she whined. "You know we all want to know what Alpha Zaliver is like in bed. It's not just me. We're starving over here don't keep the goods from the people!"

Just as my cheeks flared with heat, Mark's head poked out from around the kitchen doorway.

"You hungry? Food's almost " His words cut off as Hannah's shoe whizzed through the air toward him.

"Never mind!" he shouted, ducking back into the kitchen.

Hannah turned back to me like nothing had happened. "We're all hungry for some info. Come on, spill. He had to be good, right? Right?"

She looked at Mila and Courtney for backup. The two of them kept straight faces, but the amusement twinkling in their eyes gave them away.

I groaned, covering my face with one hand. "Fine. I know you're not going to drop this, and I'm sure some of the other wolves picked up on it anyway," I mumbled, resigned to my fate.

Hannah squeaked and bounced, practically vibrating with excitement.

"This is all I'm saying, so savor it," I warned, locking eyes with her. "Even with my freakishly fast healing... I was still sore this morning. That's all you get."

She screamed. Literally screamed.

"My inner fangirl is losing it!" she clapped wildly. I stared at her like she'd grown a second head.

"Your what now?" I asked slowly.

"My inner fangirl! Ever since you got to the island, Alpha's been like... hyper-efficient. He finishes his work fast, and then he disappears. Guess where he's going? Home. To you. And it's the cutest thing ever, I can't even deal."

"She's not wrong," Courtney chimed in. "Alpha used to be around the island a lot more always sparring or working with the warriors. But lately, he just finishes up and poof. Gone."

"It's kind of adorable," Mila added with a knowing nod.

I blinked. That was news to me. I hadn't really paid attention to Zaliver's schedule I'd just been... soaking up every second we had together. Still, hearing that he rushed home, that he made me his priority it stirred something deep in my chest.

When lunch was ready, we all gathered around and shared the meal, laughter echoing through the house like warm sunlight. Afterward, I stood and hugged them all goodbye. Hannah was teary-eyed again.

"You have to come back soon, or I'll break you out myself," she threatened playfully. "I don't care how amazing the sex is I will come dragging you back."

Mark just shook his head, smiling at her antics as I waved goodbye.

Getting the guards to leave me alone wasn't easy, but not impossible. At first, they hovered like anxious shadows, following my every move. But eventually, with a firm voice and sharper-than-usual stare, I convinced them I needed space.

It wasn't that I didn't appreciate their protection but sometimes, I just needed to breathe. Alone. Think things through without the constant weight of everything pressing in.

I just needed a moment to feel like me again.

Chapter 170: Ghostly Strands and Returning Home

Vivian's POV

Later that day, my mind could not stop wandering to what the others had said earlier to me. Luna of this pack? That I could maybe wrap my head around. But Luna of all packs? No way. That idea didn't just overwhelm me it terrified me. What happened to the other Lunas? Did they just vanish? Would they still have roles? And what was I even supposed to do as "Luna of all"? Be Zaliver's shadow? Copy whatever he did? Hell, I didn't even know what he did most of the time.

With a frustrated sigh, I shoved my fingers into my hair, tugging lightly as they snagged on a knot near the ends. I needed air. Movement. Something. So I walked no real destination, just away from the suffocating thoughts. The streets around me bustled with life. Cafés spilled laughter onto the sidewalks, little boutiques displayed handmade trinkets in their windows, and a nearby park brimmed with color and motion. I paused when I spotted an elementary school, children running wild with joy on the playground.

School. College. I hadn't thought about that in a long time.

Did I still want to go?

Probably. But when? Between being turned immortal, mated to a supernatural being of terrifying power, and... whatever this Luna-of-everything gig meant, college seemed like a distant dream.

"You've got eternity now," my wolf chimed in dryly. "Pretty sure colleges aren't going extinct anytime soon."

Fair point.

I turned back toward home, but halfway there, curiosity itched under my skin. Zaliver always just... appeared places, blinking in and out of rooms like it was nothing. Could I do that too?

Why not try?

I exhaled slowly and let my eyes fall shut. Heat bloomed under my skin, curling through my veins like anticipation or adrenaline. I began with small steps, warming up, then broke into a light jog. Pedestrians threw me strange glances, but I didn't care. I picked up speed. Three more strides and

The world blurred.

Everything around me slowed like syrup people mid-step, birds mid-flap, leaves mid-fall. But I kept moving, fast, fluid, like time didn't apply to me anymore. The rush of it burned behind my ribs in the best way. Before I knew it, my house came into view, and I skidded to a stop just a few feet away, chest rising and falling quickly, not from exhaustion but from the pure thrill.

I stepped inside and made a beeline for the kitchen, filling a glass with water. My gaze drifted to the window, but my mind wasn't really seeing anything outside. I was still thinking about visiting Hannah, how comforting it had been to see her again, surrounded by familiar faces. That warmth curled tighter in my chest, and I found myself thinking of my parents.

I missed them.

What were they doing right now?

Suddenly, something sparked literally in my mind, like a flare going off behind my eyes. Without meaning to, I reached for it, mentally tugging the thread that had appeared from nowhere.

And just like that, I was in their minds.

Not physically, of course, but it was like looking out through their eyes, listening to their thoughts echo through my head. My dad was sitting on the couch beside my mom, his arm around her as a movie flickered in front of them. But neither of them were really watching.

"What do you think Vivian is doing now?" my mom asked in a quiet, sad voice that made my heart squeeze painfully.

"I don't know," my dad murmured, pressing a kiss to the top of her head. *"I just hope she's safe."*

I yanked myself back with a gasp, blinking at the kitchen window again like it had swallowed me whole.

What the hell had that been?

I didn't mean to do it. It was like I just thought about them hard enough and boom I was inside their minds. Not controlling anything. Just watching. Listening. Feeling.

Intrigued, I closed my eyes again and thought of an old friend from high school. Instantly, another spark lit up in my mind. This time, I didn't hesitate. I followed it.

The next second, I was looking through her eyes she was walking through a mall, chatting with someone on the phone about shoes. And before I knew it, I wasn't just watching her. I was bouncing, effortlessly slipping from one person to the next, catching glimpses of strangers and people I barely remembered.

Distance didn't seem to matter. Time didn't either.

I was... spying, I guess. Harmlessly, but still. Not mind control, not manipulation just silent observation. Like Zaliver. Only his way always felt more dominating, forceful. Mine was more... ghostlike. Curious.

I was so deep in it that I didn't even notice Zaliver until I felt his presence standing right behind me. My eyes were still closed, my mind miles away, peering through the thoughts and sights of someone I used to know.

And yet, somehow, I knew without turning around.

He had found me. Again.

I flinched, startled by a sudden warmth wrapping around me. Arms slid around my waist from behind, anchoring me back into a firm chest. The glow I'd been playing with in my hand flickered out, forgotten, as my eyes fluttered open to the reflection in the darkened window glass. My cheeks flushed immediately, and I watched the way my wide brown eyes lit up with a mix of surprise and anticipation.

Zaliver rested his chin on the top of my head, his blue eyes catching mine in the glass with a small, knowing smile. But this wasn't like our usual embraces the kind where he held back just a little. No, this time his body was flush against mine, solid and unapologetic. Every edge and line of him pressed into me, leaving no distance between us.

Then his voice brushed against my ear, deep and playfully intimate.

"Honey, I'm home," he whispered, and nipped gently at my ear.

A grin broke across my face before I could stop it. I turned in his arms, sliding mine around his waist and locking my fingers at the small of his back.

"How was work, dear?" I asked with a teasing lilt, gazing up at him. My wolf perked up instantly, tail wagging like an overexcited pup. She was practically rolling over in delight.

Zaliver gave a mock-sigh, shaking his head with feigned disappointment.

"Unbearably dull," he said, lowering his gaze to mine. "Can't imagine why."

"Hmm," I hummed, lifting myself slightly to press a kiss above the mark on his neck his mark. I felt his body jolt at the contact, a ripple of tension passing through him before he shuddered lightly. The way he reacted filled me with a quiet kind of triumph. I loved knowing I affected him like that.