

Chapter 17

-Alexia-

"How does it feel? Being kissed by Alpha Kieran Stone," Raeteased, winking at her.

"Please. Stop this, Rae," Alexia warned. "You forget how I am only a contract wife."

"Pffft! All I can say is I have never seen Alpha Kieran kiss a girl before. I'm telling you, he treats you differently," Rae indicated.

"At what Rae was suggesting, Alexia shook her head. She did not want to make assumptions about Kieran's actions. To her, he only kissed her in public to make it appear like they had a contented marriage.

Alexia and Rae were walking toward the packhouse's library. They were going to look up the history of the winter-grey wolves, especially since Alexia had been dreaming about one.

Making it in one section of the library, Rae said, "We rarely come across a winter-grey wolf, and that is because they had long hidden from us - common werewolves."

"Common werewolves?" Alexia asked, lifting his brow.

"Yes, because it is said that the winter-grey wolves are direct descendants of the Moon Goddess," Rae revealed. "But as I said, it has been so long since they have been seen amongst the territories of Taplean and other nearby nations."

Alexia noticed how Rae was frowning at the fifth row of a wide shelf. Rae said, "Here it is."

After getting an old wood-bounded book, they both settled at one table and scanned from page to page.

"Winter-grey wolves - Oh, here it is," Rae pointed to one page.

Alexia read the first part of the paragraph. "Winter-grey wolves are said to be direct descendants of the Moon Goddess. They had a white, greyish coat that gleamed in the night, especially during the full moon. The color of their fur granted them the name of the winter-grey wolves."

"They had the power of strength four times that of a normal werewolf. They can borrow from the Moon Goddess's powers as needed. They can also lend their strength to their kind," Alexia resumed.

"Adira Elsher was the first winter-grey wolf to walk amongst the common werewolves. She mated with a human, and their kind grew in number," Alexia continued. "As their kind grew in number, some winter-grey wolves also mated with common wolves. All of them had great strength."

"This record goes far beyond eighteen-hundreds," Rae suggested, pointing to some dates mentioned in the book.

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The two continued to read about the abilities of a winter-grey wolf until they read the part about the great war. Over three hundred years ago, each pack fought for supremacy, and it wasn't just the werewolves; the witches and even the vampires were trying to secure territories of their own.

Alexia read, "Many humans died in the process, and since the winter-grey wolves had most of the human mates, they protected them with their lives."

Alexia felt for the humans after reading about the struggles during the first great war. They were caught in warfare that they had no chance to fight. Humans could use weapons, but even werewolves could use them too.

"The winter-grey wolves and the humans sought refuge at the biggest nation in the western continent, claiming it as their own. They vowed never to dwell in the lands where greed and corruption remain. Since then, the winter-grey wolves have been the protectors of humans, and every day, they accept only humans to seek sanctuary in their nation," Alexia read.

"Yes, I remember now why there are only very few humans who live in Taplean, even in Eswen," Rae said before skipping several pages.

Then, finding a map of the eastern continent, she pointed with her finger, "This is Taplean. This is Eswen. This is Votara, where most of the witches and vampires lived. Paredon is the only nation with a mix of all species, but still, very few humans live there. The King of Paredon, also a werewolf, demolished packs to prevent any uprising from the werewolves."

Rae's finger traveled far higher on the map to the most noteworthy land of the western continent. She said, "And this - Yep. This is where the winter-grey wolves live, in Azenna, the refuge for humans."

"The winter-grey wolves ruled Azenna and were deemed to be protectors of humankind," Rae added.

"Now, we need to understand why... I am dreaming about one winter-grey wolf?" Alexia muttered.

Rae went through the last pages of the book. In the end, she said, "Well, I'm afraid there is no answer in the book." Raising a brow at Alexia, Rae asked, "Are you sure you haven't met a winter grey wolf? What am I asking? Of course not! Azenna is too far from Taplean. One would have to go through Paredon to reach there."

"Yeah." Alexia frowned. "I'm pretty sure I would remember seeing a winter-grey wolf that gleams in the night. After all, no other common werewolf could have the same fur."

"What exactly happened in your dream?" Rae asked.

"Just the winter-grey wolf was running toward me, and when she would stand in front of me, her face would zoom in. Then, she would say... I'm coming for you," Alexia revealed, feeling her skin crawl.

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Silence engulfed them. It took almost a second before Rae suggested, "That's a little creepy."

"Anyway, maybe it's just nothing," Alexia dismissed it, but in her mind, she thought, 'I hope.'

~Kieran~

"Your men are avoiding the battlegrounds, and they retreat during an active combat!" On day one of the councils of alphas meeting, Kieran was already in a heated argument with Alpha Blaze, the leader of the Golden Eye Pack.

Inside a vast meeting room of King Balthasar's palace, twelve alphas of the most extensive packs in the land gathered for their usual meeting. They were there to discuss the matters of the war.

"They are not cowards!" Alpha Blaze responded, glaring at

Kieran, his eyes turning gold in anger. "How dare you say that of my people!"

"Then let them go to the front! My men are tired. They also need rest! Alpha Declan's warriors need treatment; the same could be said for Alpha Kai's and Alpha Baxter's men!" Kieran growled.

Like his disputing alpha, Kieran was this close to shifting. He was so angered that his frame was expanding, and the buttons on his shirt had popped out. He pointed out, "Your men only suffered two injuries while all our warriors suffered losses!"

"It's true, Alpha Blaze. My men had reported that your warriors flee in the face of battle, leaving them to fight off invaders on the coast!" The Alpha Baxter said. His territory was closest to the southern coast, and it was natural that he aided more in the war.

"Enough!" King Balthasar growled, his voice commanding as he stood up. He raised his chin as his eyes glowered at Alpha Blaze. He exerted his dominance and ordered, "During the next attack, let Alpha Blaze's men be in the first line of defense! No excuses!"

Kieran became contented, and his body shrank down to its normal size. He bowed to the king,

saying, "Thank you, my king." He glanced at Alpha Blaze, saying, "At the end of the day, we live in.

one nation. We should help each other."

"Now that it's settled, let us move on to the next agenda," the king ordered.

Within the long table, the king's right hand, Beta Ford, rose from his seat and read the next part of their agenda. The

king and the alphas listened to the other pack's current issues. From one complaint to another, the king addressed them.

"The Rock Mountain Pack is once again struggling to bring grains in," Beta Ford reported.

"Send our men to deliver food," the king ordered.

"Some coast-bound residents would like a permanent relocation to the middle lands. The war had traumatized them; they no longer want to return to their homes," Beta Ford reported.

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There was silence in the air before Kieran offered, "I'll offer refuge at my main territory and in the northlands."

"I'll also offer shelter," Alpha Declan presented.

"Lastly, a complaint from Alpha Roland of the Cross River Pack." Beta Ford glanced at Alpha Kieran and resumed, "He claims that Alpha Kieran is threatening his pack and his family for money."

Kieran's eyes narrowed. Suddenly, he felt the need to shift again. If only Alpha Roland were in that council, Kieran would bite off his head!

"Kieran? What is this about?" The king sought.

"Your Highness, I am asking compensation for the abuse my wife had to go through under his care.

I don't know what Alpha Roland told you, but he deprived Alexia of her right to education and.

training! She has been living in the attic for three years, and her stepbrother and Alpha Roland's former Beta had tried to." At that point, Kieran was provoked just thinking about it. "They tried to touch my wife!"

"Even if this happened before I married Alexia, it is my duty, as her husband, to give her justice!"

Kieran growled. "All I asked is for him to compensate my wife!"

"Is that all?" The king sought.

"I2" He sighed in anger, adding, "I have ordered the beating of his stepson."

Dead air fell upon them. The temperature was rising, and that change in temperament came from Kieran. Strangely though, Kieran thought the king was also enraged.

Soon, King Balthazar spoke, "I do not condone abuse. I especially do not support alphas who do not care for their daughter!"

Kieran saw as the king growled at his beta, saying, "Tell Alpha Roland that he should be thankful.

that Kieran did not have his head! If he dares abuse any member of his pack, I shall ask him to step down and hand over his territory to Kieran!"

"Yes, Your Highness," the king's beta bowed in agreement.

Kieran soothed. He was pleased with the king's decision.

It took another hour for the council meeting to conclude. When everyone had left the room, the king called, "Alpha Kieran. May I have a word?"

"What is it about, my king?" Kieran sought.

"It's about Alexia," King Balthazar revealed. "I -"