Chapter 0039

It's Friday and I'm really excited about today's gift. It took a lot for me to get it, and even pulling strings, I still had to fight for it.

After yesterday, I'm getting all kinds of side eyed looks from both my pack members and Liam's. There is no issue between our packs and it needs to stay that way, so I don't say anything, just put on my arrogant Alpha face and continue walking.

I'm at my locker getting books for class, not really paying attention, when hands come around me from the back and slide across my abdomen. I can tell by the scent of rosewater that it's Sheila. Have I mentioned I'm not a huge fan of the scent of rosewater?

"Alpha, I've missed you." One hand slides down the inside of my jeans to where she can touch me. "It's Friday and I was wondering if you'd like to party tonight. We had so much fun last week."

Last week, this would have been a completely welcome offering of a good fuck. Today it doesn't even cause my dick to twitch. Not only is my body not responsive, but the last thing I need is Cara seeing me like this and taking it wrong.

I grab Sheila's hand pulling it out of my jeans as I step out of her embrace. "Sheila. Nice to see you, but I have to get to class. As you might remember, tomorrow is my birthday, so I won't be doing any partying tonight.

"So, I'll see you tomorrow, Alpha, at your party?" She states as I start to walk away. "Sure." I say to get her to go away. I don't hear whatever else she says or see her smug smile as she turns to her friends.

The time is crawling today. By the time lunch rolls around, I'm nearly desperate to see Cara's reaction to my gift. 'She's going to love it.' Kai reassures me.

'I hope so, I'd hate to think we used our favor for something that she didn't even like.'

'Rik, it's a perfect gift, trust me. It tells her we know who she is, understand what she needs and wants and that we value her for the person and wolf that she is.'

'Ailduin wasn't thrilled to part with the book.'

'He would have been less thrilled if his son had died in that explosion three years ago.' Kai remarks.

'Which is why I know he'll deliver today.'

I watch as Cara enters. I can tell she thinks that her suitor was scared off by Liam yesterday. Not a chance Little Guardian. I'm here to stay. She looks disappointed until the room goes quiet and then the buzz of chatter starts almost immediately. Most wolves have never seen a fae. They are rare and don't particularly like werewolves, feeling that our lives are too violent. They prefer to live peaceful lives among the humans, typically identified as 'tree-huggers, hippies or free spirits'. For wolves, there is no peaceful life among humans, not unless we hide who we really are.

I watch as Ailduin walks to Cara, confirms who she is and then, after the briefest of hesitations, hands her the book.

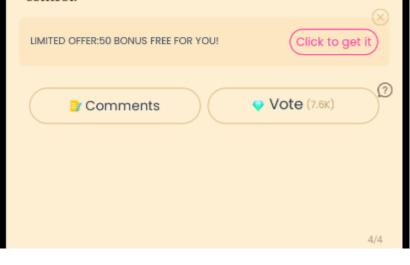
The book has been in Ailduin's family, the royal fae family, for generations. The only reason I know that it even exists is because I happened to see it when I returned Aolis, Ailduin's son, to him after finding him in a hunter's bunker. The hunters knew that we had found them so they were trying to get rid of the evidence by bombing the building, letting it and all the supernatural inhabitants burn alive.

I was there with my father searching for some of our missing pack members. We had gotten intel from



another wolf pack that the hunters were kidnapping supes and bringing them to the bunker for experiments. It was a multi-pack effort, but the hunters realized we were there when we tripped their alarm system. The bombs started going off almost immediately, as if they were on a trip wire. Five wolves ran into the building, using a hole in a wall that had blown open with one of the bombs. I wanted to go, but my father refused to let me enter the building.

It was chaos. The screams of those who were burning alive still haunt my dreams. But, they did what we could and saved many supernaturals that day, Aolis included. He was just a boy, so my father had me take him back to his family to make sure he made it safely while he and the other pack leaders did damage control.



Chapter 0040

When I met with Ailduin, it was in his study. It was there I saw the book. I thought it odd at the time that he had a book about the history of the werewolf guardians, but I didn't think much of it as I had other, more important matters to worry about, such as making sure our pack members were okay. Ailduin told me that he was in my debt. Honestly, I never expected to request the return favor. I didn't do it to have something to leverage against his family, I did it because it was the right thing to do. Aolis was only 5 years old at the time.

Afterward, when I had time to think about it, I started searching for a copy of the book, thinking it would be good to have. After searching for almost a year and finding nothing, I approached my father about it. That is when I learned that there is only one book like it in existence, written by the Guardians, for the Guardians. I'm still unsure how Ailduin's ancestors got a copy, but now it's where it should be, in the hands of a werewolf guardian.

I watch as Cara once again asks about a card. There was no way Ailduin was going to act as a "delivery boy" for me. I was lucky to get him to deliver the

book. The only reason he did is because it is so valuable, he would never trust it to just anyone. And I had to promise him that it was going to a Guardian, the true keepers of the book.

But, I do agree with him, the book speaks for itself. No card needed. When he announces to me that the debt is paid, I very softly agree with him, knowing the hearing of the Fae King is better than most wolves.

I watch the shock that plays across Cara's face as she unwraps the gift. She knows exactly what it is and how precious it is. Her quiet 'thank you' has Kai purring in my head. The gift is perfect.

As she clutches the book, she looks around and meets my gaze. Does she realize that it's from me? There are very few individuals that could pull this off. Well, in truth, only one. Me. But she probably doesn't know that. I nod my head in acknowledgement of her thanks. Maybe then she'll realize that it was me. That I know exactly who she is and how special she, Artemis and her family are to the pack, my family, but most especially to me and my wolf.

If she hasn't figured it out after today, there will be no question tomorrow.

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During training that afternoon, everyone is talking about my upcoming birthday party. It's not every day that an Alpha turns 18. Of course, everyone wants to know if I think I'll find my mate and who it might be.

Dean comes up to me after training and tells me there's a betting pool for my mate. Sheila has apparently told everyone that she thinks I'm her mate, so she's in the top 5, along with a couple of the other she-wolves that I've been involved with. I'm only interested because Cara is also in the top 5.

"Cara, huh?"

"Yeah, well," Dean responds, watching me intently. " We still don't know who her mystery man is and you are still in the top 2 contenders."

"Who is the other person in the top two?" I ask, knowing Liam has been eliminated from the pool now.

"Chase, of course."

I nod my head and walk toward the forest. I want to get to Cara's to see how things are going with Liam. It's been difficult to focus on training while trying to manage my jealousy that he gets this special time with her.

I arrive near their house just in time to see Mr. Nelson



heading inside the house from the indoor training facility. Not seeing Liam or Cara, I move to get closer to see if they are still training inside. I was hoping they'd be outside, but this is better. They won't hear or smell me from inside the building.

As I get closer, I feel Kai getting restless and angry. I tune in more closely and realize what he's heard that I didn't. Cara is moaning and Liam is growling in pleasure.

I have to fight Kai and I'm about to lose control when I see them walking hand in hand toward the house. I take hold of Kai and settle in to wait.

