

# Traded To The Lycan King by MG Wattsons

## Chapter 26-30

### Chapter 26

Colette is nervous, her hands shaking as we exit the vehicle and come face to face with the enormous remodeled castle. The once gray stones have been painted over in a soft white.

Pristine bushes frame the heavy wooden double doors, the spiral pattern climbing the height to the entrance. A thick line of hydrangeas line the stone wall, in full bloom and tall enough to kiss the bottom of the tall windows.

Percy unloads behind us, pulling our luggage to the door before tugging a chain and bells chime, announcing our presence. Penny was as angry as a raging bull when I told her she wouldn't be coming with us. But with her unmated and around the likes of a few of these assholes, I'm more comfortable with Percy

"I will be your shadow as always, Luna." He says, giving her a nod and Colette gives him a gentle smile. The same smile I used to get and I've come to realize I miss more than anything.

"I'm glad you are here, she admits, then she looks at me, her face going cold and looks forward. I lean into her ear to whisper something snarky, but the door creaks open instead.

Ezrah gives me a smirk and I take an internal sigh of relief. I was worried one of the others would answer. There is one person in particular I am trying to avoid.

"You answer doors now?" I ask him and he chuckles.

Thankfully, no, I am on my way out after delivering the message you would be arriving

"You have been monitoring us, Ezrah?" I ask, and he shrugs. "How did they take that?" I quirk a brow and he fights a grin.

“Oh, with an air of grace, Alpha. As always. But I can hear the teasing lilt in his voice. I am sure they took word of my arrival with rage and a side of bitterness.

“Ah, yes. I am sure they did.” I clear my throat, looking to Colette, who watches Ezra with a curious eye

“Ezrah, this is my Luna, Colette,” I say. She bows her head in respect and Ezra barks out a laugh.

“Oh, I like her.” he grins. “I should bow to you, Luna, I am no one, just a low messenger.”

“And I was a maid until recently. Your station doesn’t matter much to me, but your kindness does. You seem to trust each other. She says, shooting me a look..

Ezrah arches an amused brow

“Trust? Hardly. His great grandfather killed my kind.”

“Great, great–great–great..-maybe a few more in there somewhere–Grandfather. It’s been a few generations now.” I remind him, and he nods knowingly.

“Yes, I am aware of how you all get over things in time. But it is much harder for the people who live much longer.”

“And It wasn’t your kind.” I frown at him.

“The council is my kind. I serve all.” He reminds me with a twinkle in his eye. “As long as it is in the best interest of the council”

“Fraternizing with the enemy. Ez?” a light airy voice beckons and I reach out, instinctively gripping Colette’s hand in mine.

“Never, Florence. He gives a tight lip smile, turning. “I was just leaving and ran in to an old friend”

Friend my ass.” She mutters, taking a step forward. “Well, Merikh, I can’t say it’s great to see you. I rather hoped you would get the message you are unwanted and unwelcome here.”

## Chapter 28

“Wanted or not, we have the right to represent our kind” I say firmly. She scowls at me and then turns her gaze on to Colette, her eyes lighting up with delight.

“Oh,” she giggles. “Oh my. You brought a plaything?”

Colette freezes, and I pull her close. She steps willingly into my embrace as I press my lips to her head.

“I brought my mate and Luna. She is my equal and will be treated with respect. Not like a person to play a part in your foreplay

She tuts and then rolls her eyes, throwing the door open wide.

“You lycans and your possessive nature. Perhaps she wants a little fun. Heavens know you aren’t any.” She mutters, turning and walking away. “Hurry along and I will show you to your room.”

Colette remains silent the whole walk, Florence mumbling to herself as she shoots daggers my way and checks Colette out once or twice. She weaves us past a second kitchen and up a set of spiral staircases before stopping with an annoyed expression

“Apparently, dinner will be in two hours” She says, sounding annoyed. “It’s requested that you bathe and dry off thoroughly. I would hate to choke to death on the smell of a wet dog.”

“Don’t tempt me-”

“Thank you for kindly showing us to our room.” Colette says cutting me off as she death grips my hand. Florence’s face changes to one of an overly excited cheerleader.

it was nothing.” She tucks a hair behind her ear flirtatiously. “The women will be having a drink before dinner, if you want to join?” she asks.

“That does sound nice, but we are newly mated and uh-” Colette flushes “I’m not quite ready to be too far from Merikh

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“What a shame.” Florence sighs before she sashays away, and I drag Colette into the room,

The second the door closes Colette steps into me, her face buried in my chest as she drags in long deep breaths.

“Are you okay?” I whisper, running my hands up and down her arms.

“I am in way over my head, Merikh.” her voice trembles and her fear makes me want to burn the whole of the council down and let everyone fend for themselves.

“You handled yourself beautifully.” I admit. “Truthfully, I was worried you might not speak at all the entire trip. But you once again surprise me.”

“I didn’t want you to lose your temper with her. She admits, “The last thing we need is enemies.”

I

frown, framing her face with my hands and pulling it back so I can look down into her eyes.

“To everyone, we are the enemies. No one trusts us, and we can not trust them.”

“What is Florence?” She asks, taking a step back and fixing her shirt.

“Promise not to laugh?” I ask, biting back a smile. She is going to lose her shit when she hears what Florence is.

“Uh. Okay. I won’t laugh.” She says, but I know she will. Which is why I told her not to because now she won’t be able to stop herself because she is expecting outrageous, but not this outrageous.

“Florence is a unicorn.” I grin.

Colette chokes on her own spit, her hand over her throat and her eyes wide as she laughs and heaves. It’s contagious. Her

Chapter 26

smile, her laugh, and I rub her back, joining in. After a moment, she shakes her head and wipes her eyes.

“No, seriously.”

“I am dead serious.”

“Where is her horn?” She asks, still chuckling. I tug at my shirt collar, wondering how she will handle all the species she will

meet over the month.

“Her horn only appears in her true form. She isn’t quite a shifter, not quite human. They are able to take on human form with the use of their magic. And they have a horn to symbolize their greatest downfall.”

“Downfall?” She tilts her head. “You mean her snarky mood isn’t enough?” she says with a smile.

“They are always horny.” I shrug and she freezes.

“Like they always want to...”

“Yes.”

“You are joking.” she whispers wide eyed and I bite back a grin.

“I’m actually not. She has tried many times to make her way into my room with one of her various partners.”

“Doesn’t take no for an answer?” She asks, but I can see the rage growing in her eyes. It seems like my little Luna doesn’t like the thought of someone else trying to bed her Alpha.

“She does. But it takes some convincing. The point is, avoid being alone with her at all costs.”

“Not going to lie. I may be mad at you, but I don’t think I will leave your side.”

There is a knock at the door and I take a few steps back, my heart soaring at the thought of her staying close at all times before I spin and pull the door open. All joy and happiness leeches from me as I stand face to face with the fuck

er who blew my world up three years ago. He leans on the door frame, grinning.

“Rumor has it you have a new Luna” His voice grates on my ears, his fangs showing as he looks over my shoulder. “She isn’t nearly as stunning as my Lauren was, but she will do just fine.”

“She is off limits.” I grit out

“What are you going to do? Kill her to keep her from me. Eventually, you’re going to run out of options.”

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## Chapter 27

### Colette POV

The second the door opens, the air in the room changes. It grows cold and Merikh’s tension is palpable on my tongue. I move closer, catching a set of crimson eyes with a dangerous glint of amusement. His tongue darts out, licking his lips after he mutters something to Merikh, and I watch his knuckles grow white as he crushes the door handle.

Pushing my anger aside, I move over to Merikh, taking his hand in mine, and sliding my other up his arm to press my body close to his while looking at his perfectly angled face. Then the man clears his throat, vying for my attention, but I refuse to give him a single moment more when Merikh is barely holding on. Instead, I press up onto my toes and drop a kiss on his cheek.

“Come, let’s rest while we can.” My heart is thudding and I am certain the man staring at us can hear it, but I don’t care. I can feel not only his danger but Merikh’s just beneath the surface and I know he needs this save. Our pack needs him to calm himself.

“You must be the New Luna?” the person says and I glance at him briefly, taking in his appearance.

He is thinner than Merikh, and though he is tall by most standards, he is not Merikh's level of tall. His shoulders are slender and his face is thin but attractive. Again, he has nothing on the specimen of a man I am clinging to.

"I am. Is there something we can assist you with...?" I ask, leading him so I get a name.

"Johannes," He says with a slight accent and a grin on his pale lips. I listen as best I can, trying to determine what he is with out needing to be told. Then he shows me his fangs and I realize he is a vampire. "Prince Royale of the Vampire clans!"

"Ah, I see." I murmur, pressing my lips into a flat, unimpressed line. "I am Colette, Luna of the Lycans and werewolves"

Merikh twitches, his hand releasing the doorknob and taking mine in his and I can feel his eyes on me as I stand tall and introduce myself.

"Mmm, you don't look like much." He says, glancing at Merikh waiting for him to take the bait, but he doesn't.

"Did you get what you needed?" Merikh asks, seeming to finally snap out of his daze. He stares Johannes down, squaring his shoulder, and I can feel the way his muscles twitch

"Your reaction was a little underwhelming, I must admit. I really hoped you would be more excited to see me"

"Are you two friends?" I ask, trying to get a sight into what the hell this hostile energy is.

"Friends?" Johannes tastes the word, seeming to swish it around in his mouth before he gives me a devious smile. "Depends on your definition. We shared a woman, so to some that would be friendly, no?"

Merikh scoffs, taking a step forward but I cling to him with every ounce of me and he clears his throat sliding me a grateful

look.

\*Johannes here was Lauren's lover, whilst she was supposed to be my luna," he informs me in a bitter voice. "I thought you were dead."

"I am royalty, Merikh. Did you really think my coven cared about who I fucked?"

"The coven? No. The council I thought had more tact."

is up to me to decide.

"Mmm, the council does not protect your kind any longer. What I do with your kind for a little fun is And I am not the only one enjoying having you all as little playthings. Or so I hear."

"So should I kill you now, before I get on the council?" Merikh asks him and Johannes shakes his head with a laugh.

"You don't seem to take hints very well, so I will be candid with you. The council will never let you back on it. You being here, right now, it's the elders being nostalgic for the old days. But you will slip up with that signature lycan temper. And I

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## Chapter 27

can't fucking WAIT to swoop in and take your new luna for a test-

"It will be a cold day in hell the second I let you touch me." I growl, pushing my way in front of Merikh in a last-ditch attempt to keep him from attacking this asshole. "You may have been able to sway a weak, unworthy woman with promises of immortality, but I would rather die than betray my pack and my mate.

My wolf is going feral in my mind, lashing out and begging to tear at this asshole for suggesting we would ever be as weak as Lauren. We aren't her. We aren't some weak, traitorous asshole who thinks only of herself. Merikh's arms wrap around my waist from behind, pulling me back into his chest as he takes a step back.



“Thanks for stopping by Johannes. Now if you don’t mind, kindly fuck right off,” he says, sounding amused before he slams the door shut.

The next thing I know I am pinned against the closed door, Merikh looming over me with his arms on either side of my head as he studies my face with barely restrained. dare I say lust?

There are no words that pass between us in this heavy moment, but so much is said in the way he stares into my eyes, and the way my heart seems to match his beat after skipping a few. Then he reaches out, cupping my face as he drags my lips to his. Apprehension quickly melts into a fiery need and I clutch to his shoulders, kissing him back.

His lips are soft and pliant as I whimper a needy moan, and he nibbles my bottom lip. I am putty in his hands, his to mold and do with what he needs as he gives me more genuine emotions than I have seen from him in days. He kisses like he is apologizing, begging to erase the hurt of the past week, but I know I can’t. No matter how much I crave this, and him.

I tilt my head down, breaking the kiss. He presses his forehead to mine, out of breath, as he shakes. It breaks me to see him so vulnerable, so upset about seeing the man who made his life a living hell. I hate knowing that these emotions, his need to kiss me, arose from Lauren and her asshole immortal lover.

“Thank you.” He whispers, his voice hoarse and breaking.

“For what?” I ask, surprised.

“Did you mean what you said?” He asks, standing up straight. His emerald eyes search me, looking into the depths of my soul, and I frown.

“Mean what?”

“What you said to him..about dying instead of betraying your pack and me...” He looks like a little child, waiting for his mom to say yes over some huge gift he asked for and I tilt my head, my hand sliding up his neck as I use my thumb to stroke his jawline

“Of course.” I furrow my brow. “I made a promise to our pack, and you. No matter how angry I am with you, Merikh, you gave me a home. You gave me a purpose, and I owe you everything.”

I swear I witness his heart break at that moment, the way his eyes soften and he exhales like I had confessed that I loved him

“Thank you for still choosing us.” He whispers, his hand covering my and dragging it away from his face. He holds it in his between us, playing with my fingers, fidgeting.

I want to tell him it's fine and that I forgive him, but the truth is. I have changed since coming to our pack, since choosing this as my path. The path of a luna has no room for the old me. The one who would let everyone, no matter what, walk all

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I am the Lycan Queen and it's about damn time I act like it

“His eyes...” I say, changing the subject, and Merikh nods,

“Yes, the vampire royals all have crimson red eyes.”

I furrow my brows, thinking of the wolves in the woods, trying to pinpoint the color of red in their hollow eyes.

“They aren't they can't be the reason for the red wolves, right?” I ask him and he huffs out a heavy sigh.

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Chapter 27

The wolves were spelled, or compulsion could have been used, but no, it would not explain the eyes being the color they

were

“So it wasn't the vampires?”

“It very much could have been them. Or the witches or Fae. Or anyone here working with another group. There is no ruling anyone out, Colette..everyone here is our enemy.

“Every single one?” I ask, biting my lip, feeling uneasy all over again. How the hell am I supposed to sleep if I know that everyone here is probably plotting against us?

“Yes, but we will make allies soon enough.”

“You just said we can’t trust anyone. So how will we make allies?” I ask, confused.

“You.” He says with a shrug before stepping further into the massive suite.

“What do I have to do with it?”

“Everything. But for starters, you clearly can keep me from killing Johannes, and that’s a huge win” He moves around the room, looking in doors and checking spaces as I watch him, shocked..

One minute he was near catatonic, then homicidal, then kissing me senseless. And now...now he is almost giddy walking around the large room and telling me how important I am. If he keeps this whiplash up, I’m going to end up with a

concussion

But I have to admit, it’s kind of

being acknowledged for something I did right,

3/3

Chapter 28

“Merikh

11 POV

Colette steps out of the bathroom, her scent wafting from the steam that follows behind her. She looks more prepared, like the shower provided her with liquid courage.

Her hair is soft and wavy, falling over her delicate shoulders that are exposed in her pale blue summer dress. The soft ruffles remind me of waves lapping at

the shore as they cascade over her bust and down one side where a slit reveals a portion of

her smooth skin.

She looks divine. A breath of fresh air after a lifetime being lost in the Mariana's trench. My heart races as I meet her eyes, my mouth dry. Colette watches me curiously before growing noticeably nervous and she crosses her arm across her belly, holding the other arm while she looks away. I hate she feels she has to hide, like she has no idea how damn stunning she is

"Don't do that." I rasp out, standing from the edge of the bed as I move toward her. "Do not ever hide."

"I'm not used to dressing like this..." she frowns,

"You look beautiful." I tell her sincerely.

It won't be hard to make it seem like I can't keep my hands off her in a dress like this. The lycan in me is rallying against my sane mind, begging to make me force her to change. To cover her up and not allow anyone to see her like this but us. But I want everyone to stare. I want them to look at her and gape.

Colette needs to see what she can do, what she has always been capable of. She has always been stunning, but since coming to my pack, she has flourished. I know she wasn't being poisoned in her old pack. Not in the way she thinks she was. But she was sickly, her soul malnourished and her wolf suffered, making her thing and gaunt.

Not anymore.

A month of good food, exercise and people who treat her well. Well...most people who treat her well. I wince inwardly, hating that I'm the one who causes her stress. I am the one who hurt her and ruined us. It's not fair to punish her for my insecurities, but yet... I can't find it in my pride to tell her that. Not yet.

Not when I know that this is just a small amount of the hatred she will send my way when she finds out at the first meeting.

Her soft hand touches mine, and I shake myself from my thoughts, taking her in once more. Damn, she is perfect. Her lips part and I lick mine.

“You don’t have to flatter me,” she mumbles.

“I’m being honest.” I say firmly.

“Oh,” she blinks, her cheeks growing pink as she tucks some hair behind her ear. I reach out, undoing it and then I look her in the eyes, making sure she can see the sincerity.

“Are you ready for this?” I ask her.

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“I don’t have a choice,” she says with a sigh. It pains me to hear her say that, knowing I forced her here. Forced all of this on her.

“Tonight it is.” I say, deciding to give her back a little control. “If you would prefer to stay behind, or both of us to stay behind, I can muster up an excuse.”

It’s true. It would be easy to skip this dinner with a simple lie. To them, we are recently mated, and it would be perfectly reasonable to say we got carried away or were too exhausted,

“No.” she says, shaking her head. “I’ll be fine.”

“You are sure?” I check once more.

Yes. She presses her hand to my chest, and I know she can feel my fast beating heart. Her eyes soften, but she says nothing. Instead, she hides a smile and steps past me, heading to the door. “Are you ready?”

“Yes,” I say, clearing my throat and moving toward her as she slips her feet into a pair of small heels

“Remember, we are in love. I will be close to you the entire evening and if you need to escape, you only need to lean in and whisper. These people can be they can be a lot. You thought I was a monster being the Alpha of Death? You are about to come face to face with people who will smile while they cut you open.”

Her face pales, but she squares her shoulders and sets her lips. She is damn cute when she puts a warrior face on

“I am the Lama of the Werewolves and Lycans,” she says firmly. “They don’t care me. Not when you are at my side.”

I can’t tell if she means it or not and I chose not to dissect it too much because true or not, those words are what I have needed to hear from a mate for so long. My heart feels lighter and my lycan purrs with delight as I reach down and take her hand in mine, entwining our fingers.

“Well then, Luna Letty,” I give her a wink using the name she announced herself as Luna with. “Let’s go have dinner with

some monsters.”

She clings to my hand, reaching over and grabbing my bicep as well, pulling herself closer as we enter the dining area. Everyone is chatting merrily, laughter floating through the large space before it stops and all eyes land on us. Johannes smirks, and Florence rolls her eyes while the others look at us with a mild curiosity.

“Oh wonderful,” Florence groans, sitting roughly back in her seat.

“There are two spots over here, Johannes says with a devious smirk, pulling a chair closer to him. I growl vibrates through my chest as Florence laughs and the others watch in silence. It’s strange how the others don’t join in, but I assume they are already fed up with these two. It doesn’t take much.

“Enough,” a deep, tired voice says from behind us. I turn and watch as Caspian, who was supposed to be coming late into this whole charade, saunters into the dining room. Everyone seems to grow stiff, Johannes glancing away and Florence’s cheeks grow red in embarrassment.

“Caspian,” Florence says, shaking her hair out and flashing a quick smile. “We weren’t expecting you for at least another week.”

“I moved things around,” He says, walking past us, giving Colette and I a sideways glance. He commands the presence of everyone in his navy shirt and linen pants with a stern look. He smells of the ocean breeze and I glance at Colette, who watches him curiously.

“Who is this?” He asks, taking his seat, then looking up at me.

“This is my Luna. I announce, and he frowns, tilting his head.

“A new one? Already?”

“It’s been three years.” I say, ”

“And you are well aware she was a traitor and killed my father.”

“I suppose that doesn’t inspire much of an undying loyalty.” he frowns. “Sit. Eat. We will have a long first meeting

tomorrow.”

I look and see two seats on opposite ends of the table and I tense, not happy about splitting up from Colette. She glances up at me, fear-filled eyes, and I decide to take a drastic measure.

I drag her with me to the seat sitting to the left of Casplan and I sit, then I wrap my arms around her waist and tug her into my lap. She feels tense at first until I pull her hair to the side and kiss the bare skin between her shoulder blades. She shivers, then relaxes, leaning back into me as I nuzzle her neck.

“Is the chair next to Johannes not good enough for her?” Florence spits at us and Colette snaps her head in her direction.

“You can speak to me directly, and no. I will not stoop so low as to sit next to a soulless monster who steals mates for their

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2/8

Chapter 28

own fun,” Colette growls. I squeeze her tighter in gratitude, loving this savvy Lama and how she stands up for her kind, and

1. me.

Everyone is silent until Caspian chuckles and shakes his head.

“I like her better than the other one” He admits.

Pride swells in my chest at his words, knowing firsthand how far she has come. How hard she has worked to grow her confidence.

“She is something else, that’s for sure.” I say, meeting her gaze over her shoulder as her cheeks grow pink at the compliment. I catch Caspian looking at her, then casting his tired, worn eyes down at the plate served in front of him.

“Hold on to her, the mate bond is one thing I have always admired about your kind. There is nothing quite like it.” He says softly, once again sliding a sideways glance in our direction.

“Do you have a queen?” Colette asks sweetly, and he freezes.

“No.” He sighs, taking a swing of the goblet next to him. “No, I have not been fortunate enough to find my queen.”

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I know it’s a lie. But few of us know that truth. Hell, until recently, I believed my kind was the only kind to know Caspian’s heartbreaking truth. He had a queen once, and a little princess too. He lost them both, murdered when he was a way kingdom trying to change laws that kept him from his girls. Or so he thinks.

But as I mentioned, I know the truth. His queen may be gone, but his princess is alive and thriving. And she is sitting tucked away on my lap.

SEND GIFT

Chapter 29

“Colette POV

I can’t help but feel bad for Caspian, as he looks away from me, unable to look me in the eye. It’s obvious that he may not have a queen now, but at one point there was someone he cared for, loved maybe.

I tilt my head, taking in his graying hair and the way his skin seems to glisten as if he dusted with a soft morning dew. He is a handsome man, looking dashing in his expensive clothes as he eats in his silence. But king of the council or not, he is still a

man, or part man.

“What is it like?” I ask, making him pause mid bite. “The ocean?”



He places his spoon down. Caspian turns in his chair to face me, his curious eyes taking in my face a spark of interest in his deep grays.

“That’s a strange question,” He says, but the malice isn’t there, instead he places his elbows on the table and leans on them, watching me with a curious glint in his eyes.

‘s just that I’ve never been to the ocean before.” I give him a soft smile. “I’ve always wondered what it feels like or even looks like under the waves.”

“It’s a shame you haven’t experienced for yourself.” He says, returning my smile. “The ocean is-

“Wet, and smells of fish” Florence interrupts, mumbling into her glass of whatever alcohol can get supernatural beings drunk. I’m not entirely sure they can get drunk, but with how she acts, she has to be drunk. All the time.

“My first time being near a body of water was when I came to my new pack.” I say ignoring Florence and reminiscing about the lake that instantly made me feel at home. The way the water just calmed me. The sound, the feel, having it near me.

“And did you enjoy it?”

I nod, giddily. “The water is magical.”

“It is indeed.” he gives me a tight smile, before clearing his throat. I glance around the table. Everyone’s eyes are on us, watching me like I am spinning some bob, ready to catch Caspian and drag him away or something.

Then he sits back in his chair, looking between me and Merikh before he clears his throat once more and picks up his — utensils again, then straightens himself out to eat the rest of his dinner.

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You trained this dog better than the last one. He mutters, before scooping up food and pushing it into his mouth.

My jaw drops and Merikh’s arm tightens around me, a warning not to say any more. My gaze once again slides around the table, taking in all the unfamiliar faces who try not to stare or gawk at me and my embarrassed, red cheeks

“This is my Luna, Caspian.” Merikh says in a low, threatening voice.

“Your point?” He sighs, annoyed.

“She is not a dog, nor is she someone for you to judge and put down.”

“Please, you think we don’t see this pathetic attempt to make her dazzle me by speaking about the fucking water so you can earn your spot on the council? I am not stupid. If she is your mate, your true Luna, then where is your mark, Merikh?” He asks, turning his head and looking at my neck. He observes both sides. “I don’t see it.”

“Our marks do not always go where others can see them,” Merikh tells him.

“Oh, come on, that’s bullshit and you know it.” Johannes heckles from his side of the table. “You marked Lauren on the neck. Are you not as fond of this one? Because Florence and I would take her for you.

“Shut up Johannes,” Caspian growls, “Must you always bring up that dreadful dead bitch?”

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1/4

Chapter 29

Johannes stands abruptly, his chair toppling to the floor as he slams his fists on the table.

“Sit Down Caspian hisses. I watch as Johannes’ eyes flicker a darker red before he pushes off in anger and collects his chair.

“He is right,” a bearded man draws out, crossing his arms over his broad chest as he sits back, his eyes boring into mine. “We all know Lycan’s are possessive. Your kind wants the world to know what belongs to them.”

I scoff, rolling my eyes and I force Merikh’s hand from my waist angrily. I scowl, looking around the table, annoyed and nervous. These people are all full of themselves and such assholes, including Caspian, who I mistakenly got the vibe might be a decent person. Everyone here is so full of themselves and self important that it is a wonder that anyone is ever safe or that the council even serves a real purpose.

“Should I hike up my dress to show you my mark?” I offer, reaching for the hem, pulling it up an inch, showcasing more skin that I am used to. Merikh growls, jumping up as Florence giggles and Caspian looks at me arching a brow in curiosity.

“I think we would rather not see it.” He says after a moment. Merikh moves himself in front of me, his eyes blazing in anger and I furrow my brows, confused. Why would he be upset about me calling their bluff to help us!

“Speak for yourself, Florence says with a gleeful grin. “Show me the mark, baby girl.”

“Your mark is only for me to see,” Merikh hisses, bending down so our faces are close together. His nose lightly brushes over mine. A warning in his eyes.

“Sit. Eat your food. You will want all the nourishment you can get before we sit and argue for a month about why you will never be on the council again. Caspian sighs.

I press my hands to Merikh’s chest, giving myself space as I look him in the eyes, then nod to the chair. He doesn’t budge until I gently push him a second time and his lips twitch in frustration before he sits and opens his arms to welcome me back on his lap

His muscular forearm wraps around me like a seatbelt, tucking me as close as humanly possible to him. I wiggle, trying to get comfortable, but freeze when I hear a pained groan and feel something pressing into my butt cheek.

I slide him a glance over my shoulder, shocked, and he gives me a wry smile. He dips his head, his lips finding the top of my shoulder, before pressing a kiss to my heated skin. I need to remind myself I am mad at him. That our relationship is built on a broken foundation with no trust, but damn if I can’t help but want to melt into him.

“How did you two meet? Seeing as you are obviously second chance mates, which is a little rare for your kind, correct?” A blonde-haired woman asks, drawing my attention. I give her a soft smile.

“It’s not crazy rare, but it’s not an everyday occurrence.” I smile. “Merikh came to my pack to mate with the Alpha’s daughter Loffer, before getting squeezed from Merikh to continue on.

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“And you discovered you were mates.” She finishes and I chuckle.

“Something like that.” I say softly, leaning back into the wall of a man behind me.

“I discovered my first mate in the alpha’s daughter’s bed. He got her pregnant and then rejected me. Merikh and I obviously refused her, and I was traded in her place. At his insistence, of course.”

“How romantic,” she says, clutching her chest with a genuine smile on her lips .

“It’s been a whirlwind,” Merikh mutters and I bark out a laugh, thinking back on what feels like so long ago.

Then I shake my head and look down, noticing the plates before us, a little shocked that I didn’t see them arrive, but I grab a fork and cut into the roasted chicken breast. As I take a bite, relishing the tender meat, there is shouting down the hallway that has everyone looking around.

“Oh, great, Brent is here.” Johannes says.

“Does the wizard get under your skin, vamp?” Florence asks with a giddy grin.

“Enough. Eat, then go about your business. I am tired of the bickering, especially when we all know what the first meeting

## Chapter 29

will turn into by the end.”

I furrow my brow, not really sure what will happen but based on everyone taking a drink from their cups and avoiding eye contact with anyone, it seems tomorrow will be very much like this dinner. As long as I’m not a part of it, it could be fun.

Merikh leans forward, one arm around my waist and the other feeding himself.

I take his lead, devouring my food in silence before pressing back into him again and watching the others chat amongst themselves.

As everyone finishes their meals, they leave in silence, either wandering to the deck outside and mingling or disappearing down the hallways. Merikh helps me off his lap, taking his hand in mine as he leads me back to the room, closing the door behind us and releasing a heavy sigh. All of his tension evaporates as he spins and looks at me.

“So how’d that feel?” He asks. I shrug.

“Not entirely different from dinner in my old pack, except at least here I had almost actual conversation. Who is the blonde woman?” I ask. “The one that was asking me about how we found each other?”

“She doesn’t matter. What matters is what the hell were you going to do if they called your bluff?” He growls, crossing the room to me as I take steps backward to escape him.

“They didn’t.” I remind him.

“If they had, it would have gotten us both killed, you understand that, right? I would have killed every fucking one of them I could for seeing what wasn’t theirs to see.”

I bite back a smile, trying to hide the thrilling shiver that zips through my body with his possessive nature over me. No one has ever really wanted me before, all of me. I mean, he has acted this way with Grady, but for him to be this way with people that are equal to him...it’s a little exciting and kind of a turn on.

“It won’t happen again.” I tell him, and he drags a hand over his face.

“I’m sorry it’s just...after everything with...” He pauses and frowns at me and I sigh. He is talking about Grady. Would he still feel this way if he knew the truth? If he knew I picked him and that it was an easy decision? I bite my lip, but my damn mouth has a mind of its own since becoming his Luna

“Merikh, I didn’t kiss Grady back. I slapped him and told him to leave.” I blurt out. Merikh freezes, his eyes full of shock and wonder.

“I saw you two kissing.” He tries to argue, but I close the short distance between us now. Pressing my hand to his cheek.

“He kissed me and I was stunned. The second I realized what was happening, I shoved him back and slapped him. You can alpha command me to tell you the truth.”

He pauses, thinking about it for a moment. I want him to trust me, to take my word for it because, damn it, it's the freaking truth. My chest aches with anticipation, my eyes flitting from one to the other, trying to predict what is going to happen.

next.

“It is easier if I don't believe you.” He murmurs, and my heart shatters. I don't know why it does. I knew what his response would be. Merikh's trust issues have trust issues. Asking for such a big thing from him was a long shot, but I still find myself so disappointed.

“You mean you still don't trust me? Merikh, you could just command the truth. Under the oath, I can't lie to you, right?”

He steps away from me, moving to the bathroom, stopping in the doorway.

“You think the kiss is the only issue? The fact remains, you still lied to my face, Colette.” he whispers before disappearing. Leaving me behind to force the tears away and reflect on what I know was wrong.

3/4

## Chapter 30

Heavens, I needed this. No, I've dreamed of this, Running in wolf form along a beautiful river with the moon still hung in the sky, speaking life into my very soul. I can't recall the last time I ever enjoyed my wolf's form in this manner. I was always too weak to let her out more than once or twice a year and that was only IF I could get her to come out.

For most wolves, they would go crazy, driving their human to the brink of insanity, but my wolf was always so far out of reach. It's not since moving to Merikh's that we are strong enough to handle a shift on command. Not since being away from my old pack and the poison. I am sure she was putting in my food.

I trot to the edge of the water, peeking at the mirror-like surface and checking out my healthy coat of dark gray fur. It looks almost iridescent in the bright moonlight and I spin, giving myself a full look before a sense of pride settles deep in my stomach. I'm perfect in wolf form.

I'm no longer small or malnourished. Just a happy, healthy, average wolf reclining under the full moon. Except I'm not average, I'm a Luna. And not just any Luna, but the Lycan Luna. Not that I feel like one in the slightest.

"I'd love to know what you're thinking right now," someone says. I spin and growl, watching as Caspian saunters toward me, his hands in his pockets as he assesses me with a glint of familiarity. He tosses a bag at me and I catch it in my mouth, tilting my head to see what he wants.

"Shift back and take a walk with me." he says, turning his back to me.

After a moment of watching him curiously, he clears his throat and I decide maybe I can use this opportunity to do what Merikh has failed to do all this time. Win Caspian over in friendship. I shift into my human form, quickly pulling out the garments inside and slipping into the softest yoga pants and sweatshirt I have ever touched.

"What did you want to talk about?" I ask him, as I slip the now empty bag over my shoulder. Caspian turns to look at me, his hands in his pockets once more as he nods to his side, showing I should walk with him.

"Come." He says softly, but I hesitate thinking about Merikh's warning of not being able to trust anyone. Then again, Percy is in the shadows so maybe it will be fine.

"I am not sure my mate will like this very much. I tell him and he chuckles softly

desire to w

"He knows you are in no danger with me. I have no desire to whisk you away from him and you pose no immediate threat to my wellbeing, which would lead to me needing to kill you. I assure you, Letty...is it?"

"Yes, Letty." I say, smiling to myself. I don't really know why being called Letty sets my heart a blaze. Maybe it's because it signifies a new me. A stronger, b

raver version, one worthy of leading and being here just like anyone else. Either way, I can't help but feel pride in the new me and new name.

"Well, Letty, I assure you I have only good intentions. I only wish to know you more." He smiles and I skeptically move to his side.

We walk in awkward silence for a short time, the two of us absorbing the beautiful scenery. The air is still, and the full moon's light reflects off the glassy water, illuminating the night life around us. I can see little orbs of yellow and I swallow, fear creeping into my chest, remembering the green orb that destroyed my heart with the intense realistic dream it wove in my mind.

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"Why are you stopping?" Caspian asks, looking around. I shake my head, my throat tight, and that feeling of watching my mom be ripped from the world in front of me resurfaces as I breathe roughly. "Letty..." his voice sounds distant, and it feels like I am being sucked back in.

His hand touches my bicep and I jump back, inhaling sharply before I pull myself back from the cowering I was doing internally. No. I will not be that girl. The one with trauma so crippling I can not enjoy the night. I refuse to let them take anything else from me. Fate has already done a good enough job of making my life painful. I am so damn sick of pain.

"Forgive me," I release a breath, my hand to my chest as I try to force my heart to calm itself.

"There is no need to apologize. Are you okay? Did something spook you? I promise you are safe," He tries to reassure me

## Chapter 30

and frown

There is no way of knowing if I can actually trust Caspian. If I should tell him about the attacks that have been happening. Would explaining it all do anything to break away at his ice heart?

Then I remember, he won't do anything about it since we are not members of his council yet, but surely mentioning how someone is targeting me will show



him how important us being on the council is. How much we, as a species, need their protection?

"I...I was recently attacked. Several times, actually, and I am working through those moments." I say, giving him a tight smile. "Some things seem to trigger those memories"

"Ah, yes. I heard of your accident." He gives me a sad look, like he wishes he could apologize or offer me some sort of condolences. But that would be acknowledging blame. That we belong under the umbrella of safety with the other species and he can't do that. Not yet.

"Oh, the accident is the least of my worries." I smile. "I struggle with the dream weavers and what they placed in my head. Those are new to me, someone playing in my mind, changing what little memories I have of my dead loved ones to nightmares." The moment I start speaking, I find my anger grows.

Speaking of this out loud...it's not just painful, but a startling truth that whoever was doing this isn't just trying to scare me. They are trying to scar me. Make me bitter and angry.

Anger is easier to manipulate and control. Anger makes a person predictable, yet unstable. You know how to make them react, and when they react, the only thing you don't know is how. And that's what they want from me. A reaction.

"Dream weavers..." He asks, and I look up at him to see his furrowed brow

"Ever have one play with your mind?" I ask and he shakes his head no. "Count your lucky stars. You have your protection."

"Is it that bad?" He asks, curious.

I scoff out a dry laugh. If only he had even a semblance of understanding of what these other species can do, what it feels like to be on the receiving end. Then he might not wish to keep us all out. He might let us into the council and spare my people what these other monsters have planned for us for the sake of some fun.

"I have very few memories of my mother." I say with a heavy sigh, walking a little ahead of him. "The ones I do have aren't, happy or sweet. They are sad. But the dream weavers entered my mind, toying with my memories, distorting th

em so that those last few moments I have with her in my head are of her death. A death I know I did not witness,”

“How do you know that is not the truth?” he asks, arching a brow.

I tilt my head, truly understanding how much he doesn't know about the other species. How can he be the king when he doesn't know what these monsters are capable of? How they act and treat those they deem lesser than them in the name of fun.

“There are ways to determine what is real.” I say, “But that doesn't erase the jagged point of a spear breaking through my mother's chest covered in her blood while she blames me for her death. No matter how easily I can determine it was false, that image lives there. That moment I had with her shattered in my heart and in my mind forever because someone wanted to lure me away from my home, away from the safety of my mate.”

“Why are you so sure they don't want to save you?” he asks with furrowed brows. His silver streaks in his hair look so much more defined when he stands in the moonlight, his chin jutting out the side in serious thought.

“You don't save someone by trying to hurt them.”

“You were not injured, were you?” he asks, sounding genuinely concerned.

“That time no, but I was injured the first time. They crashed into our vehicles and dragged me out by my broken leg. My femur was shattered and the only person who was there to help me was Merikh. He was ready to die to protect me, to bring me home.”

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## Chapter 20

“I hate to say this, but there are many who do not like

of like your mate, Letty,” he frowns and I hark out a laugh.

“He is abrasive. But he is loyal to his own downfall. Merikh is broken, but he is trying. We all are, and it's all for. This person who is after me, what reason do you think they would want me?” I ask him.

“I can not say.” He responds by shaking his head and shrugging.

“I can. They want to hurt Merikh To break him beyond repair and ruin him and I will not let them.”

“Hmm, and you think it is the same person?”

“I know it is.” I tell him resolutely.

“Oh, and how could you possibly know that if you don’t know who it is?”

anyone

Werewolves don’t have red, glowing eyes.” I snort. “Neither do lycans. And they do not attack their new Luna and Lycan king. How many species can manipulate what others do and how they act?”

“In a

way, almost all of them.” He admits, “But wouldn’t that mean that it could be anyone both times? That it could be separate attacks. You said yourself one was a dream weaver, and the other was wolves with red eyes. He seems to be in deep thought as he speaks.

“The dream weaver led me to the border in my sleep. At the border, waiting for me, was a crowd of red-eyed wolves. Do you think two separate parties would use the same exact people if they were not working together!”

He pauses for a moment, his lips pressing together in a thin line.

“Why are you telling me all of this? Are you trying to play to my sympathies and manipulate me?” he asks, arching a brow.

I shake my head, smiling at him.

“No. No, I am informing you, out of respect for the position you hold, that someone here on your honorable council is a coward. I want you to know that I am hunting them.”

“They are protected, no matter what or who they are. They are under the protection of the council. Killing any of the members would get you exiled.”

“What good is that punishment when we are already exiled?” I remind him with a small smirk.

SEND GIFT