

THE MOON AND HER SECRET

CHAPTER 20 NO.20

When Lana got back to her room, she laid in bed and stared at the ceiling for what felt like hours. She was tired, both physically and mentally but her mind refused to sleep even when she was surrounded by complete darkness. She recounted the events that happened earlier, remembering every detail from every sentence everyone said. Over and over again like a broken record player. Sometimes she would catch herself thinking that this was all just a prolonged and messed up dream but she had to constantly remind herself that this was her reality now.

She longed to learn more about her parents, about her birth but she could not stop herself from feeling frustrated whenever she thought of Ray and even Griffin. She debated with herself internally whether or not she was being unreasonably upset with Ray when all he ever did was show her unconditional love and raise her as his own after her parents died. She looked up at him as a father figure but could not help herself to feel betrayed by him. A part of her felt that everything could have been avoided if the adults were just honest with her and the others.

Her mind then drifted to River. She tried to put herself in his shoes, constantly trying to fight his primal instincts whenever Lana was around. She chuckled softly to herself at the absurdity of the situation but everything seemed to make sense now when she remembered the faces he would have when he was near her. It must have been suffocating, irritating even to be in the same room as her. Given that she did not truly understand what he was going through but she could just imagine.

She felt her face getting hot at the idea of River wanting to mate with her just because she has the blood of an alpha. According to Ray and Griffin, it would seem that other alphas might have the same reaction as River if they were close to her. River had 10 years to get used to her scent but even then he still reacted as such. A question then popped up in Lana's mind, would that mean that she could get attacked by another alpha in the near future?

"Argh!" Lana groaned as she rolled around in bed trying to push away these feelings of doubt and self-induced fears. She could not keep pondering over the what ifs anymore, especially now that she had to get used to the idea that she's not fully human and how there's an entire new world that she could venture into, the world of the creatures of the night, of the werewolves.

A sudden tapping sound from her window made Lana jump up into a seated position on her bed. She held her breath, trying to figure out whether or not she simply imagined the sound.

Tap tap. The sound of gentle knocking against her window could be heard. She exhaled slowly as she reached for her bedside drawer and pulled it open. She blindly rummaged through the messy drawer until her hand touched a familiar hand. She pulled out a butterfly knife and held it close to her.

She secretly bought the knife for herself last year to practise self-defence. She never thought she would need it in such an outrageous situation. She made her way to the window slowly, mentally bracing herself for what she would find when she pulled the curtain away. Luckily for her, nothing was there and Lana let out a sigh of relief, finding her own paranoia to be quite laughable.

Her body relaxed as she decided to open the window, wanting to check if

there was something around the area that could have been making the tapping noise. Just as she pushed the window open, a hand appeared from the side of the window and grabbed her mouth shut. In her panic, Lana flipped the knife that she was firmly holding out and stabbed the arm in a swift motion.

“Ow.” A voice muttered. Lana looked up in disbelief when she saw River’s frowning face. Lana wanted to shout a million curse words at him for appearing out of the blue and scaring her but her voice was muffled from the grip he had over her mouth. “Keep quiet and I’ll move my hand.” He said in a low voice.

Lana glared at him, hating the fact that he was giving her orders even in this situation but she nodded slowly, indicating that she will go along with whatever he was scheming. After a moment, River pulled his hand away and Lana watched as he examined the knife that was sticking out of his arm. “S-Sorry.” She muttered, watching the blood slowly trickle down from the stab wound, a sense of guilt rushing over her as it overshadowed the anger she felt earlier.

“It’s my fault for surprising you.” He admitted before hopping over the ledge and allowing himself into her room. He leaned against the ledge of the opened window casually. He pulled the knife out in one simple motion and casually flipped the knife around like it was a toy. “I didn’t expect you to stab me though.” he raised an eyebrow at her, almost judging her for her aggressive behaviour.

Lana wanted to argue with him but decided to swallow her words. “...what are you doing here anyway?” Lana frowned as she slowly took a few steps away

from him, self-conscious about her smell now that she knew he was affected by it.

River glanced at her, noticing how she backed away from him. With his free hand, he reached out to Lana's wrist and pulled her closer to him. Lana felt her body being dragged towards him until her body collided onto his. She pushed herself steady but her body was still fairly close to him. She was ready to yell at him for his sudden action but she froze when she felt the cold metal blade pressed against her pinkie.

"I came for this." River said in a low whisper against her ear. "You broke your promise, right?" he sneered.

"...are you insane?" Lana squeaked, feeling her body tense from sudden fear.

"Well, you were the one who stabbed me, so who is really insane here?" she could feel him smiling through his words.

"Still you! You grabbed me from outside my window! It was self-defence!" she argued.

"Shh. Lower your voice." he hushed her. "It really hurts, you know?" he muttered as he placed pressure on the knife. Lana could feel a light sting from where the blade met her skin.

"S-Stop! I didn't say anything! You were the one who told them everything!" she cried, feeling that River really has lost his mind if he was about to cut her pinkie off.

River sighed and nudged Lana away with a rough push on her shoulder. She stumbled back, her hand unconsciously grabbing her pinkie to check if there were any cuts. "I was messing around. You can't blame me for being upset that you stabbed me." He said as he playfully flipped the butterfly knife around.

Lana frowned at his sick idea of a joke but her eyes lingered at the spot where she stabbed him. There was no wound. "Um..." she muttered but unsure how to bring it up.

"I can heal faster than humans, remember?" he said nonchalantly. He held up the knife and examined it from the dim light that emitted from the streetlights outside. Lana eyed the once clean blade and how it was now stained with his blood.

"Right..." she mumbled, suddenly not feeling guilty that she stabbed him anymore. "So why are you really here? I thought you left...?"

"I just wanted to mess with you."

"Seriously? Don't lie."

River sighed as he dropped his hands to his side, the knife still firmly in his hands. "I wanted to check up on you." He admitted.

"Why...?" she asked dubiously.

"Don't look at me like that." He said as he wiped his blood from the knife with his shirt before handing it over to Lana. Lana slowly reached out but River

pulled the knife away and grabbed her hand instead. "But it seems like you are doing just fine." He said in a dangerously low voice, making Lana's core quiver.

She gulped. "What were you expecting?" she asked, making her voice as steady as possible so that River would not notice how intimidated she was.

He shrugged. "Thought I could catch a glimpse of you crying."

"That's literally what a psychopath would say. You really are insane, River Attwood." She said as she attempted to pull her hand free from his grip. She then stopped resisting and smiled. "But it does sound to me like you are only here because you were worried about me." Lana dared to assume. Even though she was clearly afraid of what he would do with that knife in his hands, she did not want to allow him to trample all over her.

River looked into her eyes, the same unfaltering stare greeted him and he wondered if it was because she had alpha traits in her that made him react unnaturally to it. "Don't flatter yourself." He spat, yet a smirk played on his lips as he let go of her hand and tossed the knife to her. Lana easily caught it without breaking their eye contact.

"Whatever." She shrugged. "You should leave before I push you out of the window."

River stifled a laugh, surprised that she would even say something like that. "You could try, I'd just drag you down with me. Maybe we could test and see if you have any other werewolf traits in you."

Lana stared at him in disbelief. She would be lying if she said she was not curious herself but she would rather avoid hurting herself just for the sake of experimenting.

“Hah, you are insufferable.” She rolled her eyes at him.

“Yeah, yeah, whatever. I’m leaving now.” He said as he jumped out of the window and stood by the ledge.

Somehow Lana felt that it was wrong of her to just let him leave. There was something irking her mind and chest and if she didn’t say it out right now, she knew she would never get this chance ever again.

“River.” Lana called out, fiddling with the knife in her hands.

“What?” he asked as he turned to face her.

“I’m sorry.”

“What for? Stabbing me?”

“No, I really feel like you deserved that.” She smiled sweetly, her grip against the knife tightening. The thought of stabbing him again crossed her mind but she dismissed it immediately. She did not want to be placed in the same category as the psychopath River after all.

“Hah, so why are you apologizing then?”

“I’m sorry for assuming that you hated me when I didn’t know your

circumstances. It was...um childish of me.” She admitted.

River stared at her for a moment, trying to comprehend her words. Of course Ray and Griffin would tell her everything. He wasn't surprised by that at all. But somehow, watching her apologize to him over something out of her control was irritating him profoundly.

He reached out suddenly and grabbed her by the collar, pulling her close. The sudden impact made her drop the knife to the ground. River leaned close to her ear, her scent filling his senses and making his entire body react deliriously. He forced himself to push away those feelings as he always did.

“But...you assumed right. I fucking despise you, Lana Danley.” He whispered into her ear.

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