

Chapter 18

Lily

It had been one week since the 'incident' in Dimitris room. I threw myself into activities in order to avoid thinking about it. Clint had agreed to start training me- I'd never been allowed to train at my old pack, and I was desperate to learn. I'd been keeping company with Greta, Hazel and even Thara at the hospital. I picked up a few tricks on treating wounds with her and decided to add it to my list of interests. Maybe I'd work there officially someday. Goddess knows I'd had more than enough practice cleaning and bandaging my own wounds over the years. Setting broken bones was nothing new to me, something Thara learned about me but did not comment on.

The weekend loomed and all my friends had plans. Plans they had invited me to get in on, and that I'd declined. As much as I was enjoying my new life, (save one person), I was still extremely shy about meeting new people. My little group wanted to attend a club Saturday night, which was way out of my comfort zone. Especially when I learned that most of the pack frequented that particular spot on the weekend to let loose. I knew I wasn't ready for that yet, so come Saturday night, I was holed up in the gym training by myself. I'd completed fifty laps on the track which I was extremely proud of, and was now lifting weights.

"We've gotten so much stronger." Said Aya.

"I know. It's awesome!" I replied.

"We would have gotten here eventually, but thank the Moon Goddess for blessing us with this body sooner rather than later."

"Agreed."

Thinking I should move onto the next set of weights, I placed my current ones in the holders and sat up. Sweat dripped from my forehead but it didn't bother me. I liked working out, more than I thought I ever would. The feeling of being stronger made me proud. Like maybe I could actually step into my role as Luna and be worthy of it someday.

"You look like you could use a water."

An unattractive yelp left me as I jumped to my feet and spun around. An unfamiliar guy was leaning against the weights, arms crossed. He was pretty average looking. Brown hair, blue eyes, lean but muscular build and ripped faded blue jeans with a black t-shirt. His skin was a nice olive color, but it might have been the only attractive quality about him. The way he was looking at me made me uncomfortable too, like I was a juicy cheeseburger and he was a starved man.

"What are you doing here?" I asked.

The guy laughed and the sound put me on edge. He sounded like one of the villains from the Disney movies Hazel and I had been watching.

"This is the gym, right? Anyone can be here."

I shook my head. "No, I mean... I thought everyone was out at the club tonight."

"Most are. I've been there so much; it's become a little boring. I thought I'd try something new tonight." He said.

I looked him up and down quickly. "It doesn't seem like working out is anything new for you."

He smirked. "It's not. But working out on a Saturday night? That is new."

"Oh."

He stared at me with that starved look again and I remembered I was only wearing a pair of black leggings and a blue sports bra. I suddenly felt very exposed and crossed my arms in an attempt to show less skin.

"You seem nervous." He stated.

"No." I denied quickly. "I just wasn't expecting anyone to join me. But uhm, you can use the weights if you want. I'm done with them."

"Thanks very much."

I nodded and turned to leave. Halfway to the door I heard him call me.

"Yes?" I turned and looked at him.

"It was nice to meet you, Luna."

I blinked. "You know who I am?"

"Oh yes. How could I not know the woman who got me kicked out of my position?"

My heart stopped, and then picked up double time. Holy shit, this was James? No wonder I didn't recognize him from anywhere. I didn't make it habit to seek out scum, so I'd never met him. And Hazel had never given me a description of the guy, other than his personality.

"You look surprised Luna."

His tone was no longer friendly- in fact, it was cold. Aya went into alert mode and I did the same. Instinctively, I turned my body to face him fully, the way Clint had taught me.

"Do I?" I asked.

James nodded. "You didn't think we wouldn't meet eventually?"

"I haven't thought about it really."

"That's too bad." He straightened up and took a few steps in my direction.

"Because I've been thinking about you a lot lately."

My feet carried me backwards at his words.

"Why?"

He scoffed. "How could I not be curious about the woman who has our Alpha wrapped around her little finger? I'm not the only one either. Dimitri has been acting different since you showed up."

Ignoring that last part, I replied, "I don't have him wrapped around my finger."

James stopped a few feet from me. His eyes were ice blue and flat.

"Oh really? Then explain something to me. How is that our Alpha never said a word about who I fuck until you show up, huh? I've been with tons of women in this pack. Suddenly, we get a Luna, and their all claiming abuse and I get demoted!" He practically yelled.

My reaction to his outburst was totally unexpected. As his words processed, a laugh burst from my chest and out of my mouth.

"Are you serious? Your demotion had nothing to do with me James. It was the result of your own stupid, shitty choices. Dimitri never said anything because he didn't know exactly what you were doing, all the disgusting ways you were using and manipulating the women of the pack. Taking them to the packhouse, to the Alphas floor, to have sex. Yes, I had a discussion with him about it, but you didn't really think he wouldn't have found out eventually? Even if I had never come into the picture?" I shook my head.

"You stupid bitch, you ruined everything!" James's spit.

"No, all I did was help put an end to you abusing women." I shot back.

James laughed humorlessly. A shiver ran down my spine.

"Can we leave now?" Aya said.

"Rule number one- never turn your back on an enemy. And he's definitely our enemy."

"Pfft. Like he could take us down."

"He could take me down Aya."

"True. So let me out."

"Not yet."

"You think you're so brave Luna. So good and strong? Yet, you were stupid enough to make an enemy your first week here. And also, stupid enough to come to an empty building, alone, when everyone else is out."

I gulped nervously. I hated to admit it, but he had a point. He took another step and everything Clint had taught me so far washed away, replaced with my old instincts. Turning, I ran for the door, a scream ready in my throat. Suddenly my feet left the ground and I was thrown backwards, landing on my back with a painful gasp.

"Fuck! Lily, we have to shift!"

I barely registered Ayas words when James threw himself on top of me, pinning my arms to my sides. Regardless, I struggled against him but even I knew it was a lost fight. He had years of training; I had one week. And if I shifted right under him, I could actually kill him. I didn't want to kill anyone, not even a parasite like James.

"Not so strong now, eh?" A sharp sting ran across my cheek and my face whipped to the side as James slapped me.

"Fuck you!" I yelled.

He slapped me again before roughly grabbing my face, forcing me to look at him. His eyes held pure fiery rage. Fear gripped me.

"Be careful what you wish for. Because of you, I haven't gotten laid in a while."

My breathing stopped. Adrenaline kicked in and I bucked my hips in an attempt to throw him off. I twisted and writhed under him, desperately attempting to get my hands free.

"Stop struggling! You can't win."

"Get off of me! Help! HELP!" I screamed. James slammed his hand over my mouth.

"Shut the fuck up!" He hissed. The next second, I sank my teeth into his hand causing him to howl in pain. "Fucking bitch!"

His fist connected with my stomach, winding me. While I gasped for breath, he grabbed a fistful of my hair and yanked. I winced in pain and lust shone in his eyes. He was getting off on this, my pain. Goddess he really was a sick son of a bitch! James leaned down to my ear, his breath fanning my cheek and I shivered in disgust.

"I heard Dimitri hasn't touched you yet. So, either you're playing hard to get, or he's simply not interested." He chuckled. "Both are fine with me. I'd hate to have his sloppy seconds anyways."

The hand that wasn't holding my face swept down over my shoulder and down my arm. When he reached my stomach, I whimpered in fear. Panic rushed through me so strongly I began to feel dizzy. James moved his hand higher by inches, prolonging my torture until he was cupping my breast. I choked back vomit and tears at the same time- I would not give him the satisfaction of seeing either.

"Oh yeah, I'm going to enjoy you baby."

Closing my eyes, I went to my happy place. Maybe I would survive what happened next if I stayed there indefinitely.