

I Am The Luna Chapter 11 By Moonlight Muse

A Dress

ZAIA

New Year's Eve is upon us, and I am rushing around helping with setting up the banquet hall.

Atticus's mother fell ill with the cold a few days ago and since I was helping Mrs Watson with the flower arrangements I offered to help with the event organising. I wish I didn't, because I didn't think it meant I'd be stuck around Atticus for the last few days.

For an Alpha, who surely has much more to do, he visited often until I was getting looks from the other female staff

Envious, amused, and a few jealous. I did not ask for his attention, and I really wish he wasn't so intrigued.

Since that day in the car, things have been a little more awkward between us. "Place them to the right. They'll fit better there" I call out to the organisers as I make my way over to them.

"Here, Miss?" The man replies, looking confused. I nod with a small smile. "Yes, right here"

He obeys, before smiling slightly." You're right. It reflects just right Thank you."

"No problem. Do the same for the other tables and just make sure they're not placed right near the mirrors" I turn away and glance up at the floral arrangements that hang from the ceiling of the grand hall.

It's going to be a masked ball, something I had suggested after I had 15 ROHAUS

learned that Sebastian will be making an appearance. It was a risky decision and the chances he'll see right through me are high, especially due to the fact that last time I

lost my composure at the mention of Sebastian. But he hasn't said anything again. I think for now he believes me. I look around the hall and hide a smile, satisfied.

It's breathtaking but it's also a painful reminder of every party I've attended with Sebastian. When he treated me like I was the only one for him.

Where did it go wrong?

"Such a pretty face in a stunning environment shouldn't look so down."

I spin around to see Atticus walking down the centre of the hall, hands in his pockets as he looks around the hall and whistles slowly

"Oh, I'm fine," I reply, smiling smoothly, squashing my thoughts.

"You did an incredible job, almost as if you're used to it," he says, whistling slowly. "I'm truly impressed, Zaia."

"Thanks, I just like party planning," I reply. By now I've noticed he is indeed rather sharp and I'm aware of his indirect remarks, already prepared and alert around him.

"Well, I don't think our hall has ever looked better Mrs Watson told me you helped with the flower arrangements, too"

"I did. So tell me, Alpha- sorry, Atticus why do you choose fresh flowers every year?" I ask, trying to divert the conversation from myself

He sighs, but smiles, clearly happy I'm making conversation "Why I don't really know it's always been a tradition but this year I chose a specific colour"

"Lilac

"Yes, violet because that's the colour of something that I have come to admire recently," he says I make the mistake of looking at him and our eyes meet

"That's beautiful," I reply, glancing around in hopes of a distraction.

“I’m hoping you’ll save me a dance tonight,” he says quietly, as he glances at the people working around

“1” I am torn How do I tell him I don’t plan on being here tonight?

Valerie told me they will be coming and I simply can’t risk it, plus Sebastian is bringing Annalise I don’t need to see them, only to scratch open my wounds that are still not healing.

“Please don’t deny me. I hope you will come, even if it’s simply as a gesture of goodwill towards your new Alpha and Pack”

Our eyes meet and he couldn’t be more

obvious. Disobeying him means disobeying my new Alpha and showing disrespect towards him.

“Atticus I-”

“Alpha!” Two men in suits approach Atticus, and one of them leans closer to him, but despite speaking quietly, I manage to make out what they’re saying.

“The Black Beast is almost at pack borders.”

My heart skips a beat and I try to calm myself by thinking about something else anything else! The flowers.. Think of the flowers!

The Black Beast .

A name that was given to Sebastian years ago, because of his power and the colour of his wolf’s fur

I can feel Atticus’s eyes on me, but I’m certain I haven’t given anything away as I scan the garlands that wrap around the double-door entrance, keeping my face calm and at ease

“Zaia, I’ll see you tonight. I have to go,” he says

“Of course, see you then.” I smile, despite how sick I feel inside.

His final words are a command, not an offer, and if things couldn't get any worse, Sebastian being here is the icing on the cake!

“When did that arrive?” I ask as I stare at the unzipped dress bag that sits on my bed.

“Not long after you left,” Mom replies, shaking her head. “He had it ordered at the boutique 1 lanew Maggie was working on an order for the Alpha, but I did not think it was for you. It now makes sense why she has been so nice lately”

I shake my head. “And the colour. “I say, staring at the lilac shade of tulle.

“He, for some crazy reason, is into you,”

“Mom, am I that bad?” I ask, amused despite the situation.

Mom tilts her head and wrings her hands.

“No! but you're pregnant! With another man's children, why would an Alpha... I don't know, I mean it can happen and you are a beauty but...” She sits down and I'm about to speak when I pay attention to her.

Her clothes seem to be ill fitting and only now do I realise just how much weight she has lost. I feel guilt eat up at me. This is my fault

“You're right,” I say quietly, looking away and back at the dress. “But he practically commanded me 1 can't refuse”

Our eyes meet, and Mom places her head in her hands. “I'm scared Zaia”

My heart skips a beat. I've never heard Mom say something like that before. I slowly kneel before her and take her hands in mine “Mom we're going to be ok, I'm sorry I know this is all very hard on you too.”

She shakes her head. “No, No Zaia, don't ever apologise That's what mothers are for Everyone will learn that the Alpha asked you to the ball.”

“Mom, he said I should come. He didn’t say about being his date.”

“The dress did Zaia!” Mom sighs and closes her eyes. Up close, I can see the wrinkles in her skin I should be taking care of her not the other way around. “I just don’t want you going from one ruthless alpha to the next”

I nod in understanding. “Don’t worry Mom, I’m not that stupid. I learned my lesson once Zaia Toussaint needs no man.”

Mom nods, but at least my words brought a smile to her face, albeit a weak one

“With Sebastian coming here tonight. It’s so risky I’m just scared that...”

My smile fades. Something is troubling her “What is it, Mom?”

“What if he learns these babies are his and takes them away?” Her voice is lifeless as she says those words, and I realise she’s remembering her own past When I was born, my father took me away and gave me to my stepmother With his power and influence, Mom had no one to help her

Luckily, for both Mom and I, my stepmother didn’t want me, nor did she want me raised in that household and convinced my dad to return me to Mom

It is the only thing I am thankful to her for Even though her intentions weren’t good, I at least got to be with my mother

But I am not Mom

“I won’t let anyone take my babies away,” I say, the power in my voice surprises even myself as I stare at Mom, my chest heaving

I swear if he tries. I won’t just walk away I will wreak havoc if I have to, but no one, and I mean no one, will take my children from me.

-15 BONUS

A strength I have forgotten I possess rises within me and I stand up.

“I will go to the ball, show Atticus that I went. He will be too busy with other Alphas, anyway. I will make sure I avoid Sebastian and the first chance I get, I will leave ” I state “This is just a small hurdle, and we will overcome it, just as we have overcome so many before it.”

My confidence seems to give Mom the courage she needs and she nods

“Then, let’s get you ready.

With those words, she stands up with rejuvenated strength, ready to tackle the challenge ahead.

A few hours have passed, and it is late in the evening when I’m finally ready for the ball. Earlier, I messaged Atticus to ask him if it is ok not to be addressed as Zaia at the ball, just in

case it got back to my ex. After all, word can spread and my name is a little unique.

Something I now wish I had changed when we came here, but it’s too late to change that.

He had agreed and said it made sense and he would let the pack know, so no one accidentally let it slip and how he’s simply happy I will be attending.

Mom and I struggled to make myself look as different as possible. In the end, I had contoured my face heavily before applying a matt base and very pale lips.

Anyone who knows me, knows I love my bold lips. We have twisted my hair into a small bun, and the aim is to make it look a lot less than it is. I am personally satisfied with how I look

From afar, you wouldn’t be able to tell that it’s me I pick up the purple mask that mom had just coloured in with felt -15 BONUS

pen to match. The original was a lovely ivory shade

“I wish you had a heavier mask,” Mom murmurs

“It should be ok, we won’t be that close,” I reply, placing it on my face and before I can tie the ribbon, Mom takes over and ties it for me.

“Thank you,” I say softly as I look up at

her, patting her hand gently.

“Well it’s time for you to do what you need to do, but rest assured, if things become difficult there and if he tries to get close to you, leave ” Mom warns me as I stand up, spritzing plenty of perfume over me, before I kiss her cheek

“It’s going to be ok I won’t be long, and my phone will be with me at all times. I’ll keep you updated.”

She nods reluctantly, helping me with 15 BONUS

my gown as I make my way downstairs Draping my shawl around my shoulders, I step out into the cold.

A car is waiting for me, but it doesn’t surprise me Atticus had given his order. It’s no surprise he sent someone

Once the driver shuts the door and gets into the driver’s seat, we are on our way towards the grand hall.

I glance down at my phone, seeing the message Valerie had sent earlier whilst I was getting ready

VALERIE We’re at the hall.

I take a steadying breath when the venue comes into sight. It’s lit ablaze with dazzling lights. Pots of purple flowers line the entrance steps as guests pour into the hall.

Here goes nothing....

Before I know it, I’m about to enter.

15 BONUS

Knowing that Sebastian is right inside sets my heart into a frenzy of emotions. He hurt me in so many ways, but the thought of him still makes my belly flip from excitement.

Deep down, a part of me wants to see if he'd even recognise me or would he be too lost in the arms of his beloved Annalise?

I know I'm playing a dangerous game and I remind myself I need to steer well away from them.

Someone takes my shawl away, and I look around, wanting to blend away into a corner, however the moment I step into the hall, silence falls from those around me as all eyes now turn to me

I carry myself gracefully, not making eye contact with anyone, but the whispers follow

"It's the Alpha's woman.

"No wonder he is so infatuated."

I'm beginning to feel uneasy. I knew people would misunderstand, but right away?

I hurry away, blending into the crowd,

not wanting to remain in the limelight,

when Atticus's voice reaches my ears

surprise

"You are the one who sent the invitation. Did you think I wouldn't show up? Or were you hoping that I didn't?" Sebastian's cold, callous voice reaches me

My breath hitches, his voice making it hard to focus. A crushing pain fills my chest and I slowly turn, scanning the crowd, but I don't need to search for long

Like always, he stands out, even in a room full of handsome alphas, and stunning ball gowns, his deadly allure,

or the aura he exudes stand above all.

Even the black mask on his face does nothing to hide his identity. The black suit he wears fits him perfectly, a suit that you know is expensive, yet it's classy. Unlike others, he wears only a black satin tie with a silver pin. One hand is in his pocket, and Annalise clings to the other. She's in a dark pink gown and I can't help but stare at her stomach.

It's hidden by the many layers of tulle of her extravagant gown, and I find myself slowly backing away.

"Oh!" a man behind me exclaims, and I turn quickly.

"I'm so sorry!" I whisper.

The elderly man smiles and shakes his head.

"Not at all, dear, just be careful." He says with a pleasant smile as his gaze falls to my stomach.

I nod, thanking him before I glance over my shoulder at the man who broke my heart, only to find him looking directly at me.

Those piercing blue eyes meet mine as time seems to stand still..