

The Wolf God's Unwanted Luna - Chapter 181: God of War[1,235 words]

Chapter 181: God of War

Vivian's POV

Zaliver spun quickly on his heel, absorbing three heavy punches at once with his forearms like they were nothing at all. Then he retaliated with brutal, terrifying precision each of his hits fast, deliberate, and devastating. He struck three exact pressure points on each opponent like he knew precisely where to aim, and they crumpled instantly. Four massive bodies hit the floor with heavy thuds, unmoving.

The crowd gasped.

I could feel the electricity ripple through the entire clearing, the tension pulling tighter as people realized just what kind of being they were dealing with. Zaliver's sharp eyes scanned for the next challenger. I found myself clutching the soft fabric of his black shirt not out of fear this time, but something far hotter. Deeper. Something primal was waking up deep inside me.

He wasn't even out of breath. Not a single drop of sweat on him.

Surrounded by elite guards clad in black, he stood out shirtless and remarkably calm amid the chaotic fight. Every sharp cut of muscle along his broad chest and arms was perfectly defined, his physique caught somewhere between pure grace and deadly power. The dark jeans he wore clung just right, hugging strong legs that moved with absolute purpose. But it wasn't just the physical allure it was the way his raw power thrummed through the air around him, thick and alive. He looked like a creature born of war and shadow, his eyes an intense, focused blue that didn't carry the cheap arrogance of a fighter trying to show off. No, Zaliver was all business.

Two female fighters flanked his left, moving together with synchronized purpose. I could tell by the subtle way his eyes flicked in their direction that he'd already calculated their whole strategy.

A man suddenly charged from behind, aiming a hard kick directly at Zaliver's back probably thinking he could easily knock him off balance.

He couldn't have been more wrong.

Zaliver jumped.

In one fluid motion, his body flipped cleanly in midair, and he landed gracefully on his hands. A handstand. Completely effortless. His thick muscles flexed and held his entire frame steady, but his face remained calm, like he could stay that way all day long.

The man's heavy kick missed entirely and retracted, but Zaliver wasn't done with him yet. Spinning quickly on one hand, he extended his leg and swept it across, taking the man's legs clean out from under him. The attacker hit the hard ground with a painful grunt.

Zaliver's other leg lashed out again mid-spin, connecting squarely with the man's jaw. That one definitely didn't get back up.

He dropped his second hand down, braced, and with a forceful push, kicked off the ground and landed gracefully back on his feet like a dancer mid-performance, if that dancer could casually break every single bone in your body.

I stared, my lips parted, my heart pounding wildly.

He wasn't just fighting.

He was putting on a damn show.

And I had front-row seats to the storm that was my mate.

There's always a moment one sharp, soul-clenching breath in time when something shifts inside you forever. Mine came crashing down the second I realized the truth that had always been hovering in my chest like smoke waiting to become flame. My mate wasn't just strong, or dangerous.

He was something else entirely.

A god. A terrifying, beautiful god wrapped in skin, muscle, and quiet wrath.

The moment Zaliver's feet hit the ground again, he dropped smoothly beneath a fist that barely missed him and spun on his heel like a predator sizing up the hunt. Then, like it was the most natural thing in the world, he stepped directly between the two female fighters closing in on him. My breath caught at the sight. My inner instincts prickled.

Okay. That was bold.

There were still several others circling him, tense, observant, and calculating. They weren't jumping in recklessly anymore. They were watching. Learning. Desperately trying to find any cracks in his stance. Even I found myself scanning his movements, looking for something anything that could resemble a weakness.

The shorter female in front hesitated. From my angle, I could clearly see how much taller he was than her, how much darker his presence felt. I didn't blame her for faltering. But the second woman standing right behind him had no such reservations.

She went straight for a cheap shot.

Her foot snapped out, aiming directly for the back of his groin, while the one in front finally acted too, launching a quick kick straight for his stomach. My heart stuttered in my chest. But Zaliver...

He didn't falter. He didn't flinch.

He slid a single step to the side. At the exact same time, he let the force behind him push him forward just enough.

And then he was gone.

A breath later, he reappeared right behind the second female, almost lazily nudging her forward. No one realized what had just happened. No one... except me.

And because I caught it, I understood exactly why the two women kicked directly at each other and then stumbled back in startled confusion. The looks on their faces were absolutely priceless like someone had pulled the ground right out from under them.

Laughter bubbled out of me before I could stop it, quiet but full of pure awe. And even through the noise of the crowd, I knew he heard me. His head tilted slightly, and one corner of his mouth twitched just enough to make my stomach flip in delight.

The females backed off quickly. This time, the rest of the fighters moved back with them. The crowd murmured with rising excitement, the air crackling with tension and wonder. Everyone was desperately trying to figure out how this was going to end.

The circle around Zaliver tightened, slow and steady. He pivoted in place with measured calm, turning so he could keep his sharp eyes on them all. I could tell by the subtle tilt of his broad shoulders and the stillness in his stance that he was giving them a final chance.

That mercy didn't last long.

Whatever patience had been flickering in his eyes moments ago vanished completely.

Then, everything exploded.

One of the fighters stepped forward just a small test, a probe to try and make Zaliver react.

Big mistake.

Zaliver leapt upward in a smooth twist of motion, flipped right over the man's head, grabbed him midair by the neck, and slammed him backward into the ground. The heavy impact made the earth shudder beneath my boots.

Before anyone had time to react, Zaliver dropped beside the unconscious man, spun on his knees, and shot forward like a cyclone let loose.

He was a blur. A violent, breathtaking blur.

He struck low at knees, ribs, and joints, dropping them instantly. Others he crashed into, sending their heavy bodies into each other like dominos made of flesh and muscle. And each time he landed a blow, it was precise. Final.

There was no wasted movement. No hesitation.

They never stood a single chance.

I stood frozen at the edge of it all, my fingers gripping the fabric of his discarded shirt like a grounding anchor. I couldn't look away. I didn't want to.

He wasn't just winning.

He was dominating completely.

And I... I had never felt more drawn to him.

The Wolf God's Unwanted Luna - Chapter 182: A Dangerous Presence[1,123 words]

Chapter 182: A Dangerous Presence

Vivian's POV

One second, Zaliver had been standing right at the edge of the sparring ring, and the next he was completely gone. Just vanished. The wide crowd barely had time to blink before the heavy fighters around him dropped like fragile dominoes some flung violently through the air, others left crumpled on the hard ground. When the chaotic blur of movement finally settled, he stood right where he'd started, surrounded by fallen guards like some god of war. Unscathed. Unmoved. Unshaken.

For a single heartbeat, everything went dead quiet. Then the wild cheers exploded clapping, whistling, and roaring praise. It surged all around us like a massive wave, but his sharp attention was already fixed entirely on me.

He straightened up slowly, his broad chest rising with a deep inhale, and turned directly toward me. His harsh expression softened the moment his blue eyes found mine. Meanwhile, I was trying and utterly failing not to beam like a fool. My face must've said it all: deeply impressed, incredibly proud, and probably glowing like a lantern in the night.

He strode straight through the crowd like the other wolves weren't even there, coming to a stop right in front of me. His warm hands settled onto my waist with a possessive ease that still sent delicious shivers straight through me. His dark hair was a total mess, damp strands falling over his face, but even through it I caught the fierce glint of those intense blue eyes.

"Well?" he asked, his deep voice low and rough with lingering adrenaline.

I couldn't help the broad smile tugging at my lips, not with the wild cocktail of emotions running through me some mine, some his, and some bleeding over from the still-thrumming crowd.

"One more day," I reminded him softly.

You don't have to wait a whole day to get freaky. That's what hands and mouths are for.

My wolf's completely unfiltered comment hit my mind like a hard slap, and I nearly choked on my own air. *Shut up!* I hissed internally, my face flushing bright hot.

Zaliver's grip on my waist tightened instantly, and he leaned in just enough to gently nip at my bottom lip before pulling away with a wicked smirk that made my heart do stupid things.

"Mmhmm. She's got a solid point, you know," he murmured playfully.

I shoved his black shirt straight at him to distract myself and him. "Put this on and shut up."

He chuckled warmly while slipping it over his head, and I took a deep breath, desperately trying to cool my burning cheeks.

Then I noticed something impossible.

"Wait a second... You're not even sweating! How is that even possible?" I stared up at him, completely stunned.

He just gave a small shake of his head and offered that annoyingly secretive smile of his, looking like he knew something I didn't and loved every second of it.

Turning back toward the still-hyped crowd, he raised one heavy hand. Instant silence fell over the field. The sudden shift in energy was palpable.

"Thank you for your support," he called out, his deep voice booming with absolute Alpha command. "Now, back to your training. And help your unconscious partners off the dirt. Next time we spar, I expect at least one hit."

A few nervous laughs rippled through the large group, but heads nodded respectfully, and everyone moved quickly, as if deeply inspired by the very man who had just wiped the floor with them all.

Once again, he turned to face me, and it took a beat for my brain to catch up. Right. We hadn't even come out here for the fighting I was still stuck replaying his insane movements in my head.

"I take back what I said earlier. You don't need guards," I admitted.

He gave me a look that was part smug, part deeply pleased, and took my hand in his, leading me back toward the car.

"Glad you finally see reason," he said smoothly, opening the passenger door for me like a true gentleman... who just happened to be a deadly Alpha.

"I'll need to start prepping for tonight's flight and go over some final details for the ball," he added as I climbed inside. "Want to come along, or should I drop you off somewhere first?"

"Can I tag along?" I asked, buckling my seatbelt. "You still haven't told me what exactly I'm supposed to be doing. I doubt my role involves just standing around looking pretty. And honestly? I don't want to wing this whole ball thing. It feels far too important to improvise."

He rolled his eyes playfully, but I caught the slight twitch of a smile before he nodded.

Following Zaliver around turned out to be a really weird mix of exciting and incredibly dull. On the one hand, I got to shadow the most powerful wolf I knew, give actual input on real pack decisions, and feel like I really mattered. On the other... well, my brain started melting the moment we got into the weeds of member counts, complex land boundaries, and side-pack merger documents.

By the time we were back in the car heading home, the sun had dipped low in the sky, casting a warm golden hue through the windows. I'd almost drifted off to sleep when his low voice cut through the quiet hum of the engine.

He had a serious question for me, and from the cautious tone of his voice, I knew it wasn't something he could ask lightly.

"Do you want to invite your parents to the ball?" Zaliver asked me gently.

My entire body stiffened in an instant, and my head whipped around to stare at him like he'd just suggested we hold the ball on the surface of the sun. Shock and sudden dread tangled in my chest, cold and tight. I couldn't believe I had forgotten about them entirely with everything going on and now, the mere idea of them being at that ball? Absolutely terrifying.

Judging by the slight twitch of amusement on his lips, he caught my dramatic reaction loud and clear.

"By the look on your face, I'll take that as a firm no," he murmured softly.

"Yeah. No. Definitely no," I breathed out, still reeling from the thought. "Thanks for the reminder, though." I rubbed my hands over my arms as if that would shake off the cold unease creeping over me. "I'd rather not have them in a room full of possessive, territorial, easily provoked wolves. They wouldn't last five minutes without flinching or ducking their heads." I paused, grimacing slightly. "Honestly, they wouldn't even know why they were there. Or who I really am now."

The Wolf God's Unwanted Luna - Chapter 183: Unspoken Truths[1,115 words]

Chapter 183: Unspoken Truths

Vivian's POV

He didn't argue right away. Instead, he watched me carefully, and then offered in that low, patient tone he used when he was trying to soothe my nerves. "If you really want them there, I can make sure everyone knows to leave them alone. They'll be safe."

His voice was warm, reassuring, and just a little hopeful.

But I shook my head softly. "I appreciate that. I do. But I think it's safer for everyone if they come the day after. By then, things should be... calmer."

He nodded slowly, but then his expression shifted, like he was only now bringing up the real thing on his mind.

"What I actually meant was... if you want, I can restore their memory."

I froze right where I sat.

"No," I said immediately, shaking my head violently. "I know it's not fair, but I don't want them to hate you for that. We've moved past it, and dragging it back up won't help

anyone." The words spilled out faster than I intended, but I meant every single one. "They don't need to know. What they don't remember won't hurt them."

They'd once met him, sure. But that version of him the one who'd appeared out of nowhere and basically kidnapped me wasn't the one they'd be meeting now. Still... there was no need to stir all that up again. Not if it meant family dinners filled with unbearable tension and wild accusations.

Zaliver's dark gaze hardened, just slightly, catching me off guard.

"What?" I asked, defensively. "You don't agree? I figured you of all people would be happy they don't remember."

He sighed heavily, took my hand, and lifted it to his mouth, pressing a soft kiss to my knuckles. His thumb grazed over my skin like he was trying to soothe away some invisible wound.

"It doesn't matter whether I agree or not. What matters is that you won't regret this choice later. You might think that forgetting how they first met me makes it easier, but let's not pretend, love my reputation isn't something most parents are eager to welcome into their family."

He spoke slowly, as if explaining something simple to a child refusing to see the obvious.

I narrowed my eyes up at him. "I know. I've heard. But I also believe that if they meet you now, the version of you who doesn't go off the rails at every single comment, who doesn't pull his whole 'Zaliver's master plan to lock Vivian away forever' routine, then we might actually be okay."

He blinked at me, his lips twitching slightly. "Zaliver's master plan to keep Vivian all to himself," he repeated, clearly entertained by my words.

I rolled my eyes so hard I nearly gave myself a sudden headache. "Yes. The one where you don't communicate with me and then go full psycho when something triggers you, which leads to massive fights because I didn't read your mind fast enough. That exact plan."

He huffed a quiet laugh and shook his head softly. "So, as long as I don't panic, everything's completely fine?"

"Exactly. Should be a walk in the park for someone like you," I teased with a sharp smile.

"Well then," he said with a playful smirk, "guess we have nothing to worry about."

"Yup."

"Why you lyin'? Why you always lyin'? Stop f"

I groaned inwardly and cut my wolf off before she could even finish singing that ridiculous old song in my head. Not right now.

Zaliver, thankfully, pretended not to hear the crazy inner chaos erupting inside me.

"Stop. Just stop," I muttered internally.

"Then stop lying," she shot back instantly. *"We both know something is going to explode. You don't just stick alphas, lunas, betas, and their hormone-driven offspring in a room with you and Zaliver and expect it to end in group hugs. You just don't."*

I clenched my jaw tight.

Gods, how I absolutely hated when she was right.

"Do you want to invite your parents to the ball?" Zaliver asked softly, the heavy question dropping into the space between us like a live wire.

I froze once again.

Every muscle in my body went stiff, my head whipping toward him as if he'd just suggested we hold the entire ball inside an erupting volcano. A spike of cold dread twisted hard through my chest, making it hard to breathe. My parents? At that chaotic ball? Surrounded by territorial, status-obsessed wolves? I hadn't even thought about them lately far too much had happened and now the mere idea of seeing them there... gods, no.

The small curve at the corner of Zaliver's mouth told me he caught every single ounce of panic written across my expression.

"I'll take that look as a firm no," he murmured softly, amusement lacing his deep voice.

"Yeah. No. Definitely not," I exhaled loudly, still trying to slow my hammering heartbeat. "Thanks for the gentle reminder, though." I rubbed my arms instinctively, trying to shake off the cold tension crawling up my spine. "Putting them in a room full of alphas and lunas with short tempers and sharper claws? They'd either faint or run straight for the exit. And even if they stayed... they wouldn't understand a single thing. They don't know who I am anymore. Not really."

He didn't speak right away. Just studied me quietly, his expression completely unreadable. Then he softened his tone, the way he always did when trying to keep me grounded.

"If you do want them there," he said gently, "I can make sure they're left alone. They'll be completely safe."

There was genuine warmth in his voice, a quiet reassurance. And something else... a faint flicker of hope.

But I shook my head firmly. "I appreciate that. Really. But I think it's better if they come after the ball. When things have settled down. When the heavy pressure's off. It'll be safer for everyone involved."

He nodded once, slowly, but his sharp gaze shifted. There was clearly something else brewing behind those stormy blue eyes.

"What I actually meant," he said carefully, "was... if you want, I could restore their memories."

I went completely still.

"No," I said quickly, almost too quickly. I shook my head before the scary thought could fully form. "I know it's not fair, but I don't want them resenting you for it. We've worked far too hard to move past all that. Bringing it back now? It'll only reopen old wounds that don't need to heal again. They don't need to remember. They're much better off not knowing."

The words came out fast, a little frantic, but I truly meant every single syllable.

The Wolf God's Unwanted Luna - Chapter 184: Bound by Destiny[1,093 words]

Vivian's POV

They had met him once before well, met might be a generous term. More like being suddenly confronted by a brooding stranger who'd whisked me away with absolutely no real explanation. That version of Zaliver? The one who had zero patience and no boundaries? He wasn't the man they'd see now. Still, I couldn't stomach the idea of future family dinners turning into constant battles of suspicion and heavy blame.

Zaliver's dark gaze darkened just slightly, the subtle shift so small I almost missed it entirely.

"What?" I asked, suddenly on edge. "You don't agree? I thought you of all people would be glad they don't remember."

He let out a slow, heavy breath, then reached out for my hand, bringing it to his lips. The kiss he pressed to my knuckles was soft, completely reverent. His thumb traced slow circles over my skin, grounding me and maybe grounding himself too.

"It's not about what I want," he said quietly. "It's about whether you will deeply regret this choice later. You think keeping that dark part of the past buried will make things easier now. But love... let's not pretend I'm the kind of mate most human parents welcome with wide open arms."

There was no harsh accusation in his tone just quiet, bitter truth. And it stung because I knew deep down he was right.

I frowned softly at him, my fingers tightening slightly in his.

"I know your reputation, Zaliver. I've heard it all. But I also know who you are right now. If they meet this version of you the one who actually talks instead of snarling, who doesn't lock me away just because he thinks it's the only way to keep me safe then maybe they'll see what I see."

He blinked at me, then let out a dry, low chuckle. "Zaliver's grand plan to keep Vivian locked in a tower forever," he echoed softly, clearly amused by the phrase.

I rolled my eyes so hard it almost hurt. "Yes. That exact plan. The one where you clam up completely instead of telling me how you feel, go full-on alpha meltdown when something upsets you, and expect me to just psychically know what's going on in that thick skull of yours. That exact one."

He huffed a quiet laugh, shaking his head. "So basically, as long as I don't have a full mental breakdown, we're good?"

"Exactly. Should be easy for someone with your legendary self-control," I teased with a smirk.

"Oh, absolutely," he smirked right back. "What could possibly go wrong?"

"Yup," I muttered, already regretting opening this whole can of worms.

And then, from deep within my mind, my wolf decided to make her chaotic presence known.

"Why you lyin'? Why you always lyin'? Stooop"

Oh no.

I groaned internally, slapping down the vivid mental image of her dancing around to that ridiculous song. Not right now.

"Then stop lying," she snapped back instantly. "We both know something is going to blow up out there. You don't shove alphas, lunas, betas, and their hormonally imbalanced offspring into one single room with you two and expect peace and harmony. That's just not how this works."

I clenched my jaw tight.

She had a solid point.

Damn it, she always had a point.

"Five more hours, then we'll check in at one of my luxury hotels. It's exclusively built for werewolves, so that should help our guests feel far more at ease," Zaliver said casually, like he hadn't just dropped the casual fact that he owned the entire place. "We'll be staying on the top floor. No interruptions whatsoever."

I stared at him in disbelief. The top floor of his own private hotel? Of course. This man simply couldn't do anything halfway.

"Will Jesse be there when we arrive?" I asked, shifting slightly in my seat.

Jesse was the one handling the extensive event preparations for the upcoming masquerade ball. Zaliver had introduced us over the phone right after telling me about the event. Things were a little awkward at first, but as our conversation went on, we clicked instantly. Hours flew by before I even realized where the time went.

"She'll be there, but not for the actual ball. She's been working herself straight into the ground," he said, a distinct hint of admiration in his voice. "From what I've seen and picked up directly in her mind, it's all going really well."

He turned his head to look at me a moment later. "Are you planning to sleep on the plane or wait until we reach the hotel?"

"Hotel," I muttered, digging through my bag to find something to keep my busy mind occupied. "I can't sleep on planes. Too noisy. Too stiff. Just... really not for me."

He nodded thoughtfully. A beat passed in silence, then he spoke up again. "So... about the dress "

My head snapped up instantly, my eyes narrowing. "Don't."

He raised both hands in mock surrender. "I'm not going back on our agreement. I swear it. I just wanted to ask one thing."

I gave him a long, slow look before sighing deeply. "Fine. Go on."

His expression shifted into something far too serious. With a voice low and firm, he asked, "Exactly how much skin are you planning to show?"

I blinked, then rolled my eyes. "Probably far less than whatever wild fantasy your overly possessive brain is conjuring up right now."

He grunted softly, clearly not pleased with the answer, but after a second, he nodded. "Good."

Eventually, the long plane ride ended and we landed. I was completely exhausted, my body aching for a hot shower and a soft bed. Just as we were about to leave the private plane, Zaliver reached into his bag and pulled out a thick sweater, slipping it over my head without even asking first.

I gave him a dry look. "You do realize I'm already wearing a sweater, right? And this one's basically a massive blanket."

"It's colder out there than you think. Don't argue," he said smoothly, pulling the oversized hood up and tucking my loose hair inside. It smelled strongly like him warm, woodsy, and intensely grounding. I didn't mind it. Not one bit.

"Fine. But don't expect to ever get it back," I said, wrapping my arms lazily around his broad waist.

He leaned down softly, kissed my forehead, and whispered against my skin, "That's alright. As long as I get to keep you forever."

A soft smile tugged at my lips. "Deal."

The Wolf God's Unwanted Luna - Chapter 185: A Sanctuary in the Shadows[1,071 words]

Chapter 185: A Sanctuary in the Shadows

Vivian's POV

We left the plane and headed straight toward the car waiting for us on the tarmac. Zaliver mentioned casually that our bags would already be in our room by the time we arrived. It wasn't until I climbed into the leather passenger seat and settled in that I remembered something important.

"Where's Venom?"

Zaliver reached into his front pocket and pulled out a sleek key fob, unlocking the car with a soft beep. His dark eyes gleamed as he looked down at it, almost like he was reuniting with a beloved old friend.

"He's already here. Don't worry you'll get to see him before the ball."

Satisfied with his answer, I leaned my head back against the headrest, my eyes fluttering shut for a brief moment. My exhausted body was practically begging for sleep, but I definitely needed a long, hot shower first.

The drive was quiet. Peaceful. Long, but deeply peaceful. When we finally pulled up to the hotel, I felt like I was staring up at something straight out of a dream. The building towered above us like a modern-day castle gothic in its core design, but sleek and clean with glinting windows and sharp architectural lines. It was majestic. Intimidating. Pure Zaliver.

Instead of heading to the main entrance where anyone might spot us, he drove around to a secure side entrance and descended into a dark, underground parking area. After shutting off the engine, he stepped out and came right around to open my door, taking my hand in his like it was the most natural thing in the world.

I followed him, drowsy but comforted by the gentle way his fingers curled around mine.

Tomorrow, I'd explore. Tomorrow, I'd breathe in everything this magnificent place had to offer.

But tonight, I just needed him, a warm bed, and a long moment to exist in absolute silence.

The inside of the hotel was just as breathtaking as the outside opulent and polished in that effortless way only the truly rich seemed to manage. Everything gleamed brightly: the walls, the marble floors, even the very air felt expensive. Every step we took echoed softly against the marbled tiles. I wasn't sure if it was just a lucky coincidence or if Zaliver had meticulously planned it, but the private halls we walked through were completely deserted. Completely still. Silent.

We hadn't come in through the main entrance, and wherever this side door led, it looked like the entire staff had vanished into thin air. Or maybe it was just that late at night.

We stepped into a sleek elevator, the heavy metal doors whispering shut behind us. Zaliver punched in what looked like the most absurdly complex code I'd ever seen, his long fingers moving quickly like it was second nature.

"I'll give you the code in the morning," he murmured, his voice soft as pure velvet.

Even at a low whisper, his voice rang loud in my ears thanks to my enhanced lycan hearing. But I appreciated the gentle effort. He knew how sensitive my senses were after a long day of travel, and I really wasn't in the mood for anything loud.

When the elevator finally slid open, I found myself stepping into what could only be described as a royalty's private penthouse. The place was massive, styled in a theme that screamed Zaliver in every single inch deep blacks and silvers layered over rich textures, from the shimmering wallpaper to the oversized bed draped in dark, heavy silk.

Then I saw it my travel bag.

"Yes!" I made a swift beeline for it, scooping it up with the pure relief of someone being reunited with an old friend. Without a second word, I disappeared into the attached bathroom, which looked far more like a temple made to worship luxury than a simple place to wash your hands.

Thirty minutes later, I emerged thoroughly clean, drowsy, and definitely in a much better mood. Zaliver was sitting calmly on the edge of the large bed, paper documents spread out in his hands like he was reading an urgent war report. When he looked up and caught sight of me, his lips curled into a slow, affectionate smile.

"Feeling better?" he asked gently.

I gave him a lazy nod and stretched my arms, yawning softly. Then I flopped onto the soft bed and wrapped myself tightly around a plush pillow, blinking up at him through half-lidded eyes.

Without another word, he rose from the mattress and disappeared into the bathroom. A moment later, the soothing sound of running water reached my ears. I must've started to drift off to sleep, because the very next thing I felt was the intense warmth of his bare chest as he slid into bed right beside me. His strong arms wrapped tightly around me, pulling me in against him like I was something incredibly precious.

I released the pillow and tucked myself closely against his warm skin instead.

"Night," I whispered softly into the quiet room.

"Good night, my little cloud," he murmured, placing a tender kiss directly onto my forehead. I felt the deep tension melt completely from his body as he exhaled. "Rest."

"No, no, no. If you think I'm going to let you place their table dead center or right in front of the room, you've clearly lost your mind or you're trying to get fired," a sharp, furious voice rang out loudly across the grand hall. "Who even gave you that ridiculous idea? Do you want them surrounded and ambushed? I like my face the way it is, thank you very much. Put their table up there."

That had to be Jesse.

I hadn't met her yet in person, but I didn't need a name tag to recognize her. She was the only woman in the vast room who looked like she could command an entire army and still find time to critique your shoes. Petite but undeniably powerful, with skin like smooth espresso and a bold red mohawk that defied gravity itself, she stood right at the center of the total chaos, barking quick orders at trembling staff members who scrambled frantically to adjust heavy tables and chairs under her sharp gaze.

I was just passing by the main entrance when her loud voice caught my attention. Curious and half-amused, I paused right at the doorway to watch the show.

The Wolf God's Unwanted Luna - Chapter 186: The Mind of a Luna[1,183 words]

Chapter 186: The Mind of a Luna

Vivian's POV

Staff members noticed me instantly the moment I stepped near the open doorway. Some tried desperately not to stare. Others weren't so subtle at all. I could feel their intense unease could practically taste it hanging thick in the air. I understood why, though. My aura wasn't exactly soft or welcoming anymore. I'd inherited a formidable presence that made ordinary people deeply uneasy the kind that felt ancient, heavy, and formidable, much like Zahliver's own overwhelming aura.

It made me wonder, though... what did I actually look like to them?

A sarcastic pain in the ass? An awkward introvert forced into high society? A moody werewolf who liked quiet snacks and hated massive crowds?

Or are we talking about me and you right now?

Please. I'm just saying what we're both secretly thinking.

Before the internal voice in my head could run its mouth any further, Jesse turned around and grinned wide.

"Well, I'll be damned. Could it be? Is it really she? Hello, Luna," she said with a teasing lilt, her broad smile stretching from ear to ear.

"Hey, Jesse. Finally meeting you in person it's about time," I said, stepping fully into the chaotic room. My eyes swept over the massive space. Exposed wires dangling from above.

Half-unpainted walls. High-end furniture still tightly wrapped in protective plastic. Open paint cans dotting the far corners like dangerous landmines. "This is, um..."

"Unfinished?" she offered, arching a single dark brow while flipping through the thick clipboard in her hands.

"Yeah, that sounds about right," I admitted with a slightly sheepish grin.

She sighed heavily, her sharp eyes narrowing at one of the crew members dragging a heavy chair in the completely wrong direction. "Believe me, I know. I was really hoping we'd be fully done by tonight, but it looks like it'll be more like early morning if we're lucky. And that's not even counting the grand lighting setup or the catering food."

She shot me a quick look, clearly trying her best to keep her cool under pressure.

"But don't worry at all. It'll all be fully ready before the ball actually starts. Now that you're here, what do you think about..."

The rest of the morning turned into a whirlwind of constant activity. Elaborate decorations, mood lighting schemes, event playlists, and extensive food tasting Jesse and I went through every single detail together. It was chaotic in the best kind of way, the exact kind of high-energy environment that left me buzzing with excitement, even as I waved a fond goodbye to her and made my way back to our private penthouse suite where Zahliver said lunch would be waiting.

I stepped inside to find him hunched low over a staggering mountain of paperwork. The fresh food sitting on the table remained completely untouched, but his facial expression was what really caught my attention. His face was a total storm cloud frustrated, deeply tense, and so consumed by anger that he didn't even look up right away.

"Are you okay?" I asked gently, concern knitting my brow as I crossed the quiet room and sat down at the table. I reached for a warm garlic breadstick, the rich smell instantly making my mouth water.

He exhaled a long, heavy sigh, dragging a large hand down his face before leaning back in his chair.

"No. It looks like tomorrow night will be filled with swift firings and unexpected promotions. Some Alphas under my rule are complete imbeciles," he muttered darkly, then picked up a breadstick of his own and bit into it without much real interest. "Have you ever heard of Alpha Stone from the Leanzar pack?"

I nodded slowly. "I've heard the name brought up before, but I've never met him in person. Why?"

Gods, this garlic bread was absolute heaven. I tried to savor the rich bite, but Zahliver's very next words made that completely impossible.

"He's been turning a blind eye to forced matings in his pack. They're not waiting for their true fated mates they're pairing wolves up like it's some kind of cold business transaction. Males and females. All artificially arranged."

I stopped chewing instantly. My stomach twisted into a tight knot, and my inner beast snarled deep inside me a guttural growl of pure rage echoing through my very bones.

"They're mating for status and political gain?" I asked quietly, the horrifying idea making my chest ache.

He gave a solemn, heavy nod.

"You really do have a lot of firing to do," I murmured softly. "What about the wolves who were already forced into these unnatural bonds? What happens to them?"

I couldn't stop thinking about the poor wolves who might've been robbed forever of meeting their true mates. The mere thought felt like a violation of everything sacred in our kind. Who was Alpha Stone to decide who belonged to whom? Did he not feel the divine power of his own bond? Or worse did he simply not care?

Zahliver leaned back, his gaze cold and distant. "I usually focus on completely eliminating the root source of the problem. The emotional fallout? That's not something I'm particularly good at handling... if you haven't already noticed."

I looked down at the table, the sheer weight of the issue pressing heavily on me. My instincts both human and wolf alike refused to let this go without a fight. I needed to do more than just feel angry about it. I needed to act.

"If they weren't true fated mates, then... wouldn't the forced marks eventually fade on their own if we started a proper separation process?" I asked, thinking rapidly aloud. "If their destined mates are still out there somewhere, don't they have the absolute right to find them? No one should be stuck in a bond they didn't choose for themselves. If young pups were involved, then... well, I suppose each pair would need to decide what's truly best for their child. But they should at least be given the freedom of choice."

The words came out in a steady, determined stream, my voice rising with every thought. When I finally looked up, Zahliver was watching me intently, something fiercely warm and deeply admiring flickering in his striking blue eyes.

"You never stop surprising me," he said softly, the pride in his tone completely unmistakable. "You don't need anyone to teach you what a true Luna is meant to do, Vivian. You already embody it when it matters most."

The sudden heat that bloomed in my chest at his words caught me entirely off guard. A soft, genuine smile pulled at my lips. For a brief moment, the uncertain ground beneath my feet didn't feel so terrifying anymore.

"If that's what you want done, then I'll make it happen," he said firmly, with zero hesitation in his voice.

"Good," I said, feeling the smallest ember of real hope light up inside me. Maybe lasting change didn't always have to come through endless fire and destruction. Maybe, sometimes, it started with just one single voice refusing to stay silent.

The Wolf God's Unwanted Luna - Chapter 187: Quiet Before the Storm[1,106 words]

Chapter 187: Quiet Before the Storm

Vivian's POV

While Zahliver buried himself in mountains of reports and pack documents, I took the chance to slip quietly into the vast walk-in closet. Our heavy luggage sat neatly in the corner, untouched since we arrived late last night. I reached for the garment bag that hid my dress and pulled it free from where it hung high on the rack. I wasn't worried about wrinkles at all. Honestly, I didn't care. It was safely protected by the thick black covering, and unless Zahliver got curious enough to unzip it himself, he wouldn't see a single thing.

I placed the matching high heels on the shelf above and gently laid the masquerade masks on top. Everything was ready.

Across from mine, his tailored suit hung in its own sleek black bag. Just seeing it hanging there, untouched and waiting, made my stomach flutter nervously. We still had plenty of time before we had to get fully dressed, but I figured I might as well pull out my straightener and curler now. I hadn't decided how I'd style my hair yet it had grown much longer since we first met. Now it reached well past mid-chest, soft and thick. I ran a hand through it absentmindedly, then felt a sudden urge to annoy him.

So I marched right out of the closet and threw myself directly on top of Zahliver's broad back. His heavy shoulders tensed beneath me, but he didn't say a word. The king-sized bed dipped low under our combined weight, sending a few of his precious papers fluttering to the floor. Still, pure silence.

Challenge accepted.

Poke.

Right cheek.

Poke.

Left cheek.

Poke.

Forehead.

Poke.

Stomach.

Poke.

Thigh.

Poke.

Back to the right cheek.

Poke.

Butt cheek. I grinned wickedly to myself.

He let out a low, half-defeated groan. "Okay!" he muttered.

He rolled over in one swift motion and pinned me beneath him, resting his heavy weight comfortably on top of me. His expression was completely unreadable calm and blank but the sudden warmth in his dark eyes gave him away. He was indulging me.

I laughed at the fake stern look he gave me. He knew I wasn't going anywhere.

"Yes, Ms. Pokey?" he asked dryly.

I reached up and grabbed a loose strand of his long black hair, twirling it slowly between my fingers.

"You need a haircut," I said plainly, letting the dark strand fall.

He raised a brow, thoroughly intrigued. "Really?"

"Yes. I want my man looking extra sharp for tomorrow's ball," I said seriously, meeting his gaze.

He leaned down and pressed his face into my neck, his warm lips brushing the sensitive spot just above his mark. My body responded immediately, shivering beneath his touch.

"I like how that sounded," he whispered against my bare skin.

"Me too." I wrapped my arms around his broad neck and brought our lips together soft, deep, and slow.

As long as he doesn't shave it all off, a little trim could do wonders, my wolf mused casually, sounding oddly invested in Zahliver's grooming routine.

He broke the kiss with a sharp bark of laughter and rolled off me onto his side. I let my eyes drift up toward the high ceiling and narrowed them in total exasperation.

Really? I muttered internally.

What? I'm just saying the truth, she replied instantly, completely unapologetic.

Couldn't you have waited thirty seconds?

Nope. Had to sneak it in while his attention was elsewhere. You know what I

Yes. I get it, I cut her off with a heavy sigh.

Yeesh, someone's cranky. Are you PMSing or just born this bitchy today?

You I growled, but didn't finish the thought.

A long beat of silence passed between us.

"You know," Zahliver said, his deep voice full of amusement, "as entertaining as it is listening to you two argue internally, I'd prefer if you focused on the extremely attractive male currently gazing at you like you hung the moon."

I turned to look at him and, sure enough, he was resting up on one elbow, head propped up in his hand, watching me like I was the only thing worth seeing in the whole room. His blue eyes shimmered softly, full of quiet affection. My breath caught a little in my chest.

"Yes?" I asked softly.

He didn't answer right away, but his lips curved into that slow, secretive smile that always did dangerous things to my heart.

I cleared my throat, desperately needing to ground myself. "So... just to make sure I've got tomorrow night completely right, stop me if I'm wrong."

He nodded once, signaling for me to go on.

"We arrive, announce ourselves, and do the rounds greeting everyone properly. Then later, we eat, mingle, and at some point you'll have your official alpha meeting, and I'll meet with the lunas. Then we end the night dancing, all while trying to actively prevent any brawls, bloodshed, or public meltdowns. Sound accurate?"

Zahliver didn't speak immediately. He just kept looking down at me like I was the quiet calm before his storm.

Gods help me, tomorrow's going to be interesting.

He reached out and caught a long strand of my hair between his fingers, rolling it lazily. His warm fingertips brushed my neck as he twirled the strand like it was the most fascinating thing in the entire world. Then, shifting closer, he leaned into me and rested his heavy head on my shoulder. It made me snort a little his body was way too massive for such an innocent gesture. He had to awkwardly adjust his lower half just to make it work, but still, he did it. Like I was his anchor in the chaos.

He shook his head softly in response to what I'd just laid out.

"And what, exactly, did I miss?" His deep voice rumbled low and amused against my skin.

"You conveniently skipped the part where we remind everyone how stunning and downright terrifying their Alpha and Luna are." I glanced at him out of the corner of my eye. "Or the bit where, if one of those entitled little Alpha brats dares look at you the wrong way, I "

His low growl was soft, but it still vibrated from his broad chest straight into mine, interrupting me.

I grinned up at him. "Then it goes both ways. If I catch a she-wolf even thinking about putting her hands on you, I'm not making any promises about staying civilized."

I wouldn't be held responsible for what happened next.

But they definitely would.

His smirk was slow, wicked, and far too amused. "Duly noted, love."

The Wolf God's Unwanted Luna - Chapter 188: The Mark of Royalty[1,472 words]

Chapter 188: The Mark of Royalty

Vivian's POV

The next day came in a total whirlwind.

The moment I opened my eyes, chaos practically greeted me with a kiss on the forehead. Zaliver and I parted ways not long after sunrise he had his heavy Alpha duties and final arrangements to double-check before the main event. I, on the other hand, was left to prepare for the night... which ended up taking the entire day.

I decided to indulge myself a little. A full spa day sounded like the absolute least I deserved with everything going on. First on the long list: my legs. Normally, I would have just shaved, but no apparently my body decided to go through some kind of rebellious growth spurt overnight. So, waxing it was. Painful? Yes. Worth it? Also yes.

After that, I got a light trim to clean up my split ends, then had both my nails and toes painted a sleek shade that made me feel oddly powerful. I spent nearly an hour steaming in a private room hot enough to melt my thoughts, just to get my skin glowing. Then came a cold rinse that left me shivering but completely refreshed.

Zaliver checked in on me through the mate bond a few times. His constant presence in my head felt warm, steady, and intensely curious. I could tell he was deeply looking forward to seeing the finished result.

After the spa, I came back to our penthouse suite and stepped into the grand bathroom, grabbing my favorite lotion and slathering it all over. The scent was soft and familiar the exact kind that made him bury his nose in my neck whenever he thought I wasn't paying attention. I waited for the lotion to settle while I laid out the dress, the high heels, and the masks on the vast bed.

Next came my hair. I blow-dried it carefully, then ran the flat iron through every single strand until it gleamed beneath the light. No flyaways, no frizz just sleek, straight lines.

Finally, the moment I'd been anticipating all day: the dress.

Sliding into it sent a wild thrill right down my spine. It clung in all the right places, hugging my curves like it had been custom-sewn onto my skin, leaving just enough to the imagination. The high heels were equally jaw-dropping tall, strappy, and sharp enough to be used as lethal weapons if the night went completely sideways.

I stood before the large mirror and focused on my makeup. A bold cat-eye liner, enough mascara to fan out my dark lashes, and finally, the lipstick. A deep, intense shade that practically glowed against my skin. I loved the stark contrast. Loved how fierce I looked.

Hairbrush in hand, I pulled everything into a low, taut ponytail. A quick spritz of hairspray kept the baby hairs in check, and then I started digging through my bag.

"Where are you... come on, where aha." I grinned bright as I pulled out what I'd been searching for. Reading the instructions carefully, I took my time. It needed to be absolutely perfect.

Fifteen minutes later, I was completely ready.

The mirror reflected a woman I barely recognized not because she looked completely different, but because for once... I had no complaints. Not one single flaw to nitpick. I looked strong. Beautiful. Dangerous.

And very much like someone's true Luna.

Excitement buzzed through my veins. A little anxiety too. But over all of it, there was this grounding, undeniable joy. Tonight was important for us, for the pack, and for everything that came next.

And I was completely ready.

I stood in front of the full-length mirror, adjusting the sleeves of the deep red lace dress that clung to me like a second skin. From my chest straight down to my waist, it hugged every single curve before flaring out beneath the silver ribbon that cinched my midsection tightly. The lace pattern on the sleeves bloomed in delicate red petals, but what I truly adored wasn't just the dress or even the sleek black stilettos that added a few extra inches to my height. It was the intricate temporary mask drawn onto my bare skin, wrapping around my eyes like a secret whispered in dark ink.

The deep black swirls and intricate patterns framed my face with total elegance, enhancing the warm brown of my eyes and making my lashes look impossibly long. Once I put on the actual physical mask later, the tattoo beneath would stay hidden until I removed it and I absolutely loved the idea of that hidden detail. Like secret armor. Like magic.

I kept my accessories simple: pearl earrings, three rings that shimmered when the light hit them just right, and a long gladiator-style cuff that laced up my forearm. A hollow, flower-patterned black choker circled my neck, just loose enough to be comfortable, but tight enough to remind me who I was becoming. My nails, painted the same icy silver as the ribbon around my waist, glinted every time I moved my fingers.

Instead of going with basic red lips like I knew most others would, I chose black. Bold, unusual, and completely unapologetic. And somehow, the black lipstick worked in total harmony with the mask tattoo. It didn't make me look strange at all. It made me look fierce.

Looking at myself, I didn't just see a woman in a beautiful dress.

I saw a Luna.

A badass Luna.

With steady steps, I crossed the room to the bed and picked up the two physical masks waiting there one for me, one for him just as the door opened softly behind me.

And there he was.

Zaliver walked in like he owned the entire world hell, maybe he actually did. That raw power, that heavy weight he carried with every single step, filled the space before he even said a word. His dark black hair had been freshly trimmed, slicked back nicely on the sides but left just tousled enough at the top. His deep blue eyes locked onto me and immediately darkened, like a sudden storm gathering at sea.

He looked like pure sin wrapped in custom Armani.

The suit was perfectly tailored to his broad shoulders and lean frame. The black shirt beneath was buttoned all the way up to his throat, which for some reason drove me completely crazy. I found myself wishing two, maybe three of those buttons were undone so I could see just a hint of his sculpted chest. His pocket square was the exact same crimson shade as my dress a subtle but unmistakable claim: *He's mine*.

Even his pants deviated from the usual boring style, tapering tightly at his ankles in a way only he could pull off. The polished black dress shoes grounded the whole look, completing the ultimate image of lethal grace.

If I looked fierce, he looked like a dark god ready to go to war and win.

He paused the second he saw me, his eyes raking slowly down my entire body like he needed to memorize every detail. Then, in a fast rush of movement, he was standing right

in front of me. His mouth parted, and his tongue swept slowly over his bottom lip in a move that sent immediate heat flaring through my core. My heartbeat skipped, then picked up pace, knowing full well he hadn't even seen what I was hiding underneath the dress yet.

His voice dropped low, almost a dark growl.

"Can I take the dress off now?"

His gaze fixated heavily on my chest, his eyes dark with raw hunger.

I let out a breathless laugh, shaking my head softly. "Nope. I just put it on. You'll have to wait," I added with a teasing smile.

His eyes glazed over for a second before trailing down to my lips this time. He reached up, gently tracing my bottom lip with his index finger, his touch featherlight. He swallowed hard.

"Yes. Later," he said, his voice hoarse with promise.

Something coiled tight and low in my belly, heat spiraling straight through me. Saints, I wanted the night to end already if it meant being completely alone with him.

But another thought pushed through, tugging softly at the edge of my confidence.

"I'm a little nervous about meeting all the other alphas and lunas," I admitted quietly.

He didn't lose the fire in his gaze, but his brows did crease slightly in concern.

"Why?"

I looked away from him, unsure. "Besides you and Albericus, I've never really interacted with other alphas. Not in my old pack either. I was raised being told to keep my head down, to avoid eye contact with dominant wolves, especially males. I never had the chance to defy that. You were different because you're... you're mine. But them..."

The Wolf God's Unwanted Luna - Chapter 189: The Serpent and the Shadow[1,294 words]

Chapter 189: The Serpent and the Shadow

Vivian's POV

He stepped closer, closing the space between us with that unshakable calm he carried like a shield.

"They are under your command, Vivian. Whether they like it or not, you're their Luna. You don't lower your eyes. You don't silence yourself. You don't ask permission to exist in a room that was already yours the moment you walked in. They bow. They explain themselves. They obey. The only person who has any claim to your submission is standing right here in front of me." His deep voice softened. "Now tell me, who is that?"

I met his gaze, diving into that endless ocean of stormy blue.

"Me," I said, my voice firm, completely unshaken.

He smiled, slow and sensual, lifting my chin gently so I'd tilt my face toward him.

"That's right. You hold the power, Vivian. I want them to see that tonight. Be the sharp, fearless, brilliant woman I fell in love with. The one who made me want more than just control and power. Can you do that for me, baby?"

He leaned in close, his breath warm against my ear as he whispered softly. And just like that, the nervous flutter in my chest settled down into cold certainty.

Because I was ready.

And I'd make sure they saw the Luna I truly was.

My legs trembled, but I refused to collapse beneath his intense stare. His words grounded me, reminding me of who I was beside him. Not beneath. Not behind. Beside. His equal. His Luna.

I blinked down at the silver mask in my hand, then lifted the other and offered it to him. Zahriver took it from me, his gaze lingering on my face for a second too long before he finally looked down and let out a low chuckle.

"This is ironic and surprisingly clever, Vivian," he said, slipping the silver mask smoothly over his face. "I like it."

He curled a broad arm around my waist, and I mirrored the motion, pressing into his side. Together, we turned to face the large mirror. Twin silver masks stared back at us sleek and regal wolf royalty preparing to descend among their kind.

As we stepped out of the penthouse room, Zahriver leaned down, his warm breath ghosting over the shell of my ear.

"The next time we walk back through that door," he murmured, his voice dipped in promise, "I'm taking that red dress off you and proving just how sexy you look in it."

I glanced up at him, caught in the gleam of his wild, storm-blue eyes, and smirked.

"I'll be counting every single step until then."

We walked a little further down the grand hallway before something struck me.

"Wait... where's Venom?"

Zahliver tensed just a slight flicker of it and then he stopped completely and turned toward me fully. The sudden seriousness in his expression made my pulse jump.

"Will you keep an open mind?" he asked softly.

I raised an eyebrow, then remembered he couldn't actually see that behind my mask.

"That depends. How open are we talking?"

He let out a slow breath, then laced his fingers with mine and tugged me down the hall, steering us away from the main ballroom and toward a private balcony bathed in moonlight.

And there he stood tall and imposing, dressed head to toe in pristine white. Even from a distance, he was completely unmistakable. No one else was seven feet tall, with slicked-back white hair, golden serpent eyes, and the uncanny confidence to wear a golden bow tie with serious style.

"Luna. Alpha. You both look exceptional tonight," Venom greeted smoothly, bowing slightly at the waist.

"Thank you," I said, then smiled up at him. "You're not looking too bad yourself. The golden bow's a nice touch."

Zahliver turned to me, his broad back shielding Venom from view. His hands settled on my shoulders, grounding me again. Through our mate bond, I felt it just the faintest flicker of hesitation, something left unspoken.

"Okay," I said, narrowing my eyes at him behind my mask. "Spit it out already."

He hesitated for a second.

"How do you feel about snakes?"

I blinked. Of all the strange questions I thought were coming, that one hadn't even crossed my mind.

"What kind of question is that?" I asked, side-eying the very snake-like man standing right behind him.

"When I said Venom would be your personal bodyguard, I wasn't just handing him a title. He has... unique talents."

I tilted my head, trying to read between his carefully chosen words.

"You're not about to tell me he turns into a snake, are you? Because I swear, Zahliver, if a giant serpent slithers after me all night, I'm not going to be responsible for the absolute chaos that follows."

Zahliver didn't answer right away he just stepped aside as Venom took a slow step forward.

"If I may?" Venom asked, polite as ever. I gave a hesitant nod, unsure what I was agreeing to.

He reached out a hand, and after a short pause, I took it. The moment our skin touched, he vanished completely. Just gone into thin air.

"What the " I spun around in a circle, searching for the seven-foot-tall man who had just disintegrated right in front of me. "Zahliver? Where did he go? How do you even lose a giant snake man in three seconds?"

Zahliver was watching me, quiet amusement glinting in his eyes, but he said nothing.

I stopped mid-rant when something cold clamped gently around my upper arm. I looked down in shock.

"What the hell..."

Wrapped snugly around my bicep was what looked like an intricately carved, gleaming white snake armband.

"Is that...?" I asked, lifting my arm to get a closer look.

"Venom? Yep," Zahliver replied casually.

"He... He turned into jewelry? What in the ever-loving..." I trailed off, inspecting the odd sensation of having a live snake wrapped around my arm. He wasn't heavy at all, but I could feel the strange coolness of his form. I poked him lightly with one finger. He didn't react. No hiss, no flinch. Nothing.

"I... don't even know what to say to that."

"Venom has a lot of tricks up his sleeve or around your arm, I guess," Zahliver said with a slight shrug. "You can ask him about it later, when he's not masquerading as an accessory."

I kept staring down at my arm. "It's kind of... cool, actually."

Zahliver's blue eyes lit up with surprise, but he only nodded and took my hand again.

Back in the main hallway, the air was thick with scent and sound. I could hear wolves laughing, chattering, and the distant clink of glasses. The electric pulse of the pack gathering for the grand masked ball.

Zahliver gave me a wicked grin and pushed open the ballroom doors.

"Ready to have a little fun?" he asked low.

I nodded.

The room was vast and glowing brightly with warm lights. Soft music floated through the heavy air. There were stairs leading to a grand indoor theater space, but before anyone could notice us, Zahliver grabbed my waist and pulled me close his supernatural speed blurring everything around us. In a blink, we were standing at our private table high above the main floor, hidden away behind a veil of deep shadows.

No one saw us arrive.

But they definitely felt us.

I could feel the sudden shift ripple through the entire room the sharp turn of instincts responding to our overwhelming presence. Wolves began to look around frantically, trying to locate the source of that rising power.

I looked at Zahliver. He looked at me.

Our thoughts aligned with perfect clarity.

Let the party begin.

The Wolf God's Unwanted Luna - Chapter 190: An Atmosphere of Danger[1,005 words]

Vivian's POV

I kept close to the dark shadows, letting the busy buzz of conversation and soft background music hide my presence. No one had noticed me yet, which gave me the perfect chance to take in the entire room without any interruption. I observed everything happening around and soaked in the feeling.

Jesse had outdone herself again. The large space had been transformed into something deeply elegant yet haunting. She painted the walls in a stormy blend of black, white, silver, gold, and just the right amount of deep blood-red that licked the corners of the room like an afterthought of danger. A low half-wall jutted out with small circular mirrors lining it, reflecting scattered glimpses of guests as they passed by. She had draped long, sheer net curtains in a rich crimson color from the ceiling, letting them spill all the way to the ground in delicate pools. It gave the room a dreamlike, otherworldly quality.

The layout was completely strategic. The guest tables were positioned across the outer perimeter, with the wide dancefloor cutting straight through the center like a direct challenge laid bare. From where I stood near the back, I could see the massive dessert table stretched out along the rear wall. Zahliver and I were perfectly placed to watch everything, an oversight that was anything but accidental, it was carefully curated.

To the right side, the DJ manned his station, raised up slightly on a small podium. He was playing something soft right now, just for ambiance, but I knew the tempo would pick up later. I had given Jesse a personal playlist for the middle stretch of the night. This party was supposed to be for me, after all. I refused to spend the entire night listening to dusty old classical tunes that made me want to claw my own ears off. We were wolves, not quiet statues sitting in a museum that could be subject to boring musics and events.

Each table was covered in dark black fabric that hung neatly down the sides, paired with heavy chairs that had silver and gold legs. It looked clean, modern, and refined. And right in the center of each table sat a true masterpiece of subtlety. I had begged Jesse not to use those ridiculously tall flower arrangements that made real conversation awkward and left guests dodging long stems just to make eye contact. She came back with something far more brilliant small wolf figurines, each one crafted with exquisite detail. Right above each figurine stood a miniature moon bearing the pack's sigil, letting every visiting alpha know exactly where they belonged.

And overhead, suspended high above the dancefloor like some ancient relic from a forgotten castle, hung a massive crystal chandelier. Its gothic frame shimmered quietly under the dimmed lights. Every single wall sconce had been turned down low, including the chandelier itself, so that the entire room glowed gently in an eerie, seductive hush. I absolutely loved it. The entire space hummed with mystery, and it was clear by the tight shoulders and hushed tones of the arriving guests that they really didn't know whether to relax or brace themselves for something completely unexpected.

Our private table was set on the second-floor balcony, pushed right to the edge so Zahliver and I had a clear, full view of the room below. Even while seated, we could easily see every single entrance, every movement, and every unspoken whisper.

I would definitely need to thank Jesse properly once this long night was finally over. She did a good job.

A warm, steady squeeze at my hand brought me right back from my silent awe. I turned my head to look at Zahliver, who gave me a lopsided grin. His sharp eyes, however, were focused directly on the floor below us. With a subtle tilt of his chin, he signaled down toward the growing crowd.

Following his gaze, I sifted through the blur of black and white dresses, fancy masks, and quiet murmurs, and then I saw what had caught his attention.

Just slipping through the grand entrance, already making a massive statement without even trying, was a young alpha pair who looked to be about my age. While they had stuck to the basic black-and-white dress code, they had clearly decided masks were not worth their time. Instead, they wore pure arrogance like heavy armor heads held far too high, their expressions totally soaked in superiority.

The male had a thick mane of wavy blond hair and walked like he was already completely bored to tears. His suit jacket hung wide open, his dark shirt undone halfway down his torso as if flashing his chest was part of some calculated act of direct defiance.

But the girl walking right beside him was the real showstopper. Her confidence was blazing bright. She had a curvy figure that she flaunted with zero shame, and the small excuse for a black dress she wore barely met the definition of clothing. It clung tightly to her like a second skin, leaving almost nothing to the imagination. The top was cut so high it did not even attempt to cover the bottom curves of her breasts just a narrow strip of fabric held things in place, almost taunting basic modesty. Thin strings wound down her midsection in a tight crisscross pattern until they reached her hips, where the fabric gave up entirely. There was far more bare skin than actual dress, and it left no real questions about the kind of undergarments or total lack thereof she had chosen for the night.

Even among wolves, who were not exactly known for being shy about their bodies, her entrance turned every head in the room and sparked immediate whispers.

I arched a brow behind my mask and leaned slightly closer to Zahliver.

"Subtle," I murmured under my breath.

He let out a low, dark chuckle. "They clearly came here to make a scene."

And they were clearly just getting started.

