

The Alpha's Contract Luna alexia By Lian #Chapter 82 - Read The Alpha's Contract Luna alexia By Lian Chapter 82

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~ King Balthasar

"Who hired you? I said who hired you?" One of Kieran's warriors, Sheena, interrogated the half-witch, Evilene, and within the underground prison, King Balthasar watched from a glass window. A few days had passed since Kieran left the palace of

Taplean, but Evilene still refused to give the name of her employer.

Apparently, Evilene, the half-wolf and half-witch was born with the ability to seduce, and it works best on men. She could imitate a true mate's bond with

the potion she had created. This was what Morgan had found out from Evilene's kin.

Her clan had long deserted Evilene due to her forbidden practice and had long been a wanted offender in the nation of Vottara.

While Vottara's rulers had sent warriors to collect Evilene, King Balthasar ensured that the half-witch was interrogated.

Morgan left specific instructions on how to handle Evilene. Since the half-witch had natural seducing capabilities, a female

warrior should interrogate her. Like every witch, he or she can recharge her power through the life force around her, such as nature, werewolves, and humans. Thus, Evilene should be weakened.

A day after the witch regained consciousness, she had little food and water.

Evilene was locked in chains inside her prison cell

while occasionally injected

with wolfsbane.

Using a whip with silver dust on its tail, Sheena hit Evilene's leg. Sheena

barked, "Save yourself from the torture and save us all the trouble! Tell us who hired you to seduce our alpha!"

Evilene shrieked in pain. She howled and attempted to shift but was too weak to change into her wolf form.

"Hahaha!" An ominous laugh escaped Evilene's lips. She said, "You can torture me all you want, but eventually, I will be set free.

Because whoever hired me will be taking over Taplean! Haha!"

Evilene fell to her knees and choked, but she continued to mock her captors.

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despite her agony. "Some have already entered Taplean, and you don't even

know it! Haha! You might as well say goodbye to your king! Haha – Ahhh! Bi tch!”

Sheena whipped her again, but later on, the warrior looked past the glass window with her brows furrowed at the king.

King Balthasar knew exactly what was going on in Sheena’s mind. Their nation had been breached, and war was evidently coming.

Alexia

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Alexia awoke from her sleep, panting. She got up and drank a glass of water. Tears ran down her face, recalling the dream. It had been the same for the past week. She saw Kieran and that woman, Evilene.

Yet again, Alexia cried. A big part of her wanted answers. She wanted to know if Kieran and Evilene had already mated, but at the same time, she was afraid of the truth.

“I should have known better. Loving someone who isn’t my true mate would never last,” she told herself the same words Elder Gaston had repeatedly instilled in her head.

She got up and opened her window. She studied the night sky from her room. Snow was falling again.

Azenna snowed all year round, but there was very little snow when she arrived the first time. It was very chilly, but Alexia had gotten used to it. The more she stayed in her mother’s lands, the more she became immune to the cold.

As she hugged herself, she thought about calling Rae. However, remembering how her child was in pain when she saw Kieran with Evilene, she changed her mind.

Alexia thought it was a miracle, the connection she had with her pup. However, her baby’s reaction also gave her the strength to fight her feelings for Kieran.

The palace doctor had suggested it was not good to feel depressed nor cause her pup any more discomfort. It was hurting her baby and giving her abdominal cramps. Thus, Alexia was determined to protect her child. Alexia would rather lose Kieran than lose her pup at this point. So instead of hearing

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news about Kieran, she closed the window and returned to her bed.

Alexia prayed to the Moon Goddess to give her a goodnight's sleep. She needed a good rest for tomorrow because Prince Raegan would arrive.

The next day, Alexia had an early breakfast with her mother when a commotion outside the palace gates forced one warrior to disrupt their meal.

"Your Highness, there are two warriors outside the gates. They are people of Paredon, but perhaps, commissioned by King Balthasar. They wish to send a message to princess Alexia," the guard said. "I offered to receive a message, but these men insisted on relaying the message themselves only to the princess or to you, Queen Avery."

The warrior on guard at the gate gasped and said, "Elder Gaston is outside, trying to scare them away, but the warriors were persistent, saying they were willing to die if needed."

Avery let out a low growl. She said, "We can't have that. King Balthasar may have paid them, but they are people of Paredon.

That means we end up aggravating two nations should Gaston hurt them."

"Alexia," Avery turned to her, saying, "We have no choice but to hear them out."

Heartbeats later, Avery and Alexia were inside the queen's private office. Beta Agatha and other warriors were present while accommodating the werewolves from Paredon.

While the unknown men were being ushered inside the office, Gaston kept grumbling behind, saying, "Queen Avery, you are risking our safety! You cannot let these men come in here just like that -"

"I am not any werewolf, Elder Gaston. You might have forgotten that I am the strongest one amongst all werewolves. There is no need to fret against warriors from Paredon, a nation you always favored for an alliance," Queen Avery quickly countered.

Elder Gaston continued to object, but Alexia's mother stood her ground, saying, "You are free to leave us, Elder Gaston."

Gaston purred. His eyes formed slits, studying the visitors. Instead of leaving, he stood beside Beta Agatha, saying, "I want to hear what they have to say."

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When the two warriors from Paredon had the queen's full attention, they kneeled before her and to Alexia.

“Say what you have to say, but whatever it is, it will not change the fact that Alpha Kieran has hurt my daughter,” Queen Avery firmly said.

On the other hand, Alexia held her breath and lifted her chin. She knew this was equally hard for her mother, considering Kieran was King Balthasar’s most trusted alpha. Her mother and King Balthasar were, after all, true mates.

Turning to the visitors, Alexia paid attention as one man reported, “The woman who was with Alpha Kieran at the time of Princess Alexia’s visit was not his true mate. She was a half-witched who had used magic to sway the alpha and seduce him with a potion.”

Alexia stilled at what she had heard. Her heart felt like it was being squeezed again. She wasn’t sure if the news consoled her.

‘What? What did they say?’

“Alpha Kieran freed himself from the witch’s magic after seeing Princess Alexia in the flesh. The witch is suspected of being commissioned to lure Alpha Kieran and is currently locked up and interrogated. Alpha Kieran wants to explain everything to Princess Alexia and the queen in person. As we speak, Alpha Kieran, his beta, and two other companions should already be in Paredon by now, traveling to Azenna.” The man looked up at Alexia, saying, “Alpha Kieran is coming here for his wife.”

“Nonsense! Lies after lies to gain our Princess’ trust!” Gaston growled. “While it is true that some witches have such capability, a man like Alpha Kieran should not have been easily convinced.”

Turning to Avery, Gaston suggested, “King Balthasar is making excuses for his proudest alpha. We cannot easily accept his reasoning, considering Alexia’s pup was in danger!”

Meanwhile, Alexia’s mouth fell on the floor. Her brows met, thinking about that night. Then she recounted how Kieran had kept this truth from her at first, and then that image of him k*ssing another woman and touching her b*dy flashed in her head. Her pain was so real that she could not accept their words easily. Moreover, Elder Gaston was right. Because of how much she was hurt, her baby also suffered.

She turned to her mother, and Avery implied, “I agree with Elder Gaston. How

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could he easily fall into a witch’s trap? We will listen to what he says, but we will have to decide if it’s worth believing.”

Avery turned to Alexia, asking, "Am I right, Alexia?"

Alexia felt as though there was a lump in her throat. She was half-hearted but could not help but agree with her mother and Elder

Gaston. She gulped before answering, "That's right, mother. That's right."

Sadly for Alexia, Kieran was not the only person she had to worry about.

Shortly after the messengers of King Balthasar arrived, the youngest prince of Paredon turned up.

Prince Raegan may be the youngest prince of Paredon, but he is eight years older than Alexia. Yet, despite his age, he looked

impressive and youthful. He had lighter features, quite the opposite of Kieran.

The prince had green eyes and a fair complexion.

He had dirty blonde hair and a clean face. Alexia could not deny how the prince caught her eye.

It was in the palace's sitting area where Alexia and her mother met the prince. Introductions were made, and pleasantries were exchanged.

When Prince Raegan asked for his private time with Alexia, they walked to the wintry gardens of the palace. From there, the

prince revealed, "I fell in love with my best friend ten years ago. We were set to be married, but after four years into our relationship, she found her true mate. She left me, and I have been in misery since."

Prince Raegan turned to Alexia, suggesting, "I know exactly how you feel, Princess Alexia, and while we are not true mates, I can promise you that the experience of that pain taught me a valuable lesson. I will never hurt a woman as my best friend did."

"Trust me. I have no part in my Uncle Gaston's plans. Whatever it is. In fact, I wasn't going to come until I learned of your

husband's betrayal," The prince offered his hand to her and proposed, "I can be your friend, and if we catch feelings for each other, I will treasure you with all my heart."

It wasn't that Alexia already believed him, but she felt she could relate to the prince following his tale. She accepted his hand, saying, "Thank you. I could honestly use a friend right now."

Alexia

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"Nothing yet?" Prince Raegan asked after meeting Alexia outside the queen's private office.

Closing the door behind her, Alexia shook her head regretfully, saying, "There

is no word of their arrival. Nor do the messengers of the king have any news.”

Her heart ached once again because a small part of her hoped. It had been more than two weeks since the messengers from the king arrived. At first, Alexia felt reluctant to listen to Kieran’s side of the story. After a day, she felt guilty for making assumptions about her husband. Next, she felt hopeful that maybe it was true – that her husband simply could not resist the witch’s magic. In each day that passed, Alexia longed to hear his reasons. However, after eleven days of waiting, she regretted believing Kieran would go after her. At most, Kieran should have arrived after eight days, but he did not.

“I’m sorry to hear that, Alexia,” Prince Raegan said.

“His true mate might have come after him. Maybe she wasn’t imprisoned after all,” a female voice said, and when Alexia turned to the source, she saw Elder Tara. “I’m telling you, the king was only trying to make excuses for Kieran, knowing how King Balthasar favors you more than Alpha Kieran’s true mate.”

“Maybe it’s true that woman is a half-witch, but could still be Alpha Kieran’s true mate.” Elder Tara shook her head and said, “My dear child. Don’t let your heart be so weak, for your sake and the pup’s.” Elder Tara had awoken a few days back and spat nothing good about Kieran and King Balthasar.

“Perhaps Elder Tara is right, Alexia thought in her head. ‘Kieran is not coming after all.’

Prince Raegan offered his hand to her. He said, “Come on. Let’s go out and enjoy the snow. I heard that you rarely step out of the palace, so why don’t we go out now and meet your people?”

Alexia suddenly had an awakening. She was too absorbed by what was

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happening with her personal life that she had forgotten who she was. She was Princess Alexia and was obligated to her mother’s lands. Now that she had mastered controlling her power, she reckoned Prince Raegan was right.

She took his hand and replied, “I think that is a great idea.”

In the next few hours, Alexia and Prince Raegan went around the nearest towns to the palace, meeting people and hearing their

cries. Most who lived in their lands were humans, so with Azenna having snow all year round, they worried about getting food.

The entire time warriors from the palace walked with them.

“Some parts of Azenna do not snow so often, Princess. These are the towns of Coinan, Lexus, and Twara. We get most of our fruits from these villages where our farmers live. We also get fruits and grains from Paredon and Taplean,” one warrior said.

Alexia hugged her coat tightly and blew warm air before suggesting, “Then, we should help those who live in Coinan, Lexus, and Twara for their trees and crops to grow more, maybe even relocate those that live far from these towns. The more people are in these towns, the more likely they will convert into farming as a livelihood.”

“We did not think of relocation before, Princess, but that’s a good idea,” the warrior responded.

“How about meat?” Alexia belatedly asked.

“Our warriors hunt for the humans, and as for fish, they get it from the lakes and the nearby seas – which is about four hours away,” the warrior revealed. “Relocation is not possible there, Princess. It’s too cold by the seas.”

“There are small fishermen who bring fish through here once in a while, and the towns hear the palace buy them in bulk,” the warrior added. “But mostly, we rely on Paredon to give us our meat and poultry, sometimes fish too.”

“If they are small fishermen, then we should think about giving them financial aid so they can grow their business – buy a bigger boat, hire more men whenever they sailed,” Alexia suggested. With a sigh, Alexia said, “I’ll discuss this with my mother later.”

“You really are a princess, Alexia,” Regan remarked. “A princess of Azenna.

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This is your calling and where you belong.”

Alexia smiled at Raegan. Thanks to his suggestion, she was able to get her mind off Kieran. She said, “I appreciate your presence. You have been a good friend these past few days.”

“Princess, I heard you are getting a divorce from your husband,” One local suddenly expressed. “Then, maybe you can be with Prince Raegan. You two look good together.”

The town’s people that were around them teased Alexia, and she could not help but blush at their claims. She turned to Raegan, who was smiling from ear to ear, his face also burning.

She wondered, ‘Can I really move on?’

Alexia looked down at her belly. She was about a month shy from shifting into her wolf and around three to four months into giving birth. After focusing on her stomach, she looked past the trees and the snowy slopes wondering what had happened to Kieran. 'Are you really coming, Kieran?' Kieran's mobile, including Rae's could not be reached, so Alexia would not know.

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Kieran

"Arrg – HmMMM." Kieran's growl muffled against Morgan's hand. He was in pain following an attempt to his life again. Morgan was putting medicine in Kieran's wound so he would heal faster, and she wrapped it tightly with a cloth.

It had been a week since they entered Azenna. They were ambushed and attacked by not only werewolves from Paredon, but also by winter-grey wolves!

Being the strongest in their group, Kieran was often at the front of the struggle and had killed five warriors from Paredon and wounded one winter-grey wolf. Jaxon and Rae also fought for their lives but often stayed together.

Morgan used spells and magic to weaken the wintery-grey wolves. Thankfully, with all of them helping each other, they managed to last another week, fighting back, running for their lives, and continuing their route toward the

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palace of Azenna.

They lost their car, money, and mobiles in the process. Morgan only carried her bag and protected it with her life. In it were pieces of evidence of the Evilene's potion and other helpful medicines they could use during the travel, including the magical healing potion made from the fire root plant.

If it weren't for the healing potion that Morgan had brought, it was safe to say they would not have remained alive to this day.

They were in a cave somewhere in Azenna, hiding from their enemies. Jaxon was scouting the cave, trying to find food, while Rae was looking for another exit from the shelter.

Soon Jaxon returned with a snake. He carried the dead snake with one arm

while his other had a sling due to a dislocated elbow.

He said, "This will have to be food for now."

"I hate snakes," Kieran growled.

He sat up, panting. He massaged his temples before turning to Morgan, "Is the Moon Goddess so against me being with Alexia?"

"It's not that, Alpha Kieran. Someone ordered to hunt us down. There is a traitor in Azenna, and Alexia's mother is unaware,"

Morgan suggested.

Kieran gasped. He said, "I need my wife. I need to see her. How far are we from the palace? Had I known we would be attacked

this way, I should have brought Alpha Kai's skunk potion."

"I think we should arrive by tomorrow, Alpha Kieran. Before hiding in the cave, I climbed up the tree earlier. I saw the palace was

not too far. Our attackers have been trying to drive us to the east, opposite the palace, and somehow, they succeeded, but

thanks to the Moon Goddess, we are back on course." Jaxon walked closer to the wounded Kieran and assured him, "A little

more, Alpha. Just a little more."

Just then, Rae arrived. She was chasing her breath and holding a torch in her hand. She smiled as she announced, "I found

another way out."

Kieran

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The fire root plant healed Kieran quickly in two ways. Morgan had spread a few on his wound and drank a few drops. Following a few hours of rest, Kieran was up and ultimately healed. It also helped that he was an Alpha with a fast-healing ability.

Jaxon wasn't completely better, but they had to leave. They were racing against time, missing the opportunities for Kieran to patch things up with Alexia and then the problem in Taplean, which they had no update on since they lost their mobiles.

They navigated through a cave with the last set of their worn-out clothes. For minutes, they followed Rae and finally arrived at the small opening.

"F**k, Rae. I can't fit through there!" Kieran growled. He looked at his beta and saw Jaxon gulp.

"Relax, Alpha. I covered the opening with rocks so it won't be too obvious," Rae revealed.

Rae and Morgan slowly removed the rocks. Then, Kieran was able to see where they were at. Trees and rocks enclosed the

cave's opening, along with the snow. Then, in front of it were boulders of stones.

The opening of the cave formed pointed limes that scratched their skins upon exiting, but that was trivial compared to what they had been through at the hands of the winter-grey wolves.

Kieran slowly climbed up to the boulders. Then he climbed up to the highest tree. From there, he realized they were now closer to the palace of Azenna. However, it looked like they were headed down a thick forest.

When Kieran returned to the ground, he said to everyone, "This way. Let's shift. We can run faster."

They stripped and shifted. They let Morgan carry their clothes in the same bag that kept all the essential potions. Morgan

secured the bag, biting the sling as she followed behind Rae and Jaxon.

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Their party cautiously trekked down the snowy hill, occasionally coming across thick, pointy branches that belt their arms. During the first four hours, everything went well until they arrived at a village where humans lived.

Kieran and his group tried to avoid being detected. The presence of another werewolf kind would alert the humans. Moreover, he knew that the winter-grey wolves protected them dearly. Therefore, there were bound to be warriors on watch.

Can he trust his life to a winter-grey wolf? Given his recent experience, no. He would only trust his wife and Queen Avery.

They went around the village, maintaining to hide in between trees. They were successful at some point until a child ran into them.

Time stilled for everyone when the child studied their frames. The child was wide-eyed, his mouth open. Kieran's heart pounded against his ribcage. He mindlinked with his group, 'Run. Run fast.'

Before he knew it, the child yelled, "Wolves! Werewolves! Not grey ones!"

Kieran and Rae, Jaxon, and Morgan ran past the child. Their paws thundered against the ground. Soon, they heard the howling of wolves, but it did not come from them.

"Let Morgan run ahead!" Kieran instructed. He said, "Morgan, try to reach the palace before us. You alone can prove my innocence!"

"But Alpha Kieran -"

Morgan tried to object, but Kieran instructed, "Go!"

The half-witch had no choice but to obey her alpha. She sprinted ahead, biting tightly against the sling of her bag.

As they ran toward their route, they heard a winter-grey wolf shouting, "Stop in the name of Queen Avery of Azeena!"

"We won't stop! We don't know if you mean well. We have been attacked by your kind!" Kieran reasoned.

"If you don't stop, you will die!" The big white wolf from behind them said.

"Funny! We have heard that many times over the past week!" Kieran barked.

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"Who are you, and why have you wandered into our lands?" The unknown wolf asked.

Kieran thought this wolf may not have been part of those pursuing them. Why would they ask about their purpose for being there? The problem with winter-grey wolves is that they have the same coat; wintry grey. They all looked alike in their wolf form, except for their height, build, and the color of their eyes. It was difficult to tell one apart from the other. Thus, Kieran could not readily identify their attackers.

He continued to run with Jaxon and Rae, yelling, "I am Alpha Kieran Stone! I am Princess Alexia's husband! I have come to see my wife!"

"Alpha Kieran Stone? We have been expecting you! What took you so long?"

Following the query from the grey wolf, Kieran allowed Jaxon and Rae to go past him. He stalled and eventually stopped in his tracks.

He saw the winter-grey wolf continue on his path. Next, he saw two other winter-grey wolves dashing in their direction.

Seeing the warrior slow down, Kieran relaxed. However, in his mind, he still instructed Jaxon, 'Keep going.'

Watching the warrior close in on him, Kieran disclosed, "We were ambushed, first by warriors of Paredon, and when we went further into Azenna, we were met by winter-grey wolves who joined the raid. We had to abandon our car and most of our belongings. They threw us off course, so we took longer to reach here."

The wolf before him was almost as tall as Kieran. He thanked his alpha blood because his cut was still more imposing than the

wintery-grey wolves he had encountered so far.

“It’s fortunate then that you came across us,” the unknown wolf said before adding, “So we can put an end to your life once and for all – ”

The warrior let out a growl before his fangs elongated, and just then, Kieran saw that familiar eyes, the same that had recently injured him.

The winter-grey wolf lunged at Kieran, but he promptly ducked and rolled to the ground. He was back on his fours again, just in time to bite the warrior’s tail.

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The winter-grey wolf screamed before attempting to wag his tail, but the more he moved, the more Kieran’s teeth sunk into the flesh of his tail. He tried to bite Kieran, but Kieran shifted into his human form, sliding down in between the warrior’s legs, this time holding his tail instead.

Unfortunately for Kieran, winter-grey wolves were known for their strength. Like the warrior he was fighting, he could not push him off easily. Still, in an effort to run for it, he pushed his human feet against the wolf’s back before shifting into his wolf form, and he kicked him down with every strength he got.

Kieran managed to make the winter-grey wolf lose his balance, which was his cue to run. He dashed toward the direction of the palace, following the paw prints left by Rae and Jaxon. Kieran could hear more growls and howls, suggesting more enemies were coming for him. Nevertheless, he did not look back, knowing every second mattered.

The great alpha did not know how long he ran, but Kieran escaped his hunters. He ran despite his swelling paws and only rested

when passing by a creek. He quenched his thirst before racing again. ‘Alpha Kieran! We are being attacked! Help!’ He heard Rae, mindlinking. Kieran dashed as fast as he could and arrived at a startling scene.

Jaxon was on the ground. His legs were bleeding, but his chest had a deeper cut. He was pressing his hand firmly against his wound while Rae was trying to fight off another winter-grey wolf, and oh boy, was she angry.

The warrior was already gasping. Clearly, Jaxon gave him a hard time.

“You want to kill my mate?!” She barked. “Not before I kill you first!” Their speed was the one thing they had an advantage over the winter-grey wolves. The latter may be more robust, but Kieran, Rae, and Jaxon were faster and had more techniques. Perhaps, it was their experience in fighting a war, and Azenna had fewer battles to win that required less training. Lastly, Kieran considered how they relied too much on the strength of their queen, one who held the most significant power.

He watched as Rae ran around the attacker. She went in circles that confused the warrior. Rae called, “Now, Alpha Kieran!”

Kieran rushed and jumped at the warrior, his teeth easily finding the enemy’s

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back. Rae also tried to find an opening as the warrior cried in pain. She was pushed and landed on a tree branch but was back up to attack again.

Rae went for the warrior’s leg instead, and with the two of them biting him, he was bleeding severely, and he fell in no time.

The warrior still fought back, clawing or biting them. Kieran was bitten on her leg, and Rae was clawed. However, Rae did not stop. Kieran was the same, plunging his fangs at their opponent whenever possible. Until such time that the winter-grey wolf lost consciousness,

“Alpha,” Jaxon called. He was struggling to breathe.

Kieran approached his beta, saying, “I’ll carry you on my back. Let’s find Morgan -”

A loud barking sound distracted Kieran. He recognized that the warriors that were chasing him were now close by. Kieran first

lowered his b*dy, and Rae shifted to her human form to help Jaxon on his back. However, to his dismay, winter-grey wolves

emerged from the trees. There was not just one, but five of them.

One of them found their unconscious fellow and became enraged. He barked, “You will pay for this!”

Kieran put Jaxon back down on the ground. His claws dug into the earth as he growled. No matter what, he wouldn’t die that day because he still needed to see his wife!

The winter-grey wolf, who seemed like their leader, ordered, “Let’s kill Alpha Kieran first!”

‘Rae, run with Jaxon!’ Kieran suggested while the warriors surrounded him.

‘No. No!’ Rae cried.

'Save yourself and Jaxon! Find Morgan! Get healed!' Kieran ordered. 'I can't fight and protect you at the same time!'

From the corner of Kieran's eye, he saw Rae holding Jaxon on her back. Then, she shifted into her wolf form. Rae fled, whimpering.

Kieran's pursuers were growling, their fangs lengthening. They were about to

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jump at him simultaneously when a commanding voice froze them in their stance.

"Stop! I demand your explanation!"

The next thing Kieran noticed was a powerful atmosphere behind him, and his attackers flew in mid-air like the wind had thrust them away.

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Alexia

Alexia awoke, feeling her chest heavy. She could not understand it because Kieran was constantly in her thoughts, even as she slept through the night.

She dreamt of him, running into the snow, seemingly flustered. Her pup was restless in her stomach too, like their baby was sensing their father.

That day was her initiation into the nation of Azenna, where she was meant to have a blood compact with her mother. They had put it off for so long because Alexia still meant to return to Taplean. However, due to the problem between her and Kieran, her mother suggested that Alexia swear loyalty to the winter-grey wolves. That also meant losing her connection with the Stone Blood Pack, Kieran's pack.

Alexia bathed and changed into her dress. She continued to feel uneasy, even as she ate breakfast with her mother and made her way to the palace balcony, where many of the people awaited to see her. She watched her mother address the crowd, explaining how the initiation worked. Avery said, "My people, today is a special day, for my daughter has already decided to leave her past behind, and join us wholeheartedly..."

A hand clasped on hers, and Alexia turned to Prince Raegan. He was smiling at her, affirming her decision. He said, "This is for the best. When you can mindlink with your people, you feel instantly

connected with them.”

Nodding her head, Alexia answered, “Right.” She remembered when she had a blood compact with Kieran; she felt the same way, connected to the Stone Blood Pack.

As Avery continued to talk in front of the warriors and humans below the balcony, Alexia felt her chest tightening. That uncomfortable feeling was becoming more and more familiar with each minute that passed.

“Alexia, come here, my daughter,” Avery said, smiling at her. Alexia was so distracted. Her heart was pounding erratically, and her forehead sweat. “What’s wrong? Are you nervous?”

‘Nervous? No, more like I feel Kieran’s in grave danger – Her thoughts were cut

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off when she felt her mark in pain, her stomach cramping. She gasped, calling,

“Kieran... Kieran... Kieran!”

Everyone around her was startled. Alexia cried and ran toward the balcony’s edge, saying, “Mother, I can feel Kieran. He is in trouble. He is here! I feel him. I know it!”

“Alexia? Are you sure?” Avery asked. “He wouldn’t be in danger here.”

“Mother, I swear.” Alexia turned to her mother, her hand on her stomach. “My pup feels it too.”

Even if Kieran had hurt her, she could not just let her baby’s father get hurt or die. Thus, Alexia begged, “Mother, please.”

Alexia returned to the balcony’s edge, looking past villages, trees, and snowy slopes. As she did, a commotion erupted behind her.

Elder Tara and Elder Gaston were speaking against Alexia’s claims.

“She is just being emotional right now, still hurt by what she discovered about her husband. If Alpha Kieran made his way into

our nation, we would have been notified,” Gaston said.

Tara, on the other hand, suggested, “Alexia, forget your husband. Let’s continue with the ceremony.”

Prince Raegan, on the other hand, approached Alexia. He asked, “You feel him through your mark?”

Alexia nodded, saying, “I do.”

"Then, I'll scout for him," Prince Raegan offered.

"That's not necessary. It is my job," the queen said. She turned to her daughter, -saying, "We will look for him, Alexia."

"Mother, something is not right. You need to hurry," Alexia begged. She pointed in one direction, saying, "I feel his presence more in this direction."

Alexia watched as her mother addressed her people, saying, "I'm sorry, but we must reschedule. We have an urgent matter to attend to. Thank you all for coming here, and kindly await my next announcement."

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In the next few minutes, Alexia followed her mother and warriors down the first floor, all while the crowd disbursed. They made it to the front of the palace gates when they saw another ruckus ahead.

"There is an intruder!"

"Catch her!"

"It's another werewolf!"

They saw the humans running away while the warriors by the gate shifted and formed a protective arch around Avery and Alexia.

Alexia narrowed her eyes, sensing the werewolf looked so familiar. Just then, she heard the werewolf, mindlink with her, 'Luna Alexia! It's me, Morgan! This is my wolf form!'

Morgan's army-colored wolf was limping as she ran, her leg had been bitten, but she kept running. Then, Alexia noticed a warrior chasing after her.

"I will take her out, Queen Avery! She is an intruder!" The warrior behind Morgan barked.

Alexia, however, was quick to scream, "No! She is my friend! Do not harm her!"

Despite her warning, the warrior maintained his pace, and because of this, Alexia saw her mother use her power. She shifted into her wolf form and stood behind Morgan, thrusting the attacker into the air with the mere force of her hand.

"Guards!" Avery called, pointing to the assaulting wintery-grey wolf. She commanded, "Seize the warrior!"

Behind Alexia, she could hear Elder Gaston and Elder Tara questioning the queen's decision. Still, Avery maintained her stance, loudly voicing, "Didn't you hear what my daughter said! This werewolf is her

friend!”

Morgan shifted into her human form. She held a bag dearly against her chest as she reached for Alexia. She said, “Luna Alexia, thank the Moon Goddess, we have finally met.”

When Morgan embraced Alexia, she revealed, “The moment we entered Azenna’s territory, we were ambushed – repeatedly attacked! Like no one.

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wanted us to reach you!”

“We were sabotaged, Luna Alexia! Believe me! I have no reason to lie to you! We have been on foot since!” Morgan claimed.

“And even winter-grey wolves tried to kill us!”

It was because her howls were unpretentious that Alexia cried with Morgan. She felt her pain and struggle. Moreover, she noticed Morgan had lost an incredible amount of weight. ‘So, how long had they been running?’

Alexia soothed Morgan’s back, rubbing it as she said, “You are okay now, Morgan. You are safe -”

“Rae, Jaxon, and Alpha Kieran. Their lives are in danger. Other winter-grey wolves are probably chasing after them!” Morgan suggested. “And we would have easily managed independently, except, Luna Alexia, your kind is stronger!”

She howled, saying, “Please. Please, Luna. Send help. Help them!”

Instantly, Alexia felt her heart race. She felt chills down her spine because she sensed Kieran was nervous, doubting himself.

When had Kieran ever doubted himself – his ability to fight? His opponent must be that strong, or there were too many of them.

However, considering Morgan’s words, if winter-grey wolves were attacking him, then Kieran found a match to his strength, maybe

even more.

Turning to her mother, Alexia said, “I need to find Kieran, Rae, and Jaxon -”

“Let your mother take care of it. Stay. You are pregnant, and your friend needs you,” Avery said. “Moreover, if it concerns one of our kind, I must address it!”

Avery eyed her beta, saying, “Take charge, Agatha.” He glanced at her guards, ordering, “Follow me!”

Alexia watched her mother leave with a pained expression. Behind her, Elder Gaston and Elder Tara were ranting, but she did not care. All her bitterness toward Kieran vanished and was replaced by

complete concern. Under her breath, she muttered, "Be safe, Kieran. Be safe, Rae and Jaxon."

"I'm warning you, Elder Gaston. I will not think twice about fighting you. Respect the royals, and that includes any of their visitors!" Alexia could hear Agatha scold the elders behind closed doors. She was in the medical room

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helping Morgan tend to her wounds, together with the palace's in-house doctor, Godwin.

"Uncle, enough of this! Why do you think they do not mean well?" She could also hear Prince Raegan, arguing with Elder Gaston and Elder Tara outside the door.

Alexia could only shake her head, thankful she wasn't outside to witness their exchange.

"Why are they so angry at us when we have done nothing?" Morgan sought before sipping down a few drops of the healing potion. She hissed, watching the doctor apply the same mixture on her leg, saying, "Da mn, your kind is strong, Alexia."

"So you are saying Chase was one of those who attacked you?" The doctor, Godwin, asked.

"Chase? The one who ran after me?" Morgan asked.

"I saw him run after you. So I supposed," Godwin admitted. The palace doctor, Godwin, saw everything at the palace entrance.

He knew everyone in the nearby provinces of Azenna.

"Chase, he is like me, a mix of half winter-gray wolf and half human," the doctor revealed. "If my guess is right, his group was the one who attacked you. They always get in trouble around here."

"They aren't the strongest in the nation since they aren't pure breed. You were lucky. No pure breed would dare defy the queen,"

Godwin added. "It's just... regretful if Chase and his group did this."

Alexia gasped. She shook her head and agreed. After all, Alexia had learned about her lineage this past few weeks. She knew many warriors were two to three times stronger than her husband. Her mother was probably four times stronger due to her power, being a descendant of Adira Elsher, the first winter-grey wolves known to all.

'Why would they do this?' Alexia asked herself in silence. Her gaze landed on the doctor, and she meant to ask more when someone barged into the room.

“Alpha Kieran and your other friends arrived, Princess. They are all... badly wounded,” one palace guard shared the news. “They said they needed the one

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called Morgan.”

“Bring them in here to get treated,” Alexia quickly ordered. “Now!”
“Yes, Princess!” The guard responded.

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~

Alexia

Alexia was feeling nervous about seeing Kieran. She did not know how she would react to his presence, but she could sense him closer. However, Kieran was not the first to arrive. The moment the door opened, Alexia saw one guard carrying Jaxon. She gasped, seeing how he was so much in bad shape. Her voice trembled as she said, “Oh, my god, Jaxon!”

“Lay him here,” the doctor ordered, clearing one stretcher. “I need an IV site on this patient.”

“I’ll help you, doctor,” a nurse quickly responded.

Jaxon was barely breathing and had his eyes closed. Morgan quickly gave him drops of the potion when Rae was also brought in.

Rae was entirely in a panic that she only cried at the sight of Alexia. She was also wounded, but her attention was focused more on Jaxon.”

“Miss, you need to lie yourself down. On the next hospital bed,” the doctor instructed, but Rae just kept howling in front of Jaxon.

Alexia had to step in and offer her friend comfort. She put an arm around Rae, declaring, “Rae, he will be fine. Jaxon will be okay. The worst is over now. Lie down so we can treat your wounds.”

That was the only time when Rae finally turned to Alexia. She embraced her strongly, saying, “Whoever did this will pay, Alexia! They should!”

Alexia wept with her friend. She put her hands on Rae’s face, assuring her, “We are going to find out who did this – ”

“The group of young winter-grey werewolves was already captured, Princess,” one palace guard said. “They are being interrogated right now at the dungeons. Her Highness is there.”

The guard turned to Rae, supplementing, "Rest assured, our queen will give you justice. She is a just ruler."

"We are stopping the bleeding now, Rae. Go and have her drink the healing potion." Turning to Alexia, Morgan asked, "Luna,

please help Rae."

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Alexia nodded, took a nearly empty healing potion, and gave it to Rae. After Rae had a few drops, she lay on the other stretcher,

and the nurse attended to her cuts.

Morgan and the palace doctor continued to attend to Jaxon. The doctor gave him IV fluids and morphine while Morgan

maintained to put pressure on his wounds. One other guard, trained in medical situations, prepared to cover the injuries. Seeing

all this, Alexia thanked the Moon Goddess for having enough supplies in the palace's medical room.

The infirmary was in chaos, but Alexia knew one more patient was coming.

She rushed to the third stretcher just in time as

Agatha walked in, supporting Kieran.

Like Rae, Kieran was in a robe, probably given by the guards. He had scratches on his face, but the bleeding bite marks on his leg were the most concerning.

Looking at her husband, Alexia's heart was racing. She was relieved that he was alive. At the same time, she could not deny

how he had that effect on him. However, instead of addressing their marital problem, she approached him, saying, "Let's get you

treated-

"Alexia!" Kieran said, holding her hand and pulling her into his arms. "I did not mean to hurt you, my wife. I promise you, that

time, I thought I was with you. You are the only woman I want to be with."

'He thought it was me?' Alexia asked in her head.

"Please, Alpha Kieran, you can talk with the princess later. Let's stop the bleeding on your wounds first," Agatha proposed.

Alexia pulled away from Kieran's hold, saying, "We will talk later."

Before lying on the stretcher, Kieran put his hands on Alexia's face and k*ssed her forehead. He then lowered his frame and

caressed her belly. He pecked her stomach too, saying, "I'm here, my child. I'm here. I can feel you calling to me."

The entire time, Alexia remained in the clinic. She could sense her friend's

unwillingness to be alone with the palace guards, and she understood why. One of their kind attacked them. Her friends were having trust issues. Kieran especially held her hand,

saying, "Stay, please."

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"Yes, stay here, Alexia, please," Rae also pleaded, her eyes getting heavy by the second.

Morgan was feeling sleepy too. Even when no bed was available in the medical room, she insisted on staying with their group. Alexia had to ask for another bed to be made inside the infirmary, and only then did Morgan doze off to sleep, her arms hugging her bag like her life depended on it.

Later on, Kieran and Rae were also fast asleep. Prince Raegan had only dropped by to say goodnight, and Alexia thought it was very understanding of him not to bother her in that situation. He also did an excellent job of shoosing Elder Gaston and Elder Tara away.

Alexia sat on a chair next to Kieran, his hand holding her wrist. She slowly released Kieran's hand, and just then, Beta Agatha returned with her mother.

Avery said, "You need to take a rest, my child. We will see them tomorrow."

"Don't worry, Princess. I'll stay on watch here with the guards tonight. Nothing will happen to them," Beta Agatha swore.

Alexia reluctantly left the clinic. She walked with her mother back to her room. As they did, Avery revealed, "The ones who attacked your friends were Chase, Abu, Mond, Richie, Adam, Kurt, and Rex. You may have met some of them already. They are still pups, considering their age. All of them are half-humans."

"Kurt and Rex were rushed to the hospital because I had to use my full power against them. They tried to run away when I arrived to help Alpha Kieran and your friends, Rae and Jaxon," Avery added.

"My ga mmas interrogated Chase and the rest. I also tried to get information out of them, but they kept insisting they thought that

Alpha Kieran and his group were intruders and had attacked them first," Avery continued. "I know that is absurd, though. Who

would attack a winter-grey wolf first? It's like asking for a death wish."

"Morgan, she is a witch?" Avery asked, and Alexia nodded. "Can she make a truth serum?"

Alexia acknowledged, "I suppose."

"Then, we may need her help," Avery said. "I don't employ witches here in my 3/4

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lands, but I trust that your friend is honorable."

"She is mother. She helped save King Balthasar," Alexia revealed.

At five in the morning, Kieran and Morgan were already awake and asked for a meal. Thus, Beta Agatha had breakfast prepared earlier than usual. Alexia and Avery ate with them at the royal dining area. Jaxon was already awake, but he still could not get up. Rae remained with him and ate at the clinic instead.

Alexia had never seen Kieran and Morgan so famished. They were eating with their bare hands at the dining table, gathering all

kinds of meat. She also heard that Rae had asked for a refill with her breakfast. It simply made Alexia's heart ache.

Morgan still carried her dirty bag with her. It made Alexia curious about what was in it, that she protected it dearly. Alexia asked,

"What else is in the bag, Morgan? Why do you carry it with you all the time."

"My dearest Luna," Morgan replied. "Inside my bag are the proofs I needed to show you that Alpha Kieran was bewitched a few weeks back. I wasn't there when you found Kieran and Eviline, but the pieces of evidence in my bag are enough to suggest that Alpha Kieran believed he was with you that night."

"Alexia, dear. Kieran never meant to betray you. Believe me," Morgan added.

"Inside my bag is a bottle of your -"

"Queen Avery!" There was a loud knocking at the dining room. Elder Gaston raised his voice, saying, "Whatever nonsense they have to say, we want to listen to it! We deserve to know!"

~Alexia –

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A loud growl echoed against the royal hall of Azenna's palace, coming from Kieran. He was squinting at Prince Raegan as the latter approached Alexia.

The prince smiled at Alexia, greeting, "Good morning, Alexia. I hope you had a good rest." He glanced in Kieran's way and smirked, saying, "You should have thought of that before hurting your wife, Alpha Kieran."

Yet again, Kieran barked. He countered, "You don't know anything!"

Alexia had to direct Prince Raegan to his seat. She ordered the two, "Enough." She glared at Raegan, mouthing, 'What are you doing?'

The prince mouthed back, 'Testing him.'

Aside from Tara and Gaston, four other elders, Avery's beta, and some gammas came to observe the meeting.

Alexia was seated next to her mother. Kieran and Morgan were in front of them, surrounded by spectators. As Morgan requested, there was a table in front of her where her bag was settled. Eventually, Rae arrived. Jaxon was nowhere in sight, suggesting he was still unwell. Rae smiled at Alexia, and she smiled back.

"Someone is looking after Jaxon?" Alexia asked Agatha.

"Yes, Princess. Three warriors are guarding the infirmary," Beta Agatha assured her.

"I am telling you, Avery. Alpha Kieran is not good for Alexia. Whatever he tells us today, we should carefully scrutinize them and not be deluded," Elder Gaston suggested. "Bewitched? Even if there is such a spell or magic, that only meant that the alpha has a weak mind."

"They are here and went against all odds to be here, so there must be a good reason for it. Besides, our kind had been hunting Kieran and his friends down for days. They deserved to be listened to," Avery declared.

Inwardly, Alexia smiled. She recognized her mother was right. She noticed the

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irritation from the elders, but Alexia also witnessed her mother's

determination. Their words would not affect Avery that day.

"Now that everyone is here, let us listen to Alpha Kieran and Morgan," Avery asserted.

Alexia's gaze landed on Kieran, and their eyes met. She gulped, seeing longing in his eyes.

Soon, Morgan walked forward. She took out the contents of her bag and placed them on the table. Afterward, Morgan held two glass bottles, informing, "On my left hand is a mixture of the potion Eveline, the half-witch, had used to lure Kieran and make him suppose they were true mates. The other is an ingredient, one which I suspect Evilene recently added to the potion."

Morgan looked into everyone's eyes, explaining, "After Evilene was

apprehended, we thoroughly searched her b*dy and resting area. We found these. We also discovered glass cups thrown into the trash. It suggested she was mixing the potion or adding a new ingredient.” She began explaining how Evilene was a known witch, a fugitive on the run from Vottara for using magic against werewolves, significantly influencing behaviors. Morgan said, “The rulers of Vottara are just one call away, Queen Avery. You can easily confirm this. Evilene had broken many marriages, even mated couples, because of this potion she created. Alpha Kieran was not

her first target. She has made a business out of her secret potion.”

“Evilene had a natural ability of seduction, and by creating this potion, she had mimicked the mate-bond pull. She called this a mate-bond potion. With this mixture in her possession, Evilene gave it a touch of magic and made Kieran see visions of his future through green smoke.” Raising one bottle, Morgan. expounded, “You might wonder what makes such potion so powerful that made Alpha Kieran consider it was a true mate’s bound.”

“I had studied the ingredients carefully and identified distinct and potent components. First, the known hallucinogenic Green Trumpets, which used to be grown in Paredon, and although the former kings had eliminated these dangerous plants -” Morgan halted and turned to the Prince of Paredon. She added, “Many had illegally brought seedlings out of Paredon and grew them in other nations, especially in Vottara.”

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Prince Raegan shook his head and answered, “I won’t deny that. We have captured a few who tried to smuggle them back into

our nation.”

“Then the most powerful ingredient is a siren’s tears,” Morgan divulged.

Murmurs erupted, and Alexia’s skin crawled. She softly asked, “A siren?”

“There have been no sightings of a siren in years,” Elder Tara scoffed.

“Doesn’t mean they don’t go to the ocean’s surface anymore,” Morgan said.

“Using their angelic voices and tears, a siren has a natural power to manipulate humans, werewolves, vampires, and even witches.”

Everyone paid attention to Morgan as she asked, “Does anyb*dy know what they say about a siren’s tears? And what happens when it comes into contact with salt water?”

“It turns into pearls,” Prince Raegan replied.

“Exactly,” Morgan confirmed.

“I heard about that too,” Avery admitted. “And while I have not seen a siren, I have heard of their strong luring capabilities from fishermen and sailors.”

Morgan rested the other bottle on the table. The same tube bottle appeared to contain dry blood. Next, Alexia observed how

Morgan pulled out a small flask. She stared into a see-through bowl, one that she had carried from the dining area, and poured

the contents of the flask. She then announced, “This is... salt water.”

Morgan dipped her forefinger into the bowl and tasted the water. She repeated, “It’s salt water. To those who doubt me, you can taste it yourself.”

Elder Tara tested the water next, and after tasting the clear liquid, she said, “I think it’s just regular water.”

“You lie!” Kieran snarled.

To settle any conflict, Alexia stepped forward and tasted the water. She affirmed, “It’s salt water.”

Prince Raegan, Beta Agatha, and even the queen tried the water. They all concluded that it was salt water. When there was no more dispute about the liquid, Morgan proposed, “Observe.”

Morgan poured a portion of the potion. Bubbles formed, and while the potion looked more like purple, one ingredient appeared to have separated from the mixture. Slowly tiny pearls began to form, shocking everyone.

Scooping with her hand, Morgan presented the tiny pearls, saying, “A liquid that turns into pearls. This can only be a siren’s tears.”

“It’s just her trick! She is also a witch!” Elder Gaston retorted. “For all we know, she made these pearls! If you say the potion is potent, why don’t we test it?”

“Sure. We can test it,” Morgan offered. “I don’t have the natural ability to seduce anyone. So my power will not be as strong in using this potion. However, it will still work. Who wants to volunteer?”

“I will volunteer,” Elder Gaston raised his hand. “I won’t be swayed that easily.”

“Very well,” Morgan nodded.

Alexia observed how Morgan’s eyes narrowed like she was satisfied that Elder Gaston volunteered. She figured Morgan was trying to prove her words were valid, which could be easily done when Elder

Gaston falls into the same situation as Kieran.

Morgan applied the potion to her entire b*dy. Afterward, she channeled her energy at Elder Gaston, her eyes calling on to the elder. Mist suddenly surrounded Gaston and Morgan, and the great elder froze in his stance like he was in a trance.

It wasn't just Elder Gaston, though. Alexia noticed how the men inside the room looked at Morgan's frame with tenderness. On the other hand, her husband distanced himself from Morgan.

Prince Raegan approached Alexia, reporting, "I am feeling attracted to her." "Get away from my wife!" Kieran immediately walked up to them and flashed his fangs at Prince Reagan. Alexia had to calm him down while Morgan showed the potion's effects.

"Both of you. Stay away from me for now," Alexia ordered, and instantly, he saw the hurt in Kieran's eyes.

Alexia felt guilty altogether, and she felt equally hurt, but Morgan was still proving his innocence. He should at least not distract her from it.

The mist around Morgan and Elder Gaston was not that thick. Alexia could see their frames but not the expressions on their faces. They heard Morgan chant words, and after some time, she said, "Mate."

The air began to clear, and everyone saw how Morgan locked eyes with Gaston. The elder said, "Mate. You are my mate!"

Gasping and murmurs erupted from the royal hall, especially from the elders. Tara, for one, was furious. She said, "Gaston! Snap out of it!"

If anyone, Gaston would not be faking it. He was the one who objected to Kieran the most.

Seeing this, Alexia felt relieved. She turned to her mother and saw Avery also letting out a sigh. When they thought the show was over, the great elder said, "Alexia, you are my mate!"

Alexia stilled, and her mouth fell on the floor. Her voice trembled as she asked, "What – what just happened? Why is Elder Gaston calling me?"

"Alexia, my mate!" Elder Gaston grinned like a lovesick fool. He approached Morgan and embraced her, saying, "Kiss me, Alexia!"

My mate!"

Then, with the snap of Morgan's fingers, everything was over. Gaston was shocked at how there was no distance between him

and Morgan. He reflected adoration in his eyes but was also confused. He stuttered as he asked, "What happened? Why do you smell like Alexia?"

"What happened?" Avery asked. "You just fell for the potion you said would never work."

"It still doesn't answer why he called you, Aelxia, Morgan," Alexia sought.

"What is going on?"

Alexia noticed how Morgan was panting. She said, "Forgive me. Enticing the elder was rather draining." Rae approached Morgan and helped her remain standing. From there, Morgan revealed, "Alexia's blood was the latest ingredient to the potion. We confirmed this by comparing the blood sample to Alexia's DNA – hair from her comb at the Stone Blood Pack and her old toothbrush."

"So you see, Alpha Kieran thought Evilene was you, Luna Alexia. Evilene must have created an illusion to make her look like you," Morgan implied.

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"In the days prior, my love," Kieran interrupted, addressing his words to Alexia. "I admit to having been drawn to have recognized attraction, but I returned to you or avoided Evilene. I even rejected her!"

"However, I saw you in my visions when Evilene came after me that night. That was how I thought I was with you the whole time, and I believed you were my true mate, Kieran described.

"Alexia, I love only you – true mate or not!" He raised his voice, claiming, "My wife, I would never intentionally hurt you. I love you!"

"Now, the greater question is... how did the witch, Evilene, get a hold of Luna Alexia's blood?" Morgan asked. "Tell me, Luna, when was the last time someone took blood from you?"

Alexia's eyes fluttered. Then, she gazed at Elder Tara, whose face was white as snow.

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Alexia

Alexia stood up, glowering at Elder Tara. Her lips twitched as she voiced, "You

"That's why you asked us to step out of the room! I perfectly recalled how you suggested you needed to focus. You asked

Agatha and me to leave you alone when Alexia entered the portal! Only Gaston was there with you!" Queen Avery angrily said,

her finger pointing at Elder Tara. "You went into the portal, didn't you?" When Elder Tara did not respond, Avery screamed, "Didn't you!" "I did not!" Elder Tara shot back, but Alexia knew it was too late for her to deny it. Everyone, especially Beta Agatha, was glaring at the elder.

"You were the one who took blood from the princess!" Agatha exposed.

"And you are the only one who could open the portal!" Alexia added.

"It's just as we suspected. There is a traitor in your palace, Queen Avery!"

Kieran declared. "The blood that was recovered was still freshly drawn. If it were taken from Alexia hours or days before, it would have dried up or formed clots at the very least!"

"And I can only guess you are the reason why we were hunted down. Who else would know of our arrival?" Kieran proposed, making Alexia gasp.

"Moreover, into our journey, we have learned that Evilene is working for our enemies, King James or the former queen, Helen!

Whoever gave the blood to Evilene is plotting something with our rivals. They must be stopped!" Kieran declared.

Alexia turned to her mother and saw Avery was mortified. The queen covered her mouth, saying, "True. That is another angle we have to look into. Why would young winter-grey wolves initiate an attack on Alpha Kieran's group, not unless someone powerful from the winter-grey wolf clan had ordered it!"

"Do not say such accusations, Queen Avery!" Elder Gaston snapped. "You have no proof!"

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"What about my blood in that tube bottle?" Alexia angrily countered. She approached Morgan and grabbed the tube, studying it carefully. When she did, her lips trembled while admitting, "These are the same tube bottles from our laboratory, mother. It even has Azenna's seal on it!"

Alexia also studied the bottle containing Evilene's potion and distinguished, "This bottle is different. It does not have any markings whatsoever."

"Guards!" Avery commanded, "Lock up Elder Tara and Elder Gaston into their rooms! They are not allowed to go out until a full investigation has been completed!"

"You cannot do this to us?!" Elder Gaston growled.

"You believe these people more than the elders?" Tara questioned. "Gaston

and I have served your mother!”

“What is clear to me is that Tara had drawn blood from my daughter, and no one else could have given the blood to this Evilene, considering how she had control over the portal!” Avery snarled. “And you, Elder Gaston, being alone with Elder Tara the entire

time the portal was open, you probably had a hand in this!”

“You are both under investigation!” Avery declared. She directed her gaze to her beta, saying, “Make sure to confiscate the amulet from Tara!”

“Yes, My Queen,” Agatha acknowledged.

Next, everyone’s heads snapped in the direction of Prince Raegan.

Immediately, he had his hands raised as if surrendering. He claimed, “I swear, I have no idea about this. I only came because I wanted to escape my mother and thought I could... use a friend.”

“It’s true. My mother wanted me to be married to Princess Alexia, and that was my uncle’s plan too,” Prince Raegan said to everyone.

After Elder Tara and Elder Gaston were escorted into their private chambers, the queen questioned Prince Raegan’s intentions.

They remained in the palace’s royal hall as the prince described, “But I never planned to follow their lead. My mother had been pushing me to find a royal mate so I could get a better status in Paredon. As you know, my father has many wives. I am only one of many princes in the nation. There is a power feud within the royals of Paredon.”

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“I know Uncle Gaston wanted to remain an Elder in Azenna, maybe even take control of the next queen, but I never wanted to be

part of his schemes. In fact, I did not want to come here,” Reagan insisted. He pointed to Alexia, saying, “Princess, I told you about my story.”

“I came here because I felt Alexia and I was on the same boat.” Prince Raegan put his hand over his chest, revealing, “Years ago, my fiance left me after meeting her true mate. I simply felt for the princess and thought I could give her advice. Aside from that, It was a good time to get away from my mother.”

Puffing air out, Raegan added, “You can lock me up as you please, but I

swear, I have nothing to do with their actions. I only wanted to be friends with the princess, and if it developed into something more, I was happy to entertain the possibility -"

"She is my wife! Alexia is mine!" Kieran barked. "There will be no possibility!"

"Kieran!" Alexia warned. "Don't. Prince Raegan has been good to me and never took advantage of me." She glanced at the prince, adding, "Maybe, he really had no part in all of this."

"However, Prince Raegan, to be on the safe side, we would like to keep you under close watch. Can you stay in your room for a few days? We will bring your food and all your necessities. Agatha's team will be conducting an investigation and-" Queen Avery turned to Morgan, asking, "I was hoping that Morgan could create a truth serum for me."

"I will, Your Highness," Morgan said, bowing her head.

"I have no problem with that. I love sleeping," Prince Raegan responded. He stood up and peered at one guard, saying, "Take me to my room."

"Princess." Raegan bowed his head to Alexia and then to the queen, adding, "Queen Avery. I respect and understand your wishes."

After the prince of Paredon was taken away, the remaining elders fled the scene. One was half-hearted after all the revelations, while the others fully supported Avery.

Rae immediately hugged Alexia, softly saying, "Alexia, I would never lie to you. I saw everything. After you left, green smoke surrounded Alpha Kieran in that room. It was clear that Evilene was trying to keep Alpha Kieran under control, but he broke free -"

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"It wasn't just the sight of you that awakened me and freed me from that trance," Kieran expressed. He was also inching to Alexia. "I felt our baby calling me."

Rae let go of Alexia to give way to Kieran. He stood before her and revealed, "You and our baby helped free me from that trance I was trapped in. If not for your arrival -"

Kieran clenched his jaws, thinking about that night. He groaned and said under his breath, "I don't even want to think about it."

Holding Alexia's face, Kieran professed, "I love only you, my wife." Kieran embraced Alexia tightly, saying, "Believe me."

While Alexia accepted the hug, she pulled away and looked into Kieran's eyes. She saw through his sincerity but said, "Let's talk about it in private. First, Kieran. Everyone and I supposed you could use a really good bath."

Kieran nodded. He answered, "Yes, we need a very long and good bath." In the next few hours, Alexia ensured that Kieran and her friends were assigned to their respective rooms. Only Jaxon remained in the medical room. Alexia ordered one guard to direct Kieran to her room once he was done bathing and changing.

The palace had given them clothes last night, but the infirmary did not have a bathing area, so Kieran, Rae, and Morgan could not get a decent wash.

After an hour of waiting, Alexia heard a knock on her door. When she opened it, it was her husband, Kieran. He had his hair cut shorter and his beard trimmed. It was a bit uneven, so she assumed he did it alone. Nonetheless, it did not reduce his attractiveness.

"I'm glad we could finally have this heart-to-heart talk, Kieran," Alexia said while looking into his eyes.

She watched as Kieran closed the door behind him. She was about to start expressing her frustrations when Kieran kneeled and held her tightly.

"You have no idea how much that night had haunted me – how you left, thinking of how much I must have hurt you and our baby.

Whatever you saw that night, Alexia, please obliterate it from your mind. Weigh my love for you and the good things I have done versus this one mistake where I had also

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been bewitched," Kieran begged. "Please, Alexia. Please."

Alexia gasped, hearing Kieran's plea. A tear fell down her cheek as she replied, "It hurt Kieran. It hurt not only me but our baby too."

"You kept that from me for over a week – how you met her. We could have talked about it and solved that problem together.

Then, that memory of that night. That night. Your hands were on her skin, and your lips have touched hers," Alexia added, and at that point, her cries became louder. "You may have been under a spell, but that thought of you being with another woman, naked, I might add, still hurts me."

“Then,” Kieran stood up and grabbed her hand. He intertwined his fingers with hers and said, “Wash my hands, b*dy, and l*ps.

Only your scent can linger on me.”

He cupped Alexia’s chin and claimed, “I am yours, and you are mine. I love you with every beat of my heart. My little wife, make love with me all through the day and night.”

Kieran caressed Alexia’s l*ps before covering them with his.

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Alexia

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When Kieran k*ssed her l*ps, she gasped, recognizing that tingling sensation that ran through her b*dy and into her core. Alexia had hoped she had put up her walls much longer, but she could not deny how much she loved Kieran. The way he made her feel, simply eliminated all her resistance.

He captured her l*ps thoroughly, his tongue invading her mouth. As Kieran held her tightly, his moan muffled into her mouth. He let go to take a breather, saying, “I missed you so much.”

“Kieran, promise me you won’t hurt me again. I know it was unintentional, but you kept it from me. You have to tell me everything that is bothering you – never keep anything from me,” Alexia said while looking into his eyes.

“I promise,” Kieran swore. “I’m sorry I kept the truth from you. You are right. Back then, I thought I could deal with it without telling you about Evilene. I did not want to worry you and our baby.”

“Believe me, I only had your best interest in mind, but I know now how I was wrong,” Kieran added.

Alexia studied the passion of his eyes, how his brows met, and how he never looked away from her. She sensed his emotions and the beating of his heart. Through his mark on her, Alexia felt his sincerity. She maintained to lock eyes with her husband and proposed, “We have to stay together, no matter what. That is my condition. I don’t care if I sound insecure or possessive.

Considering that we don’t know if we are true mates and you are not yet marked by me, I think we should constantly strengthen our bond. It doesn’t help that we are apart, especially since I am pregnant.”

“Let me repeat it, Kieran. We have to stay together,” Alexia reiterated.

She noticed how her husband stilled. She knew exactly what went on in his mind. When she thought he would disagree, he nodded, saying, "You are more important to me than anything in the world – you and our child."

"I can come with you to Taplean," Alexia suggested.

A hiss left Kieran's lips. He massaged his temples before responding, "Let us
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figure it out tomorrow, my little wife. For now, I simply... want you."

"But Kieran -" Alexia's objection was halted when Kieran put a finger on her lips.

"Shhh." Her husband said, "I promise we will be together. As to how, let's figure that out tomorrow."

He cupped her chin and sealed her lips with a kiss. Kieran's arms were easily around her frame, and he carried her entire weight like she was feather-light. He landed her back on the sheets and lay next to her.

As they lay on the bed, their lips were inseparable. Alexia responded eagerly to his kisses. Her eyes closed as her hands touched his face.

Kieran was hungrily kissing her that he bit her lower lip, and she bled. Alexia noticed the metallic taste of her blood, but that did not stop her from kissing back with the same fervor.

The second Kieran moved away from her lips, a moan escaped her. He littered kisses on her jaws before climbing above her and lingering on her neck.

"Oh, Goddess," she could not help but sigh erotically at the feel of Kieran's hot breath against her neck.

What made that sensation even more thrilling was how she could feel his excitement, lust for her, and love.

"Aahh!" She screamed as soon as Kieran gripped her dress and ripped it open. His hand quickly cupped her breast beneath her bra, kneading it while often letting his finger fondle her nipple.

Alexia felt goosebumps all over. She threw her head back against the pillow, enjoying Kieran's touch, and her body began to wave in pleasure.

The next thing Alexia knew, Kieran removed every cover from her body. She helped by throwing her clothes down to the floor.

Kieran also undressed. The second he pulled down his pants, his manhood bounced back and forth, extremely stiff. Alexia

wound up biting her l*p. Without a doubt, she missed him inside of her. Alexia thought he would already make love to her, but instead, Kieran settled
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on her belly. Repeatedly, he caressed her stomach and pecked in on every side. He smiled and said, "Hello, my child. It's me, your daddy."

She sensed her baby move, and Kieran smiled. She said, "I think our baby could feel you. He is happy."

"I can feel him. He is pleased," Kieran said. He k*ssed her stomach again, saying, "I'm sorry for hurting you, baby. I promise to be careful next time. And your Mommy will be with me to put all evil witches and cu nning women in their place."

Alexia ended up rolling her eyes. She chuckled and said, "Surely, you have learned a thing or two to potentially avoid the same situation."

Sitting up, Kieran replied, "Yes. The main difference was how I saw my future through green smoke. Also, Morgan taught me how to resist spells in the future."

Kieran was about to indulge on her peach when he returned his attention to her, saying, "You should also learn to resist such magic, Alexia. There are male witches too."

"Ahhh!" Before Alexia could answer, she felt his tongue pleasuring her. "Oh, Goddess!"

In the next few minutes, Alexia squirmed in delight, her b*dy waving endlessly, simply enjoying the moment. With how Kieran heartily drank her, she came quickly, and her b*dy mildly convulsed.

"Kieran!" She screamed. Her eyes were shut, feeling spineless at having climaxed.

"I f**king missed you, Alexia, so much," Kieran declared as he sat up. "Do you know who else misses you? My di ck."

Yet again, Alexia bit her l*p seductively.

Kieran lay on his back, allowing Alexia to return the favor. She held his manhood, her fingers barely covering his girth. Next, she tasted his full length, licking it with her tongue before putting his shaft into her mouth.

Kieran howled. Alexia wound up scolding her husband, "You are practically announcing to the palace what we are doing, Kieran!"

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"So what?" Kieran retorted. "We are husband and wife. I especially want

Prince Raegan to hear.” He reached for her face and proposed, “Once I am buried inside you, scream as loud as you can, my little wife, like how you always do when I f**k you madly.”

“No!” Alexia objected. “It will be too shameful. My mother would hear us. Control your howls and screams, and I’ll control mine.”

Kieran squinted at her as she resumed bobbing in between his thighs.

However, as seconds passed, they both had forgotten

Alexia’s directive. Kieran kept moaning and wailing in euphoria while she pleased at his expressions.

“I want you now! I want to be inside you,” Kieran ordered. “Lie next to me.”

Alexia did as she was told. She lay beside Kieran while he helped position her back against his chest. He raised her right leg and

rested them on his thigh. He slowly entered her from behind, his manhood filling her core.

“Aaahh! Kieran!” Alexia screamed her desires. She felt so full down there that her hips twitched. In the next few minutes, Kieran

was thrusting in and out of her as they spooned. His other hand cupped her breast while his mouth was busy, leaving k*ss marks

on her neck.

Kieran regularly stroked her belly as he made love with her. He maintained a steady rhythm until he picked up the pace.

Howling and moaning echoed through Alexia’s bedroom space. The sound of their slapping flesh appeared so deafening in

Alexia’s ears.

When Kieran came inside her, he howled the loudest, nearly shifting as if lost in that pleasure of having erupted inside his wife.

With another thrust into her rose, Kieran cursed, “F**k. It feels so good. Only you could make me feel this way, Alexia. A real

high.”

Kieran remained inside of her. He ravaged her l*ps for an undetermined time before he started pumping in and out of her again.

Kieran was still hard and was determined to make it through the second round without stopping.

After being intimate again, they called it a day. Kieran was helplessly falling asleep, still exhausted from running and fighting for

days. Alexia also felt her eyes falling. Being pregnant encouraged her b*dy to rest more. Still, aside

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from that, she had to admit she was comforted by Kieran's presence. Alexia thanked the Moon Goddess that Evilene was not Kieran's true mate. With Evilene out of the way, she hoped they would be fated together as true mates.

"So much for all day and all night," Alexia said before chuckling.

Kieran held her tighter, saying, "Tomorrow, I promise."

"No," Alexia laughed. "The truth is we can't overdo it. I am still pregnant."

"That was exactly what I was worried about," Kieran faintly claimed.

Alexia laughed. She turned to Kieran and pecked his lips. She also apologized, "I'm sorry for reacting as I did when I saw you and Evilene together. If I had stayed to confront you, I would have known you were only bewitched."

"Shhhh," Kieran hushed. "You were hurt, and I was also at fault for not telling you everything. Let's move on and forget about that filthy half-witch."

"I love you, Kieran," Alexia said.

"I love you... with every single beat of my heart," Kieran professed.

"Remember that."

"Hmmm," Alexia said in response before her eyes closed.

~King Balthasar ~

Meanwhile, in Taplean, King Balthasar was walking back and forth inside his private office when his beta stormed in, panting. He announced, "My King. King James' men have taken over the Golden Eye Pack. They are holding Luna Beatrice as a hostage. This marks the first territory being claimed."

This marks the first territory being claimed."

Shaking his head, Beta Ford admitted, "Many of our warriors are wondering about Alpha Kieran. Their esteem is affected, My

King. They are used to him leading the battle."

King Balthasar let out a low growl. His hands balled into fists. He said, "Let's gather in the meeting room. We must plan how to regain the territory while protecting the other cities. I think it's also high time that I join the front. That had always been part of my plan, anyway."

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The king noticed his beta's reluctance, but nonetheless, he agreed,

"Considering Alpha Kieran's absence, I'm sure you are the only one who can uplift our warriors' spirits now."

Once alone, Balthasar turned to the window and said, "Kieran, I hope you are

safe and can return soon because the nation needs its hero.”

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Kieran

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Kieran’s eyes fluttered in the wee hours. He was still tired but became fully awake when he saw his wife’s face. He smiled and caressed Alexia’s cheek. He gave her a sweet k*ss on the l*ps before his eyes roamed the insides of her room.

He wasn’t sure what time it was, but the chamber was dark. His stomach growled in hunger, and he unknowingly glanced at the bedside table. Kieran found a sandwich and a bottle of water. He assumed his wife awoke while he was resting. Besides, he was still fully n*ked while Alexia wore a sleeping dress.

Kieran searched the walls and found a wall clock to his right. His eyes widened seeing the time. It was three in the morning, meaning he had slept for over ten hours straight.

He got up, growling a little, but at the same time, he sighed, knowing who gave him such a good sleep; his wife and his child. He had never felt so comforted and at rest over the past month, for that matter. After turning the bedside lamp on, Kieran ate his sandwich heartily and quenched his thirst. When he lay back next to Alexia, he littered her face with k*sses that she awoke, humming.

“Rest well?” Alexia asked.

Kieran nodded, saying, “Rest is better with you.”

He k*ssed her l*ps, and his hand slid her sleeping dress down her shoulder. It did not take long for him to climb over his wife.

Alexia was chuckling as they made out. She softly asked, “What are you doing?”

“To eat you, obviously,” he said in his husky voice.

In the next half an hour, he devoured his wife again. He left love bites at every chance he got, and he held every inch of her frame, savoring the softness of her skin.

He relished the view of his wife’s n*ked b*dy, her growing belly, how her legs

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were spread for him, and how his manhood entered her.

A hiss left his lips, enjoying the view of his glowing rod. Kieran declared, "I'm cumming – Aaah!"

Pushing his hips harder against his wife's peach, Kieran howled. He squirmed, his hips, enjoying the feel of his wife's core.

Soothing his desires, he leaned down and relished Alexia's lips again. He said, "I missed you so f**king much."

"You were the one who asked me to come here," Alexia reminded him.

"I know, but it was meant to keep you safe. Aren't you?" Kieran reminded before rolling over to the other side of the bed.

"I am safe here, but it sure tested our marriage," Alexia responded.

"Let's not talk about that. It makes me angry at myself. Again, I promise to be more careful next time, and we already agreed to be together," Kieran suggested. He hugged her again and said, "Let's go see Jaxon. I know it's still too early, but I want to make sure he is fine-

"

As Kieran said those words, a commotion erupted outside Alexia's room. Kieran heard growls and barking. Clearly, a fight was ongoing.

Alexia and Kieran frantically put on their clothes, and as they did, they heard a voice behind the door. "Princess, just stay indoors!"

"What's going on, Agatha?" Alexia immediately recognized her mother's beta. She loudly asked, "What is all that noise?"

"Elder Tara and Elder Gaston escaped. Two of our guards are dead, and some are unconscious! The elders had help." Agatha responded. "We are checking for intruders!"

"But Jaxon-" Kieran objected, but Agatha was no longer at the door.

Kieran still peered outside Alexia's room and saw two guards on watch. One guard reported, "I think your friends are fine, Alpha Kieran."

Still, Kieran mindlinked with Morgan, Jaxon, and Rae. Thankfully, they all confirmed their safety.

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It was already around six in the morning when Kieran and Alexia learned of the chaos around the palace. The couple walked

towards the infirmary in shock. There was blood in the hallways, and pieces of furniture were broken.

They first went to the infirmary and noticed Jaxon was already outside, sitting on one chair.

“Alpha Kieran,” Jaxon called. He gazed at the medical room, saying, “Someone is dying there.” He was already on his feet, though his chest was still wrapped in bandages. “I’m glad you are safe.”

“And I’m glad you are better now,” Kieran replied before hugging his beta. Kieran noticed the medical room was shut. He could hear noises inside. The doctor was in a panic.

“Who is in there?” Alexia asked.

Before Jaxon could answer, the door to the infirmary swung open, and a medical warrior stepped out with blood in his hands.

Kieran looked past the warrior and saw the doctor, nurse, and another medical warrior helping someone.

“Who is in there?” Alexia asked the warrior.

“It’s.” The warrior gasped, replying, “It’s Prince Raegan. He was stabbed with a silver knife repeatedly and is bleeding heavily.

We stopped the bleeding, but the silver’s effects are weakening him. Your friend, the half-witch, Morgan, gave us the last of her healing potion, but we don’t know if it’s enough. He just had a convulsion, and it’s not looking good for him.”

Of course, everyone knew how silver was highly poisonous to werewolves.

That was why Kieran trained himself and his men to develop tolerance against silver.

“Who – who would stab him?” Alexia asked, raising her voice.

The warrior looked distantly. He shook his head, saying, “We don’t know, Princess, but considering that Elder Tara and Elder

Gaston fled, we think they might have something to do with it. The two guards found dead were watching the elders’ rooms.

They were also stabbed with a silver knife. Some were injected with wolfsbane.”

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“But -” The medical warrior stopped himself, making Alexia suspicious, “What is it?” Alexia asked.

The warrior turned toward the halls, saying, “I think, Princess, you should proceed to the assigned room of Prince Raegan. The

queen and Beta Agatha are there, collecting pieces of evidence.”

Before heading to Prince Raegan’s room, Kieran and Alexia guided Jaxon to Rae’s chamber. Morgan was already with Rae.

They decided to stay in one place because of the attack within the palace walls.

When Kieran and Alexia finally found Prince Raegan’s room, they saw Avery’s warriors checking nearly every corner of the room. The same could be said with the rooms four to five feet away, which were the elders’ chambers.

Queen Avery met them at the door, saying, “I feel like a failure. I did not realize how the resistance of Elder Gaston and Elder

Tara had become this out of hand. We suspect they were able to contact more half-bloods that broke into the palace. As to how?

My warriors managed to chase after one half-blood into the storage room and found an opening. There was a secret passage

there that led outside the palace. That is probably how they escaped.”

Avery ran her fingers through her hair. She said, “I have my warriors follow their tracks, but right now, that’s not our main concern.”

She looked Kieran and Alexia in the eye, revealing, “Prince Raegan is our biggest problem because his room seems to suggest that Alpha Kieran instigated his attack.”

Kieran leaned back. He said, “That’s f**ked up. I was with Alexia the whole time!”

“I know,” Queen Avery acknowledged. She pointed into the room and revealed, “See for yourself.”

They walked into Prince Reagan’s quarters and noticed there was blood everywhere. On the floor, someone had written Kieran’s name using blood.

“That’s not all,” Queen Avery said. She turned to Agatha, who handed her a plastic bag, saying, “When Prince Reagan was found, he was holding this.”

Kieran’s mouth twitched. In the queen’s hand, he saw one of his necklaces

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that he had lost along the way as he and his friends traveled through Azenna. The pendant had his family crest on it.

A low growl escaped his l*ps. He said, “When I arrived in the palace, I was f**king fully n*ked! In my wolf. We had nothing! We

lost all our things because of how we were ambushed! Only Morgan carried a bag, but it had evidence about Evilene and the

healing potion. Nothing more!”

“I know that.” Queen Avery acknowledged. She turned to Agatha and added, “We know that.” She gasped, adding, “But Paredon doesn’t know that.”

“Then,” Alexia interrupted. “They simply do not need to know about these pieces of evidence pointing to Kieran. He was with me

the entire time,
mother!”

“We know, my daughter. We heard Kieran howl his passions!” Avery answered. “The entire palace had probably heard him.”

While Kieran was proud of himself, he noticed his wife flushed.

“The guards outside your door can attest to it, too,” Avery added. “But with how this was staged, I feel the elders are on to something.”

“Then, there is only one solution,” Kieran indicated. “Prince Raegan needs to live to tell the truth.” He turned to his wife, adding,

“We need more fire root plants.”

“But how?” Alexia said, recalling how it was found in Taplean.

“How about the same way you got to Taplean?” Kieran suggested.

Avery lifted her chin, saying, “I haven’t used that portal-opening amulet, but I will study the ancestral books.”