

The Luna's Choice (theo and ayla) by Kat Silver Chapter 4

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Chapter 4: Theo

It had been a week since I had gone home with Kylee. Seven days and a hundred miles away, and the bond was still there. The burning in my chest wouldn't go away. I didn't understand and it was pissing me off. I had been in an awful mood because of it.

I had taken to holing up in my office most of the time. I didn't want to snap at Kylee, or her mother, which had become hard to avoid by the third day. They didn't deserve that. Kylee definitely didn't deserve that. I was glad I had a good reason for me being so busy all of a sudden.

Alpha was sick. He was diagnosed with a progressive disease almost a year ago. It had gotten to the point that he and my mother were concerned about the toll the Alpha role was taking on him. So, he decided it was time to hand the title down to me. It wasn't official yet. We were planning on making the change at the same time as Kylee's and my mating ceremony. Actually, that's why I decided to make Kylee my official mate. Alpha's were always stronger with a strong Luna by their side. With the circumstances of my father's abdication, our pack needed to be as strong as possible.

But there was still a lot to take care of and a lot I had to learn about being an Alpha before that *time*. So it wasn't hard to convince her that it was the stress that was causing me to be distant.

There was a knock on my office door, and Kylee poked her head in before I had a chance to answer. She walked around

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my desk with a bright smile.

“There you are, mate,” she cooed, sitting in my lap. “You’ve been up here all day.”

“I’m sorry, babe. I’ve been working.”

She ran a hand up my chest, leaning in to kiss me. Kieran’s growl started immediately. He had spent the whole week giving me the silent treatment, except when Kylee was around. Then all he did was growl and snarl. It was getting exhausting.

Kylee pulled away. “I know. I understand. I just wanted to check on you.”

“Thanks,” I said with a smile. She really was sweet. “I’m fine, just knee—*deep* in all this paperwork. *Did you need anything?*”

She tried to hide her pout, but I saw it for a moment.

“What is it, Ky?”

“I don’t want to bother you. You’re already so busy.”

“You can ask me for anything. Don’t ever feel bad for doing so,” I insisted.

Her face brightened. “Well, there’s this necklace of *my* mother’s. She wants me to wear it for our mating ceremony, but it was left at the house. I *called* Ayla to have her bring it to me when she *came* up, but she won’t be able to make it for a few more weeks.”

I gripped the arm of the chair at hearing her name. *At hearing that Kylee spoke to her.* I fought the urge to ask how she was. Knowing I *shouldn’t* care.

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“Do you really need it sooner than that? We have months until the ceremony.”

“**Well**, I have my **first dress** appointment on Tuesday. I would really like to have **it so** we can match it to the perfect **dress**,” Kylee said, leaning into me, tracing her finger along the collar of my shirt.

I sighed. “Okay, I’ll send someone to pick it up. Just send me the details to pass along.”

She kissed me again, accompanied by my wolf’s protests again, and pulled away with a smile. “Thank you, baby. You’re the best.” She moved to get up but paused. “Are you coming **to** see me tonight?”

“I’ll try. If I don’t get done here too late.”

“You better. We miss you.”

‘Evie doesn’t.’

Evie was **Kylee’s** wolf. Kieran had never had a problem with Evie, but he never really showed much interest in her either. It wasn’t that surprising. Our wolves only reacted to their fated mates. The only way to change that was to mark someone else and be marked by them. So I had never been too worried about **it**. But now I was. **If** I couldn’t completely **sever the** bond between me and Ayla, he could end up taking control and stop **me** from marking Kylee.

I would **need** to do **something about this**.

“I miss **you, too**. I **promise I’ll work something out soon**.”

“**Okay**,” she said with a sigh. “**I’ll let you get back to work then**.”

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She kissed me on **the** cheek and sashayed out of my office. I **couldn’t keep** avoiding **her**. It would

hurt her if I stopped showing **interest** in **her**. I didn't want to do that. I had to do **something**.

I decided to drive down to Kylee's house myself.

I left early the following morning before anyone else woke up.

I wanted to avoid any questions. I broke every speed limit on the way. I wanted to get there and get back before too many people noticed I was gone.

It shouldn't be too hard. I'd get the necklace, I'd reject Ayla again, making sure it stuck this time, and I'd go back home.

But when I pulled up to the house, something twisted in my gut. I cut the engine to the car and grabbed the house key I had gotten from Kylee's keyring. If Ayla was home, I didn't want to scare her by barging in, so I knocked first. There was no answer, and I didn't hear any movement inside. I tested the doorknob, and it was locked. I let myself in with the key, and the feeling in my gut returned as soon as I stepped into the **house**.

No one had been here in a while. All the scents, although **still** easily detected, were too faded to have been recent. Including Ayla's. Her invigorating scent of oranges and cloves invaded my **nostrils**, but **it** wasn't nearly **as** strong as **it** should **have** been. Had **Ayla** not been **here** since we left? Kieran **paced** in my head. **What if something** happened **to her**?

My heart rate sped up, my hands balled into **fists**. **I made my way** through the **house**, **looking for** any signs **that** something had **occurred here**. **I went to their mother's room first**. **It all**

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seemed

in order. Even the jewelry **box** was untouched. I grabbed the **whole** box, **not** bothering

to look through it for **the** particular piece Kylee wanted. Then I checked Kylee's old **room**. **It, too**, seemed unbothered.

I paused outside

what had to be Ayla's room, my hand gripping the doorknob tightly. I could smell her scent through the wood. I had to brace myself, both against the onslaught of her scent hitting me and what I may find inside. I turned the knob and pushed the door open.

I had to grip the door jamb

to keep Kieran from forcing the shift. All he wanted to do was roll around in here, gathering up Ayla's delicious smell, rubbing his over everything that was hers. He wanted to stake his claim. Absolutely not. I managed to push him back, but he came surging back the moment we **looked** at the scene before us.

The place wasn't trashed, but there were definitely signs that someone had left in a hurry. Clothes were hanging out of half-open drawers, shoes had been scattered out of the closet, and there was no sign of any electronics or chargers. And then I caught it.

There was another scent in the room.

I moved **to** the **dresser**, grabbing **a shirt from a drawer and** sniffing **it**. This time, I **was the** one who growled, **my** wolf in **chorus** along **with me**. The scent was male. It **was faint**, **he** wasn't here long, but mixed in with the distinctive **scent of** my mate, I could pick **it** out anywhere. From **the trail**, **it seemed as if he was the one who packed up her** things.

The question was, did he **take her** or **did she go willingly?**

Either way, we would find her.

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I **stormed out of** the house. Tossing the jewelry box **in the passenger seat**, I took my phone out and searched for the number **for** the publishing house Kylee said Ayla worked for. I punched **it in as soon as it** pulled up. A receptionist picked up.

“I need **to** speak to Ayla Garner,” I barked into the phone.

“Just **a** moment,” she said, putting me on hold for a moment. “I’m sorry, sir. She doesn’t have **a** meeting scheduled for today.”

“When will she be in next?”

“Her next meeting isn’t until next Thursday, sir.”

What did she mean she wouldn’t be in until Thursday? That was almost a whole week. What meeting was she talking about? Kylee said she was some kind of assistant.

“This is her... sister’s mate. Kylee and their mother have been trying to get a hold of her, and they’re worried. Do you have a phone number or address for her?” I know it was low to use Kylee like that, but it was the only way I might have gotten her to give **me** that information.

“Oh, actually, **it** does look **like** she had added a forwarding **address** to her **profile**,” the receptionist said.

I punched in the **address as** she **rattled** it off, I hung up without even saying **anything else** and tore **out of the** driveway. My knuckles **turned** white **as** I gripped **the steering wheel**. I **followed** the GPS **to the address, pulling** into **the drive of a large, two-story house in a nice neighborhood. Parking half on the lawn, I didn’t even close the car door before taking the front steps two at a time.**

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I banged on the **door** until I heard movement inside. A man opened it. It was the male I smelled in Ayla's room. Before he could say anything, I lunged at him, my hands grabbing the front of his shirt and practically lifting him off the ground.

"What **the** fuck have you done with her? I smell her all over you. Where the hell is she?"

He pushed me off him, his eyes glaring at me with recognition and disdain.

"You must be Theo."