

Accusations and Rejection

Kiara:

Standing before the mirror, I prepare for the night, my heart shattering into countless fragments. The blow is immense, a hurdle I doubt I can overcome, especially with the pretense I must maintain tonight.

“Is there a problem, my Luna?” Isabella, my maid, inquires. Swiftly wiping away my tears, I turn to face her with a forced smile.

“Not at all. I will be down in a minute,” I say to her.

I then retrieve the sacred pearl necklace, a legacy passed down to every Luna of the Lunar Shadow Pack. As it rests on my neck, memories of the day Blake first placed it there flood my mind. A single tear threatens to fall, but I quickly brush it away. Taking a deep breath, I clutch my purse and stride out of the room, my long red gown flowing behind me.

Entering the room, a life-sized statue of the queen in her werewolf form commands my attention. Carved from moonstone, it stands regally in the center of the room, its ethereal glow casting dancing shadows on the walls. The room is a testament to the queen’s reign, adorned with intricate decorations yet eerily quiet save for the soft whispers of a few scattered individuals.

My gaze then seeks out the wine stand. The promise of sweet oblivion that wine offers is enticing - a temporary escape from Blake’s bitter betrayal. The thought causes my heart to ache and I hasten towards the stand, hoping to drown my sorrows in the comforting embrace of the crimson liquid.

I quickly seize a glass and down its contents. Yet, the ache persists. Glass after glass follows as I watch the room fill steadily.

“Thought I was the only one in need of a drink to loosen up,” a voice interrupts my thoughts.

Turning around, I find a tall figure in a crisp suit looking at me with twinkling eyes filled with amusement.

Ignoring him, I walk away with my wineglass in hand. A few steps away from the table, Blake enters the hall with Veronica, my best friend, among his entourage. My anger flares and I down my drink before slamming the glass onto the table with such force that it nearly shatters.

The thought of causing a scene crosses my mind, but after some contemplation, I decide against it. Instead, I head towards the waterside temple to place the flower for the final ritual

- an attempt to avoid hearing Blake’s speech.

As Blake ascends the stage to deliver his speech, my eyes cloud with tears. I struggle to navigate towards the front door, my vision blurred and my steps unsteady from the wine. My lack of attention to my surroundings results in a collision with someone. The cold splash of a drink brings me back to reality, and I find myself face-to-face with the man who had approached me earlier.

Before I can utter a word, the lights go out.

“Great!” I mutter under my breath. Determined to complete the final ritual at the temple and change out of my soiled clothes before the power returns, I step outside.

Suddenly, a firm grip halts me. It’s him again.

“I didn’t know you were the Luna, and I need you to forgive my manners,” he says under the dimly lit night sky.

“I am new here, but I understand how much this means to you. How about I help you with the flowers and clean your clothes for you at the riverside? The power won’t be out for long, and it isn’t worth going back to change. No one wants to come to an empty temple without its Luna.”

In my tipsy state, his words seem reasonable, so I allow him to lead the way. We reach the temple and place the flower, then proceed to the nearby river. There, he removes his jacket and loosens his tie before soaking it in water. He gently dabs at the wine stain on my chest as voices in the distance signal the pack’s approach.

“You are beautiful,” he murmurs, causing me to smile. Suddenly, he moves uncomfortably close. I attempt to back away, but he pulls me towards him.

“I have waited all night to do this,” he whispers before his lips crash into mine.

Caught in a battle for dominance and resistance between our tongues, the lights abruptly come back on. He releases me instantly and we find ourselves surrounded by pack members.

Murmurs fill the air, quieting down only when Blake arrives. This misunderstanding wasn’t part of my plan and my heart sinks as Blake looks at me with distaste.

“Blake, this isn’t what you...” I begin, but words fail me as I realize explanations might not be enough this time.

“Why are you doing this to me?” the man questions, his voice laced with confusion. “You seemed to forget your role as Luna while we were kissing, and now that your husband is here, you want to play innocent.”

As he strides towards me, presumably to hold me, Blake intervenes. With a swift punch, he sends the man sprawling on the floor, his nose bleeding profusely. Blake commands his removal and guards immediately surround the man, escorting him away.

I watch as Blake’s eyes well up with tears. I reach out to him, but he keeps me at arm’s length.

“I, Blake Blackwood, reject you as my mate and Luna of the Lunar Shadow Pack!” he declares. His words hit me like a physical blow and I crumple to the floor, gasping for breath amidst the pain in my chest.

Blake collapses beside me and his men rush to his aid while I am left alone in my anguish. Veronica rushes past me to assist Blake, not sparing me a second glance. As I scan the crowd through my tears, I spot my father standing there with tears in his eyes.

With great effort, I manage to stand and reach out to him, pleading for his mercy as the beta of the pack. But he turns his back on me and I fall once again with a painful thud.

“Father, please,” I cry out, but he merely shakes his head in disappointment.

“You have defiled the holy temple and disobeyed the Moon Goddess,” he says in front of everyone.

“I cannot allow evil to befall this pack. Therefore, I denounce you today as my daughter.”

With that, he forcefully removes the sacred pearl necklace from my neck. The symbol of my status and legacy is gone, just like that. The crowd watches in stunned silence as I am stripped of my title and family in one fell swoop.