

Chapter 17: Mergers

Amelia passed the phone back to Olivia, a pained look on her face. Olivia recognized the look.

She still cares about him, Olivia sighed. She pretends she doesn't, but clearly she does.

Amelia shook her head, trying to shake away the memory of that first night. She'd been so hopeful, so sure that things would work out.

But it had all gone to shit.

No matter now, though. She was in a better place. And she had a company to run.

Olivia took her phone and tucked it away into her pocket. She felt really bad for rubbing Gabriel in Amelia's face like that. She hated him, yes, but she loved her friend and didn't want to see her hurt. She decided to change the topic to get Amelia's mind off Gabriel. "Hey, I meant to ask you. Do you remember Lily and Laura?"

"Of course," Amelia smiled. The change of topic worked. Amelia's mind turned to the two twins from the Solas Pack. "We were in the sisterhood together. During school."

Amelia smiled with fondness. Those had been good times. Lily and Laura had been wonderful friends. They'd studied hard at school and graduated from the Mellowdame School

for Business, one of the most elite business schools in the area. They were kind girls with hearts of gold. But they were also strong and dedicated – a real force to be reckoned with in the business world, especially since there were two of them!

“How are they?” Amelkia asked Olivia. “I lost touch with them. When I left.”

I lost touch with everyone, Amelia thought. All for Gabriel.

“They’re amazing, as always. Listen, they heard about all the drama at the banquet from their parents. Honestly, everyone has.”

Word travels fast. In both the wolf and the human world, Amelia sighed.

“They’re thrilled that you’re back. Thrilled! They heard all about Gabriel and the whole Sophia/stolen ruby crap. Seriously, Amelia, they’re super happy you left that stupid pack.”

“It’s nice to have fans,” Amelia smiled.

“And....they want us to go out with them tonight. To that new bar. The Vicious Circle? Say you’ll come. Please. They said they have big news to share,” Olivia said, trying to entice Amelia.

Just then, there was a light knock on the door. Before Amelia could say ‘come in’, Amaya burst through. She had documents in her hand. She saw Olivia and then stopped.

She opened her mouth to say something, but then closed it.

She stood in silence, apparently waiting for Olivia to excuse herself. But Olivia didn't budge.

"Can I help you?" Amelia asked, annoyed at Amaya's interruption. Amaya gave Olivia the side eye and Olivia crossed her arms over her chest.

"You heard her," Olivia said. "What do you want?"

Amaya sighed and rolled her eyes.

These two aren't worth the effort. A month? Meh. I give her two weeks. She'll never last here, Amaya thought to herself. She turned to Amelia. "There's a case. It's a really tough one. But you're here now. So it's all yours, Amelia," she started, but Amelia cut her off.

"It's Miss Moonstone," she replied curtly.

Amaya's mouth dropped wide open.

Moonstone?

As in Magnus Moonstone?

But Magnus never mentioned this to me. Amelia saw the wheels turning in Amaya's head and smiled smugly.

Amaya glanced at the engraved name card on the desk. Sure enough:

Amelia Moonstone it read, in thick block letters.

So this is the little princess of the Moonstone family? The one that mysteriously disappeared two years ago, right after graduating from the Mellowdame School for Business. And with an MBA no less! Amaya eyed Amelia up and down. And where did you go, little princess? She recalled the shock when Amelia was gone. One day she'd been here, primed and ready to join the family business. The next? Well, no one knew where she'd gone.

Not until recently, anyway.

You ran off and to the Stormfang Pack. Luna to Alpha Gabriel. What a strange thing to do, little princess. IF that's really who you are...

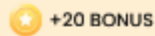
"The files?" Amelia asked, holding out her hand.

Princess or not, I'm going to make this easy for you. I've worked too hard to get where I am. I'm the golden child of the next generation, and I won't let a little daddy's girl like you take that away from me. You've met your match.

"Well, Miss Moonstone," Amaya said, emphasizing the Moonstone. I don't know what brought you into this company, but you have ONE month to prove yourself. That's the deadline YOU set, correct? A month?"

Amelia nods, her lips pressed tightly together.

"There's a business merger here. However, there are two other companies that are competing with ours. Brickroll Holdings and Mandrake Enterprise. Now, as I'm sure you



ascertained from the shareholder's discussion this morning, we need to form an alliance with one of them."

"Yes, I agree," Amelai said, trying frantically to take in all the information being scathingly thrown at her. Amelai was pretty sure Amaya wouldn't be open for a Q and A session afterwards.

"Our relationship with Brickroll Holdings has not been a friendly one. They've made their opinion of us known in previous business dealings. In fact, they've been an absolute headache to deal with. So, it's in our best interest to try to work with Mandrake Enterprises. You'll need to negotiate that. Good luck!"

Amaya dropped the files onto the desk and proudly walked out of the room.


Prepare. To. Fail, she thought as she strode out.

Amelia picked up the files. "Livs? Am I in over my head here? This sounds really serious. I don't know anything about either of these companies. I can't fail. What do you think?"

Olivia sighed. "Well, merger cases aren't really my specialty. They're a little outside my field."

"Just tell me what you know. Lay it on me. Come on, I need all the help I can get," Amelia said, as she perched onto the corner of the desk.

"Well, Brickroll Holdings is huge. Like, really big. They're a

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really successful company and they're run by humans. There's a lot of business competition with us, though. Mandrake Enterprises, on the other hand, is a bit more mysterious. I don't know much about them, really. But I can look into it? Dig up whatever I can and get back to you?"

"Sure. That'd be great. Now as for..."

"Amelia," Olivia said, holding up her hand to stop her friend. "This is your first day at the company. Your FIRST day! We need to celebrate. No more business talk, just for today? Lily and Laura are waiting for us. Let's hit up the bar. Yes? Puhleeeese."


Amelia couldn't resist a good pleading from Olivia. She nodded. "Yes?" Olivia asked again, nodding too.

"Yes," Amelia laughed.

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