

The nest

Written By

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INTRODUCTION - BLACK SCREEN

NARRATOR

Being made part of the High Council
is cause for celebration.

NARRATOR

There are only ever a dozen or so
High Mages at a time, and for good
reason. Together, the Council
governs the Mages' Guild and by
extension everywhere the Guild has
dealings with.

NARRATOR

But Luna's grandfather Readak, upon
learning of the news, simply
laughed that odd, cackling laugh of
his.

NARRATOR

A High Mage himself, she thought he
looked a little sad.

READAK

Welcome to the viper's nest.

NARRATOR

It took only two months before she
learned what he'd meant. When she
told him that much, he simply
cackled again.

NARRATOR

In truth, it would be years before
she fully understood how deep that
pit could go.

NARRATOR

By then, she had just returned from
a long mission in an unknown
realm...

INT. COUNCIL CHAMBERS

ALBERT

Luna, Emil. Believe me when I say
it's good to see you two.

Yet the apparent relief of meeting them after years of
absence is overshadowed by a grim frown in High Mage
Lycioe's face.

It is easy to understand why:

ALBERT

What happened to the others...?

Out of six High Mages sent to explore the land beyond that mysterious, unexplained portal in the middle of the sea, only three returned--and that after six years of unexplained absence.

None of the apprentices they set out to rescue made it back. Add to that the two missing High Mages from that first failed expedition, and the Council has lost half of its members.

Luna and Emil exchange glances. They have already agreed on what to tell their peers before they crossed back into the human realm, but it doesn't make the weight any easier to bear.

There is too much to hide.

LUNA

It's a dangerous realm, that's all I can say. Elrek just vanished, he warped away and we never heard from him again.

LUNA

Lester was killed by the vampires...

LUNA (V.O.)

True, if you consider that he's one of them now. Undead is still dead, right?

ALBERT

(saddened)

Killed by the creatures he hated most, huh... What of Crowe? He must have been devastated.

Necromancy and anything to do with undeath have long been outlawed by the Guild, punishable by burning at the stake. That is why Luna keeps up the lie:

LUNA

He didn't have much time to grieve. They got him, too.

LUNA (V.O.)

Let's just keep it at that.

EILHART

What about the apprentices?

LUNA

We never found them.

Emil gives Luna a sidelong glance. Nevertheless, he backs her version:

EMIL

Honestly, given how easily Lester and Crowe went down, it's anyone's guess how long a group of apprentices would last.

EMIL

They were probably gone long before we ever set out to rescue them...

There is a moment of silence as the council takes the grim news in. Finally, Albert awkwardly clears his throat.

ALBERT

You told us about the others. But what about you two?

EILHART

Right. You've been gone for what, six years? That's one hell of a sabbatical.

EMIL

(annoyed)

I was in a cell for five years. Does that answer your question?

Emil losing his cool is enough to surprise anyone in the Council, but stunned murmurs follow his words.

ALBERT

What... Why?

EMIL

(bitterly)

Vampires.

LUNA

They were afraid of his magic. And for good reason, it's how he got us out of there.

The power to control those who have wronged him, and the curse to be compelled to obey those he wrongs or those he

owes. A fearsome magic no one could quite explain--the perfect excuse for their miraculous escape.

And so continues the meeting. All full of excuses, and Luna fears she wouldn't keep all the lies straight if it weren't for Emil's help...

INT. EMIL'S OFFICE

LUNA
 (breathes a sigh of relief)
 I never want to do that again.

EMIL
 (smiling wryly)
 What, the part where we lied to the Council's face? Wait, that's the entire meeting.

LUNA
 Thank the Divines you were there. I swear, I don't know how you do it, I was about to break in cold sweat.

EMIL
 (smiles a little)
 You know the deal. Live long enough with my magic...

Emil shakes his head.

EMIL
 But Luna, this is a dangerous game you've got us playing. I get lying about Crowe...

EMIL
 But Dmitri kept me in that cell for five years, Luna. Why didn't you tell them?

LUNA
 Emil...

LUNA
 You know why. It was his condition for letting us go.

LUNA
 I have to find out what happened to Nikolai... He was no necromancer.

EMIL
Luna. Think about it. If what
Dmitri said is true... If Nikolai
was framed...

LUNA
Then it's my job to clear his name!

EMIL
It isn't!

EMIL
It's been almost twenty years. For
the Divines' sake, Luna, the man is
dead, his son is safe in another
realm entirely and no one can ever
get to him with the vampires
protecting him.

EMIL
What more do you want? I know you
cared about him...

Emil looks away to hide the jealousy they both know is
there.

EMIL
But if it's true that he was
framed, then someone in the Council
had a problem with him. And that
someone might still be here.

EMIL
You just got back. Your sister got
kicked out of the council because
she had Lester's kid. Is it really
worth risking it all for something
that happened two decades ago?

Emil pauses and his eyes soften as he looks back at Luna.

EMIL
Please. I don't want to see you
hurt...

LUNA
Emil...

LUNA
I made a promise. I'm the only
person Dmitri has left...

EMIL

That's not true. He's got his own family now. Please, Luna. You're going to get yourself killed.

LUNA

I failed him once. I failed both of them. I couldn't defend Nikolai...

LUNA

And I couldn't raise that little boy who had no one else to look to. Now all he wants is answers. How can I deny him that, Emil?

LUNA

This isn't the kind of Council I want to be part of...

Emil hesitates for a long moment.

EMIL

Then at least play it safe. Don't go around making enemies.

LUNA

I have no wish to. But please, if you're worried, help me. I know I can do so much better if you have my back.

Emil looks pained.

LUNA (V.O.)

Whenever we get close you push me away, but then you act like this... What am I supposed to think, Emil?

EMIL

I want to. Divines, you know I do.

EMIL

But if I make any false accusations, it's only going to get my magic turned against us.

EMIL

You're going to be in enough trouble without that...

EMIL

I can't speak out, but I can still give you advice. Come to me before

(MORE)

EMIL (CONT'D)

you do anything rash... Okay?

LUNA

Will do. I'm sorry to put you in this position.

Emil smiles and gives a mock bow.

EMIL

Anything for you, milady.

EXT. LUNA'S STUDY - DAY

SERACH stands in front of the door and knocks, then slips a note underneath before Luna can answer.

INT. LUNA'S STUDY - DAY

LUNA is hard at work reviewing evidence. She's been doing little else for months now, but just like the nightmare eighteen years ago, every thread she chases seems to vanish without a hint as to who cut it.

Hours spent scouring the black market for necromantic artifacts, looking up old neighbors who have long since moved away or make a point not to remember anything about "that necromancer who used to live around here"--all for nothing. She isn't any closer than she was when it all started.

Luna jumps in surprise at the knock and scrambles to hide the papers she's reading.

LUNA

Come in.

But there is only silence except for the rustle of paper. Luna frowns as she picks it up.

LUNA

An ad...?

[[Show ad on screen:

"~ Moonlight Woods ~

Furniture, signs, dolls, anything that requires skill and quality--bring it to us.

246 Ailey Street"]]

LUNA

(almost laughs at the

sheer normalcy of it)
 An ad. Oh Divines, what did I think
 it was? I'm far too worked up...

LUNA
 (pauses and looks at the
 note again)
 But still... No ad magically finds
 its way under a High Mage's door
 like this.

LUNA
 Someone wants to meet with me, and
 I'm curious who it is.

Luna carefully clears her desk of any evidence and leaves.

INT. MOONLIGHT WOODS STORE

LUNA pauses for a moment, examining the eerily realistic
 wooden dolls displayed in the shop. Snapping out of it, she
 hands over the ad to the OLD MAN at the counter.

LUNA
 (smiles a little)
 This found its way into my office.

OLD MAN
 (smiles and motions to a
 door at the back)
 He's waiting in the workshop.

LUNA (V.O.)
 He...? Well, let's see who this
 secret admirer is...

INT. EILHART'S WORKSHOP

EILHART is hunched over a table working on a doll, and
 straightens back up to look at LUNA as she comes in. SERACH
 is studying quietly in a corner, half hidden among dolls in
 progress.

EILHART
 So you made it. I was starting to
 get worried.

EILHART
 I realize this isn't the most
 conventional meeting place, but
 please humour me.

EILHART

Why do you think I had you come here?

[[Show choices:

1A - "I'd say your guess is as good as mine, but you know why you brought me here."

1B - "You have something to tell me about my investigation."

]]

1A -

[["Eilhart affinity"++]]

LUNA

I'd say your guess is as good as mine, but you know why you brought me here.

LUNA

I doubt it's for jubilant reasons, so why not just cut to the chase, hm?

LUNA (V.O.)

(trying not to look worried)

He can't know who I'm working for... Can he? There's no way anybody would know.

LUNA (V.O.)

But I'd better not look nervous...

[[Skip to 1-CONTINUE]]

1B -

LUNA

You have something to tell me about my investigation.

EILHART

(chuckles a little, though the smile never reaches his eyes)

Straight to the point, aren't you?

1-CONTINUE -

EILHART

(goes serious)

I fear you've been a bit too aggressive in your digging around. Asking questions, no matter how discrete, never goes entirely unnoticed.

EILHART

Some of our colleagues... I'm sure you can guess which... are less than pleased by some of those questions.

LUNA

(nervously)

Are they now. What are you getting at?

EILHART

I just came out of a meeting a few hours ago. They will be sending someone to tail you from now on.

LUNA (V.O.)

Oh, snap. Not good.

EILHART

Look, I don't know what you're looking for, and it's your choice whether you're going to continue despite the spy or not, but...

EILHART

Whatever it is, is it really worth risking your sister over this?

LUNA

Risking her?

EILHART

(pauses)

I'm afraid if you don't stop, we'll have another Nikolai on our hands...

[[Show choices:

2A - "Why would you warn me about this?"

2B - "Is that a threat?"

]]

2A -

[["Eilhart affection"++]

LUNA

(trying to look calm)

I think that's blowing things out of proportion, don't you...?

LUNA

I know my sister is innocent of anything they could accuse her of, and anything they could possibly come up with wouldn't lead to an extreme measure like that. Unless they plan on framing her, but can they really justify doing that to someone who isn't even in the Guild anymore?

LUNA

I suppose the part that I should find most concerning, however, is that you'd warn me of this.

EILHART

(smiles a little)

I would be surprised if you didn't find it strange.

EILHART

(looks serious)

I'm not stupid, Luna. Maybe a lot of it is my own fault, but I know I'm not exactly beloved by our "esteemed colleagues".

LUNA (V.O.)

...Pretty sure they would like you better if you didn't sound so sarcastic, Eilhart.

EILHART

Right now, the only reason I'm fine is because they have a common enemy. But if they take you down, it's gonna make them more confident, and there will be less opposition when they turn on me.

EILHART

And I know they will. In fact, more likely than not I'm the next target. So call it taking preventive action.

LUNA

(sympathetic)

Well I can't really argue with that. They've been apprehensive about you since the beginning...

EILHART

(chuckles a little)

Well, I suppose not many powerful, hard-working High Mages who descend from the great magical families of old appreciate having some random Joe go from nobody to the same rank as them.

LUNA (V.O.)

Tell me about it. But it does make you wonder how he got into the Council...

[[Skip to 2-CONTINUE]]

2B -

[["Eilhart affinity"--]]

LUNA

Is that a threat?

EILHART

(just stares)

Why you I threaten you?

EILHART

I'm just saying, Luna. You get people in the Council upset asking questions about their affairs, and they start asking questions about yours.

EILHART

There's always something to be dug up. Even a necromancer like him probably wouldn't have been exposed

(MORE)

EILHART (CONT'D)

if he kept to himself.

LUNA (V.O.)

Is he saying Nikolai asked questions too? What kind of questions?

2-CONTINUE -

EILHART

(shakes his head)

In any case... You underestimate a High Mage's determination to keep their secrets safe.

EILHART

They didn't really approve of it, but framing her is the back-up plan. You know how influent some of us can be... how many favors are owed. Your sister really doesn't need this right now.

LUNA (V.O.)

Really? He's telling it to my face, that they're going to frame her? They went and decided that in a meeting?

LUNA (V.O.)

I can't tell if he's playing me, or if they're really that rotten...

EILHART

Won't you stop, Luna? While you still can?

LUNA (V.O.)

This sounds awfully familiar. But my answer is still the same as with Emil.

LUNA

I can poke around with a little more finesse, but I can't promise I'll stop what I'm doing. I don't want to put Sola in a tough spot, even more now that she has Alice to worry about...

LUNA

But I can't just sit by and do

(MORE)

LUNA (CONT'D)

nothing. I've done far too much of that already.

EILHART

(sighs)

I can't talk you out of it, can I?

EILHART

But there are so many that are more than content to just sit by and watch. What suddenly triggered this need of yours to risk your own family for this?

[[Show choices:

3A - "I'd tell you, but that would give you far more leverage than I'm comfortable with. Nice try though."

3B - "I made a promise..."

]]

3A -

[["Eilhart affinity"++]]

LUNA

(smiles)

I'd tell you, but that would give you far more leverage than I'm comfortable with. Nice try though.

LUNA

I've sat by and watched innocent people take heat for our mistakes one too many times, thank you. And I will not sit quietly if my sister has even the slightest chance at being one of them.

EILHART

(gives a mock sigh)

Oh, well. It was worth the try.

[[Skip to 3-CONTINUE]]

3B -

LUNA

(softly)

I made a promise...

EILHART

Could you be any more vague? Who
did you make this promise to?

[[Show choices:

4A - "As a matter of fact, yes. It wouldn't be fun if I told
you, would it?"

4B - "I met Dmitri Amarov."]]

4A -

LUNA

(smiles)

As a matter of fact, yes. It
wouldn't be fun if I told you,
would it?

EILHART

(makes a face)

Why tell me at all if you're just
going to leave me curious?

EILHART

(gives up and sighs)

Fine. So... What are you going to
do with all of this?

[[Skip to 3-CONTINUE]]

4B -

[[Set "told Eilhart about Dmitri" to TRUE]]

LUNA

I met Dmitri Amarov.

EILHART

(stunned)

What?! Nikolai's kid? How... Where?

LUNA

In the demon realm. It turns out,
he infiltrated the Guild and was
under our noses all along.

LUNA (V.O.)

It might be better not to tell him
I was the one who helped him
infiltrate us at this point...

LUNA

He was one of the apprentices that got left behind in the first expedition.

EILHART

(raises an eyebrow)

And he managed to survive in a place half a dozen High Mages couldn't?

LUNA

He made friends with some demons.

LUNA (V.O.)

...Better not say they were undead. Divines, I'm not helping convince anyone his father wasn't a necromancer, am I?

LUNA

Anyway... He told me Nikolai was framed. He wanted me to investigate the matter.

LUNA (V.O.)

Well that caught his attention. Maybe too much?

EILHART

(frowns)

But the evidence was pretty convincing.

LUNA

(scoffs)

You're the one who was just warning me that the Council wanted to get rid of me so badly they might frame my sister. You tell me if the evidence wasn't a little too convincing.

EILHART

(slowly nods)

Alright, I'll bite. Suppose you do find evidence that he was innocent...

LUNA (V.O.)

Wow. I've never seen him look so serious.

EILHART

What do you expect to do with all of this? Bring down the Council?

EILHART

You know the problem isn't just one of us, but all of us. And even then it wouldn't keep innocent people from being hurt... Other rotten High Mages would just find their way in.

[[Show choice:

5A - "I just want to convince everyone that not all High Mages are sell outs."

5B - "I will bring down all of you if I have to."

]]

5A -

[["Eilhart affinity" ++]]

LUNA

I honestly don't know what I plan on doing with the information. Perhaps simply convince everyone that not all High Mages are sell outs.

LUNA

All I know is that I've been quiet for too long, and I can't let things continue.

EILHART

(looks surprised)

You don't think all High Mages are sell outs?

LUNA (V.O.)

So you do?

[[Skip to 5-CONTINUE]]

5B -

["Eilhart affinity" -= 3;

[[Set "threatened to bring down Council" to TRUE]]

LUNA (V.O.)

I have to do this. I owe it to
Nikolai...

LUNA

I will bring down all of you if I
have to.

LUNA

I don't care if more rotten High
Mages get in. I'll bring them down
too.

EILHART

So you don't care about the damage
you'll do?

LUNA (V.O.)

(pauses for a moment)

That look in his eyes... Did I make
a mistake here?

LUNA (V.O.)

But I've gone too far to back down
now. Nikolai deserves better.

LUNA

Someone has to do it! The Council's
corruption is an insult to the
entire Guild!

EILHART

(looking carefully
neutral)

I'd agree with you... But you know,
as refreshing as your dedication
is, people like that never last.

5-CONTINUE -

A knock interrupts them. ERIK, Eilhart's sickly looking son,
shyly pokes his head inside the room.

ERIK

Pop? Mom wants...

EILHART

(interrupts him)

What are you doing here? Didn't I

(MORE)

EILHART (CONT'D)

tell you to keep out of the workshop?

LUNA

(does a double-take)

Wait what? "Pop"?

ERIK

S-Sorry. Mom asked me to ask you to buy some milk...

ERIK

(coughs quietly in the back of his throat)

Who's the lady?

EILHART

She's from work. Now what did I say?

EILHART

(looks at Serach)

Serach, take him back to his mother.

SERACH

(stands up and takes Erik's hand)

Yes, sir.

LUNA (V.O.)

Too late, Eilhart. There's no way I wouldn't notice this much dark energy.

LUNA (V.O.)

Is this... A curse? A powerful one, too... What's going on here?

[[If "threatened to bring down the Council" is TRUE and "Eilhart affinity" is less or equal to 0

The door opens discreetly as Serach comes back and stands quietly inside. Eilhart notices him, but his gaze never leaves Luna.

LUNA (V.O.)

There's something off here. Eilhart looks tense... I don't like it. Maybe I shouldn't linger here.

{{Show choices:

6A - "I didn't know you had a son." (Stay.)

6B - "Uh... I'll be going." (Leave.)

}}

6B -

LUNA

Uh... I'll be going. See you at work.

LUNA (V.O.)

Why do I feel like I'm running?

[[Skip to Amarov house]]

6A -

LUNA

I wasn't aware you had a son... not that I've ever delved into your personal life. He seems rather... under the weather. I don't suppose there's a reason for that, is there?

EILHART

(looks amused)

Maybe, maybe not.

EILHART

(suddenly serious)

Honestly, you don't really expect me to tell you, do you? Right after you threatened to bring down the same Council I happen to be part of?

EILHART

I never meant for you to see him. There's a reason I tried so hard to hide my family... If you're as open about my family as you are about your intentions, they'll be in danger.

EILHART

I have too much to lose...

LUNA (V.O.)

I have a really bad feeling about this...

[[Player choice:

13A - "I won't hurt your family."

13B - Try to run for it.]]

13A -

LUNA

Eilhart, wait. I have no wish to hurt your family.

LUNA

Are you afraid the others will use them as leverage? I'll keep your secret.

[[If "told Eilhart about Dmitri" is TRUE

LUNA

After all, I already told you mine.

]]

LUNA

And if things get messy with the Council, I'll do my best not to get your family involved.

LUNA

I know what it's like to be worried about family. You said it yourself, Sola is in danger because of me...

Eilhart is quiet for a long, tense moment. Finally, he turns away.

EILHART

Get out. Before I change my mind.

LUNA

Eilhart--

EILHART

Now!

Luna leaves in a hurry, still confused.

[[Skip to Amarov house]]

13B -

Luna wordlessly turns and runs for the door, magic gathering around her hands. However, Serach moves faster and traps her in a headlock.

LUNA
Ahh! Get--off--

Luna lashes out with sharp shadow tendrils, but Serach keeps choking her.

LUNA (V.O.)
Impossible! How is he still
standing?! How--

Luna sees metal peeking out from Serach's torn skin.

LUNA (V.O.)
An automaton?!

LUNA
Eilha--

EILHART
(keeps his expression
entirely neutral)
Do it, Serach.

LUNA
(horrified)
Serach? Divines. His apprentice is
an aut--

Serach snaps her neck. Luna slumps against him.

EILHART
(shoulders slump,
suddenly looks so very
sad and tired)
I don't disagree with you, Luna.
The Council is rotten. Bringing it
down would be a favor to
everyone...

EILHART
But I can't let someone who doesn't
know how to hide her cards leave
knowing about my family.

EILHART
(looks so sad)
I'm really, really sorry.

EILHART
 Come, Serach. Let's hide her with
 the others...

[[Ending #1]]

]]

EILHART
 (clears his throat)
 You were leaving?

[[Show choices

7A - "Was." (Stay.)

7B - "Uhm... Yes." (Leave.)

]]

7B -

LUNA
 Uhm... Yes. See you later.

[[Skip to Amarov house]]

7A -

LUNA
 Was.

LUNA (V.O.)
 But now I have some questions for
 you.

LUNA
 I wasn't aware you had a son... not
 that I've ever delved into your
 personal life. He seems rather...
 under the weather. I don't suppose
 there's a reason for that, is
 there?

EILHART
 (pointedly)
 Well, yes, people not being aware
 of it was kind of the point.

EILHART
 Children get colds. Which is why I
 wanted him in bed, not wandering
 (MORE)

EILHART (CONT'D)

around.

LUNA (V.O.)

Really now.

[[Show choices:

8A - "Alright. I'll see you at work then." (Leave.)

[if "told Eilhart about Dmitri" is TRUE] 8B - "Come on, I told you my secret."

[else] 8C - "How about a deal?"]]

8A -

LUNA (V.O.)

(sighs)

If he doesn't want to tell me,
there's nothing I can do.

LUNA

Alright. I'll see you at work then.

[[Skip to Amarov house]]

8B -

LUNA

Come on, I told you my secret.

EILHART

(sighs)

I guess you did.

[[Skip to 8-CONTINUE]]

8C -

[[Set "heard Eilhart's story" to TRUE]]

LUNA

I'm not a sell out, Eilhart, you know that. Neither is my grandfather. Rather, he's feared this the whole time he's been on council.

LUNA

I'm not saying we can save anyone... hell, I'm not even saying we can change it. But we can try, right? So I'll make you a deal.

LUNA
(nods at the door)
You tell me what's up with him...

LUNA
And I'll tell you what I'm looking
for, or who asked me to dig.

8-CONTINUE -

Eilhart is silent for a long time.

LUNA (V.O.)
He's really thinking it through,
isn't he? This has to be something
big...

EILHART
It was years ago. Back then, I
didn't have the faintest how magic
worked and I honestly didn't care.
I just worked here and I was happy
with it. It's been my family's
business for as long as any of us
can remember.

LUNA (V.O.)
He looks wistful... Better days, I
take it.

EILHART
There was some High Mage who was
under investigation by the council.
He was under fire for a great count
of murders.

LUNA (V.O.)
Murder? Years ago... I think
Grandfather mentioned it. Was it
Korone?

EILHART
(nods)
When the investigation started
closing in, he panicked and fled...
He came into the city, and into our
shop, and demanded that we hide him
from the Guild or else he would
kill us.

EILHART
We spent about three weeks like
(MORE)

EILHART (CONT'D)

that. Then our food ran out, and he gave me permission to leave and go buy supplies. I had no intention of risking my family, but my wife... She was always so honest, so scrupulous.

EILHART

(smiles sadly)

While he wasn't listening, she insisted that I tell the Guild. So when I left, I went and warned them... They didn't really believe me, so they only sent a few mages back with me.

LUNA

(shocked)

They didn't send any High Mages? That's ridiculous. Even if they didn't believe you, they should have played it safe anyway.

EILHART

(his gaze falls)

He killed them so easily. Then he turned on us... He cursed us. But I wasn't affected... You could say that was how I discovered my gift for magic.

EILHART

(motions towards a long, thin metal tool leaning against the wall)

He didn't expect it. While he was still recovering, I put that thing over there... Right through his heart.

EILHART

But it wasn't enough to dispell the curse. I went to the Guild for help. I begged the Council to help find a cure... But do you think they did anything?

EILHART

(angrily)

No, they didn't want to admit one of their own did that. So that they

(MORE)

EILHART (CONT'D)

could keep up appearances, they even threatened us to shut us up. I'm fairly sure if I hadn't changed my identity after that, I wouldn't even be here now.

LUNA

(honestly upset)

I'm sorry... I had no idea.

EILHART

(crosses his arms)

Do you see now why I have some trouble believing you when you say not all High Mages are sell outs?

LUNA

(sadly)

I can't blame you.

EILHART

Maybe if you had been there back then, things would have been different.

EILHART

Or maybe you would have done nothing all the same, which makes you really no different from Lycioe or Victoria or any of them. 'Atoning' now won't make up for what not only me, but so many others have gone through.

EILHART

In any case, I joined the Guild hoping I could gain enough influence to force them to dispell the curse...

EILHART

(laughs dryly)

I must have set some kind of record for blazing through the ranks like that, I was so desperate. When time is your enemy, nothing else matters, you know?

EILHART

(looks away)

But I still wasn't fast enough. By the time I got to my post, it was

(MORE)

EILHART (CONT'D)

too late. The curse has progressed too far, there is... There is no annulling it now.

LUNA

Eilhart...

EILHART

(pained)

My wife has been bedridden for the past few months, she doesn't have much long left. Erik isn't far behind, as you just saw... And our little Emma hasn't woken up since that day. Even if she did wake up, what's left of her body to live in? I just...

Eilhart takes a deep breath, trying to calm himself

EILHART

Needless to say, that is far, far more than I've told any of our colleagues, so I would appreciate some discretion.

EILHART

I went to insane lengths to keep my family's existence secret and keep them out of Council matters. So if you ever even think about threatening them or using them as leverage, I'm sticking that same tool through your heart too. Are we clear?

LUNA (V.O.)

He doesn't even look like he's kidding.

EILHART

Now tell me what it is you're looking for.

LUNA

(pauses)

I'm looking for the evidence used against Nikolai. I had started when his integrity was called into question, but stopped after I was too late. Now I'm looking again to see if I can trace it back.

LUNA

I want to know who framed him... and why. Nikolai didn't step on any toes that I was aware of. It doesn't add up.

EILHART

Are you that sure he really was framed? He could have had a life you didn't know of... Like I have a son, and not one of our colleagues ever imagined that.

[[if "told Eilhart about Dmitri" is TRUE

LUNA

Dmitri himself told me. Sure, you could say he was lying... But why ask me to look into it at all if he was?

]]

[[else

LUNA

That's different. I didn't think he was a necromancer back then... And I still don't, even now.

LUNA (V.O)

I can't really tell him Dmitri told me he was innocent...

]]

EILHART

(sighs)

Given my story, I should be glad you're investigating... But even if some of the evidence might have looked shady, I thought a lot of it seemed genuine.

EILHART

If someone took it from our evidence vaults from previous cases, someone would have noticed, with all the noise surrounding the trial. Wouldn't only a real necromancer have access to the kind of equipment we found in his house?

EILHART

Unless... Are you suggesting the one who framed Nikolai was the real necromancer?

LUNA

The real necromancer perhaps, or someone who had access to alternate evidence. I don't really know, I haven't been able to dig that far.

EILHART

Well, it looks like you're going to have your work cut out for you. No one is exactly going to confess to being a necromancer.

EILHART

Good luck, Luna. And do watch your back, I'd really rather not be left alone with the rest of our "esteemed colleagues".

LUNA

(laughs)

Indeed, the last thing you need is to be left to the hounds. I'll do my best to be careful.

LUNA (V.O.)

Well, this is a.... weird situation, to say the least. But now that we both have leverage against the other, it keeps both our secrets safe.

LUNA (V.O.)

Unless one of us can strike faster than the other, my investigation should be safe with him...

LUNA

I'll see you at council then.

EILHART

See you.

EXT. OLD AMAROV HOUSE

LUNA is standing outside the decrepit house, hiding in the shadows with her hood drawn up.

[[Play the sound of wind howling]]

LUNA (V.O.)
 (looks behind her)
 Looks I lost my tail... Good.

LUNA (V.O.)
 (turns back to the house)
 It's been abandoned for so long...
 Dmitri was too young to live here
 and no one wanted to live in a
 necromancer's house. If there's
 anything left from all those years
 ago, this is the place to find
 it...

INT. OLD AMAROV HOUSE

The furniture and everything it once held have been left to rot in the empty house. Its inhabitants are insects and a pack of rats, and one stops and stands up on its hind legs, sniffing at LUNA. It scampers off and squeaks as it slips on a thin layer of ice, then quickly gets back up and scurries off somewhere unseen.

LUNA
 I still remember this house... Oh
 Dmitri, do you remember it the same
 way?

LUNA (V.O.)
 Did you, too, wish you could stay
 in this house forever...?

Luna almost slips on the same patch of ice.

LUNA
 (scowls, then looks
 confused)
 Wait... How did ice get here?

A loud creak from farther away makes Luna jump. She turns and sees boot marks on the dusty floor.

[[Play loud creaking sound]]

LUNA
 (hair stands on end,
 laughs nervously)
 Oh dear. This is the stuff horror
 stories are made of.

LUNA

Of course dark magic exists... It's what our Guild is supposed to protect people against.

LUNA

But there would be no such magic in your house, right, Nikolai...?

Luna takes a deep breath to steel herself, then slowly moves to the source of the noise, hands swirling with magic.

INT. NIKOLAI'S STUDY

A hooded figure slowly stands up from where it was crouched behind the desk and faces Luna.

[[Increase howling wind sound]]

LUNA

Wha--

One of the windows shatters and the wind sends papers fluttering all across the room. An inkwell falls and shatters loudly.

LUNA

(yelps)

Gyaah!

LUNA

(holds up her hands)

What... Who are you?

LUNA (V.O.)

It doesn't feel human. It can't be one of Eilhart's automatons... They're not that lifelike yet... Are they?

LUNA (V.O.)

Is that... Frost near its feet?

LUNA (V.O.)

Wait... Snow inside the house?! How can it be?

[[The wind howls deafeningly]]

NIKOLAI

Why are you here?

NIKOLAI

Why now?

LUNA

(flinches, shouts trying
to be heard above the
wind)

I... I'm not here simply for my own
sake!

LUNA

I come as much for Dmitri Amarov as
I do for myself! I'm just looking
for answers as to what happened
here... I don't feel that Nikolai's
case was examined enough. I want to
know if he was innocent... and if
he was, why he was framed!

LUNA (V.O.)

I don't know what this is about...
But what else can I say?!

The wind dies a little.

NIKOLAI

You had years for that! Why only
now?

LUNA

(flinches again)

I'm finishing what I started.

LUNA

I started investigating Nikolai's
case when he was charged, but
everything I came across either
disappeared or led me to a dead
end.

LUNA

I didn't try hard enough and he
died because of that. So when
Dmitri asked if I would look
again... I agreed.

LUNA

I want to put this to rest once and
for all. I want to know the truth.
People need to know if the Guild
condemned an innocent man.

LUNA (V.O.)

And I'm almost certain that's the case...

The wind stops, but the room is still freezing.

NIKOLAI

And what if that is the case? What will you do if the Guild murdered an innocent man...?

NIKOLAI

How far are you willing to go for this, Luna?

LUNA (V.O.)

(startled)

How does it know my name?

LUNA

(with conviction)

I'm willing to go as far as it takes. I failed the Amarov family once... I refuse to do it again.

NIKOLAI

(is silent for a while, then motions to the floor where he'd been crouched)

Break the seal. It was not made for a dead man to open.

LUNA

(hesitates and moves over to the desk)

A rune...?

Nikolai takes down his hood, revealing a face made entirely of ice.

NIKOLAI

(softly)

You didn't fail us... I know you kept fighting until the end.

Luna breaks the seal and straightens back up.

LUNA

(looks back and sees him)

Nikolai... So it is you. How...?

NIKOLAI

I don't know. I just... Woke up,

(MORE)

NIKOLAI (CONT'D)

and I was there. It was only a few years ago. I'd been dead for at least a decade. I can't even begin to explain it...

LUNA

(tears up)

I missed you. I missed you so much.

NIKOLAI

(looks away)

I know.

NIKOLAI

(doesn't really know how to react, and motions awkwardly at the seal)

I can imagine why someone would want me dead, but I have no idea who.

Nikolai moves over to the hidden cache and pulls out a few glass spheres from behind a stack of papers.

LUNA

Recording spheres...?

Nikolai holds up a sphere and it glows as it reproduces his voice and another familiar one.

CROWE (RECORDING)

Why are you recording this, Nikolai?

NIKOLAI (RECORDING)

For security. In case anything happens. You should, too.

CROWE (RECORDING)

Do you really think something will happen?

NIKOLAI (RECORDING)

I don't know, but I'm not taking the chance. You know the company we keep can be... dangerous.

NIKOLAI (RECORDING)

I owe it to Dmitri to be careful... And if that's not enough, to at least leave him something to understand why.

CROWE (RECORDING)
You do realize I'm a time mage?

NIKOLAI (RECORDING)
Yes, but so do the people we're
investigating. Now...

NIKOLAI (RECORDING)
(clears his throat)
This is week 10 of our
investigation. So far, we've found
24 possible victims among the
people who went missing in the town
of Ayla and surroundings.

NIKOLAI (RECORDING)
They were always people who left
town alone, and always very
healthy. There seems to be a
predominance of light hair and
eyes, although the last ones were
more varied. Ages vary as well,
although most were 26 and younger.
Of these 24 people, 18 had magical
blood and 11 were affiliated to the
Guild in some way.

NIKOLAI (RECORDING)
Though there is nothing physical to
suggest the same person is
responsible, kidnappings of
magically inclined people are
relatively rare and this represents
a considerable increase in
statistics.

LUNA
What...? What is this?

NIKOLAI (RECORDING)
Furthermore, one of these was a
Senior Spellcaster, and although
retired, he was believed to be
still very powerful. In order to
subdue him, one would have to be
just as powerful and thus likely in
the higher ranks of our Guild. The
15 missing corpses from the same
area would also suggest Necromancy
might be involved, although we
cannot be sure at this time if it

(MORE)

NIKOLAI (RECORDING) (CONT'D)

was the same person.

NIKOLAI (RECORDING)

This covert investigation was requested by the Aylan branch of the Guild. Any clues the local investigators have found either led nowhere or were disposed of with suspicious readiness. Whether it is a powerful necromancer out there, or a high-ranked mage in our own midst, our purpose is to determine whether someone within the Council would have means and motive to do this...

LUNA

What... I never heard of any of this. A covert investigation into the Council itself...?

LUNA (V.O.)

No wonder someone would want to frame him. But why didn't Crowe come forward with this if he was investigating it too? Wait...

LUNA (V.O.)

Oh, crap.

LUNA

Nikolai... Crowe is a necromancer. We found that out the hard way in our expedition.

LUNA (V.O.)

Though he did help us with the vampires...

LUNA

He would have had the means to frame you. He had access to the materials that would have been needed.

LUNA

It was all so meticulously planned... Almost none of the artifacts are out of place or traceable. It's very, very possible some of the relics were created by whoever planted the evidence.

NIKOLAI
 (angrily)
 He what?!

Another window shatters, making Luna jump.

NIKOLAI
 Wonderful. I've been working with the biggest hypocrite in this world, and in the next realm as well. Helping chase a potential necromancer... Keeping quiet while I was accused. Or, if what you say is right, framing me in the first place.

The room temperature has dropped considerably, and Luna shivers in the cold.

LUNA
 Well he would have had access to the right kind of materials. I've been hunting down similar pieces and some of them weren't easy to come by. I think it's safe to assume that whoever did this practiced the art, or knew someone who did.

[[if "heard Eilhart's story" is TRUE

LUNA
 But...

LUNA (V.O.)
 Light hair and eyes? And the culprit had to have immense magic...

LUNA
 Could it be...? Eilhart?

NIKOLAI
 (snappishly)
 What about him?

LUNA
 Well... Before he became a High Mage, his family fell victim to Korone. All of them were stricken with powerful ailments, and by the time he made it high enough to

(MORE)

LUNA (CONT'D)

break the curse, there was no going back on it.

LUNA (V.O.)

Sorry, Eilhart. But if you're involved in this, I can't really keep your secret from him...

LUNA

It's not... impossible to assume he's been using his automatons to try and bring his family back, and there's a good chance he'd need to know necromancy to do so.

NIKOLAI

(looks surprised)

Eilhart... Really? I never would have guessed. Still... You may be right. When I got here a few weeks ago, it was clear someone was in the house before. It could have been him.

NIKOLAI

I'm not sure how the automatons would help, but if he can animate matter and give it will, I suppose he might think he could animate bodies as well... And that, indeed, is Necromancy.

NIKOLAI

But then why kidnap all those people? You think they were sacrifices, or practice? He could have just stuck to the corpses he was stealing from the graveyards... No need to kill, unless it was part of some ritual.

NIKOLAI

(wryly)

Contrary to popular belief, I really wouldn't know.

LUNA

Sadly I know about as much as you. Perhaps Dmitri would have a better idea. I know he's been struggling with this puzzle just as much as I have...

]]

[[ELSE

NIKOLAI

We need answers. What became of Crowe?

LUNA

He was one of those that joined the demon High King. The vampires Dmitri is living with can likely summon him, but it doesn't mean we'll get any answers.

NIKOLAI

(angrily)

He's not in the Guild anymore. He's got nothing to lose. The least he could do is come clean.

LUNA

I know. And I will badger him until he does, I promise. But honestly...

NIKOLAI

What?

LUNA

I'm not sure about this, Nikolai. By "exposing" you as a necromancer, he would just be making the Council be even more careful about necromancers hidden in our midst. This would be bad for him.

NIKOLAI

You think he didn't do it?

LUNA

He's the most obvious suspect, yes, but as far as the Council is concerned, so were you.

LUNA

Maybe this isn't as straightforward as we'd like to think. He could have had an accomplice, if it was him at all... The Council DOES seem a little too concerned with where I stick my nose.

LUNA

(hesitates, then looks at
Nikolai again)

I could send word to Dmitri, see if
he can contact Crowe in the
meantime. I know he's been
struggling with this puzzle as much
as I have...

NIKOLAI

(looks sad at the mention
of his son)

Dmitri...

LUNA

(smiles a little)

He found himself a vampire woman
and settled down, would you believe
it? He has a little one of his own
now.

LUNA

A sweet four year old by the name
of Lucille. She's very
articulate... It makes me think of
you.

Nikolai smiles at the news, but still looks so very sad.

LUNA

What is it? You look troubled.

NIKOLAI

Send him the recordings if you
wish. But... Please don't tell him
how you got them.

LUNA

What? Why?

NIKOLAI

You said it yourself. He has a
family of his own now... I was
never much of a father in life, how
fair would it be to disrupt his
life now that I'm dead?

NIKOLAI

I don't even know how I came back.
That also means I don't know how
long this will last. For all I
know, I could just disappear

(MORE)

NIKOLAI (CONT'D)
tomorrow, for good this time.

NIKOLAI
(sadly)
I don't want to put him through
that once again.

LUNA
Nikolai...

[[Show choices:

9A - "I will respect your wishes."

9B - "Stop being a coward."]]

9A -

LUNA
I can see why you would want that.
I wish you would come back to him,
but... I will respect your wishes.

NIKOLAI
(smiling sadly)
Thank you, Luna. Believe me, I wish
I could...

[[Jump to 9-CONTINUE]]

9B -

LUNA
Stop being a coward.

NIKOLAI
(surprised)
What?

LUNA
He's your son. He might not be a
little boy half your size anymore,
but he still needs you.

LUNA
If you weren't enough of a father
in life.. Then now is the time to
try again.

LUNA
You were given a second chance,
Nikolai. Not many get that
opportunity. Don't waste it...

(MORE)

LUNA (CONT'D)

Please.

NIKOLAI

(still surprised, a
little flustered)

I... I see. I will... Think about
it.

NIKOLAI

(recomposing himself)

I'm sorry if I upset you. Maybe you
do have a point. I just... I guess
I'm afraid.

9-CONTINUE

Luna pauses for a moment, then hugs Nikolai tightly despite
shivering with the cold.

LUNA

I won't let you down... Not after
you've lost so much already. I
won't let them take more from you.

Nikolai opens his mouth to say something, but stops.
Flustered, he pulls away from Luna.

NIKOLAI

I... Thank you.
Nobody else should have to go
through this. To make sure it never
happens again... That is the best I
could hope for.

Nikolai suddenly pauses and frowns, looking around.

NIKOLAI

Do you feel it?

LUNA (V.O.)

Wow, Nikolai. Talk about a smooth
way to change the subject.

NIKOLAI

(catches the way she's
looking at him and
scowls, still flustered)

I mean it. Over there.

Giving in, Luna goes over to the bookshelf he's pointing at
and pushes the books aside. She gasps at the sight of a
small, softly glowing glass sphere.

LUNA
A recording sphere?!

NIKOLAI
What?! Let me see!

NIKOLAI
This doesn't make sense. Who...?
Wait.

LUNA
It's so smooth... Too smooth. You
could almost say it's impossibly
perfect.

Nikolai frowns, suddenly understanding where she's going.

NIKOLAI
An object not of this world. Not
naturally in it, in any case. Are
you thinking...?

LUNA
(nods, completing his
sentence)
There's only one man that could
make something like this. A
creation mage... The most skilled
one that we know of.

NIKOLAI
Albert Lycioe.

LUNA
But why would he hide a recording
sphere here? It doesn't make sense.

NIKOLAI
Unless he figured out what you were
investigating and was afraid of
what you might find out.

Luna is quiet for a moment, fiddling with the sphere as she
tries to get it to play its recording.

LUNA
Damn, I can't get it to play. It's
warded against outside
interference. It would take a
better enchanter than I to break
Albert's charm.

LUNA

Maybe I should just go confront him. He can't really deny it's his work, I doubt his ego could take people thinking there's someone as skilled as him out there.

LUNA (V.O.)

Wait. I do know an enchanter that's more than powerful enough to break through this...

LUNA (V.O.)

Should I go to Eilhart? At least I could find out what this sphere recorded before I do anything about it...

[[Player choices:

10-A: Confront Albert about the sphere.

10-B: Ask Eilhart for help viewing the recording.]]

((10-B is way at the end of the document, after ending #2))

10-A:

[[If "heard Eilhart's story" is TRUE

LUNA (V.O.)

Eilhart is starting to look like a really good suspect... I don't know what Albert is up to, but going straight to our prime suspect sounds like a terrible idea.

LUNA (V.O.)

Besides, if he sees the recording he'll know Nikolai is around. I'd better go to the source instead...

LUNA

Looks like it's time to pay one pompous redhead a visit.

[[Skip to Albert's study]]

]]

[[Else

LUNA (V.O.)

Eilhart is too unpredictable. I don't know what he'd do if he saw Nikolai on the recording. I'd better go to the source instead...

LUNA

Looks like it's time to pay one pompous redhead a visit.

[[Skip to Albert's study]]

]]

INT. ALBERT'S STUDY

ALBERT sits smugly at his overly ornate desk, toying with his latest creation, a glass bird with so much detail no artisan could ever have crafted it.

ALBERT

Now here's a visit I wasn't expecting. To what do I owe the pleasure?

LUNA (V.O.)

If I leave it up to him, this conversation will last forever and go nowhere... I'll cut to the chase. If anything, that just might unsettle him enough that he'll let something slip.

Luna holds up the recording sphere.

LUNA

This.

Surprise flashes across Albert's face, but he swiftly recomposes himself.

ALBERT

Might I ask what you were doing there?

LUNA (V.O.)

I can't tell if he's not denying it, or if he's fishing for information by being purposely vague...

LUNA

I could ask you the same thing.

(MORE)

LUNA (CONT'D)

Ladies first, isn't that what you always said?

ALBERT

(gives a fake smile)

Let's compare notes then. Where did you find it?

LUNA (V.O.)

Ugh. Really? We're going nowhere fast like this, are we? Fine.

LUNA

Nikolai's house. Your turn.

ALBERT

I've always had an interest in the case. How about you?

LUNA (V.O.)

Looks like I can't avoid being blunt here...

LUNA

I have reason to believe Nikolai was framed. But I was friends with him. Why would you care?

ALBERT

Why Luna, he and I worked together for years. Isn't it only to be expected that I would care?

LUNA

I don't recall you standing up for him much back then... Stop playing games, Albert.

ALBERT

(watching her carefully,
then sighs)

I am not playing games, Luna. You may not know this, but at the time of his death, Amarov was investigating the Council for a series of murders at the request of the Aylan branch.

LUNA (V.O.)

(trying hard to hide her
surprise)

What?! Wasn't it supposed to be a

(MORE)

LUNA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

secret?

ALBERT

The truth is, House Lycioe was originally supposed to run the investigation. A neutral outside party, you understand.

LUNA (V.O.)

As neutral as they can be with you in the Council.

ALBERT

But we were spread too thin at the time. Instead, we passed it on to two members who were known to be neutral in Council politics. Amarov and Crowe.

ALBERT

Long story short... It has always seemed like too much of a coincidence that one of them was executed and the other failed to make any progress in the investigation.

LUNA

That's funny. Did you manage to fit all your protests at the trial while I was off on a bathroom break? Because I don't remember you saying a word of that.

ALBERT

(grimaces)

I have a reputation to uphold, Luna. If I made any comments and turned out to be wrong, it would be a stain on the Lycioe name.

LUNA

And it's not a stain to let an innocent man die?!

ALBERT

(exasperated)

I didn't know he was an innocent man! I still don't. That's why I was looking into it, alright?

ALBERT

I need to know that we didn't
inadvertently cause his death by
giving him the case.

LUNA

What a load of bullshit.

LUNA

You really expect me to believe
that?

LUNA (V.O.)

A powerful family like his, siding
with Nikolai? If there was ever a
definition of too good to be
true...

ALBERT

Believe me or not, that's your
prerogative. But I need the sphere
back, Luna. It's evidence. I can
show you the recording if you want,
but I need you to return it now.

LUNA (V.O.)

So that's what it's about, is it?
Getting your hands on it?

Albert reaches for the sphere, but Luna backs away.

LUNA (V.O.)

(tries not to look
alarmed)

It's got me talking to Nikolai in
it! No one is ever going to believe
he's not a necromancer if they see
him back as a ghost... And that's
just asking to get myself accused
too!

ALBERT

Luna, give it back!

Albert summons the sphere to himself with his magic. In a
panic, Luna shatters it in midair.

LUNA (V.O.)

Oh crap. Now I've done it.

LUNA (V.O.)

But I didn't have a choice. I

(MORE)

LUNA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 couldn't let the Lycioes have it!

ALBERT
 (stares in shock)
 Luna...

LUNA
 I, uh... I need to go.

Luna runs out before Albert can stop her.

LUNA (V.O.)
 I need to make sure the
 preparations are ready to go back
 to the demon realm... There's no
 telling what the Lycioes might do
 as payback. Divines damn it!

FADE OUT

INT. COUNCIL CHAMBERS - NEXT DAY

The High Mages are gathered around the large, circular meeting table. EILHART is leaning back on his chair with his feet propped up on it. ALBERT is conspicuously absent: everyone half expects him to start shouting at Eilhart, and the silence is unsettling.

EILHART
 Where is that pompous redhead? He should've been here already. In all of my tenure, I've never seen him be late for council.

CAERS
 (yawns)
 Mmmhh. You, on the other hand, are always late.

EILHART
 And you oversleep more often than not, dearest Pot.

VICTORIA
 What a waste of time.

A knock interrupts them. SERACH pokes his head in, looks around and shakes his head.

EILHART
 What is it, Serach?

SERACH

High Mage Lycioe's apprentice asked me to check if he was here... He was supposed to meet him before the council meeting to give him his tasks for the day, but he never showed himself.

LUNA (V.O.)

That's not like him...

SERACH

His family has been asking about his whereabouts as well. I'll have to inform them that he's not here.

EILHART

Feh. He's probably gone to meet some lover or something. No need to make such a fuss.

CAERS

He wouldn't. Not with the fiancée he has. He's been pestering me for weeks for a reading on when best to marry her...

EILHART

Then maybe he's looking for a ring or something equally expensive and yet worthless.

EILHART

He's a big kid. The pride of the family. He can take care of himself.

VICTORIA

I have my doubts.

VANESSA

It is unusual that he would be so late.

READAK

Ah, give the boy a break. It would be good if he finally decided to loosen up. He's so stuffy I'm amazed his shirt collar hasn't strangled him yet.

LUNA (V.O.)
 (laugh quietly)
 That's my Grandfather. But still...

EILHART
 Do we postpone the session or go on
 without Mr Truantlyoe?

LUNA (V.O.)
 Please tell me you didn't make that
 pun.

LUNA
 Regardless of whether we continue
 or not... We should send out people
 to look for him.

VICTORIA
 I bet we'll discover he was asleep
 at his desk... or better yet,
 trying to find Eilhart to make sure
 he isn't late.

VICTORIA
 And it would be ironic because
 today you were almost on time.

EILHART
 Yeah, yeah. Blame the blonde, won't
 you. Alright, let's just send some
 mooks.

FADE OUT

But as the day wore on and no word came of Albert Lycioe,
 the atmosphere grew heavy. Caers muttered of ill omens in
 the stars, warning him for days on end, Victoria was
 snappier than ever, and even Readak and Eilhart's jokes grew
 rare. Luna couldn't help this heavy feeling...

FADE IN

EXT. GRAVEYARD - NEXT DAY

The High Mages are standing in the graveyard of a small
 neighboring town. A green-faced CAERS is emptying his
 breakfast on a nearby tree. The sound of metallic hooves
 signal EILHART's approach as he rides one of his automatons.

EILHART
 What happened here? I came as fast
 as I could.

CAERS

They f-found him...

EILHART

What do you mean, 'found' him?

Eilhart pushes past a crowd of many redheaded Lycioes to get to the hole they were all gathered around. Readak is holding Luna as she shakes uncontrollably.

EILHART

...Oh.

EILHART

(covers his mouth)

Caers, any room left near your tree?

Albert's hair pales in face of the blood coating all over his robes. It has pooled under his chest, where countless stab wounds have torn fabric and flesh alike. Two black candles burn over each of his hands, and countless necromantic runes have been drawn all over his too-white skin.

LUNA (V.O.)

Albert... Oh Divines. How...?

READAK

Luna, it's okay. There wasn't anything we could do.

LUNA (V.O.)

Wasn't there? What if I caused this somehow? What if...

[[if "Eilhart kept sphere" is TRUE]]

LUNA (V.O.)

Oh no. Eilhart kept the sphere and now Albert turns up dead. This can't be a coincidence.

LUNA (V.O.)

Did he lie about the enchantment? Could Eilhart... do this...?

]]

[[Else

LUNA (V.O.)

Oh no. The broken sphere. There's
(MORE)

LUNA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

only one person he could get help
from to fix the enchantment...

LUNA (V.O.)

Could it be... Eilhart...?

]]

Luna looks back at Eilhart warily. Too late, she realizes he
isn't the one that is being watched with suspicion.

LUNA (V.O.)

No... Did the tail they set on me
see me studying necromantic
artifacts? They can't possibly
think I did this...

EILHART

(looking back at the
entrance)

News travel fast, don't they?

A redhaired woman whose features are strikingly similar to
Albert's walks in, accompanied by some of her family.

EILHART

(bows his head)

Vera. I'm really sorry.

LUNA

We all are... Please, let us know
if you need--

But VERA brushes past them, too anguished to reply. She
rushes to her brother's side, kneeling near the shallow
grave in horror.

VERA

Albert... No...

They all watch as the grieving Vera places her hand over
Albert's eyes. Closing her own, her body shakes with silent
sobs as magic builds around her hand.

LUNA (V.O.)

Right, she's a diviner... She can
see his last moments. As cruel as
it is to put her through this, at
least we'll know who did this.

VICTORIA

What did you see?

VERA
 (quickly)
 I would speak of it privately.

But the damage is already done. Grief-stricken, angry eyes sought their target faster than she could restrain herself. Luna feels her stomach twist.

LUNA
 W-What? Why are you looking at me like that?

LUNA
 I-I didn't--

LUNA (V.O.)
 Oh no...

VICTORIA
 Eilhart, won't you escort Luna back to headquarters?

LUNA
 No!

LUNA (V.O.)
 This can't be happening! How... Are the Lycioes in on this? How could Vera be fooled? Why...?

LUNA (V.O.)
 I can't... Oh Divines, any trial at this point is going to be even more of a farce than Nikolai's was.

Eilhart motions to one of his automatons and it follows him closer to Luna as he approaches her.

EILHART
 Come on, Luna. Let's talk about this back in the Guild.

But Luna shakes her head and releases the spell she'd been casting. Dark tendrils snake up from the tombstones' shadows and wrap themselves around Eilhart's legs and then the automaton's, holding them in place. Luna takes off running desperately.

LUNA (V.O.)
 I have to get to Sola and Alice...!

FADE OUT

EXT. SOLA'S HOUSE

LUNA is holding SOLA's hand while they both run into the woods nearby, little Alice holding on tightly as Sola carries her as well as she can.

LUNA
Quick! Through here! Oh Divines,
they're here, we've got to get them
off our trail!

ALICE
Mama, what's going on?

SOLA
Shhh! I'll explain later!

Luna conjures up a shadow mist to try and shake their pursuers, but they can still hear them coming closer.

LUNA
Come on! We're almost there. We
just need to get to the anchor
point and it'll take us right to
the portal!

Luna takes Alice from Sola so they can run faster. Just as they start losing their pursuers, the sound of crackling and whistling air is the only warning before one of Victoria's fireballs comes hurtling their way.

LUNA
SOLA!!!

[[Play a high pitched scream and explosion]]

Luna stands there in shock, wide eyed and clutching Alice tight to her chest. Sola lies fallen on the ground, the smell of charred flesh overwhelming as smoke rises off her back.

LUNA
So...la.... No, this can't...

ALICE
Mama...?

Luna falls to her knees.

LUNA
My twin. No. No. She's always been
here. She can't be... No. No!!

ALICE

Mama!

Alice tries to squirm out of her aunt's arms, reaching out for Sola. Luna wails and holds on tightly.

The sudden sound of footsteps makes her head snap up just as her hands light up with an angry, purple glow.

She stops when she recognizes EMIL.

LUNA

E... Emil... Sola, she...

LUNA

She's alright... Right? She can't... She can't be...

Emil takes one look at Sola and winces. He reaches for Luna instead, trying to help her up.

EMIL

There's nothing you can do. You have to go now!

LUNA

(crying)

I can't leave her!!

EMIL

Luna!

LUNA

She's my twin! She's half of me!

EMIL

Just go!

LUNA

SOLA!

Emil hugs Luna tightly, so much Alice has to whine and protest. He then shoves Luna back hard.

EMIL

You have to do this, Luna. For Sola's sake. She wouldn't want you to get caught. You can't let Alice get hurt!

LUNA

B-But... I...

EMIL

I'll point them the wrong way. Save
her daughter! Go!

FADE OUT

Luna safely escaped to the demon realm with her niece and settled where she could keep Dmitri company. But part of her was left behind that day: without Sola, she was never the same. And though she did her best to raise Alice as her sister would have wanted, she looked to the future with a singular, dark determination. For she vowed this to Dmitri the day she got back: once he and her niece had no longer need of her, she would go back, and she would avenge Nikolai and Sola. One day...

[[Ending #2]]

10-B -

LUNA (V.O.)

Of course I'm not going to ask the man himself without anyone to back me up. That's just asking for trouble. And the last thing I want is to have the Lycioes on my back...

[[If "heard Eilhart's story is TRUE"

LUNA (V.O.)

Besides, Eilhart is on my side. He can help me here... And I bet he'd be interested in knowing if the Lycioes are involved in any treachery.

]]

[[Else if "Eilhart affinity" < 0

LUNA (V.O.)

No matter how awkward things were when I left, it's still better than being face-to-face with that pompous fop.

]]

LUNA

Time to pay one Eliphaz Eilhart a
(MORE)

LUNA (CONT'D)

visit and hope he's not in the mood
to be a smartass.

INT. EILHART'S STUDY

LUNA walks into Eilhart's study and is surprised to find
EMIL is already there.

LUNA

Huh? Emil, what are you doing here?

EMIL

(surprised)

Luna?

Emil quickly motions to his mechanic arm.

EMIL

Oh, I'm just getting my arm checked
out. It's a wonder how it never
broke while we were away.

EILHART

Please do come in, knocking is for
weaklings. I'm fine, thanks for
asking. How are you?

LUNA

Right. Sorry. Eilhart, there's
something I need to discuss with
you.

LUNA (V.O.)

But first...

[[Player choice:

11-A: Ask to speak in private.

11-B: Let Emil stay.]]

11-A -

LUNA

Emil, could you give us a second?

EMIL

Huh? Sure. That's it for my arm,
right? I'll catch you later, Elly.

Emil gives her a look that plainly translates as "What are
you getting yourself into this time?" but leaves all the
same.

EILHART

Well that wasn't rude.

LUNA

What, my interrupting or his calling you pet names?

EILHART

Now that you mention it...

Luna just laughs, but before long the weight of the recording sphere in her hand makes her sober up again. She hands the sphere over to Eilhart.

LUNA

I found this. I couldn't get past the protective charm, but I was hoping you could work your magic... In both senses.

EILHART

(surprised)

This is quite the piece. Where did you find it?

EILHART

Wait... This is Lycioe's work, isn't it? It's got his style all over it. Why do you have this?

LUNA (V.O.)

Well, that's one cat out of the bag.

12-A -

[[If "heard Eilhart's story" is TRUE

LUNA (V.O.)

He's on my side. There's no point in lying now.

]]

[[Else

LUNA (V.O.)

I can't really ask him for help and not tell him. He might figure it out anyway if he gets a glimpse while breaking the ward...

]]

LUNA

I found it in the old Amarov house.

Eilhart freezes for a moment, then continues to reach for the sphere and takes it.

LUNA (V.O.)

What was that?

EILHART

What were you even doing in there?

[[If "told Eilhart about Dmitri" or "heard Eilhart's story" is TRUE

LUNA

I was there for my investigation. I found it hidden in one of the bookshelves...

LUNA

Given how influent the Lycioe family is, I wouldn't be surprised if they had Nikolai silenced about something. It certainly looks that way, if Albert was worried enough to keep surveillance in the house.

EILHART

You might be right. They've got their fingers in a lot of pies for sure.

]]

[[Else

Luna smiles sadly.

LUNA

Just reliving some old memories, I guess.

]]

LUNA

In any case... Here you go.

[[If "heard Eilhart's story" is FALSE

Luna hands Eilhart the recording sphere. He sits at his desk and fiddles with it, frowning deeply.

After a solid fifteen minutes of tinkering, he shakes his head.

EILHART

I can't do it.

LUNA

What?

LUNA

You're a master enchanter. If you can't break that ward, who can?

EILHART

Don't ask me. Looks like the Lycioes have a trick up their sleeves, that's for sure.

EILHART

But I can come up with something if you give me more time. I'll keep the sphere and work on it some more.

EILHART

If I still can't do it after a couple of days, I'll give it back to you.

LUNA

...Alright.

LUNA (V.O.)

It's not ideal, but if the Lycioes bothered to place such a strong enchantment on it, I want to find out what's in it even more.

LUNA

Thanks for this, Eilhart. I'll owe you one.

EILHART

You can buy me lunch sometime.

LUNA

You're gonna pick a super expensive restaurant, aren't you?

EILHART
 (grins)
 Perish the thought!

[[Fade to black]]

But Luna would never have to worry about that. The next day held an unpleasant surprise...

[[Set "Eilhart kept sphere" to TRUE]]

[[Jump to council chamber next day]]

]]

[[Else continue]]

Luna hands Eilhart the recording sphere. But instead of working on it, Eilhart just sits at his desk, turning the glass sphere in his hands deep in thought. Seemingly having made a decision, he lets out a heavy sigh.

LUNA
 What is it?

EILHART
 I'll be honest...

Eilhart meets her gaze.

EILHART
 I already know what you're going to see in this thing.

LUNA
 ...What?

EILHART
 You'll see me, looking for evidence.

LUNA
 Evidence? You mean you--

EILHART
 Not for an investigation. To destroy it.

LUNA
 What?!

LUNA (V.O.)
 He's just going to admit to it?!

LUNA

Eilhart, did you... Did you frame
Nikolai?

Eilhart is silent for a moment. Finally, he sets down the
sphere and looks back at her.

EILHART

Am I involved in the frame job?
Yes. But am I the one who did it?

EILHART

No.

EILHART

But you could say I'm the... cause,
I guess.

EILHART

I've got another story for you. The
other one wasn't a lie--but it
was... Heavily edited.

EILHART

This time, I'll give you the truth,
and nothing but the truth. But I'll
tell you now, you won't like it.

EILHART

Will you hear me out before you
make your judgment?

LUNA

What kind of question is that? I
didn't come so far to run from the
truth when I found it. I want
answers...

EILHART

(smiles wryly)

Then lock the door and take a seat.
It's storytime.

[[Slowly fade screen to black]]

EILHART

You know how I shot up the ranks
way back?

EILHART

I had help.

EILHART

You see, at some point after I joined, I found a man under attack...

EILHART

I saved his life. But his arm couldn't be salvaged, so I had to make him one too.

LUNA

Wait. Arm? That sounds like...

EILHART

Exactly who you're thinking of.

LUNA

Emil? What does he have to do with anything?

EILHART

Apparently nothing. You'd think that, anyway...

EILHART

From that moment on, people were afraid. Word got out that I practically owned Emil now. For someone with his kind of magic, owing me his life means he basically has to do anything I say, right?

EILHART

I thought I struck it big. That's the mistake they all make. A few months after that, Emil came to my office...

INT. EILHART'S STUDY - PAST

A knock interrupts Eilhart's work.

EILHART

Yeah? Come on in.

Emil walks in and closes and locks the door behind him.

EMIL

I know who you are.

EILHART

...Excuse me?

EMIL
Ernest Talbot.

Eilhart pales.

EILHART
How...

EMIL
(smiles)
A magician never reveals his
secrets, right?

Eilhart clenches his fists.

EILHART
...What do you want?

EILHART
I saved your life, you ingrate.

EMIL
Oh no no, I'm not here to threaten
you. On the contrary. Your secret
is safe with me.

EMIL
As you said, I owe you my life. So
this is me repaying the favor.

EMIL
There's some of the other senior
enchanters... They're onto you.

EILHART
What?

EMIL
They've been suspecting you for a
while now. Derek Calcino and Thomas
Cassar. Those are the names.

EMIL
They're going to be canvassing your
neighborhood a few days from now.
They'll find your shop...

EILHART (V.O.)
Oh, shit. I can't let that happen.
Not with her and the kids in there.
And they're too sick to move...

EMIL

This is all I can do. I'll leave
you to it...

Emil leaves before Eilhart can say anything else.

INT. EILHART'S STUDY - PRESENT

LUNA

What... What did you do?

EILHART

The only thing I thought I could
do.

Eilhart smiles sadly.

EILHART

I... killed them.

LUNA

Eilhart!

EILHART

What else could I do? I didn't have
a choice, Luna! It wasn't right,
what I did. I'll be the first to
admit it.

EILHART

But I just... I didn't know what to
do. There was no one to help me and
my family depended on it. I forced
myself not to dwell on it...

EILHART

But I should have. You see, a few
months later, Emil came back.

EILHART

He told me people were
investigating their deaths. And I
panicked even more.

EILHART

Now I wasn't just some man with
motive enough to hate the Council
going undercover... I was a
murderer.

EILHART
If someone found out...

LUNA
(narrows her eyes)
You killed them too.

EILHART
I couldn't think straight. I was in a panic. Thinking back on it, he probably counted on that.

EILHART
I thought he was just trying to clear his debt. You know, help me out on his own terms rather than wait for me to demand the favor back my way.

EILHART
That's the other mistake everyone makes when it comes to Emil.

EILHART
We all think his power is about being morally higher than us... Help us out so we owe him, don't wrong us.

EILHART
But you don't need to outswim the shark. Just the guy next to you.

EILHART
He doesn't need to be good, so long as we're worse. He never told me to kill them... I made the decision myself.

EILHART
But before I knew it, he owned me. Sure, I saved his life, but how many times did he save mine by keeping my secret? Once for each man I killed?

EILHART
By the third time he came back, I started suspecting. Rather than panic, I looked into the names he gave me. That's when I realized they had never been investigating

(MORE)

EILHART (CONT'D)

me.

EILHART

He just used me to get rid of the people who might be trouble to him someday. But it was too late. Even if he fooled me, I was in it too deep already.

EILHART

I think... Part of me liked it, what I did. It was horrible, and wrong, and I hated it, but...

EILHART

Those were the people who'd denied me help. I was alone, and powerless... I tried and tried each day to help my family but they just kept getting worse and no one would even care.

EILHART

I was just so angry. It doesn't excuse what I did, but I did it anyway. It made me feel empowered... Like I was even a tiny bit in control of my life again.

EILHART

Emil picked up on it. He said, if I was going to kill anyway... Why not make a good thing out of it? Why not use them to figure out how to help my family?

LUNA

No. Stop. Emil wouldn't do any of this.

LUNA

He's not that kind of person!

LUNA

He's sweet, he's loyal, and he lov...

EILHART

Lies all the freaking time? If you really don't believe what I'm saying, why didn't you speak up way earlier before I spent three years

(MORE)

EILHART (CONT'D)

worth of breath on a stupid monologue?

EILHART

The guy's a monster, Luna.

LUNA

So are you if any of that was true!

EILHART

That's not the point! Look, you wanted Nikolai, didn't you? I'll get to it.

EILHART

Emil offered to help me. I didn't have much to lose by taking him up on his offer at that point.

EILHART

We tried all sorts of research... Spells, rituals, anything we could get our hands on. Dark stuff that would give even your grandfather nightmares.

EILHART

That's when we figured out how to trap souls in inanimate objects. He came with some Necromancy tome and we adapted a lich-making ritual...

EILHART

We sealed a soul in a gem instead, and attached it to a magical, metallic construct. By building complex magic circuits, the energy from the gem made it move...

LUNA

(eyes go wide)

Your automatons.

EILHART

Yeah.

LUNA

They're powered by souls?!

EILHART

Each and every one of them. I hoped to improve on them and build new

(MORE)

EILHART (CONT'D)

bodies for my family...

EILHART

But of course all those disappearances started attracting attention.

EILHART

By then, Emil had already helped me up the ladder and gotten me into the Council. I found out two of our members were looking into our victims...

LUNA

...Crowe and Nikolai.

EILHART

(nods heavily)

I panicked like I hadn't in so long. I went straight to Emil. Told him we were done for, we were going to be exposed...

EILHART

He just said, "Don't worry about it."

EILHART

The next day, that anonymous tip came in.

LUNA

...No. No, it can't be. Emil couldn't.

EILHART

He did. He got that Necromancy stuff from somewhere before... He knew how to do it again.

EILHART

And he's been really good about playing you all this time. Why do you think he was here anyway? We were discussing how to handle you because you wouldn't back down.

LUNA

You're lying!

EILHART

Try me. I'd tell you to ask him yourself, but the moment he figures out I betrayed him, I'm done for.

EILHART

He could easily make me go after my own family...

EILHART

I trust you, Luna. It's why I told you all this. I...

EILHART

I need your help.

LUNA

You've got to be kidding me.

EILHART

This is my only way out. Please.

EILHART

You get Nikolai's killer, and I get my freedom again.

LUNA

Freedom to keep on killing?!

EILHART

Freedom to get my family the hell out of here!

EILHART

When you guys left for the other realm, I thought of I was free of him. But then he came back.

EILHART

I can't do this anymore. When it's just me, I feel like I can do better. Like I'm not some sick psycho. But when he's around...

Eilhart just shakes his head.

EILHART

I want to do better. I want to fix my family... I don't want to do this anymore.

EILHART

When your reports mentioned some of
(MORE)

EILHART (CONT'D)

the kinds of magic they had in that realm, I thought... Maybe I could try that. Maybe they have something. Some cure... Anything.

LUNA

Maybe some things aren't meant to be cured, Eilhart.

EILHART

Easy for you to say when you don't have to watch the love of your life and your flesh and blood wither and rot in front of you.

[[Player choice:

13-A: "I'll help you."

13-B: "You're no better than the man who did this to your family."]]

13-A -

LUNA

...Alright. I'll help you.

LUNA

You're a murderer. Nothing's going to change that.

LUNA

But I think we both know who the greater evil here is.

LUNA (V.O.)

I just... Why would Emil do this? I want to believe Eilhart is lying, but for this to be such an elaborate lie...

LUNA (V.O.)

Could I really have been this blind? Emil...

EILHART

Then meet me in the shop tonight. We need to figure out how to deal with him. Exposing him to the Council isn't going to do shit, not with the dirt he's probably got on

(MORE)

EILHART (CONT'D)

them.

LUNA

Maybe they'd be glad to be rid of him.

LUNA (V.O.)

But Eilhart would still be in danger from his magic. And I doubt Emil would go down without dragging him along too...

LUNA (V.O.)

Maybe that would be the way to go. Bringing them both to justice. It just feels like there's no right answer here...

LUNA

Oh I have my own idea. I say we get him to go back to the demon realm with me.

LUNA

He can't be tried here... But he can over there.

LUNA

The vampires will put him on trial. Maybe Dmitri himself will get to decide the verdict. It would be fair thing to do.

EILHART

He'd never see it coming either. I can work with this...

EILHART

Thank you, Luna. Maybe I'll finally be able to put this all behind me.

LUNA

You do that. None of this should ever have happened...

[[Ending #4 - To be continued...]]

13-B -

LUNA

No. You're no better than Korone.

EILHART

...What?

LUNA

Killing people who have nothing to do with you. Taking pleasure in it.

LUNA

No matter what motives you may have, I can't play along with that.

LUNA

How many wives did you murder, Eilhart? How many children? How many Eilharts did you leave out there?

EILHART

You're not... I...

LUNA

You know I'm right. Do you really think your wife would want you to do this for her?

LUNA

This isn't who you are. Or at least... It's no who you were, once.

LUNA

I don't know what you are now.

LUNA

But I know you have to be brought to justice.

Eilhart puts up almost token resistance, diving at Luna with a paper knife she isn't sure he really wanted to find its mark. When she tells him she'll look after his family, he breaks.

When the trial comes, Eilhart is eerily silent. He doesn't breathe a word about Emil, or his family, or any of the story he's told her. He simply confesses to the murders and to framing Nikolai and blackmailing Crowe to stop their investigation.

Eilhart is put to death. But without his testimony, there is no way to ever prove Emil's involvement...

Part of Luna can't bring herself to believe that the man she'd cared for so deeply--loved--could have done this. The

other part can't ever look at him the same again. Maybe one day, she will have the courage to confront him. But with her own family to protect and no justice to turn to, she fears she may become another Eilhart herself...

[[Ending #5]]

11-B -

LUNA

Emil, you can stay. I think I'd feel better with you here.

EMIL

(smiles)

Of course.

EILHART

So what did you want?

Luna shows him the recording sphere.

LUNA

I found this. I couldn't get past the protective charm, but I was hoping you could work your magic... In both senses.

EILHART

(surprised)

This is quite the piece. Where did you find it?

EILHART

Wait... This is Lycioe's work, isn't it? It's got his style all over it. Why do you have this?

LUNA (V.O.)

Well, that's one cat out of the bag.

[[If "heard Eilhart's story" is TRUE

LUNA (V.O.)

He's on my side. There's no point in lying now. Besides, if I lie to him now, I'll be lying to Emil too.

]]

[[Else

LUNA (V.O.)

I can't really ask him for help and not tell him. He might figure it out anyway if he gets a glimpse while breaking the ward... Besides, if I lie to him now, I'll be lying to Emil too.

]]

LUNA

I found it in the old Amarov house.

Eilhart freezes for a moment, then continues to reach for the sphere and takes it.

LUNA (V.O.)

What was that?

Luna exchanges looks with Emil.

LUNA (V.O.)

He seems nervous... I guess he noticed Eilhart's reaction too.

EILHART

What were you even doing in there?

[[If "told Eilhart about Dmitri" or "heard Eilhart's story" is TRUE

LUNA

I was there for my investigation. I found it hidden in one of the bookshelves...

LUNA

Given how influent the Lycioe family is, I wouldn't be surprised if they had Nikolai silenced about something. It certainly looks that way, if Albert was worried enough to keep surveillance in the house.

EMIL

Wait, you told Eilhart about it?

LUNA

That I was investigating? Yeah.

EMIL

Are you sure that was smart? You don't want the Council knowing, Luna.

LUNA

Well it's kind of too late to argue the point now.

EILHART

Erm... Guys, I'm still here.

LUNA

Right. Uh, the sphere. Have at it.

]]

[[Else

Luna smiles sadly.

LUNA

Just reliving some old memories, I guess.

LUNA

In any case... Here you go.

]]

Luna hands Eilhart the recording sphere. He walks over to his desk to examine it, and motions at Emil in the meantime.

EILHART

Look the door, will you? I assume we don't want Lycioe walking in on this.

EMIL

Sure.

The door locks with a click. Luna can't help but feel Emil looks uneasy, before she turns away to look back at Eilhart.

EILHART

Right. I can see he's a creation mage, not an enchanter. If I go through this gap in the ward here...

Eilhart fiddles with the sphere for a moment, his hands glowing slightly. He reaches inside his desk for something.

EILHART

Luna, can you help me for a sec?

LUNA

Uh, sure.

Eilhart glances nervously at Luna, then back at Emil. As Luna walks closer to Eilhart, reaching for the sphere, she sees the cold sweat beading above his lips.

LUNA (V.O.)

What--

Eilhart makes a stab with the paper knife he was holding.

LUNA

Ahh!

A terrible metallic screech sounds as Emil pushes her out of the way. Mechanical arm raised, he blocks the strike and grimaces as the paper knife embeds itself in his arm.

LUNA

Emil! Are you--Eilhart, are you insane?!

Luna's hands swirl with dark magic and she lashes out at Eilhart. He blocks it with a quick shield, which shatters and crumbles under her magic.

LUNA (V.O.)

This doesn't make sense! Why would he do this?! Is he on the Lycioe's payroll?

LUNA (V.O.)

He didn't think this through. We're two against one--

LUNA (V.O.)

(eyes go wide)

Oh crap.

EILHART

What are you doing?! Kill her!

Luna turns to Emil in horror.

LUNA (V.O.)

That arm is Eilhart's work. He

(MORE)

LUNA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

saved Emil's life that day. If
anyone has the power to turn Emil's
magic on us...

Emil yanks the knife out of his arm.

LUNA

Please, Emil, you have to fight it
off...

Emil grips the knife tightly, trembling...

Then promptly turns and stabs Eilhart.

LUNA (V.O.)

What?!

Emil stabs him over and over, in a fury.

LUNA

E-Emil! Stop!

But he doesn't. Luna tries to pull him off Eilhart, but by
the time she manages to overpower him, it's too late.

LUNA

What... What did you do?! Emil,
h-he's dead!

EMIL

He tried to kill you!

EMIL

He tried to make me kill you!

Luna hugs him tightly, and takes the knife off his hands.

LUNA

Just... stop...

EMIL

I-I'm sorry...

Emil takes a deep breath, trying to calm himself and stop
shaking.

EMIL

We can... We can argue self
defense. It was nothing but that,
really.

LUNA

But why...? Why would he do this?

They exchange looks and turn to the recording sphere lying on the ground beside Eilhart.

LUNA
Could it be...?

Luna gingerly avoids stepping on blood as she reaches for the tiny sphere. It seems to glow almost tauntingly at her.

LUNA
The cause of all this...

With the ward dispelled, Luna activates the sphere.

[[Show Nikolai's house bg superposed over the current bg]]

Luna speeds through the footage of the empty house, until--

LUNA
Eilhart.

LUNA
What's he doing there?

EMIL
It's like he's looking for something...

EMIL
Or making sure we don't find it.

LUNA
You think he's...?

EMIL
What else would explain this?

EMIL
(sighs)
Oh, Luna, you had to go straight to Nikolai's killer...

EMIL
Talk about not making enemies.

LUNA
He knew what we would find if we saw the recording...

LUNA
So that's why he tried to kill me?
But something just seems wrong...

EMIL

What do you mean?

LUNA

I don't know. Maybe it's just that it feels too simple.

LUNA

I've been looking for so long... And this is how it ends?

LUNA

A body in an office... And no answers at all.

EMIL

But it is an answer, Luna. Eilhart did this. He's the reason why Nikolai is dead.

EMIL

Maybe it doesn't tell you why he did it, but... Dead men tell no tales. It's the best we can do.

EMIL

At least Nikolai can rest in peace now...

LUNA (V.O.)

If only he knew. I just wish I could give Nikolai an answer...

EMIL

Come on, let's call this in. I'll need your help...

[[Slowly fade to black]]

There wasn't a day Luna didn't ask herself why, until time slowly erased the question. After she and Emil reported their findings to Nikolai, he vanished, never to be seen again.

Luna couldn't quite shake the feeling that she'd missed something. But that, too, faded over time--Luna and Emil were too busy, having elected to stay in the Guild to clear it of its corruption. Luna still visited Dmitri in the other realm sometimes, but she knew her place in the Council at Emil's side, where they could work to make sure there were no more Nikolais, ever again.

EMIL

That was a close one, Luna.

EMIL

I don't know what I would have done
if you'd found out...

[[Ending #3]]