

## The Ivory Queen by StephanieLight Chapter 19

### 19. The Gamma Bond II

\*\*\*Aurora's POV\*\*\*

It's been over three weeks since the incident at the library.

Halloween came and went without a fuss, though I've never been one to celebrate it. On November 2nd, Oliver surprised me by making several preparations for the Day of the Dead celebrations. He cleared out a space in his office so I could build an ofrenda {altar} for my father. He bought sugar skulls, calaveras, candles, papel picado, and lots and lots of Aztec marigolds for me to use. He didn't own a picture of my father so I did my best to draw one. While I'm no artist, I was quite impressed with my result and placed it on the ofrenda. Jaime, my cook, baked some pan de muerto for everyone to try and I made Dad's favorite foods for him. The entire drive way and walk way was covered in marigolds to guide his spirit to our house.

Back at Lluvia Blanca, I used to always make a makeshift altar in my basement. I was never allowed to visit my father's grave nor was I allowed to participate in the celebrations but I always found a way to celebrate his life. I would construct an altar from pieces of card board and decorate it with paper banners I cut from binder paper or old books. I would steal some marigold petals and candles, among other things to decorate as well.

It meant a lot to me that Oliver went to great lengths to help me celebrate my father's life and I was more than a little emotional that night.

Things, however, didn't cool off between the boys. They continue to ignore each other for the most part and only acknowledge each other when I'm present. Evan has been distancing himself from me, going to the training grounds almost every day. On the few occasions that he does have to take charge of me, he refrains from touching or hugging me and refers to me only as Luna. I hate it. I miss my friend.

Meanwhile Oliver has become attached to my hip and doesn't let me out of his sight. I spend nearly every minute of his free time with him and accompany him to work every day in the city. I even have my own little comfy nook in the corner of his office, complete with

cream colored barrel swivel armchair, pillows, blankets, a small desk, a tiny bookshelf and laptop. Rio's bed, food and water bowls are also located beside me. I usually spend my time studying my healing books and playing games on my phone or with Rio. I get bored pretty easily, however. Although I like being with Oliver, sitting in the office with him is about as fun as jury duty. The only good thing about this situation is seeing the look on Adeline's face every time I walk into the office hand in hand with Oliver. It's the look of absolute defeat and I love every second of it.

As I sit in my cozy chair playing games, I catch a glimpse of the stupid black book in the bookshelf. I still haven't figured out how to open it and Reyna is no help. I sigh and pull it into my lap. The front cover is completely black with a large gold circular lock in the middle. The lock is carved with a crescent moon and sun at the top while a Rowan tree sits just below them. The trees branches become real

vines once they extend past the lock and wrap around the edges of the book, sealing it shut. No matter how long I stare, I see no key hole, no sliding parts and no buttons. All I see is that the lock can rotate in place to the left before getting stuck. Growing frustrated, I let out

an exasperated sigh and chuck the book at the bookshelf, causing a ruckus. Oliver is out of his chair instantly and looks at me with great concern.

“Baby, what’s wrong?” he says walking over to me.

“Nothing,” I mutter, massaging my temples with my fingers.

He stares at me and furrows his brows, waiting for me to tell him the truth.

“It’s just- It’s that stupid book! It’s been over three weeks and I still can’t open it!”

He chuckles at my childish frustration, grabs the book off the ground and tucks it neatly in the book shelf. “It’s just a book, babe.

There’s no need to get all worked up over it.”

Easy to say when you know exactly what you are and no one accuses you of being witch.

I sigh again and Oliver kisses me softly on the cheek. Rio jumps onto my lap although he barely fits. He’s gotten so big these past 3

weeks! I massage his big ears and kiss him softly on the nose. Rio responds by licking the entirety of my face and I giggle. Oliver smiles as he walks over to his desk again.

The door bursts open and Carter rushes in. Rio rushes over to greet him.

“Alpha, rogue attack at Lluvia Blanca! Alpha Miguel has requested our help. There’s about 50 or so fuckers on their territories,” he reports.

The blood drains from my face. Despite the fact that I hadn’t spoken to my family in almost five months and they had spent the past 5 years torturing me, the thought of something happening to them was unnerving. They were my only family after all. I walk to Oliver’s side and plead with my eyes that he help them. It appears he gets the message because he orders Carter to send warriors over to Lluvia Blanca. Carter makes a quick call before returning his attention to us.

“You said 50? That’s odd, rogues don’t usually attack in such large groups,” Oliver responds, shaking his head. “Not to mention that’s the third ally they’ve hit in the past 3 weeks. Something’s not right.”

“What do you think is going on?” Carter asks.

“I don’t know. We were hit 3 weeks ago, followed by Jade Crescent, Cerulean Sea and now Lluvia Blanca. It just doesn’t add up!”

Oliver exasperates.

“Well, Blood Moon hasn’t reported any rogue attacks,” Carter adds. “Do you think they could have something to do with this?”

“No, Blood Moon is strong but their numbers are small compared to ours and they would never attack Jade Crescent. Luna Scarlet

is originally from Blood Moon. Someone else is targeting us and our allies.”

“Could Amethyst Lake be trying to disrupt the treaty between the five packs?” I interject. Thad heard stories of the feared pack of the North. The Amethyst Lake pack was notoriously territorial and while they were small compared to River Moon and Lluvia Blanca, their warriors were highly trained and vicious. Not to mention, their Alpha, was a

f\*\*\*\*\*g

psychopath.

“Couldn’t be. The guards haven’t reported any suspicious activity at the border.

Besides, the last thing Amethyst Lake wants to do is

start a war with the Allies,” Carter says. “We greatly outnumber them.”

“Unless, they’re getting help and trying to take over the entire region,” I say quietly. I tremble at the idea of a turf war.

“Hey, let’s not get ahead of ourselves,” Oliver says softly, taking me into his arms. “For now, let’s just send your former pack some help. Carter increase security at our borders. We don’t want any strays sneaking into our territory.”

“Yes, Alpha.”

“Where’s Evan?” I ask, worried they’d send my friend out to battle.

“At the training grounds,” Carter replies.

“Can you send him here? I need to speak with him immediately.”

“What for?” Oliver snaps. I could sense his aura growing darker.

“Stop it,” I sigh. I was getting tired of Oliver’s jealousy towards Evan. “I just need to see him.”

“Can’t it wait until we get home?” He asks annoyed.

“Actually, I was hoping he could take me somewhere,” I say sheepishly.

“I can take you.”

“No, Oliver. You have so much work to finish and this whole Rogue situation to worry about,” I say.

Oliver thinks about it for moment.

“I miss my friend,” I add when he doesn’t speak.

He sighs and nods his head. I’m practically jumping with excitement.

“Thank you!” I stand on my tippy toes and cup his face in my hands to shower him with kisses. “Thank you, thank you, thank

Oliver smiles and places his hand behind my legs, lifting me up for a deep kiss.

Carter clears his throat but we ignore him.

“Ugh get a room,” he laughs. He steps out and closes the door. A few seconds later he pokes his head back in. “Evan’s on his way, Luna.”

I turn away from Oliver to give Carter a quick thank you before resting my head on Oliver’s chest and wrapping my arms around his waist.

Oliver chuckles and I look up confused.

“What’s so funny?” I ask.

“You’re so tiny,” he laugh. “It’s cute.”

“Shut up!” I say smacking his chest.

He lifts me up again, placing each hand on my thighs while I hang onto his neck and wrap my legs around his waist. He walks over to the desk and sits down with me straddling him. I could feel his arousal on inner thigh and I blush. I like knowing I have this effect on him.

“Make me,” he whispers in my ear, his hot breath tickling my skin. He nibbles on my ear before leaving a trail of kisses along my

neck. He stops where my neck meets my shoulder, grazing his teeth on the place where he is to mark me. Sparks spread throughout my body. I grab his chin between my thumb and fore finger and force him to face me.

"I might only be 5ft tall, but don't forget, I make the rules," I say, surprised at my confidence.

Oliver looks shocked too but a mischievous grin quickly takes over his handsome face.

"Says who?" He smirks.

I lean in close to his face, my lips just hovering over his. He leans forward, closing his eyes but before our lips meet, I pull back and wriggle out of his lap.

"Says me," I reply. "Now get back to work."

I walk back to my nook and grab one of my healing books. Oliver is stunned. He swallows hard, adjusts his tie and smooths the files on his desk. "Tease," he mutters and I can't help but laugh.

We work in silence when a knock at the door draws our attention. Evan walks in and Oliver straightens up his back to look at him. I

give Oliver a warning look and he lets out an exasperated breath.

"You asked for me, Luna?" he says looking at the floor with his hands behind his back.

"Yes, I need you to take me somewhere," I say with a smile.

Evan nods but doesn't meet my eyes. I pack my things and grab Rio's leash and put it on him. I step out into the hallway with Rio and Evan follows behind without saying a word. We walk in silence out of the building and into the car. Evan opens the door to the back

seat but I walk past him and into the passenger seat with Rio in my arms.

"Luna-

"You are not my driver so I will not sit in the back. And you can call me Aurora."

He sighs and walks to the driver's seat. "Where to?"

"I heard there's a botanical Garden in the city," I smile. He raises his eyebrows in confusion. "I'd like to visit it."

We make our way to the Gardens and I'm excited to finally get away from the bustling city and relax amongst the flowers and trees. When we arrive, I head straight for the stone benches beneath some oak trees covered in leaves of gorgeous shades of orange, red, and

yellow. I let Rio run around the leaves as I sit. I pat the seat next to me but Evan stares blankly at me, crossing his arms over his chest. I frown at him but he doesn't move.

"How long are you going to keep this up, Evan?"

"Keep what up?"

"This!" I shout motioning my hands towards him. "This coldness. I-I thought you were my friend."

He looks away from me and speaks to the ground. There is sadness in his voice. "I am your guardian, Luna, not your friend. Oliver made it very clear what my place is."

So he's afraid of Oliver....

This is all my fault. They were best friends before I showed up and now they can't even be in the same room without fighting.

"Do you hate me?" I ask, dreading his answer.

He looks at back at me with shock. "What?"

"Do you hate me?" My voice cracks. "You and Oliver were best friends before I-"

Evan rushes over and kneels down in front of me before wrapping his arms around me. I take in his scent and quickly realize it's nothing like Oliver's. Evan smells like maple and rain. I like it but not as much as the honey and green apples.

"I could never hate you," he says softly.

"Then can we be friends again?" I whisper, wiping my tears and pulling myself from his embrace.

He hesitates and I can tell he's thinking about Oliver.

"Don't worry about Oliver. I'll kick his ass if he ever tries to hurt you again," I say and he laughs.

"Fine, but no more kisses," he teases.

I burn bright red and he laughs at my embarrassment.

"Deal, now sit with me. I need you help!" I say patting the seat again.

He obediently sits adown beside me nd I bring out the black book from my bag.

"You want me to read to you?" he jokes and I smack him with the book.

"No, you i\*\*\*t. I want you to help me figure out how to open it. I've been trying for weeks but it won't budge!"

I hand Evan the book and he begins examining the vines that extend past the gold lock.

"Hmm, no key hole..." he mutters.

"No key hole, no combination, no hidden buttons. The only thing I got is that the lock rotates to the left, see?" I say twisting the lock slightly.

He examines it some more, frowning and deep in thought. His fingers trace the vines that wrap around the book and chuckles to himself. "Maybe we can cut the vines with a pair of hedge shears."

I look at him in shock. "Evan, that's f\*\*\*\*\*g brilliant!" I jump up with excitement and take the book from his hands. "I bet we can ask a grounds keeper for a pair."

Evan laughs, "I honestly don't think it's that simple."

"Well we won't know until we try."

I hand Evan Rio's leash and he hooks it back on him. We walk around in search of a grounds keeper when I spot a young girl pulling weeds from a flower bed. A golf cart loaded with tools and supplies is parked near her. I nudge Evan in the stomach and he glares at me.

"Go over and use your charm to get her to let us use her tools," I hiss.

"What, why me?"

"Because, I have a feeling she's more likely to help you than me," I say giving him an evil smile.

Evan rolls his eyes. "I hate being used for my good looks," he sighs.

"Oh shut up," I groan and hide behind a nearby tree with Rio.

I watch as Evan works his charm and within minutes he comes back with some shears. He hands them to me and shudders.

"I feel like a w\*\*\*e," he shivers.

I roll my eyes at him and hand him the book. I take the shears and place the blades

around a vine. When I close the blades, the vines falls to the ground and I gasp in shock.

It worked!

My excitement is short lived, however. Evan and I watch in disbelief as the vine grows back in place, wrapping around the width of the book tightly.

“Holy s\*\*t!” Evan says dropping the book in surprise. “Magic. It’s a witches book!”

I go to pick the book up again but Evan smacks it out of my hand.

“Don’t touch it! It has a spell on it! It’s cursed for all we know!” He shouts.

glare at him. “Stop it! It’s not cursed. Otherwise my wolf wouldn’t be telling me to read it.”

“Your wolf wants you to read a witches book?” he says giving me a puzzled look.

I bend down and grab the book, dusting off the dirt. “She said it has the answers I am looking for.”

“And what answers are you looking for?” he questions me.

Thesitate. My wolf warns me not to answer but I desperately want to tell him about how Andrew died. How the vines grew out of nowhere and wrapped around his neck, taking his life. Wait...

My eyes widen when the realization hits me. I know how to open the book!

My thoughts are cut off by the sound of a phone ringing. Evan grabs his phone from his pocket and answers. I can’t hear the

conversation, but Evan’s face darkens. He hangs up and looks at me solemnly.

“What is it?” I ask anxiously. I don’t like the look in his eyes, a mix between pity and anger.

“I don’t think I should tell you,” he says quietly.

I can feel my chest closing in and panic surge through my body. “Evan, please tell me,” I say rushing up towards him and grabbing fistfuls of his shirt. I plead with my eyes as I feel tears well up in my eyes. He nods and his words are like sharp daggers in my heart.

“It’s Mia.”