

Broken Warrior 141

Chapter 141

I watch as Rik turns and heads back to the packhouse. I feel like part of my heart is leaving with him. I watch until I can't see him

any longer before turning back to my house and Liam.

"Liam." I say again. His smile is a welcome hello and I walk into his arms and give him a hug.

"So, you and Rik, huh? What happened to waiting for me?"

I smack his chest. "Yes, Rik and I are dating. And not that it's any of your business, but he's been a complete gentleman about

my limits."

"Your limits? Is that why his smell is all over you and your house?"

"Did you come here to interrogate me, Liam?" I ask, my temper flaring. He has been gone and has no right to ask me these

questions.

"No. I just wasn't expecting to come here and smell him all over you. I don't even smell your father, only the two of you, and it

kind of set me off. I apologize. Can we start over?"

I smile at him. "Of course. Come in. Are you hungry? I've already eaten but I can make you something."

"I'm good." He says.

"I'll be right back." I run upstairs and put on some clothes. When I return, I pull a beer out of the fridge.

"Beer?"

"Sure." He says and I pop the top on two beers, and we head to the living room.

"What have you been up to? I heard you were looking for Eli Gunnar?"

He takes a sip of his beer, resting his hand on my knee. "He continues to elude me. I've been so close so many times. But he

can only run so far so fast, and I have my best trackers out hunting him." He says before taking a sip of beer. Then he looks at

me. "So, where is your father?"

I give him an update on my time in the Fae land, what I learned about my parents and their wolves, and finally end with my father

staying on to give them the story of Donovan and Andra.

“Wow! That’s a lot. What do you think about your mother’s wolf spirit? Where do you think she could be?”

I shrug. “Ailduin thinks she may be hiding in the human world, but I don’t know.

+15 BONOS

If Ailduin’s theory is correct, it means that Andra’s spirit knows about Artemis being her daughter. I can’t see her staying away for

any reason. Not for thirteen years.”

He looks thoughtful as he ponders what I’ve said. “That makes sense. So, what? You think some Alpha has her prisoner

somewhere? That would be hard to hide. for this long.”

“I’m not sure, but wherever she is, I think she’s being held against her will. I don’t think she could know about Artemis and stay

away. I know Donovan’s spirit wouldn’t.”

We finish our beers and I get us another round. We continue catching each other up on our life events since our la

meeting. “I have to go back out. I have to keep searching for him until I find him.” He says. Then looks at me. “But I will be here

for your birthday. It’s a big day and I wouldn’t miss it.”

He smiles at me then leans in and very gently kisses me on the lips. The feelings that it used to bring to the surface when he

kissed me don’t come. It could be a brother giving me a peck on the lips or my father. There is nothing romantically responsive in

me for Liam. He feels like family, whereas Rik feels like everything.

Liam recognizes the change in me. He can see that I’m not responsive to his advances like I have been in the past. He stands,

giving me his hand to help me up. We drop the empty beer bottles on the island as we walk to the door.

As he opens the door, he turns. “Don’t give up on me yet Cara. Please. Wait until your birthday. My feelings for you haven’t

changed. I would be a good mate to you. Even if we aren’t fated mates, I would take care of you and make you happy.”

I lean in and give him a hug. "I know you would Liam, and I'm not making any decisions until my birthday. I promise."

With that, he turns and heads out the door. I stand on the front porch and wave as he drives away. The problem is, while my

head agrees to waiting, neither my heart nor Artemis agree. They both want Rik.

After Liam leaves, I take a shower. I know Rik will come over. He's here every night and has been since we returned. I don't want

him to be uncomfortable because I have Liam's scent on me.

When I call him to let him know Liam is gone, he arrives as fast as Kai can get him there. When he walks in, he immediately pulls

me in for a hug, sniffing my

hair.

"You showered."

+15 BONOS

I smile up at him. "I did. I didn't want you upset if his scent lingered on me." He nods and I can see the concern in his eyes. He's

worried that I still have feelings for Liam. It couldn't be any farther from the truth.

"Nothing happened between us. I want you to know that. That's not why I showered. And you should also know, my feelings for

Liam have changed. He feels like an older brother. Someone that will always be there for me if I need him."

I begin walking backward, toward the stairs, pulling him with me. "My feelings for you, however, are anything but familial. What I

feel for you is...." I take his hand and I put it against my heart. "It's here." I take his other hand and I put it against my stomach.

"And it's here."

I take a step up as he watches me intently. "My feelings for you are so deep and so strong that I don't know how to even put

them into words. But I know how I can show you."

I crook my finger at him, asking him to lean in. When he gets close, I run my nose up his neck, to his ear, feeling him shiver as I

smell my favorite scent in the world. "I'm very hungry Alpha, and I want brownies. Let me show you how much I want you."

As he growled in pleasure, I turned and ran up the stairs. He catches me just as I get to the door and I proceed to show him

exactly how much I love the taste of brownies.

Chapter 142

Clint returned home one week before Cara's birthday. It was an uncomfortable moment since she and I walked into the house

completely naked after shifting from our run. I was carrying her, and she had her legs wrapped around my waist. We were

kissing, planning to move to her bedroom. That's the only reason I didn't realize until it was too late that he was home.

"Alpha Rik, perhaps you could let go of my daughter long enough for her to say hello to her father." I'm not sure cold water works

as quickly as hearing your mate's father's voice while you are on the verge of pleasuring his daughter.

Cara immediately let go of me and I tuck her behind me to give her some privacy. "Hi dad. When did you get home?" She asks,

looking around me at her father.

"A couple of hours ago." He says as she and I move together until she's close to the stairs, so she can run up to put on some

clothes. "Be right back." She calls over her shoulder.

Clint looks at me. "I thought you were going to respect my daughter's wishes." He says to me.

"I have." I don't feel the need to explain myself to Cara's father. What Cara and I have is private, and I don't care if he is her

father, it's none of his business.

"By the smell, I'd say you've been living here." Cara comes back down the stairs and walks up beside me, handing me a pair of

shorts from her room. Yeah, I have clothes here and she has clothes in my room at the packhouse. "Yes dad, he has. Is that a

problem?" Cara answers for me.

"Cara, I'm not sure I'm comfortable having a man sleeping with you in your room that may or may not be your mate."

She nods her head briefly, then turns to me. "Give me a minute to grab my things and we'll head back to the packhouse." She

says.

Oh shit. I'm not sure if I should cringe or cheer for my girl.

"Excuse me?" Clint says, raising an eyebrow at Cara.

"I respect your choice father. But you will also respect mine. I'm old enough to make decisions about who I will and will not sleep

with. Rik and I have gotten much closer while you were away. I love him. I want to be with him. If that's not here, then that's fine.

But we will be together."

I turn to her. "You love me?"

+15 BONOS

She smiles at me. "You're surprised?"

This amazing, beautiful woman, my mate, has fallen in love with me before she knows she's my mate. I take her face in my

hands. "I am so in love with you Cara

Nelson."

We are staring into each other's eyes, about to kiss, when Clint clears his throat and reminds us that we are not alone.

Without breaking eye contact with Cara, I address Clint. "What's it going to be Clint. Are we staying here or going to the

packhouse?"

He grunts but agrees to let me stay.

After Cara and I shower, Clint tells us about his time with Ailduin and Aolis. They wrote the story of Clint and Lily as well as

Donovan and Andra. I can tell that reliving his time with his mate when she was alive has brought both happiness. and sadness

to Clint. I also know that once Cara and I are mated, we will move into the packhouse permanently and Clint will be alone. I hope

he is able to find his way without Cara. Maybe Dad can convince him to move into the packhouse again, or maybe take on

training twice a day instead of just once so he can continue to train his daughter.

In the week before her birthday, I find time to sneak away from Cara to order her birthday present. I've been thinking about it for

a while but haven't had time to go have it made. Between us spending all our free time together, training, school, preparation for

graduation, preparation for Cara's birthday and now beginning preparation for my Alpha ceremony, life has been crazy.

Chapter 143

Cara doesn't realize it, but my Alpha ceremony will also include her Luna ceremony. I feel confident after her evening with Liam

that she will choose me. She is mine and I am hers. It will be official on her birthday.

The night before her birthday, I tell her I'm sleeping in the packhouse and she should stay in her father's house. She seems

confused, but I want her to see me for the first time as her mate at her party. I use the excuse tha

I have to help my mother get ready for her party, which isn't a lie. I want everything to be perfect, special for my mate on her

birthday.

On the morning of her birthday, I send her a text wishing her a happy birthday. I don't want to speak to her in case she

recognizes us as her mate from our voice. I let her know her first birthday present is waiting for her at her door.

Mate: You got me another dress?

Me: This one is for a very special day. Do you like it?

Mate: I love it. It's beautiful.

Me: I can't wait to see you tonight.

Mate: Me too. I still say you could have stayed the night. Then we'd know now if we're mates.

Me: Are you worried that we aren't?

Mate: No, but I'd like to know for sure.

Me: It's only a few hours away, love. Enjoy your morning with your father.

Mate: Ok, see you soon

Me: I love you Cara.

Mate: I love you too Rik.

The dress I got her is a sand color. It will go well with her hair, but it will also go well with the other gift that I am bringing with me

tonight to give to her. I'm wearing a suit with a button-down shirt that matches her dress. Again, we will look like a couple and

after tonight, there will be no question.

I help my mother prepare for the party. Cara agreed to have it at the packhouse. She has met so many of the pack members

over the last month, that we decided to invite everyone. And since the entire pack knows that she's my mate, almost everyone is

coming. It will be a huge event. We've set up the inside for dancing

+15 BONOS

with food and tables around the dance floor for eating and drinking. Outside, at the back of the packhouse, we have set up

twinkling lights, similar to what they have at Ethereal. She really loved the look and I think we've been able to recreate it here for

her special day.

There are flowers everywhere. Every bouquet has flowers that mean love in them. We've also set a bouquet of Lily of the Valley

on either side of the entrance to the main hall. My mother and I discussed it and we felt this is the best way to include Lily Nelson

on this special day.

The guests begin to arrive about an hour before Cara. The packhouse fills up quickly and the atmosphere is filled with

excitement. Liam arrives. We shake hands and go our separate ways. One of us will have to go off and lick our wounds. tonight,

and it won't be me.

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My father clinks his glass to get everyone's attention. It's time. Cara and Clint have arrived. I can feel my heart rate increasing.

My palms are sweating. This is it. The moment that I've been waiting months for, the moment when I expect to start my life with

the love of my life, my mate.

I hear her walking in the hall and the smell of her vanilla and honey is almost overwhelming. Her scent is so much stronger now.

There's no way she doesn't feel it. Kai pushes forward, ready to acknowledge his mate.

The moment she walks into the room, I know I'm right. Artemis is front and center. Her eyes go directly to mine. "Mate." She

whispers and her brilliant smile. is the most beautiful thing I've ever seen in my life.

"Mate." Kai and I confirm together before walking to our mate and taking her in the most passionate kiss we've ever shared.

It's official, she recognized Rik as her mate

Chapter 144

I was sad to wake up alone on my birthday. I am expecting to be mates with Rik and I thought it would be a wonderful way to

wake up, but he has other plans for today.

The dress he got me is beautiful. It has a flutter sleeve, with a floor length crepe satin ruffle that looks like it is wrapped in the

front with a tie around the waist. Simple, elegant, beautiful.

My dad and I have breakfast together and then he gives me my gift. I unwrap the box and inside is a book, similar to, although

much thinner than, the History of the Guardian. This one is titled 'For the Love of a Guardian'. I look up at my dad. "What is

this?"

I

He looks at me, and I see he has tears in his eyes. "Ailduin, Aolis and I put together the story of your mother and I. It starts when

we were about your age. thought you would want to have something that tells you the story of our love."

I feel the tears in my own eyes now. I run my hand up and down the leather binding. "This is the story of you and mom?" He nods

and I jump up and hug him tightly. "I will treasure it, always. Thank you, dad."

Later, I take time for a long soak in the tub to relax. I have time to think about what may happen tonight. I'm pretty sure that Rik is

my mate. I've developed such strong feelings for him.

'We'll know as soon as we see him tonight.'

'Are you nervous Artemis?'

'No, our mate was made for us by the Moon Goddess. Whoever it is will be perfect. for us.'

I get ready and meet dad downstairs. He is driving us to the pack house. I'm so nervous. Tonight is the night. I don't know how

many pack members will be there, but if our mate is in our pack, I'm confident that we'll find him.

As soon as I step out of the car, I smell him. Rik's delicious scent of brownies is so strong, I can smell him from outside.

'MATE, MATE, MATE!' Artemis is jumping up and down, yelling in my head.

I walk through the doors to the main hall and my eyes meet his. I can see Kai is already present, as is Artemis. "Mate." I whisper.

"Mate." He confirms before taking me in a kiss so fiery, I feel as if I will

spontaneously combust. I'm overwhelmed by the tingles that are shooting all over my body, Rik's smell is so much stronger, the

taste of his mouth and tongue, which I had thought was so familiar, is so potent that I can't think of anything except him. My

Alpha, my mate, my everything.

'Mine.' Artemis and I must say it through the mind link because we immediately hear Rik and Kai repeat it back to us. "Mine."

I pull away from him, looking into his beautiful sapphire eyes. I'm lost in the moment until I remember where we are and who is

here. Remember the man who is not my mate.

My eyes dart over Rik's shoulder looking for him. I know my face has fallen. Rik sees and quickly covers for us. "I need a

moment alone with my mate." He

announces to the room, receiving cat calls and wolf whistles. "Enjoy the party, we will be back shortly."

As the clapping and cheering continues, he leans down to my ear. "He just walked out, we can catch him before he leaves.

Come on." He walks me out the front door of the packhouse, guiding me to where the cars are parked.

I see him about to get into his car.

"Liam!" I'm sure he can hear the tears in my voice.

Chapter 145

I don't know what to say to him. He has been so patient with me. So willing to wait and to take me as a chosen mate. But there

can be no one for me but Rik.

He turns to me. I move out of Rik's arms, closing the distance between us. "I'm sor..."

He cuts me off. "Don't. You were always honest with me. I knew you wanted to find your mate and see if it would work. It was a

risk I was willing to take."

He looks at Rik over my shoulder before looking back at me. "You always wanted to find your fated mate. Rik is a good man.

He'll be a good Alpha and a good mate to you. And if he isn't," he looks back at Rik, "You know where to find me."

He wipes the tears that I couldn't contain off my cheeks. Then he pulls a box out of his pocket and hands it to me. "Happy

birthday."

I unwrap the present and open the box, my hands trembling. It's a stunning silver locket overlaid with silver intertwined vines and

in the center is an

emerald. "It's beautiful." z

"Open it." He says.

When I do, I see on the left side he has somehow found a picture of my parents. It must have been taken before I was born.

They look like they are my age. They are looking at each other with so much love in their eyes. On the right side is a picture of

my mom holding me as a baby in her arms, my father's arms wrapped around both of us.

I have no idea how he could have found these pictures. I'm beside myself and the tears start to fall again. "Liam..."

He kisses my forehead. "I have to go away for a while. Take care of yourself."

He steps back as Rik steps up wrapping his arms around her waist, looking at the locket over my shoulder.

"Thank you." He says to Liam. "I know this means a lot to her. To both of us."

He nods before getting into his car and driving away. Rik and I stand and watch until his taillights are no longer visible.

"Are you okay?" Rik asks turning me in his arms.

"Yes." I say softly. "As hard as that was, there was no other choice." I look into his beautiful glacial blue eyes. "There is only you."

He smiles tenderly at me before reaching into his pocket. "Would you like to open your gift from me?" He says, handing me a

box.

I tuck the locket back in its box. Rik takes it and puts it into his pocket to hold for me. I take the gift-wrapped box and open it. It's

a large heart-shaped sapphire pendant with a diamond at the top on a silver chain.

I look up at him. "Kai and I wanted you and Artemis to know that you have our heart. I know my eyes turn that color when Kai is

present, so it represents both of us and the heart is, well, obvious."

Artemis pushes forward again. "We love you." We say, my voice overlaid with hers.

SHE

"And we love you, more than anything in the world." Rik's voice is deeper with Kai's overlapping.

"Will you put it on me?" I ask, handing it to him and turning around. He reaches in front of me and I lift my hair. As he finishes

fastening the lock, he leans down and kisses my neck, gently pulling me to him. He continues kissing me until he gets to my

mate mark, eliciting a moan from me.

"I cannot wait to make you mine, officially and forever. But first, we have a party. to attend and my mate to celebrate."

Chapter 146

The party was amazing. Cara had a great time. I felt the need to continually touch her throughout the night. She seemed to want

the touch just as much as I did. After the first unmated male tried to give her a birthday hug and Kai snarled viciously, no one

attempted to touch her.

After eating, drinking and dancing the night away, we say our goodbyes and head. up to my room. I've set it up with flowers and

when we get there, I light some candles to give the room a soft glow.

When I'm done, I look at my beautiful mate. She is

oat!

with so much. love in her eyes. I open my arms and she comes to me, wrapping her arms around waist. She looks up at me.

"Are you ready to claim me Alpha?" My mate asks me.

"I've been ready for months little guardian. Tonight, I will make you mine in every way possible." I kiss my way down her jaw to

her neck, until I get to where my mate mark will soon be on display for everyone to see. As I lick and suck on the spot, she leans

into me, moaning softly. The scent of her arousal is already perfuming the air. It's a heady smell mixing with her scent.

I reach down and pull her dress up and over her head. Stepping back, I watch the devious smile spread across her face.

"What the fuck are you wearing?" I ask her. I've seen her in various states of undress and naked of course over the past month,

but this...this is meant to drive me wild and it's working. It's a nude lace bra and panty set that gives the impression that she's

not wearing anything at all.

A possessive growl leaves my lips as my little minx turns slowly, showing me that her panties are thongs. I can't help but reach

out and rub my hands down her cheeks, squeezing her ass in my hands. She pushes back into me, and I slide my hands up to

her bra, unclasping it and letting it drop to the floor.

She turns and my arms go to her thighs, lifting her up and wrapping her legs around my waist. I kiss her as I walk us to the bed

and gently lay her down before crawling over her, deepening the kiss, nipping at her lip requesting entrance. As soon as her lips

part, my tongue slides in tasting her absolute sweetness. I lay between her legs, running my hands over her breasts as I move

my mouth to her neck, nipping at her marking spot. She no longer fears me marking her and I can't control my canines from

sliding out of my gums. I'm not yet ready to mark her, I want to take my time tonight, make her first time incredible. The marking

will come later.

I move down to her breast, nipping and sucking until she's making the sounds that I love to hear. Her moans of pleasure filling

the room. Her hand in my hair, tugging me closer as she arches into my mouth.

I continue my journey down her body, licking and kissing my way down her stomach until I reach my honey pot. The sweet scent

of her arousal mixed with vanilla and honey is so strong that I have to taste her. I run my nose over top of her panties, feeling

how wet she already is for me. When she moves to close her legs, I nip at her inner thigh, loving the gasp and her immediate

reaction, opening herself to me. Always so responsive.

I rip her panties off with my teeth, needing to have her taste. Pulling her leg over my shoulder, I lick her juices, sliding my tongue

inside her to taste all of her. Her moans are getting louder, music to my ears. As I move up to her clit, I look up to see her

watching me. I smirk before growling softly on her clit. I watch as her eyes roll back and she pushes her hips into my face.

Chapter 147

I'm a man who takes what is offered. So, I slide my hands under her, taking an ass cheek in each hand before diving in. Her

taste is so delicious. Better than before and I didn't think that was possible. Her taste, her smell, the sounds she is making are

everything that I want for the rest of my life. And now, I will have it.

I feel her pushing to find her release, so I slide two fingers inside her. I've been working to slowly stretch her over the past month,

gently so tonight hopefully won't be too painful. As I begin to work my fingers inside her, my tongue continuing its assault on her

clit, she begins to chant my name softly. I've

learned that this is her tell. She's very close to finding her release. I add another finger, curling them as I slide them out, and I

suck down hard on her clit, sending her over the top. She screams my name as she cums, her body clamping down on my

fingers.

I continue to gently bring her down, my fingers slowing as her body jerks with aftershocks. When she's done, I slide up her body,

pulling a leg up to my hip. I kiss her, letting her taste herself on my tongue. When I pull back, I put my forehead on hers. "Are you

ready for me to make you mine forever my love?" I

ask her.

"Yes Rik. Make me yours and I will make you mine."

I line my cock up against her entrance. I kiss her again and when I feel her give herself to me, I bury myself deep inside her in

one thrust. Her hands grip me, her claws extending, digging into my back as I feel her body tense. I pull back and look at her.

"Relax love, I know it hurts, it will pass. I love you." I kiss the tear drops that have formed in the corners of her eyes. Then nuzzle

her nose with mine.

"I love you too." She says, as I grit my teeth. She feels so good and everything in me wants to move, to slide in and out of her

and complete our mating. But I hold still, letting her adjust to my size until I feel her start to move underneath me.

When she does, I begin to slowly slide in and out, letting her body adapt to the intrusion before increasing my pace. When she

begins moaning, her claws raking down my back in pleasure rather than pain, I speed up even more taking myself as deep as I

can.

Just as she's on the cusp of her release, I lean down to her ear. "Let me mark you love."

She turns her head, giving me access to her beautiful neck and just as her body

starts to contract around me, my canines extend, and I sink them into her marking spot. Cara screams my name as her orgasm

hits her.

I immediately feel the mate bond kick in. A power, like nothing I've ever felt before slides through me. I go to pull my teeth out but

just as I begin to retract, I feel Cara's canines sink into my marking spot. The absolute ecstasy that I feel as her venom floods me

has me shooting off like a fucking rocket. Rather than releasing her from my bite, I end up milking my canines into her as my

body jerks with my release. Nothing has ever felt so fucking good in my entire life.

When I finally come down, I pull my canines from her neck, licking the spot to seal the wound. She does the same on my neck.

We are both panting as I look at her, still seated deep inside her.

"You are mine Cara Nelson. Mine forever."

Chapter 149

So much has happened in the two years since Rik and I took over as Alpha and Luna of the Canyon Ridge Pack.

We found my mother's wolf's spirit. Or rather, she found us. She and I have become great friends and I'm so glad to have her in

my life. The only thing that was better than finding Andra's Guardian spirit, was the birth of our daughter. We named her Lily after

her grandmother, a strong and loving Guardian.

Rik has never let me live it down that he was right from the very beginning that we were having a girl. And, although I know he

wants a son to carry on and eventually take over the pack, he's been scared of what that might mean for me.

My pregnancy and birth of Lily were not easy. I was pregnant during a time of great strife, war and loss. The pain of it almost

caused me to lose my precious daughter and both of us nearly died in childbirth. But Rik was there for both of us, and we survived.

Lily is the apple of her father's eye. He takes her everywhere, carrying her around on his shoulders. And she is definitely a

daddy's girl. Even after she was born, unless she was nursing, she preferred Rik holding her to me.

Lacey and Chase's little boy is exactly the same. It's cute to see the dads having play dates and taking the kids to the park or to

get ice cream. They are both great fathers.

I was shocked at first that Lacey gave in to Chase, but when she had her birthday a month after mine and realized that he was

her mate, it all made sense. He, like Rik, had his birthday first and realized what she was to him. He pursued her relentlessly

until her birthday, and then everything fell into place. They had their second child, a girl, a couple months ago.

Rik's fear of losing me has kept him from wanting to have another baby. Artemis and I were ready a couple months after Lily's

birth to try for another one, but he refused. The fear of losing me or worse, me and our child together was too much for him. But

the Moon Goddess has her own plans, and we don't always get to choose when or how many children we will have.

I'm finishing a shower, putting on a bath robe instead of clothes, anticipating. Rik's response to finding out we're going to have

another child. I hope he's as happy as he was with Lily and wants to go peanut hunting again. That's what I started calling it,

since he called Lily 'Peanut' until she was born. He and Kai would sniff my stomach every night before laying their head next to

her and

telling her about their day.

As I'm walking out of the bathroom, towel drying my hair, Rik walks in with Lily in his arms. Rik's eyes go dark as soon as he

sees me in only a bathrobe. My love and desire for this amazing man have only increased with time.

“Mommy, mommy. Guess what?” My daughter squirms until Rik puts her down and she runs over to me. I reach down and scoop

her up. “What?” I ask her as I take her over to the love seat sitting under the window in our room.

“Kai took for me a ride then Daddy showed me all the constations in the sky.” She mispronounces constellations.

“He did?” I ask acting excited looking at my mate who has a sheepish look on his face. I give him the barest of head shakes and

his grin just gets bigger.

I turn my attention back to my daughter. “Did you fall off Kai this time?” I ask her. “Nope, I held on tight like Daddy said.”

“Did Daddy show you the Dory constellation?” I ask and she nods her head in exaggerated excitement.

“Yep! He showed me her

nose and her tail and her...” She turns and looks at Rik for help.

“Her dorsal fin” He fills in for her as he sits to take off his shoes. “Yes, that, mommy.”

“Wow. Daddy is really smart, isn’t he?” She nods her head in agreement again.

“Well guess what?” I ask my little girl.

“What?” She asks, bouncing up and down in my lap.

“Mommy knows something that Daddy doesn’t know. If I tell you then you’ll know too, and you can share it with Daddy. Do you

want to know what it is?”

She nods her head. I lean down and whisper in her ear. “Tell Daddy that it’s time to go peanut hunting.”

She sits back and looks at me her brow furrowing, then looks at Rik.

“Why would Daddy want to go peanut hunting?” She asks, blowing the entire surprise. Rik’s head whips around to look at me

and now it’s my turn to grin at him.

Without looking away from my mate, I answer my daughter. “Because Daddy will be really happy to know that it’s time to go

peanut hunting.

I watch as Rik’s face breaks into my favorite megawatt smile.

“If you want to make Daddy happy, why don’t you tell him that you have my little

brother in your tummy?"

My head whips back to look at my daughter. "What did you say?"

She's looking at my stomach and she pats a spot on my right side, before looking at Rik. "Daddy, wouldn't you be happier to

know that Mommy has my little

brother growing in her tummy instead of going peanut hunting?"

Rik comes over to sit on the love seat with us, putting Lily in his lap. "Princess, why do you say Mommy has your little brother in

her tummy?"

"I can smell him. Can't you?" She says, looking between us.

"What does he smell like?" I ask her.

"Like hot chocate." She says, mispronouncing chocolate.

Rik and I look at each other over her head. Then he sets her in my lap on the left side and points to where she was patting my

stomach. "He's right here?" He asks as Kai pushes forward.

My daughter takes his finger and points to where she thinks her brother is. Rik leans down and sniffs. He sniffs in a small circle

around the area and then pushes his nose into my stomach right where Lily told him. When he sits up, he's looking incredulous.

"She's right. I can smell him, and he does smell like hot chocolate."

"See Daddy, I told you."

I look at Rik. "Her sense of smell is stronger than yours? And she doesn't even have her wolf yet?" I look back at my daughter

then at my mate. "What does it mean?"

He picks Lily up and holds her in his arms looking into her eyes and she puts both her hands on his cheeks. "I think it means we

have another Guardian in our midst."

Chapter 150

**This is Book Two of the Guardians Trilogy. While it can be read as a standalone book, there are references to events that

happened in Book 1. It is recommended that you read the first book, The Broken Warrior's Daughter, before reading this

one.

“Liam!”

I was almost to my car, almost didn't have to face that she chose him over me.

It had been a long shot. I knew Cara wanted to find her fated mate. It was an even longer shot when I realized that Rik was her

mate. But I still had to try. She is an incredible woman. She will make an amazing Luna. Just not my Luna.

I stop. I have to do this. I have to let her know that we can still be friends. Just not

now, not for a while.

I turn to her. Even in the dark I can see the tears in her eyes. She just found her mate but she's worried about me. Of course she

is. That's one of the many

reasons I wanted her.

“I'm sor...”

I cut her off. “Don't. You were always honest with me. I knew you wanted to find your mate and see if it would work. It was a risk I

was willing to take.”

I look up and make eye contact with Rik. He's

with me. It's more than I would be able to do Landing back, giving her this time

if I were in his shoes.

I look back at her and put my hands on her shoulders. “You always wanted to find your fated mate. Rik is a good man. He'll be a

good Alpha and a good mate to you. And if he isn't,” I look back at him, “You know where to find me.”

She sniffs, trying to rein her tears in. I wipe them off her cheeks with my thumbs before reaching into my pocket and pulling out

her birthday present. I'd had to really dig to find the pictures for the locket, but I found them.

“Happy birthday.” I say, handing her the box.

She unwraps her present and opens the box. She pulls out the locket and looks at me. “It's beautiful.”

“Open it.” I say to her and I watch as she opens it to find the pictures. One of her parents before she was born and one of them

together holding her as a baby in their arms.

Her hand goes to her mouth and the tears start to fall again. "Liam..."

I kiss her forehead. "I have to go away for a while. Take care of yourself."

I step back as Rik steps up behind her, wrapping his arm around her waist, looking at my gift. I see the surprised look on his

face. "Thank you. I know it. means a lot to her. To both of us."

I nod and turn back to my car. Without another word, I get in and begin backing out. They continue to stand there as I pull away,

but I don't look back. Now that I've lost my Luna, I need to focus all my attention on finding Eli Gunnar. It's time for the Banished

Beta to pay for killing my mother.