

## Chapter 33

Lily

"Let me get this straight. You want me, by myself, to go into witch territory, if I can even find it, and try and persuade a witch to come help us?" Ben stared around the room, looking at each of us in turn.

"That's the gist of it, yes." Dimitri replied.

"Again, by myself?"

"You are my Beta, are you not?"

"Well, yeah, but-"

"It's not with the intent to harm you, Ben." I interrupted him. "They already don't trust us. It would look much worse if it was you and bunch of warriors."

He clenched his jaw and turned to Dimitri. "Am I that replaceable to you?"

"Nobody could replace you, Ben. And nobody is going to. I'm trusting you with this above anyone else because, I know you will be fine. Even if you don't bring a witch back, I'll know you did your best for my ma- for our pack."

Bens eyes softened as he glanced between the two of us, finally sighing heavily.

"I'll go pack. I'll leave in the morning."

"Luke, go with him and draw out some maps from your research."

Both nodded and bowed slightly to Dimitri. Then, surprising me, they gave me the same gesture before leaving. I sent up a prayer to Celeste that,

even if he wasn't successful, that Ben would return home to us safely. That's what mattered the most. I stood, every nerve on edge. Going for a run sounded really good right now.

"Want to go for a run?" I asked Dimitri. He perked up almost instantly.

"Absolutely."

Together we left the packhouse and went to our usual spot. I didn't waste any time finding a tree to change behind, shifting into Aya.

"Have fun, but don't go too far this time. Okay?"

"Like anyone could me down."

"Aya."

"Alright fine."

I gave up control and watched silently as her and Ajax played and ran together. They'd made a route through the forest, but it seemed like Ajax was in line with my thinking, not going as far as they usually did. While our wolves spent time together, I thought about my situation. It wasn't hard to figure out why I was the target- I was a Mother Wolf. And clearly this Gideon guy was watching the pack. Or at least the high-ranking wolves. It had me thinking, was that magic? Or was there a mole in our midst, spying on us for him? I really hoped it was magic, but I couldn't rule out any possibilities.

It was troubling, because that meant I didn't know who to trust. If I had to guess anyone, it would obviously be Jennine. She was the one who'd wanted me gone the most. But my dislike for her wasn't proof enough. I thought of my friends, unwillingly, and cringed at the idea that Hazel or Clint could possibly betray me. Greta was simply too kind-hearted; She didn't have a malicious bone in her body. Ben and Luke would do anything for Dimitri, so they were unlikely as well.

And Dimitri? Celeste had told me he'd only wanted a mate to make him stronger. I didn't think he'd get rid of me, not like this anyways. If anything, he'd just send me back to Snow Moon. More than that however, I truly didn't believe Dimitri would cause me any harm. His face when he realized that I was right earlier, that nobody was after him... If the solution was to lock me away in the basement for my own safety, I was positive he would do it. He seemed more than willing to do whatever it took to keep me safe.

I didn't know what that meant, for him or for us. Did he care about me? Did he want me? Or was he simply playing nice so he could complete the bond, getting what he wanted? Our day at the beach flashed in my mind; He'd been so amazing. That day, he was everything I wanted in a mate. Playful and caring, sweet and attentive. Loving, almost. But he'd pulled away from me, leaving me confused and hurt. I wasn't going to be an easy lay for him, like so many others. I wanted him to respect me.

"I'm tired." Aya panted.

"Already?"

"Lily, it's midnight. You've been in your own world for hours."

"Shit. Sorry Aya."

Running back to our spot, I shifted behind my tree, getting dressed. Dimitri was waiting for me when I walked out and we walked side by side to the house.

"Thanks. I needed this."

"Me too." He replied.

When we reached our respective doors, I bid him goodnight and entered my room. Only to stop short, my jaw dropping. I surveyed the room, twice. Three times.

Where was my stuff?

"Dimitri?" I called. He appeared in the doorway, leaning against it.

"Oh, that. Yeah, you're not staying in here anymore."

"What?"

"You're staying with me from now on." His tone was nonchalant, like he hadn't just dropped a bomb on me.

"Come again?"

"If someone wants to take you in your sleep, then they'll have to take me too. And no, it's not up for discussion."

"But... I need to shower." I replied stupidly.

"I have a shower. And all your stuff is in there already."

"How-?"

"I asked some Omegas to do it while we were out."

Anxiety pooled in my stomach. Sleeping with him, in his bed? Nu-uh. No way.

"Can you stop overthinking for once?" Aya said.

"Aya, I can't!"

"You can. Just close your eyes and sleep like every other night."

"With him?!"

"Goddess, do I need to take control just so we can sleep beside our mate?! Stop being a baby Lily!"

I 'hmped' at her, but didn't argue. Dimitri wasn't giving me a choice anyways. He opened the door to his room for me, and his scent hit me like a wall. I inhaled deeply, letting it calm me a little. I found my gaze travelling towards his huge bed again, just like last time. And just like last time, I started to fantasize about all the things we could do on it.

"Bathroom is over there. A pair of your pajamas are laid out on the sink. Take your time." Dimitri moved around the room, taking off his watch, putting his phone on its charger. He seemed totally comfortable, like this wasn't a huge deal.

"Thanks." Did I just squeak?

Ducking my head so he wouldn't see me blush, I dipped into the bathroom and shut the door. His bathroom was almost identical to mine, only bigger. At least I wouldn't have to ask him how to run his shower. However, I was acutely aware that I was naked with my mate only separated by a door. A door I hadn't locked. It made the shower far less relaxing, and I stayed in there longer than I usually would have, playing for time.

"You can't stay in here all night."

"I can try?"

I could almost see her rolling her eyes at me. Finally, I got out of the shower, taking my time to brush my teeth and putting on my clothes. The anxiety peaked again as I had nothing else to do but walk out and get in bed. With Dimitri. Goddess, help me.

Slowly opening the door, I switched off the light, blinking into the dark room. Dimitri was already in bed, his hands behind his head, staring at the ceiling. His jaw was ticking, and I thought maybe he was as nervous as I was? Crossing the room, I gulped when I saw he had no shirt on, and my eyes trailed down his body of their own accord.

"Coming in?"

His voice was heavy, huskier than usual. It sent a shiver down my spine that I couldn't ignore. Not trusting my voice, I nodded and hesitantly crawled onto the bed, pulling the covers over me. Turning onto my side away from him, I whispered a goodnight.

"Goodnight Lily."

Just close your eyes and sleep. Just close your eyes and sleep. Just close your eyes-

I repeated my mantra over and over in my head. At some point, it must have worked because my body relaxed and I drifted into unconsciousness.

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Sometime later, in the early hours of morning, I woke up covered in sweat, pain radiating throughout my body. My first thought was I had been taken, like James, but my fear was erased when I recognized Dimitris room. Another burst of pain caused a low moan to escape me, stirring my mate from his sleep.

"Lily? What's wrong?" His voice was thick with sleep, sexy as hell, and wetness pooled between my thighs almost immediately at the sound. What was wrong with me?

"I feel- Oww!"

I looked to Dimitri for help. He was awake and alert, his eyes darker than I'd ever seen them.

"Shit! You're in heat."

I was? Well, that sucked.

"What do I do?" I panted.

He bit his lip. The longer I stared at him, the more I thought I knew the answer. Shockingly, I didn't shy away from it.

I wanted it.

I needed it.

My mind was clouded with lust and all my fantasies of Dimitri. It gave me a sense of confidence I'd never experienced. Kicking the covers off, I crawled over the bed to him. I straddled his lap, his eyes going wide.

"Lily... I-I shouldn't. You're not thinking clearly."

"So?"

He swallowed, his Adams apples bobbing. "You just need a cold shower. That will help."

"I don't want a cold shower. I want something much, much hotter."

Dimitri closed his eyes, breathing hard. I took the opportunity to lean down and lick his neck, right where my mark should be. He growled, placing his hands on my hips. A tiny part of me was wondering where my resolve had gone. A few hours ago, I'd wanted his respect; vowed I wasn't going to be another notch in his headboard. Now, I was ready to take anything he wanted to give me and more. I craved it, like I craved the air to breath. It was all I could think about.

"Come on Dimitri. Show me what my Alpha can do." I breathed into his ear.