

Chapter 36

Lily

I stood outside Dimitris office, trying to get the words in my head to come together. After my heat broke, I'd avoided him until I no longer felt like a total whore. I mean, I'd thrown myself at him, literally. But he'd been right; I was so happy he hadn't given into me. He'd gained a lot of my respect. I'd slept at Hazels last night, not ready to face him yet, but she encouraged me to just rip the band-aid off. Come and apologize, and leave. Easy.

"Come in."

Taking one more deep breath, I turned the knob and walked in, avoiding his gaze.

"Hey. How are you feeling?"

"Fine." I replied quietly.

He motioned for me to take a seat, so I did. Folding my hands in my lap, I looked at my shoes.

"You wanted something?" Dimitri asked.

My mouth opened. Closed. I licked my dry lips, trying to get myself together.

"I uh, -" I cleared my throat. "I wanted to apologize." I spoke quickly.

"What for?"

"For... you know." My cheeks felt way too hot. I probably looked like a tomato.

Dimitri raised his eyebrows.

"For what happened. The other night."

"When you attacked me in a lust and hormone induced frenzy?" His lips twitched, like he was trying to hide a smile, and impossibly, my face grew redder.

"Yeah." I squeaked. "That."

"Lily, you don't need to apologize. Your heat isn't something you can control. Nor how you act during it."

"Still." I looked at a picture on the wall. "You had to avoid your own room because of me."

"You know why I left."

I chanced a peek at him, seeing that he was gazing at me tenderly.

"Okay. Well, that's all I came to say." Standing, I quickly walked to the door.

"Lily."

Ah, so close.

"Dimitri, I really-"

"Lily, look at me."

Slowly, I turned back to him.

"I don't accept your apology, because there's no reason for it. You didn't do anything wrong."

"Sure, feels like it." I mumbled and he chuckled quietly.

"Do you wish it had turned out differently?" He asked.

"No. I'm glad you left. Now, anyways." I told him honestly.

"And I knew you would."

I thought for a minute, gathering my courage. "Do you?"

"No." He stood and slowly walked to stand in front of me. "Don't take that the wrong way, please. Just know I would never take advantage of you that way." He tucked my hair behind my ear.

I knew he was referring to me accusing him of not wanting me.

"Thank you. And I do know that. I trust you."

Our eyes met, his surprised.

"You do?"

"Yes."

Perhaps I didn't at first, but now? Okay, I didn't trust him one hundred percent, but what he did couldn't have been easy. It said something about him, about the kind of man he was. And I liked that man more and more. He smiled, happiness shining on his features. The unexpected expression caught me off guard and made my heart throb.

"I want to hold your Luna ceremony tomorrow night." He suddenly dropped on me. "I know it's not much time, but Thara agreed to take you out, get you ready. I'm arranging everything else."

"Uhm, okay." It's not like I could say no.

"Also, before you go..." He walked back to his desk, picking up a peach-colored piece of paper. "This is an invitation to the Alpha Ball."

That rang a dim bell. The Ball was held at Snow Moon one year, some ten years back. I'd been a child, but I remembered admiring all the Lunas, looking stunning in their dresses, like princesses.

"You're attending?" I asked. I took the paper from him, scanning it.

"I have to." His tone said he would rather do anything else. "I was hoping you would go with me? It is customary, but really, I just don't want to attend another one alone. It's brutal."

I pointed to the bottom of the invitation. "Is this the menu?"

"Some of it, yes."

"Yeah, I'll go."

Dimitri laughed openly, the sound like music.

"Anything else?" I smiled at him.

"No, I think that's everything." He sobered. I handed him back the invitation, his hand lingering on mine. "Come back to the room tonight."

"Okay."

I left feeling much lighter than before. On my way down the stairs, I bumped into Silvia.

"Luna Lily!"

"Hi Silvia. How are you?"

"I'm good. Better." She smiled.

"I'm glad to hear it. What are you doing here?"

"The Alpha gave me a job here!" She exclaimed. "Without Connor warrior salary, I had to move back in with my parents. Alpha came to see me, and was kind enough to offer me a job as a maid in the packhouse. I couldn't say no." She grinned.

My heart melted. "That's wonderful Silvia. I'm happy things are looking up for you."

"Thank you, Luna. For everything. I don't know what I would have done if you weren't here." She threw her arms around me, surprising me.

"I just did what anyone else would have." I said.

"No, you did more. Much more." She gave me another huge smile when she released me, saying she had to go back to her duties and we would catch up later. I felt a foreign feeling of pride well up inside me. Had I really had that much of an impact on her?

I walked to the pack hospital, a small smile on my face the whole way. Various pack members greeted me, excited by the news of finally having an official Luna.

"Hey you." Thara was signing forms when I located her.

"Hey."

"Come with me. There's a patient in two-oh-six who needs stitches."

I followed her brisk walk, sidestepping gurneys and people waiting to see other patients. Donning a pair of gloves and pumping some sanitization onto my hand, I followed her into a room with a grumpy looking guy, probably in his mid-forties. He had a deep laceration up his right arm, dried blood covering the skin.

"Hello Bill. What happened this time?" Thara asked as she examined the wound.

"That damned chainsaw got away from me again. I swear Thara, I'm going to sue the company!" I blew out angrily, causing his white beard to sway. He kind of reminded me of a not-so-cheery Santa Claus.

"I see Hayley already cleaned the wound. I'll get you fixed up and you'll be perfect in no time. Oh, this is my new assistant, Luna Lily." She gestured to me as she walked around the room gathering supplies.

"Luna?" Bill was surprised.

"Hello Bill." I said politely.

"Now what's the Luna of Blood Moon doing here?"

I shrugged. "I like helping people. Thara is teaching me."

He eyed me for a moment. "Well, pleased to make your acquaintance Luna Lily. Nice to see a fresh face 'round here."

"It sounds like you're here often."

"On a first name basis with most of the staff, it's true." He hissed as Thara applied the ointment to his wound. "Damn woman, that stings!"

"Call me 'woman' again, and I'll pour the whole bottle on it."

Bill laughed heartily while Thara and I smiled.

"Lily, do you want to do this one?"

"Really?"

"I think you're ready. You okay with that Bill?"

"I get the honor of being our Lunas first patient?"

"Yes sir."

"How can I say no to that?"

I sat on the stool, adjusting the light over Bills arm. I worked slowly, precisely. Just like Thara taught me. Pulling the thread through to close the skin, I made sure to keep them an even space apart. Bill was the perfect patient, never twitching or complaining. When I was done, I looked at Thara for approval.

"Very well-done Lily. It looks great!"

I beamed.

I went to wash my hands, throwing the gloves in the trash as Thara gave Bill the usual care speech.

"That man really needs a new hobby." She joined me at the sink.

"What does he do?"

"He carves sculptures from wood, huge ones. I don't know how gets anything done though, he's in here all the time."

Leaning against the counter I said, "Dimitri told me you had plans with me."

"I sure do. Meet me by my car tomorrow morning, around eight. No training, we're having a girl's day."

"Which entails?"

"Salon, spa, shopping. Not necessarily in that order. And then back here to get you ready for the ceremony."

"Everyone seems to know about it."

"Dimitri sent out a pack wide announcement. Most will be there."

She must have seen the nerves on my face because she placed a hand on my shoulder.

"It'll be fine Lily. I already think of you as my Luna, official or not. You're exactly what this pack needs."

"I'm not so sure."

"Trust me. Put aside your doubts and worries, for one night at least."

"I'll try."

She smiled and handed me a folder for another patient. I scanned it, trying to believe in myself as much as she seemed to.