

Fated out Chapter 49

49 The perfect way to unwind...

Lyla *w@w.N@V@L.W@r.m.com*

I threw my arms up, bracing for the impact, my heart hammering against my ribs. I could feel the creatures' hot breath on my skin...

And then I woke up.

My scream tore through the air, as I bolted upright in bed gasping for breath. My clothes were soaked and plastered to my trembling body like a second layer, my heart still racing as if I hadn't yet realized the dream was over. *wWw.N@v@lW@r(m).com*

I looked around wildly, looking for the stick, my chest heaving... it took me a moment to realize I was no longer in the forest. The familiar surroundings of the guest room in Xander's house slowly came into focus the soft glow of the bedside lamp, and the rumpled sheets tangled around my

legs. *w@w.(n)@v@lW@rM.com*

But something was wrong. I wasn't alone.

Sitting on a recliner in the corner of the room, watching me intently was Xander.

"Xander?" my voice was hoarse and my throat was still raw from screaming. "What... what are you doing here?"

He didn't respond. A chill ran down my spine. There was something... off about the way he was looking at me. His eyes seemed to glow in the dim light, reminding me of...

"No!" I cried out, scrambling backwards on the bed. For a heartbeat, just the briefest of seconds, I saw something else in Xander's eyes. The eyes of that creature the one that had attacked me – the same eyes I had seen on the man that had come to my bedroom the last time I had my heat... although Nanny had said it was her.

And then I screamed... opening my mouth as wide as I could.

My scream pierced the silence and within seconds, my door flew open with a bang as someone rushed in fumbling for the light switch. As the room flooded with sudden brightness, my screaming intensified, my eyes wide with terror when I saw it was Xander, holding a spoon.

"Lyla!" he called out, rushing to me, but I screamed louder pressing myself at the head of the

bed.

Every part of my body was trembling now. I pointed to the now-empty recliner in the corner of the room. "You... you were just there!" I gasped, my voice hoarse and shaky. "You were sitting right there just now. How did you...?"

Confusion clouded Xander's features, his brows furrowing as he glanced between me and the chair. "What? Now! I wasn't in here," he sounded both confused and concerned. "I was in the kitchen, trying to make you dinner." *Www.n@v@l@o@r.m.com*

That was when I noticed he had an apron on and it was splattered with various cooking stains, flour dusting the front and the faint smell of food. "I came when I heard you scream."

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My chest heaved as I blinked rapidly, my mind struggling to process the conflicting information. I had seen him, hadn't I? Sitting there, watching me with those intense eyes as that creature but Xander who was standing at the doorway, with concern on his face felt nothing like what I'd

awakened to.

"But... I saw you... you were," I whispered trailing off as I rubbed my arms, trying to shake off the lingering fear. Had it all been part of the dream? "You were right there."

Xander shook his head and approached my bed, stepping cautiously, his hands held out in a calming gesture. "It's okay, Lyla. You must have been dreaming. I promise I wasn't in here."

As he reached the edge of my bed, he hesitated, I could see he was trying not to scare me but something in me craved comfort and needed to feel safe. I reached out and Xander didn't hesitate to gather me into his arms.

As soon as his strong arms enveloped me, the terror that had gripped me began to subside His familiar warmth, and the steady beat of his heart beneath my ear soothed me. I could feel myself relaxing in his embrace. I let out a shaky sigh, pressing deeper into his arms.

"What happened?" he asked softly, his hand running soothing circles on my back. "What's got you so spooked and, in my house, too? Was it those Panthers? Did you see them?"

"No!" I murmured. "I had a terrible dream, it was so real... for a moment, it felt like I was back to the pack and in the Northern Forests where I was attacked by Feral wolves," I leaned away from him, meeting his gaze. "I didn't tell you before but just before I came back to the human world, I was attacked after..." I swallowed hard "My mate told me to become his sex toy and live in some abandoned house by the edge of the pack."

"Feral wolves?" he asked gently.

I nodded. "Not just them... they also came with a creature, clad in white. Last time, I wasn't able to see its face but it was visible this time around and it spoke to me and said a lot of strange words. Said I was the Moonsinger and should go back to my mother... it felt so real," I sighed leaning into his chest again.

"Trinax!" his chest hummed as he said softly.

"What?" I pulled back

"A "Trinax," he repeated, brushing the hair from my face "I'm sorry, I wasn't there to protect you. I'm so mad at myself right now."

I chuckled, feeling light. "It was a dream, Xan... there is no way you could come protect me even if you wanted to, don't be angry. By the way..." I paused, a puzzled expression on my face,

"What's at Tri..."

"A Trinax," he finished "They lead a cluster of Ferals... they're always together."

"Like a shepherd leading sheep?" I asked.

"Something like that," he nodded as he flashed me a quiet smile.

"What did it want with me though? Ahh..." I shook my head trying to clear the images of his

from my thoughts "It felt on real"

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He pulled me close to himself again, his hands sliding up and down my arms as if he could physically rub the fear out of my body. "It was just a nightmare, Lyla," he said softly. "Your mind was playing tricks on you. The fight with Nanny must have stirred up some old emotions, maybe triggering the memories of the attack. It's normal after something like that."

I nodded slowly, wanting to believe his explanation. But a nagging doubt lingered in the back of my mind. It had been months since the attack and I'd never dreamed about it before. Why now? And what about the voice that claimed to be my wolf? It didn't feel like a simple replay of past

events.

I closed my eyes, trying to concentrate on the voice, to see if it was really in me like it claimed.

"Are you there?" I murmured silently.

I waited for a few minutes, trying hard to concentrate but nothing... Wolf Indeed! I scoffed inwardly. It was all a ruse. Xander was right, maybe it was my past traumas playing.

Suddenly, Xander stood up, clapping his hand together.

"I know exactly what you need!" he announced, a mischievous grin spreading across his face.

I eyed him warily, not sure what to make of his sudden enthusiasm. "What?" I asked staring at him with a mix of curiosity and apprehension in my voice.

Xander's grin widened. "It's a surprise," he said, his eyes twinkling with excitement. "The perfect remedy for nightmares and bad moods. Trust me, I'll make you forget all about that dream."

I raised an eyebrow, crossing my arms over my chest defensively. "I'm not in the mood for surprises, today, Xan"

"You will love this one, darling," he pinched my cheeks lovingly. "Trust me."

Despite my lingering unease, I found myself getting intrigued by this mysterious surprise and Xander's enthusiasm was infectious.

"Okay," I said managing a small smile. "What do I need to do?"

"Get dressed, he instructed, already backing towards the door. "Something nice, but comfortable and sexy..." his eyes ran down the length of my body suggestively, causing me to take a sharp inhale of breath. "Meet me downstairs in twenty minutes."

Long after he left, I sat on my bed, still shaken by the nightmare and the lingering fear of what I'd seen – or thought I'd seen. The idea of leaving the safety of my room, even for Xander's so-called surprise felt daunting.

But staying here, alone with my thoughts, didn't seem like a better option either.

Then again, I was here to live my life on my own terms, wasn't I? To experience new things and make my own choices? This surprise of Xander's, whatever it was, seemed like the perfect way

to unwind.