

Chapter 152

Two days had passed since that heated argument with Marisol, and not once had Cedric caught sight of her since then. Each passing moment only worked to fuel his growing anxiety and frustration, unable to shake the suffocating feeling of unease that gnawed at him, leaving him restless and on edge.

He paces restlessly within the hidden castle, his mind racing with worry and frustration. The memory of their argument replayed in his mind, with each second he spent alone, each word exchanged between them echoing with a painful clarity. What had possessed him to lash out at Marisol in such a manner?

His concern for her safety had quickly morphed into irrational jealousy, clouding his judgment and leading to a confrontation that he now regretted.

Recalling the events that had led to their argument only served to fuel Cedric's mounting worry. He remembered the overwhelming sense of panic that had gripped him when he'd waited a whole night and even the better part of a day with no sight of Marisol. It was enough to have him toss his reservations aside, stepping out in human form for the first time since the curse in a quest to find Marisol, or atleast find answers to the questions regarding her whereabouts and wellbeing.

However, his initial concern quickly turned to anger when he spotted her with another male, igniting a jealousy he couldn't control.

He couldn't bear the thought of Marisol with anyone else, especially after their exchange the day before, when she'd declared her unwillingness to acknowledge their bond. It was as if the mere thought of her slipping away from him sent his wolf into a frenzy of possessiveness.

But beneath the layers of anger and jealousy, Cedric couldn't deny the overwhelming sense of longing that gripped his heart. He missed Marisol more than he cared to admit, her absence leaving a gaping void within him that nothing seemed to be able to fill.

Now, as he grappled with the consequences of his actions, the pang of longing for Marisol's presence only seemed to grow. But it wasn't just his own emotions that troubled Cedric. The looming threat of his wolf's return weighed heavily on his mind, threatening to plunge him back into a state of uncontrollable savagery. He knew that without Marisol's calming influence, he was teetering on the edge of madness.

Cedric could feel his wolf growing more restless and agitated, its primal instincts clawing at the edges of his consciousness. He knew that if he didn't find Marisol soon, his wolf would break free from its tenuous hold, unleashing chaos and destruction upon the pack.

Cedric makes the decision to leave the hidden castle once again, with a desperate hope that the results would be better this time. Grudgingly, he makes his way to the pack house in search of his brother, hoping to glean any information about Marisol's whereabouts.

Caleb's surprise at seeing him was evident, his jaw dropping as he gaped at him. There's a moment of stillness in the room before every other person scurries away, leaving the brothers to exchange looks, one pleasantly surprised and the other unreadable.

"Cedric," Caleb exclaimed, finding his voice, his eyes roaming over the older figure, "Wow! Look at you! You look good. Are you feeling any different? Is the curse lifted?" On getting nothing other than a blank stare in reply, his tone faltered, but he still rambled on, concern evident as he added, "Are you alright? How do you feel? Do you need anything?"

"Summon Marisol," Cedric demanded, ignoring Caleb's questions.

He watched as Caleb's face fell, his countenance uneasy as he lifted his head to say, "I'm afraid Marisol's been missing... for the past two days." he admitted reluctantly, and Cedric felt his heart drop at the same time his nostrils flared in anger.

"You fool!" He snarled, "How could you be so incompetent at everything? Do you not understand what's at stake here?! Without Marisol, I'd revert to my former state! Do you understand what that means?"

Caleb recoiled at Cedric's harsh words, but he recovered quickly, wearing an unreadable expression now as he blinked back at Cedric. "So it's true then?" Cedric raised a brow, his irritation building. Caleb seemed to notice that and quickly continued, "I heard what happened. The pack is still in an uproar. Are you truly mates? Is that what the prophecy is about?"

Cedric's jaw clenched with anger as he shot Caleb a withering glare. He really was in no mood for this. "That's none of your concern," he snapped, "Your business is to find and protect her. You brought her here because of a prophecy, didn't you? Yet you let her suffer under your watch. You really are useless till the very end. "

Caleb's mouth snapped shut, and his nostrils flared at the words.

Without waiting for a response, Cedric turned around and stormed away. He didn't have much time before he would be plunged back into darkness. He could already feel the telltale signs of his wolf almost breaching the surface. He needed to get back to the hidden castle immediately.

Somehow, instead of going back, Cedric finds himself following the hints of Marisol's scent he picks up on the way. It led him through the pack house until he was standing in front of a shut door. Taking in his surroundings, he closed his eyes and took a long drag of the surrounding air, the immediate effect as it filled him with a sense of calm, his rage-muddled mind clearing just a little bit.

After a few seconds of standing in the doorway, contemplating his choices, Cedric pushed open the door and took a step inside. The room is still and silent, carrying all the telltale signs of disuse. Cedric shook his head in a quest to clear his blurring thoughts. He needed to find Marisol soon.

But where would he start? He knew nothing about her. On the desk in the corner, he spotted a journal lying idly. He makes a beeline for it and hesitates just for a second before snatching it off the table before he can rethink his decision. It was time to find out who his mate really was.

After spending hours poring over Marisol's journal, Cedric felt like he had unraveled a piece of her innermost thoughts and emotions. He understood her anger towards Redwood, empathized with the pain she had endured, and sympathized with her struggles. But amidst the pages of her journal, one name stood out consistently -Lily. Cedric was convinced that Lily holds the key to finding Marisol, and with that realization, a plan begins to form in his mind.

As evening descended upon Redwood, Cedric set his plan into motion. He waited until the shadows grew long and the air was thick with the scent of impending nightfall. With calculated precision, he began to track Lily's scent. With the information provided by the journal, Lily was Marisol's closest friend as far as Redwood was concerned. There was no way she wouldn't know something.

Cedric's senses heightened as he closed in on Lily's home, his eyes swirling with a hint of gold as he picked up on the unmistakable scent of Marisol, growing thicker until it was all around him like a comforting embrace. Under the cover of the darkness, Cedric lay in wait, biding his time and waiting for the perfect opportunity to strike.

It wasn't long before the girl who was undoubtedly Lily emerged from the house, accompanied by a few other people. Cedric's eyes were narrow as they fell on the familiar male who had been with Marisol that day before returning his focus to Lily. She was his target, the key to luring Marisol out of hiding.

With stealthy precision, Cedric moves closer, his heart pounding with anticipation. As Lily leads her group of friends down a clearing, Cedric makes his move, emerging from the shadows with a predatory grace.

Lily froze in her tracks, her eyes widening in fear as she caught sight of Cedric looming before her.

Good, he thinks.

Before she could react, Cedric had Lily pinned against a nearby tree, his gaze dark and intense.

"Where is Marisol?" He demanded, his voice low and dangerous.

Lily's breath catches in her throat as she begins to heave almost violently. "I- I don't know," she stammers, her eyes darting around nervously.

Cedric's grip grows harsher, and he backs her up against the tree with his arm pressing down on her collarbones. "Don't lie to me." he gritted out, "I know she's with you. Tell me where she is, or I'll make you regret it."

Fear flashes in Lily's eyes as she realizes the gravity of the situation. "Please," she begs, her voice trembling. "I don't want any trouble."

Cedric's lips curled into a menacing smile as he leaned in closer, his breath hot against her skin. "Neither do I. But only if you tell me where she is," he whispered, his voice dripping with malice.

"I don't know!" She yelled out. At this point, she was almost trembling with fear, and when Cedric leaned back slightly, he saw the flash of confusion in her eyes.

"Well then, I'm deeply sorry for what's about to happen." He sighed, and with a smirk, he released her completely, stepping away. Realizing she'd been set free, Lily immediately makes a run for it, just like he'd expected, her limbs shaky as she skitters away.

With a dark chuckle, Cedric lets his head fall back almost eerily as he lets go of the reins of control. His transformation to his wolf form was swift, and he wasted no time as he bounced after the terrified Lily in pursuit. If it were to be a serious chase, he'd have caught up with her in a matter of seconds, with no less than two to three small leaps of his gaunt wolf, but this was not a serious chase. If anything, he was enjoying it, the only downside being that he wasn't sure how long until his wolf decided it was done fooling around.

Just then, Marisol's voice rang out from the darkness, her tone filled with panic and desperation. "Cedric, stop!" she cried, rushing forward to intervene.

Cedric's eyes gleam with amusement as he takes a final leap and pounces on Lily, her loud, horrified shriek disregarded as he has his full attention on Marisol.

"Well, well, well," he purred to himself, his gaze locking with hers. "Look who finally decided to show up."

"Let her go," Marisol demanded, her voice trembling with emotion and chest heaving with exertion.

Oh, Cedric was having the time of his life. If he weren't in wolf form, he'd be grinning so hard right now. He maintained his stance, though, refusing to budge.

With a steely resolve, Marisol stepped forward, her gaze unwavering as she faced Cedric's wolf head-on. "I said let her go," she repeated firmly, "It's me you want, isn't it? I'll go back with you."

Cedric's wolf snorts dismissively as if to say, 'Very well then.' Then, he jumped off Lily's limp body.

Marisol ran to Lily, who had begun sobbing and held her close.

"I'm so sorry." She whispered, "If I'd known....."

The wolf, on the other hand, proceeded to circle around them, disinterested in what was happening. All he wanted was to go back to the hidden castle before the moonshine got to him and made him lose his mind, but it would seem Marisol wasn't getting the memo.

When it started to stretch on for too long, he stepped closer and nudged Marisol impatiently. She immediately understood and stood up regarding Lily with an apologetic look before turning to the wolf.

"Come on. Let's go, you big bully." She gritted out, leading the way back to the hidden castle.