


Chapter 0514

"That's it! I have had it with this magic being used against us bullsh*t!" Kota is pissed. "I know that you all but hate us right now, but you are staying with us until we figure this out. Someone is now attacking you directly from inside this house. Don't argue or my wolf is going to go ballistic and do something very dangerous." My sweet, fun loving twin is at the end of his rope. And I can't help myself, I walk over and place my hand on his cheek so he looks at me.

"Okay." I whisper and he looks down at me breathing heavily for a moment, then his whole body calms down. He scoops me up and wraps my legs around his waist again. I reach over his shoulder to hold Cam's hand as the four of us ascend the stairs like a wonky train to try and get a couple more hours of sleep. I was surprised when Dakota put me down in order to hug Oliver goodnight. It lasted about ten seconds though, then Cam scooped me right back up and took me to their room.

Like everytime I stay with them, I get the best sleep ever. The twin sandwich is the one place where I don't seem to dream at all. My mind and my wolf completely shuts down, because I know I am safe. We have been on a mission almost since Jena and I got back from being imprisoned and I seem to just always sleep with one eye open, suspecting everyone but my team.



We get up only a few hours later, groggy, but ready to celebrate Lucas with the warriors of the pack. The ceremony was beautiful. He was laid out on a pyre and so well cared for that he could have just been sleeping. Our eldest warriors performed the ceremony in place of our pack elders invoking the Moon Goddess to take care of his spirit and his wolf until they can rejoin us here on earth. Gentry and Elena both said an incantation over him that is used in their own burial rituals and a soft blue hue floated over him, swirling and dancing in the sunlight that is now cresting over the small mountain that sits just east of the center of the pack. The blue light flickers remind me of the pups running and dancing around and him playing with them when he would join Kyle and I for training. A tear runs down my cheek at the thought.

Each of Lucas' team stood and said something about him, then finished with Luna Ava. Alpha Reggie came up and said a few words about Lucas and the twins and the importance of this transfer of power and what it means to be chosen by the Moon Goddess to be the next Alphas.

When it was time to light the pyre Ava stood as well as the twins, but per Gentry's instructions, they didn't let my hands go and pulled me up with them. I felt very out of place and don't want to be part of the center of attention, but there was no getting out of this without causing a scene. The four of us stepped up next to him, each elder warrior offering a torch to light the pyre. I shook my head when one was

offered to me. Not only did I think I didn't deserve the honor. But I refuse to break contact with either Cam or Kota. They both move in closer to me, pressing their whole sides into me. They all lay their torch on the kindling and it quickly engulfs the former Alpha. The blue mist from Gentry and Elena turns indigo and then a deep maroon red as the fire burns.

I feel the second the transfer of the Alpha starts to take hold, it's a squeeze in my chest. Both twins clench their hands around mine, but don't move anything else. Cam has his other arm around his mother and Kota moves closer to me, switching to hold my hand with his opposite so he can wrap one around my waist. It only takes about five minutes for the deep red mist to swirl around the four of us and into the twins. They both take a deep breath in and as they let it out I can feel the power of their aura radiate off of them. Ava sags against Cam and Brett moves forward to help him hold her up. She has been so brave and strong through all of this. We watch the flames rage and all silently let our former Alpha go and welcome in the reign of our new ones.

The celebration took most of the morning, even starting at dawn. We all sat in silence as the pyre burned, watching the former Alpha being returned to the earth and the Moon Goddess.

I'm not sure how long the twins were supposed to remain 'in contact' with me, but they did not release my hand until we were back at the packhouse and headed to the firepit that

now burns forever, until we can figure out how to make it not or make it work in our favor. They did move their chairs to basically touch mine though. We all sat and let the warriors have the first crack at the spread Lenny, and Elena set up. Several people milled about, some talked to us a little, but most gave their condolences to Ava and went about their day. We are all here to do a job and keep these pack lands safe for the families to come back to. This war isn't done yet, I don't think it has even really started.

Eventually we took our turns to eat, no one is really hungry, but we do know that we need the strength. We all just stare into the fire that now means so much more to us. Elena and Gentry stop by our circle; Nickolas, Osiston, Kyle and my Dad in tow. I'm not sure what the angle is or if he is just lost because my dad literally has no other thing to do without the Alpha. As I looked around while they all pulled up chairs I noticed the sun already starting to set.

Sure he's training Mateo to help the twins, but this situation is not a typical transition. Most of the pack isn't even here. We are basically running it as if we were back at Elite training camp. There's not a lot of general pack business to attend to. And to my surprise he has now spent more time in my presence in the last couple days than he has in living memory. I'm pulled from my negative thoughts by Gentry.

"So we have discussed your idea about altering the pentagram." She starts. 1



"It will be difficult and draining at first, since we do not have the original caster to alter it for us. But I think that we can use it to our advantage." Elena says

They talk in tandem, almost like the twins do sometimes.

"For now, I believe that everyone here is safe, due to your quick thinking and added protections, Skylar. It will take us time to come up with the right incantations to counter everything that we know is affecting the pack, and then cover our bases for anything we suspect could be working against you, but it will take a few days." Gentry smiles at me. 1

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Chapter 0515

"We believe what allowed you to be minimally affected was that you were already on the pack lands when the incantation was set and complete. Your friend Robbie said something about needing to cross into the pentagram for it to take effect. That might be a literal need for the spell to work. None of you have left the barrier since you have been here and you have your protection bracelets. When you finally came for me, the spell had been tainted due to the passing of the Alpha, who's life force was maintaining the spell. That was a mistake on the caster's part." Elena explains.

"Or the whole point."

"What do you mean?" I ask.

"If the spell was tied to and using the Alpha, the plan was probably to eliminate him no matter what. Now whether that was to elevate Cameron and Dakota to the Alpha position or to make an attempt to weaken the pack. We don't know. But, what it did is make everyone suspicious which puts a strain on the pack." Gentry finishes, just adding to the many questions we don't have answers to.

We all talk a little while longer. Osiston has been sticking close to the whole Royal family while Nickolas has been tending to Gentry, but Reggie is with them now to give him a

break. It sounds like Gentry is actually considering going through with the full mating. Especially after just having Nickolas close sped up her healing from all of the poisons and abuse she took while in Mike's camp. I wonder what her elders will say since they were the ones with all the objections in the first place. And, I wonder if she will move her whole coven to the Royal pack or just herself and travel back and forth since she is their leader.

Witches are not like wolves. They are close but don't need the closeness of being with each other all of the time like we do. They tend to travel and move around as their lives and training need them to.

Someone clears their throat to get everyone's attention.

"We will be leaving in the morning, we need to get Mina to safety as soon as possible. We are all on edge right now having her here. And she is about as happy as Skylar is when confined, and ready to kill all of us." Osiston says, and I can almost see him vibrating while everyone is laughing at me. I wonder if he has slept at all since being here. "Once she is safe I plan on coming back and helping out Little One, but before we go we wanted to celebrate all of you coming of age." He looks at the guys and then stands up to go grab a cooler I didn't even notice was sitting behind his chair. "I know Oliver and Mateo had birthdays recently and Sam's is almost upon us. I don't know if we will be back before Cameron and Dakota have theirs and Mina actually threatened me within an inch of my life if I did not bring you

all a beer to celebrate before we go since Xander just about shifted in their room when she fought him to come down herself. For obvious reasons she's not allowed anywhere near this damn fire." He chuckles, handing a bottle to everyone. "So cheers to you all from your future Luna Queen and Alpha King." He raises his beer and we all follow suit.

After finishing their drinks the adults all filed out and we were left sitting together in a comfortable silence.

"Finally! It is about time. I thought they would never leave. We have traditions to uphold and I for one am not missing another one." Sierra jumps up.

"What are you talking about?" Lil asks, concerned and rightly so. Typically when Sierra is excited late at night it means many of us are getting pushed out of our comfort zones.

"I mean there is a tradition of swimming in the pool until midnight and celebrating birthdays here at the packhouse. The last time we all did that together was for Sky's fifteenth birthday. So chop chop, it's time to strip and swim."

"YES! I'm so in!" Sam jumps up, ripping his shirt off. "Let's go."

"And Sky, tell Wyatt and Nathaniel to get their asses out here too, put another warrior on surveillance for a couple hours. They both need a break and your whole team deserves to be here."

“There’s no getting out of this is there?” Lil asks, but she is smiling.

“Nope, she will hunt you down and force you to have fun.” I laugh. “Trust me, I tried and I got thrown in fully dressed.”

“I forgot about that.” Kota mumbled.

“Let’s go, woman.” Mateo looks at Jena and pulls her up from her seat.

“I am not stripping for any of you idiots.” She tries pulling away from him.

“You asked for it.” He picks her up, squealing and runs for the pool.

“Don’t you even think about it.” Cam says sternly and I look over at him as he pulls his dress shirt and pants off. You got your turn last time. He’s looking over my head at Kota.

“Wha...” I am swept up, roughly and wrap my arms and legs around Cam as he runs and goes flying before we hit the bathwarm pool. My black dress floats around me. We come up and I wipe the water out of my eyes. “You do know that you can just ask me to jump in right? The manhandling isn’t always necessary.”

“There’s no fun in that though, and you definitely hold on tighter this way.” He winks.

“You know that I’m still mad at you right?”

“Yes, but I figure we should take advantage of when you are in a good mood every time we can.”

More splashing lets me know that more of my friends have joined us.

“WHOA SH*T!” Lil yells before hitting the water. She comes up and is flailing a bit before Oliver grabs her. She scrambles onto his back. “Don’t you let me go! I hate swimming. I’m like a brick and just sink.”

“Well, it’s nice to finally find a weakness. I was starting to feel inadequate around all of you ladies.” Oliver laughs.


We swam around joking and laughing for a long time, then Sierra and I got another volleyball game going. Lil was more than happy to watch from the side of the pool and play ref. Somehow it ended up my warriors versus my guys which became a very playful but intense round of sh*t talking more than actual play. My guys have always been like a well oiled machine the way that they work together, but my team and I are no different. None of us actually have to talk to each other while we play, it just happens naturally. We anticipate the moves that are coming next. So of course that would make the game boring if no one reverted to cheating.

I set Jena up for a spike and Mateo grabbed her by the legs under the net to pull her into the water. Sierra was able to save it though and we kept playing, then someone grabbed my leg, but the guys were splashing so much I couldn’t see

who it was.



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