

## Chapter 104

I had just cut the engine and stepped from the Escalade when Breyona stepped onto the wrap around porch, her shoulder length hair damp and curling at the ends.

The long sleeve t-shirt she wore had a bunch of wet patches from where she had hurried to dress. Her cheeks were still rosy from the shower. She grinned and waved but froze midway when Asher's voice popped into both of our heads.

'I'm assuming the two of you are together, yes?'

'Sure are.' I responded seconds before Breyona's, 'Yep.'

His frustration felt like coarse sandpaper as it vibrated down the bond. Before either of us had the chance to ask what had happened, his next words sent us both into stunned silence.

'Good, meet me at Town Hall. One of the witches we picked—she's here and she wants to speak with you.'

I could taste the ire in Asher's every word

●ould taste the ire in Asher's every word and wondered if it was the pre-school teacher slash blood witch or the middle-aged protection witch who ordered my Alpha of a mate to fetch me. I held no offense, but I knew Asher's patience level as well as my own—and his was a bit lacking. 2

“That fast?” Breyona frowned, her eyebrows gnashed together. “But you haven't even—oh, is that why you've come? You found a witch for you and Holly?”

“Asher and I decided on two, but I guess the one came early?” I shrugged, cringing at the confusion in my voice.

I couldn't help but feel like I was already screwing up this Luna slash Vampire Queen thing.

“Really, really early. Maybe she's also psychic?” Breyona suggested helpfully, giving me a soft smile when I refused to be convinced. I sighed when she swung an arm over my shoulders, steering the two of us towards the sedan. “There's no way you could've seen this coming, Lola. Even our mighty Luna and Vamp Queen has her limits. On the bright side, think of

her limits. On the bright side, think of how helpful she'll be!" ①

It took ten minutes out of the half-hour drive to Town Hall for Breyona to have me smiling madly, laughing until tears filled the corners of my eyes.

"He actually fainted?" I asked in between bursts of laughter. I tried to picture Mason, pale faced and slack jawed as he watched Giovanni tear open a blood bag.

"Well, he gagged first. Then he fainted." She laughed along side me. Wiping the tears from her eyes, she ran her fingers through her now dry hair. "He's tasted blood before, just like the rest of us.

Kinda comes with the territory, y'know? I think there's something about drinking it that makes him squeamish." ②

"It makes me squeamish too, sometimes."

"Don't tell him I told you, though." She warned, "He made us all swear it would never leave the house. Even Tristan removed the stick up his ass to crack a grin."

"My lips are sealed." I smirked, tossing the imaginary key out the window.

the imaginary key but the window.

The forest never once thinned as we reached the center of town, even as buildings became larger and taller, glittering with clean windows and steel beams. Grocery stores and other chain restaurants began to pop up.

Town Hall was a glittering building with tinted windows that showed only your reflection when you walked past. I had thought the parking lot was larger than necessary, until I watched another thirty cars pile in, all clamoring for a space.

“Park in the reserved spot!” Breyona called out, pointing ahead.

Directly in front of the doors was a reserved spot. The word itself was painted across the space in crimson letters.

“Do you think I’m allowed to?” I caught myself only after I asked the insane question.

“Um, you’re Luna. Who else is this spot reserved for?” Like I thought, she threw her head back and cackled gracefully.

Mason emerged from Town Hall just as we made it to the top of the stairs. Made

made it to the top of the stairs. Made from concrete, they led from the parking lot to the front of the building.

A laugh bubbled in my throat as I remembered what had me near crying in the car. I schooled my face into neutrality and approached Mason with Breyona skipping at my side.

Mason took one look at us, glancing from Breyona's reddened to my own before snarling at the two of us. He ran a hand through his windblown hair, letting out a loud breath as he looked to the sky.

"You filthy traitor." He directed his disappointed words at Breyona before frowning in my direction, a faint blush staining his cheeks. "And I didn't faint, I was just lightheaded."

As we stepped inside, catching a strong whiff of artificial air fresheners and disinfectant, I wondered how either one managed to stay awake in this place.

Identical looking desks dotted the room, fitted with two drawers on either side of a basic office chairs. The carpet was a blah shade of grey, and the walls white. Cubicles separated the desks, and the

Cubicles separated the desks, and the people who typed away. Some wore small headsets and took phone calls, others sat bored on their phones.

“Luna, we were told to be expecting you.” A wispy voice called out; one I had almost ignored. I was still getting used to my title but turned and smiled politely at the woman. She was small in stature and had fine lines around her mouth and eyes. Her wheat-blond hair was greying around the roots, and her voice was full of warmth. “If you’ll follow me, I’ll escort you to Alpha and his guests.”

My eyes were drawn to where Asher stood, towering over everyone else as his sheer presence dominated the room. The broadness of his shoulders, the way his eyes both dissected and analyzed, he all but radiated intimidation. He had never frightened me, not in the same way he did the rest of the pack.

The curly haired witch that sat in a crème pencil skirt, her legs crossed at the ankles, showed no fear towards Asher either. Her nude-colored nails tapped idly on the table, in tune with the sound of the ticking clock. The white blouse she

f the ticking clock. The white blouse she wore buttoned up to her neck, making it look as though she might've come from an important event.

Asher's Beta and Alpha Zeke hovered nearby, the latter much more relaxed despite the situation. 1

"This is my mate and Luna, Lola."

"Lola, how wonderful to meet you. My name's Rowena Clarke, but any variation of Rowena works." Her heart shaped face was soft and kind, round around her cheeks. She clasped her hands together, excitement blossoming in her eyes turning them from moss to emerald. "I know I'm early—more than early. I was simply too excited. I had an inkling you were going to choose me, so I caught the first flight here."

"Are your inklings usually correct?" Zeke asked, interest appearing in his eyes.

Asher flashed his friend a look, knowing as well as I that when Zeke became fixated on something, he was hard to sway. "Have any inklings on where I can find my mate?"

Rowena laughed, the sound was light and

● something, he was hard to sway. "Have any inklings on where I can find my mate?"

Rowena laughed, the sound was light and airy. Her teeth were straight and white, nothing like the image I had concocted in my head. Obviously, witches weren't these ugly beings with warts and blisters, but I hadn't expected her to seem so... normal, as well.

"Here's your first lesson, Lola. And you, Alpha Zeke. Be careful making a deal with a witch. Magic can get you into all sorts of tricky situations, and rarely does it help you out of them." She said, softly spoken yet confident. I could see the previous preschool teacher within her steady voice and tone. Her eyes fell on my face but fell to the center of my chest. "You and your sister's magic will continue to manifest. It will grow stronger and more unpredictable unless you train and give it an outlet. I believe there's much I can teach the two of you. If you'll have me, I'd be honored to work with you and your sister, Luna Lola."

"Your background in blood-magic, how extensive is it?" I asked, feeling my



“Intensive is it?” I asked, feeling my stomach curl as my mouth formed the words. Drinking blood was something I was increasingly fond of, but the word ‘blood-magic’ continued to give me the chills.

“To actually preform blood-magic is purely based on your genetics. I am only one eighth blood-witch, therefor I can do little. However, I am extremely knowledgeable on the subject. Before my mother passed seven years ago, she passed down our family tomes. A few of them were on blood-magic.”

“Will you have an issue housing with another witch? I’ve invited another for the position, but she specializes in protection magic and runes. I think that with the two of you, my sister and I can learn to control our magic and protect our peoples.” I explained, “You would live in the same house, nothing more.”

“Another witch?” She seemed surprised that we might’ve considered another...or that she hadn’t seen the outcome, I wasn’t sure. She pursed her nude painted lips half a second before nodding softly. That sparkle of genuine excitement...

That sparkle of genuine excitement in her eyes brought a hopeful grin to my face. "I do enjoy my privacy, but I can share a household with another witch. Now, when might I begin training you and your sister?"

"The announcement is tonight, and we're going to that party tomorrow afternoon..." Alpha Zeke hummed, ticking them off on his fingers.

"Monday—you can start Monday."

Asher's voice was resolute, slicing through Zekes like a double-edged blade. He turned to his Beta, Blake, and nodded.

"Escort her to the Wesley house and provide her with one of the cars for the duration of her stay." 4

"I'll come by Monday, and we can work out a schedule for you and your sister, yes?" Rowena smiled softly, extending a hand towards my own. I was surprised by the firmness in her grip but smiled in return and nodded. "Sounds good to me. I'll let Holly know when we're meeting up."

Rowena followed Blake from the room, tugging alone an eggshell-colored suitcase. Once the glass doors clanged

...tagging along in eggshell-colored  
● itcase. Once the glass doors clanged  
shut, and the figures of Blake and  
Rowena faded down the hall, Asher  
turned his intense gaze to where Zeke sat.

Zeke lounged lazily, his muscular biceps  
flexing as he stretched his arms out  
behind his head. It wasn't that Zeke  
didn't fear Asher; he just had no sense of  
self-preservation. He ran headfirst into  
the fire, almost excited to get burned. 2

Asher's voice was low and collected,  
dangerously calm. "Since when are we  
going to this party?"

"You didn't think your brother would  
keep it quiet that the Alpha and Luna of  
our pack were coming to a college frat  
party? Half of the University is tweeting  
about it right now. The party is officially  
invite only, and you two—you're my  
invite. Besides, I'm not being left out  
again." Zeke pouted, shaking his head. 1

"Is this a phobia of yours?" Breyona  
snorted, combusting into full blown  
laughter when Zeke shook his head  
disparagingly and groaned, "Actually,  
it's because of my abandonment issues."