

Broken 191

Chapter 191

I don't understand why Liam would do so much for me. Doubling his patrols, giving me a place to stay, planning to buy me

clothes, feeding me, giving me medical treatment. No one does all that just because a person needs it. If that were the case, my

family and I wouldn't have suffered for years as rogues.

I'm not sure I trust his reasons, but he does seem genuine that he wants me to be safe.

"I trust him." Alessia says. "There was nothing deceitful in his scent when he was talking."

"You trust him? We don't even know him Alessia."

I feel her almost fidgeting in my mind. "Alessia?"

"I don't know why, but I trust both of them."

I sigh. I trust her and she trusts them. And Cara and Artemis also trust them, so for now, I'll let it go. I'll just have to figure out a

way to pay him back for all of his assistance.

I finish getting ready, continuing to wear clothes that hide my scars and leaving my long hair down so the scars on my neck

aren't noticeable. I would like to get my hair cut, but Liam said he likes it long. I admit, I enjoyed last night when he was running

his fingers through it. It felt nice.

I walk out of my room and across the hall to his room. His door is open slightly and I'm about to knock when it swings open and

he nearly runs me over. He grabs me before he could knock me down. "Geez Angel, I could have hurt you!" In the instant when

our bodies collide, Liam wraps his arm around my waist, lifting me off the ground, holding me so that we are eye to eye. His

other hand is against the door jamb keeping us from falling. I'm mesmerized by his sage colored eyes. My heart rate increases

but I'm not sure if it's because of my near fall or our close proximity.

The heat of his body seeps into mine, my hands are on his chest and I'm reminded once again of his strong, muscular body.

“Baby girl. You need you to stop looking at me like that.”

“Like what?” I ask softly, licking my lips.

His eyes track down to watch my tongue before returning to mine, considerably darker than they were a moment ago.

His voice is lower, somehow soft and growly at the same time, “Like you want to taste me.”

I look at his lips. I do want to taste them. I swallow hard. His scent surrounding me is making my head spin. That’s the only

excuse for what I do next. I lean in and gently slide my tongue between the seam of his lips.

I feel his body tense up, his arm around me pulling me impossibly closer, his eyes never leaving mine. His lips part and his

tongue slides out to meet mine. Electric tingles shoot through me and a ripple of pleasure slides down my spine as my eyes drift

close. His hand comes up into my hair, gently tugging my head to the side and deepening the kiss. He tastes of fresh air and

sunshine. I didn’t know. that was possible, but there it is.

It takes me a moment to realize the whimpers I hear are coming from me. I can feel more than hear the growls rumbling in

Liam’s chest as he deepens the kiss even more, his tongue teasing mine in an intricate dance. The sound makes my nipples

harden and sends jolts of pleasure straight to my core. A warmth I’ve never felt before causes an uncomfortable feeling between

my legs, a pressure that needs to be released. I wrap my legs around his waist, feeling a dampness in my panties.

He pulls away, and I can tell he can smell my arousal. He puts his forehead against mine. “Baby girl, we have to stop.”

I’m immediately embarrassed by my actions. Of course he wouldn’t want me. My body is a scarred mess and his is perfection.

I’m sure he could have anyone he wanted, someone gorgeous just like him.

I slide my legs down from around his waist, but he doesn’t let me go. I look up at him, and I know my face is bright red. “I’m

sorry.” I say and look down at a spot on his throat.

His hand slides from the back of my head to my chin, lifting it, forcing me to meet his eyes. “Baby girl, this is not a rejection. I

want so much more of what we are starting here. But you are not yet ready for what I want to give you and I wouldn’t want to

stop once we start. When you are ready, I will take my time, touching you, tasting you and making you feel pleasure that you’ve

never felt before.”

His words have the heat pulsing in my core again. I watch his nostrils flare as he smells the impact of his words. “Fuck baby. If

you don’t stop smelling this delicious, we’re not making it to dinner.” He slowly slides me down his body, his eyes on me. I gasp

when I feel how hard his large, long length is. When my f are on the ground, he leans down and nuzzles my ear. “I wanted you to

feel that,

just in case you thought I wasn’t serious about how much I want you.”

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I shiver as he runs his nose across my jaw before kissing the corner of my mouth.

He stands, taking my hand in one of his and shifting his jeans with the other before turning and guiding me down the stairs to the

front door. His pack members flock to him again and I notice that he moves so that I’m standing in front of him. He lets them

know that we have to be somewhere but that he’ll be back later if they need to meet with him about anything.

He walks me to a giant truck, opening the passenger door and lifting me inside. He leans over and clicks the seatbelt into place

before pecking my lips again and winking before closing the door and coming around to climb into the driver’s

side.

The last time I was in a car was when the vampires had me in the trunk. Before that, it was when I was still part of a pack. It’s

weird being back in a car again.

As we start to pull away, I look at my surroundings. It's pretty here, in a different way than it was back in my childhood pack in

Minnesota. I much prefer the warmer climate here.

I turn to look at Liam. "Taking care of me is keeping you from your work with the pack, isn't it?" I ask him.

He looks at me, reaching over and taking my hand, pulling it to him so he can kiss my knuckles before setting it on his thigh. "My

pack is the largest in the country. I have 832 pack members with another 27 pregnant females that will be adding to my numbers

within the next five months. My work is never done. So, no, you aren't keeping me from my work, it's always there, no matter

what."

"When did you become Alpha?" I ask. I don't know much about Liam and I'd like to get to know him better, especially if Alessia

feels that we can trust him.

I watch as his face takes on a tense look. I jump in before he says anything. "It's none of my business, you don't have to tell me."

He looks over at me, pulling my hand to his lips, kissing it again, before putting it back in his lap. "I told you before you can ask

me anything. It's just, not all of my answers are happy ones."

He looks at me again. "To help you understand, I need to go back to before I took over from my father. When I was six years old,

my mother was murdered. We were attacked by another pack that wanted the strength of our numbers and our land. My father

defeated their Alpha, but not before my mother was killed." My

hand goes to my mouth, I understand all too well what it feels like to have your mother murdered. He

reaches over and brushes

him knuckles over my cheek. before taking my hand again.

"My father was never the same after that. He moved out of the packhouse and he barely managed the pack at all. Dustin's

father, my father's Beta, basically took over, only getting my father involved if needed. When I was ten years old, he started

including me in the decision making for the pack. He and I made all the decisions together for the pack and the company that I

own from the time I was 10 to the time I was 16. The day after my 16th birthday, my father died. There was no reason, he wasn't

sick, or not any sicker than he'd been for the previous 10 years. That day, it became official. A week later, I laid my father to rest

and the day after that, we had my Alpha ceremony."

He turns to look at me. I can see the pain in his eyes. I turn my hand in his, intertwining our fingers and rubbing my thumb over

his hand. I want him to know he's not alone. I know what it's like to feel alone, like you have no one. I want him to know I'm here.

"My Alpha ceremony was a somber affair, not like most of them which are a celebration. And honestly, it didn't matter. I'd been

running this pack long before my father died and it became official." He shrugs, looking at me before looking back at the road.

"How old are you now?" I ask him.

"Nearly 25."

"So, you've been taking care of your pack and its members for almost 15 years?" He nods.

"Aren't you tired?" I ask, because really, it's got to be a huge burden for him to carry, day after day. The lives of over 800 people

depend on him and him alone. He has to be everything to everyone.

"Some days more than others. Honestly, before all this," he gestures with his hand between us, "it was becoming

overwhelming."

"I make it less overwhelming for you?" I ask confused.

"You give me hope."

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I wasn't sure how I felt about being so open with Angel, but she's my mate. I want to share everything with her, and have her

share everything with me.

After our moment in the hallway, I know she's beginning to feel the pull of the mate bond, even if she doesn't recognize that

that's what it is.

Everything about my beautiful Angel is drawing me in. And even more than her sweetness, her scent and her taste, the idea that

I won't be alone anymore, that there will be someone to bear this burden with me? It's almost too much to hope

for.

We arrive at the Nelson home a few minutes before we were supposed to arrive. I've brought a couple bottles of wine, since

Cara didn't ask me to bring anything.

I go around the truck and help Angel out. She's so short that it's a big leap for her, but mostly, I just want to take any opportunity

there is to touch her. I keep hold of her hand as we walk to the door and ring the bell.

I can hear talking on the other side, and I hear Clint ask who could be at the door as Cara announces that she'll get it.

When she opens the door, her smile greets us. "I'm so glad you could come. Please come in."

We walk in and Cara moves to stand in front of Angel as we follow her into the kitchen. "Dad, I invited some guests tonight."

Cara tells Clint.

He looks up at me. "Liam, it's good to see you, it's been too long." He says, starting to wheel himself over.

"And someone else." Cara says and steps aside, giving Clint his first glimpse of my mate. Donovan, Clint's wolf, pushes forward

immediately. "Andra?" He asks in his gruff voice.

"Donovan." Alessia answers. "I'm Alessia now."

"Alessia." He says it softly, tears forming in his eyes. "Where have you been all these years? I thought....I thought..."

Alessia walks to him, squatting down in front of his wheelchair. "We have much to discuss tonight. But first, I've waited a long

time to give you a message from Lily."

Clint's hand goes to his mouth and he rubs it across his face and roughly. "A message from Lily?" He whispers.

"You understand how the Guardian spirit works? I have memories from my previous lives, but not all of them. Some, like when I

saw Cara yesterday or you just now, come at the moment I see you." Clint looks at Cara before looking back at Alessia.

Clint reaches down and takes Angel's hand. "What is the message?"

Angel/Alessia puts her other hand over Clint's. "She wanted you to know that she knew. She knew that day in battle would be her

last. The Moon Goddess visited her a couple of days before the attack. She traded her life for yours. You were the one that was

supposed to die that day, but she knew that you had the better chance of survival and would be here for Cara and Artemis. She

knew her life would end that day because she gave her life so you could live."

I watched as Anders moves to stand beside Clint putting his hand on his shoulder. I thought Clint was going to break down right

there. I'm not sure how I would feel if I found out my mate, if Angel, gave her life for me. It's definitely something to consider,

because when she realizes that she's my mate, it's exactly what she will try to do.

"If you will all excuse me for a moment, I need a minute." Clint turns and rolls himself down a hallway and into a room that I'm

guessing is his bedroom.

Angel stands and comes to me. "Should Alessia not have said anything? Lily wanted him to know." She looks to me and I'm not

sure if she needs comfort or confirmation, but I give her both.

I cup her face in my hand as I respond. "He's waited 13 years to know what happened to her Guardian spirit and now, not only

has he met Alessia, but he found out that Lily gave her life for him. It's a lot to take in all at once." I say and look to where Rik is

holding Cara as she cries into his chest.

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Rik looks at me and an understanding passes between us. These women, these Guardians, give their lives for those they love

and protect. It's not something either he or I am willing to live with. I'll have to find a time to speak to him to see if he's found a

way to keep Cara from taking a bullet, real or metaphorical, for him.

Anders goes to follow Clint. They have been friends most of their lives. I pull Angel in and kiss her forehead. "Let's open the

wine. Would you like some?"

Cara dries her eyes. "I'm sorry, it's a lot to find out that your mother made such a sacrifice for you."

Rik runs his thumbs across her cheeks helping to wipe her tears. "Yes. It's very difficult to know that someone you love would

trade their life for yours." He says to her and gives her a meaningful look. So, this isn't a new conversation for them. I definitely

need to speak to him about it.

Cara reaches out her hand. "I won't be having any, but I'm happy to pour wine for everyone."

Angel steps away from me. "I've actually never had any." She looks at me and shrugs as I hand the wine to Cara. "I never really

had the opportunity."

I step up to her again, putting my hand on the small of her back. "Why don't you try it and see if you like one of them, there's a

white and a red, since I didn't know what we were having for dinner."

Rik turns to me and smiles. "Oh, Thursday nights are always steak nights. It's apparently a thing that our fathers have been

doing for years. It's only since Cara and I started dating that I was invited to attend as well."

"Joke's on you Alpha, because tonight it's ribs for dinner." Cara says to Rik and I can see the love in both their eyes. I look at

Angel. Yeah, I want that in our future.

"I hear congratulations are in order." I say to Rik.

“Yep.” He says giving Angel and I each a glass of wine. “I can’t wait to meet my little Peanut. Did Cara tell you we’re having a

girl?” I see Cara roll her eyes behind his back.

“We don’t know it’s a girl yet.” Cara says and Rik looks at us and mouths silently, ‘It’s a girl.’

Clint and Anders walk out, Clint still sniffing and looking like he just sobbed his

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heart out, which I’m guessing he did.

Angel walks over to him. “I’m so sorry.”

Before she can say anymore, he stops her. “No, I’m glad you told me. Lily wanted me to know and it makes some things that

happened in those last couple of days make sense. And before we get to our dinner, I want you to know that I’m so thankful that

we’ve found you, or that you’ve found us. I know that the bond that we shared when you were Andra is no longer there, Donovan

can feel that the bond is different, but there is still a familial bond. I hope that Alessia can feel it too?” Angel nods her head.

“Good. We are family. I don’t know what has happened to you or why no one could find you for so long, but you are here now

and you are not alone. We are all your family now.” Clint gestures around the room.

Angel looks around and sees everyone nodding in agreement. I see her eyes well with tears and I walk to her, running my hand

over her hair. She sniffs and looks up at me. “I’m okay, it’s just been so long since I had anyone to call family.”

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I had no idea when I agreed to come to Cara’s house for dinner that it would be this emotional. There’s so much going on, so

many emotions, so many memories that are coming to the forefront. It’s a bit overwhelming.

Liam has been very supportive. I’m glad he’s here. I’m not sure I could do this without him.

“Anders, you want to help me with the ribs? Cara, are you ready with everything else?”

“Yep, we’ll get the table set while you go pull the ribs off the slow cooker.” She says to Clint before looking at us. “They’ve been

cooking for several hours. They should fall off the bone.”

I follow her to the kitchen. “What can I do to help?” I ask.

Rik goes to the oven and begins pulling out what looks like twice-baked potatoes, some sort of vegetable casserole and

something else that smells like mac and cheese.

“It all smells delicious.” Liam says, coming up behind me and putting his hand on my hip. I’ve noticed that any time I move away

from him, he makes sure that he moves close again, touching me. I don’t mind, it helps me to feel relaxed in this new

environment.

Cara hands us some platters and tells us to put them on the table. We’re all

moving to the table when Clint and Alpha Anders come in with a huge amount of ribs.

Clint and Anders sit at each end of the table, with Cara and I sitting beside Clint and across from each other and Rik and Liam

sitting beside Anders and across from each other.

When we’re all seated, Anders speaks up. “So, Angel, we didn’t get a chance to be formally introduced. I’m Alpha Anders, the

previous Alpha for Canyon Ridge Pack and this fine fellow is my son, Rik, the current Alpha.

“It’s nice to meet you both.” I say as food is passed around and I watch as all four men pile so much food onto their plates that I

don’t see how they will be able to eat it all. Cara isn’t too far behind them, filling her plate to nearly overflowing. By comparison,

my plate looks practically empty. No wonder Liam keeps telling me to eat, if he thinks this is how much I’m supposed to be

eating.

Clint looks at me. “You are welcome to have as much food as you want. There is

plenty.”

"I'm fine, thank you." I say and bite into the ribs. The familiar taste hits my tongue and I close my eyes enjoying the memories of

sitting around a campfire, eating this meat.

"This is bear, right?"

Every head at the table looks at me. "You know what bear tastes like?" Rik asks

1. me.

I shrug, not sure if I should say anything. I am in a room with three Alphas. "My family and I were rogues for six years. During

that time, my father caught a few bears, which was great because it fed us for several days." I said, watching their reactions to

me being a rogue. No one said anything or looked like they were going to kick me out.

"Your father must have been quite a strong wolf to kill several bears." It's Clint that comments.

"He was the lead warrior in our pack. After we left, our Alpha searched for us for years. We had to move frequently when they'd

find us or get too close. It wasn't until one of my father's friends found us and realized that my parents left for me that we ended

up with a stable home."

"What do you mean? How did his friend finding you give you a stable home?" It's Alpha Anders that asks this time.

I explain the meeting with Jude and how he let us use his cabin, provided us with a burner phone and kept us informed of the

search. "It gave us a few years of peace before everything fell apart."

Clint reaches out and takes my hand. "Let's finish dinner before we get into the heavy details." He says and I'm grateful. I'm

having a hard time swallowing thinking back to those days.

It's quiet for a moment before I pick up another rib. "So, who caught this bear?" I ask, taking a bite. When I realize no one has

answered me, I look up to see everyone looking at Liam. He's looking uncomfortable.

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He turns to look at me. "I did."

I frown. "You caught a bear and brought it to Cara and Clint?" I ask. Why wouldn't he take it to his pack?

I see Rik lean back in his chair, a smirk on his face. Liam scowls at him before turning back to me. "Cyrus killed it for Artemis."

I look at Cara who is looking at Liam. I don't understand. Why would he do that if Cara is mated to Rik.

"Liam was pursuing Cara as a love interest." Rik states, still smirking at Liam and earning a growl.

"Rik!" Cara admonishes him.

Jealousy flares but I don't really know what to do with it. First, as strange as is it, Artemis is Alessia's daughter. Plus, she's strong

and confident, everything I'm not. I can understand why Liam would want someone like Cara. It just reminds me of all the

reasons that he wouldn't want me.

Liam takes my hand, pulling it to his mouth for a kiss. "It was before I met you. I told you things were becoming overwhelming. I

hadn't found my mate and I wanted a strong Luna to stand by my side, someone to help me carry the burden. of being an Alpha.

But Cara is mated to Rik and I'm glad they are together and happy." He tells me.

'He's being honest.' Alessia tells me.

It doesn't change my feelings of inferiority, and I don't even know why I care. It's not like I ever wanted to be a Luna, or even

mated to an Alpha. It's just the thought of Liam being with someone else hurts my heart. 'Mine too.' Alessia agrees softly.

I nod and go back to my food, but I can't stomach the thought of eating any more. So, I just pick at it and push it around on my

plate.

When everyone's done eating, I grab plates and take them to the kitchen. I turn to walk back to the table, when Liam takes my

hand and pulls me back to the foyer, away from prying eyes and ears. He cups my face in his hands.

"Hey, I need you to know

that there is nothing other than friendship or something that feels like a brother and sister between me and Cara. My feelings for her are nothing compared to my feelings for you.”

I shrug, refusing to make eye contact, but he’s not having it.

He growls, taking my chin between his finger and thumb. “Do I need to remind you of the effect that you have on me little angel?”

“It’s ok, I get it...” I’m interrupted as he lifts me off the ground by my thighs, forcing me to wrap them around him as he pushes

me against the wall. His mouth on mine is hot and needy, demanding that I give in to him. His hands are in my hair, tugging and

holding my head at the angle he wants to get access to my mouth. He’s using one of his legs to help hold me up while he

ravages my mouth.

When I don’t immediately submit to his demands, he growls, nipping at my lip until I give him entrance. When I do, he devours

me, searing me with his need and desire. My hands go around his neck, holding on as he sends my body into a torrent of aching

hunger. I feel like I’m drowning and he’s my lifeboat.

When he pulls away, we’re both panting. “Don’t doubt me.” He growls as I slide down his body, putting my feet back on the floor.

He takes my hand and puts it on the front of his jeans. “This is how much I want you, little angel.” I have to admit, if that’s an

indication of how much he wants me, then he really wants me.

I swallow hard. “Come on, let’s get back before they come looking for us.” He says leaning in and kissing me again before

standing and guiding me to walk in front of him. I’m beginning to realize that this is how he hides how aroused he is for me.

Just for me.

After making sure my girl understands that there is nothing and no one for me but her, we walk back into the living room. "All

good?" Clint asks and we both

nod.

"Good, have a seat, we have some important things to discuss."

I had already learned quite a bit about Angel over dinner. Her life has been hard, harder than mine. Her parents struggled while

they were on the run, but they made the best of things. The time in the cabin seems like the only time in her teen years when she

had some normalcy.

I know the rest of her story is going to be hard for me to hear. I know part of it, but I need to hear it all so we can plan for the

threat that is coming.

When we sit, I pull Angel into my lap. She blushes but I don't care. She's worried that I want someone else, she will learn that I

want everyone to know she's mine. Plus, I know this next part is going to be hard for her, and I want to support her.

"Angel," Clint starts, "we need to know what happened to you. I know it's hard, but in order for us to plan and prepare for what is

coming, we need to understand what we are dealing with. Can you start at the beginning and tell us what happened?

Remember, we are all family here. No one will hurt you. And if someone even thought about it, I'm pretty sure that Alpha behind

you would kill them."

"Damn right." I say as she turns to look at me. She seems to believe whatever she sees in my eyes because she leans back,

relaxing against me. My arms wrap around her as she starts.

She tells us about how they had to run from the cabin because they were found by her old pack, the Great River Pack. I look at

Rik. He doesn't seem to know anything about that pack either. Perhaps they are a small pack.

When she gets to the part about her parents being killed right in front of her, I tighten my arms around her. I can feel her shaking

and although it's been a long time, I doubt she's ever really processed their deaths. When her tears force her to stop talking,

Clint rolls over and takes her hand. "I'm sorry for your loss. sweetheart. I know this is hard. You're doing great." He tells her.

He has a gentle way with her. It's a side I've never had the chance to see of Clint. To me, he's only ever been tough and strong.

Cara comes and sits beside us, taking her hand. "We're here Angel. I know it doesn't bring them back, but we're here if you need

us."

I rub her back until she pulls herself together. Then she continues with her story, telling us about Prince Keenan, Sebastian, the

humans, the feeding room, all of it. When she gets to the part where she tells them about the prince's addiction to her blood, Rik

snarls, pulling Cara into his lap and wrapping his arms around her protectively.

Clint and Anders ask most of the questions, wanting to know more about how Prince Keenan reacted to feeding on her. When

she talks about how he would feed on her, making it sexual and putting her on display for the entire feeding room, I finally have

to get up and walk out. I gently set her aside, kiss the side of her head and let her know I'll be right back.

I know exactly where I'm going. When I trained with Cara the one time, there was an indoor training facility. It has everything one

would need to train, including punching bags. I don't stop until I walk up to the first bag and punch with every bit of frustration I'm

feeling, punching a hole in the bag. I move to the next one. and do the same.

I'm on the sixth bag when I hear Rik. "Want a real person to punch?" He asks me.

"You're not the one I'm angry at." I tell him, punching another hole in another bag.

"You know Clint will expect you to replace those, right?" I nod. I don't care, I

need to do something with this anger, so Angel doesn't think it's directed at her.

“Come on.” He says, crooking his fingers at me. “Let’s have a go. You need a challenge, someone who will hit back.”

“I have no intention of having to answer to Cara about why you’re all bloody and bruised.”

He smiles at me. “Then I guess it’s good I’m mated to a Guardian. Apparently, when you complete the bond, you gain some of

their strength. I’m stronger than you are now Liam.”

I frown at him. Is that possible, getting some of the power from the Guardians. I kick off my shoes and take a stand to begin

sparring with him. “Is that why the Alphas forced them into a mate bond?” I ask as we begin to throw punches.

“I don’t think so.” He says as he sends his fist into my gut, knocking the air out of my lungs. Fuck, he is stronger. “From what we

know from Ailduin, Alphas of the past did not get any additional strength from the Guardians.”

I swipe his legs but before I can land a punch, he’s back on his feet. Shit, he’s faster too. “I think,” he continues, “it’s only

because it’s a fated bond, and a willing bond, that there was a transfer of power. But that’s just my theory.”

We go back and forth, throwing punches, getting in kicks. When we’re done, I feel better. I won’t be great until that fuckhead

prince is dead, but my immediate frustration is gone.

“Thanks Rik.” I say and I mean it. It was exactly what I needed.

“No problem. Apparently, we are all family now and that’s what family does for each other.”

“Yeah, well, I don’t exactly know how to interact in a family environment, so give me some slack if I screw it up.” I tell him.

“Done.” He says and we walk back inside. Angel is on her feet the minute I walk inside.

“Liam!” She looks from me to Rik and back again. She comes over and takes my hands, looking at my knuckles which are

bloody and swollen. It’ll take a couple of hours for them to heal.

“I’m okay, I just needed to blow off some steam. I hate what you had to endure and that I wasn’t there to help you.” I pull her

hands to my chest, covering my heart. “But I’m here now, and as I told you earlier, no one will ever hurt you

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again." I tell her and kiss her forehead.

"I second that." It's Anders who speaks this time. "Liam, we have some ideas, but we will need to come up with a plan together

so we can protect both of our borders."

"Agreed. But tonight, I think Angel has had enough. She's still recovering and I'd like to get her home." I say, putting my arm

around her shoulders.

"Angel, I'd like to start training you. I trained Lily when she first got her Guardian spirit and I have trained Cara all her life. I'm

obviously well versed in the strengths and weaknesses of Guardians. I can help you get back on your feet faster and then help

you to get stronger." Clint suggests.

Angel turns to me. "What do you think?" She asks me. A part of me is proud that, out of everyone in this room, she trusts me

enough to ask.

I look at Clint. "You'll make sure not to push her too far while she's still recovering?" I ask.

"Absolutely."

I look at Angel. "Do you want to train with Clint?" She looks from me to Clint and back before smiling. "Yes."

I nod. "Okay then."

Cara starts jumping up and down. "Yay! Now I will have a training partner. Rik won't let me train with the warriors anymore

because I'm pregnant, but he can't complain about me training with you." She says before coming over and hugging Angel, as if

she is the one that came up with the idea.

Rik looks to Clint while Cara is hugging Angel and there is a silent agreement that Clint will make sure that Cara goes easy

during her pregnancy. That makes me feel better because Angel will need some time to build her strength.

“Come by tomorrow at 9am. We’ll swim some laps.” Clint says. We say our goodbyes and head home.

Chapter 199

I’m excited about training. It’s been years since I trained with my father and I was getting really strong then.

‘We’ll get stronger much faster with Clint as our instructor.’ Alessia says.

‘Do you remember training with him, or remember Andra training with him?’ I ask.

‘Yes, he was patient but tough. Andra was a stronger wolf because of Clint and Donovan.’

I’m lost in my thoughts when Liam speaks. “A penny for your thoughts.”

I smile at him. “Do you actually have a penny?” I ask.

He digs around in his pockets, then begins searching his car, finally coming up with a quarter. “Hey, hey! I should get twenty-five

thoughts for this.” I’m laughing, watching his antics.

I take the quarter and set it back into the truck’s console. “I was talking to Alessia about training with Clint and Donovan. She

remembers Andra’s training and says he is a good and patient trainer.”

“I had the opportunity to train with him once. He’s a clever fighter. He will teach you a lot of things that will make you a stronger,

smarter fighter.” He looks at me, reaching over and taking my hand again before looking back out to the road. “I’d like to train you

too when you’re stronger. Maybe you could train with me in the afternoons and Clint and Cara in the mornings?” He asks me.

“You want to train me too?”

“Yes. It’s not that I don’t trust Clint and his ability. I absolutely do. But different people have different styles of fighting and

sparring. It will only enhance your training. And if I’m being honest, when you’re up to full strength, it will be good. for my warriors

to spar with you too. You will make them better fighters as well.”

“Okay.” I say and he kisses my hand. I’m starting to realize that he kisses my hand when he’s happy, when he’s worried about

me or just as the desire hits.

When we arrive back at the packhouse, I know he needs to work, so I tell him I can get back to my room on my own. He insists

on walking me up anyway. You've had a rough evening. Why don't you take a hot bath, relax and then get some sleep. I'll be up

later and will check on you." He reaches down and gently kisses me.

I reach my hands up, placing them on either side of his face, holding him in place. I pull back and look at him. "Thank you, for

being there for me tonight. It means

a lot to me.

"Any time, beautiful."

When he leaves, I take his advice and slide into a hot bath. The night has

been difficult. So many memories; hard, horrible memories that I didn't want to relive. I know my dreams will be full of nightmares

tonight.

When the water runs cold, I get out and put on one of Liam's shirts that he gave me to sleep in. The scent of him on the shirt

may help, but I'm hoping that maybe he would be willing to lay with me again tonight. He or Cyran have the last two nights after I

had a nightmare, so maybe he will again.

I open my door and see that his is open as well. I walk over and gently knock, looking around. I don't see him, so I step inside.

"Liam?"

He walks out of the bathroom, the steam swirling around him as he opens the door. He's wearing a towel that is hanging low on

his hips and gives me a perfect view of his washboard abs. My mouth suddenly feels very dry. He's rubbing a

towel over his hair, so it takes him a minute to see me.

"Angel? Are you okay? Did you have a nightmare?"

Chapter 200

He tosses the towel on a chair and walks up to me as he's talking. His hands go to my arms running up and down as if he's

checking for injuries.

".....un..." My brain isn't working. I can feel the heat of his body, still warm from his shower. His intoxicating scent seems

stronger, and it's making my head spin.

"Angel?"

"I, um, I was wondering if you would mind, I mean after tonight...I don't think I can sleep." Ugh, I'm making a mess of this.

"You want Cyran to come lay down with you? Give me a few minutes to dry off so you don't have wet wolf smell all over you." He

smiles at me. He doesn't seem

upset at all.

'Just ask him.' Alessia purrs in my head.

"Actually, I was wondering if maybe you would mind laying down with me?" I look down, waiting for the rejection.

He lifts my chin, bringing my eyes to his. "You want me to come lay with you?"

I nod.

He kisses my nose. "Give me a minute. I want to put some sleep pants on so we don't have a repeat of this morning." He smirks

as my eyes go wide.

"Okay. I'll just..." I jerk my finger over my shoulder in the direction of my room.

"Be right there."

I go back to my room, feeling nervous. I don't think he'll expect anything but I'm not completely sure. I just know that when he

and Cyran have been with me, I don't have nightmares. I crawl into bed, pulling the blankets up to my chin. I've just settled when

he walks in and closes the door behind him. He's wearing at- shirt and cotton sleep pants. I wonder if he normally wears pants to

bed.

He walks over to the other side of the bed and slides in, laying down and patting his chest. "Come here."

I lay down on his chest and he wraps one arm around me and pulls his phone up for us to see with the other. "Want to listen to

some music?"

I wrinkle my nose.

"What's that look for?" He asks.

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"Your music is very angry."

"It's angry?" He asks.

"Yeah, when I listened the other day, the first song I tried to listen to was about someone screaming about being alone."

He thinks for a minute. "By Myself. Ok, yes, that is an angry song."

"And then there was one about being numb."

I see him contemplating the songs I listened to. "Another Linkin Park song and, yes, maybe that one is a bit angry."

"The last one I listened to before I stopped was some guy yelling 'What have you done?' like he was accusing you of something.

I liked the woman's part of the song, but still the overall tone was angry."

He nods. "Within Temptation. I love the group, but I can see how that one sounded angry as well. I guess when I made the music

list, I wasn't really in a good head space. I found music that expressed how I was feeling." He looks down at me. "What kind of

music do you like?"

I shrug. "It's been a long time since I was able to listen to music. But my mother and I used to sing songs that she taught me

while we were rogues. We'd sing while we looked for plants and foraged for food."

"Do you know the words or the names of any of them? I can look them up."

"I doubt you'll like them. They're folksier than what you listen to."

"That's okay. Why don't you sing one for me?"

I think for a minute and then begin one that my mother and I would sing at night.