

Chapter 52

Dimitri

"Excuse me?" Killian rounded on me, before looking at Lily.

Luna Esther waved her hand dismissively. "Nonsense! That girl is a known liar, always has been."

"We treated Lily with the utmost care and respect in our pack. Whatever she told you is a lie." Theo added.

"Oh really? Is that why she came to my home dehydrated, underweight and with marks covering every inch of her body? Was that care I saw when her cheeks were bruised and her lip was bleeding at our wedding?" I nearly shouted. Lily shifted uncomfortably beside me, and Ben threw me a look. I'd attracted the attention of some other guests, looking at us curiously. But I couldn't contain my anger, not with these people. The people who tortured and hurt my mate endlessly.

"Any marks she had were her own doing. The girl has problems."

"Yes, I'm sure she willingly took a silver knife to her own back." I spat.

"What?" Killian gasped.

"Dimitri, stop. Please." Lily whispered.

"What a load! Silver doesn't fade, and I saw no marks on her back."

"What lies have you been spreading about us?" Esther glared at Lily.

"I always knew you were ungrateful, but I never imagined you would tarnish my name like this!" Theo took a threatening step towards her.

I stepped into his path. "Back off. Now." I growled.

By now, almost everyone was listening to us, watching us. Evelyn pushed her way through the crowd, Phillip right behind her.

"What is going on?" Phillip demanded.

"Mom! Dad! What the hell?" Evelyn exclaimed at the same time.

"It's not us Evelyn! This one, -" She pointed at Lily,"-Has been telling tales about us! We're only defending ourselves!"

I scoffed loudly.

"Mom." Evelyn ground out; her jaw clenched. "Just leave it. Walk away."

Luna Esther grew red in the face. "I most certainly will not! I won't stand here and be accused of such horrid things!"

"It's not accusations if it's the truth!" Evelyn yelled. People around us gasped at her words.

"Evelyn!" Her mom said her name with horror; Theo said it with an undertone of warning.

"What? It is true! Lily was abused at our pack. By you, by dad, and by me." Phillips head swung to his mate, disappointment and shock on his face. "We beat her, whipped her, used silver on her. Dad even used a lighter to burn her hair off once. I'm not going to deny anything, not anymore."

That wasn't in the file I had. I wondered briefly if Ben had a lighter on him. Unlikely, since he didn't smoke, but I could hope.

"Evelyn, what are you doing?" Esther hissed.

"I'm telling the truth Mom. Lily didn't deserve anything we did to her. The best thing you guys ever did for her was letting her go to Blood Moon."

"You stupid little bitch!" Theo shouted at his daughter. "I gave you everything, treated you like a fucking princess, and this is how you repay me?!"

Before she could respond, he rounded on Lily. "And you! You just couldn't keep your mouth shut, could you?! No, you had to cry and snivel to your mate like the pathetic little weakling you are!"

Killian shoved Theo by his shoulders roughly. "Says the man who had to beat a little girl! What kind of Alpha are you?!"

Lily yanked her hand out my grasp. I finally looked at her, my heart wrenching as I saw her cheeks washed with tears.

Fuck.

"Lily-"

"Don't."

She walked away from me, grabbing Evelyn of all people, pulling her out of the room.

"You see! She claims abuse, but leaves with my daughter! She's clearly lying!" Esther continued to try and save herself.

"Your daughter apologized to Lily before you even got here!" Ben snapped. "She at least has some remorse; some sort of conscious!"

That got Phillips attention. "She apologized?" He asked.

"She did." I confirmed.

Hope sparked in his eyes.

"Leave." Theo turned his angry glare on me. "Get out. And don't ever cross my path again. Because if you do, I promise I will make you endure everything my mate endured by your hands, tenfold."

Fear clouded his eyes, before flattening back to anger. He grabbed his mates' hand and started to drag her with him.

"Theo!" Phillip called.

"What?!"

"Consider this the end of our alliance."

He turned so sharply; he almost threw his Luna. "You're married to my daughter!" He shouted.

"And I will stay married to her. But I want nothing to do with you, not anymore. You two are banned from my pack, and our trade agreement ends tonight. Get out of my territory." He snarled.

"Same goes for me!" Alpha Julian stepped forward, his Luna nodding her agreement. "I don't want to be associated with an Alpha like you."

"Me either!"

"Or me!"

A few other Alphas shouted out. Theo looked around the same before his eyes landed on me. Unfiltered hatred radiated from him.

"You'll pay for this. You and that little bitch mate of yours."

"LEAVE!" Phillip thundered.

Theo glared me a second more. Then he stormed off, nearly taking the door off in his haste. The room erupted with voices, questions and general disgust for the Alpha and Luna of Snow Moon. It wasn't the revenge I'd hoped for, but it was enough.

"Go. Find Lily, make sure she's okay." Ben nudged me. I nodded.

"Thanks. You too Killian."

"He had it coming for a while. I knew there was something off about that guy. What a piece of shit." Killian spit.

I left them together, focusing on finding my mate. I was glad Theo finally got called out on his shit, but I could feel that Lily was hurting over it. I couldn't even say I was sorry, because I wasn't. Killian was right; Theo had it coming. I exited the building, looking for any sign of Lily or Evelyn. I caught her sweet scent, following it. It led me through the same garden

we were in before, further in. I found the girls sitting on a bench together, talking quietly. To make my presence known, I cleared my throat.

"Can I talk to you?" I looked at Lily.

"I guess."

"I'll leave. I need to find Phillip anyways, explain to him." Her heels clicked on the stones as she walked past me. I took the seat she vacated, adjusting myself so I was facing Lily.

"I'm sorry." She said it before I'd even opened my mouth.

"What? No, you didn't do anything wrong."

"I overreacted. I was just embarrassed that my life was being put out there for everyone to see. I shouldn't have stormed off, I'm sorry."

"I understand."

She narrowed her eyes at me. "You're not going to apologize?"

"Nope. I'm sorry that you were upset, and that I didn't get to wring his useless neck. But that's all I'm sorry for."

She sighed. "What happened?"

"Well, Phillip is going to stay with Evelyn, but he banned her parents from Stone Lake. He also cut off their alliance, along with everyone else who was associated with them."

"Really?"

"It was incredibly satisfying to witness."

"Damn. Now I really wish I'd stayed." She laughed. I tucked her into my side, kissing her hair.

"Thank you. For being there for me, for having my back. I love you."

"I'll always be there for you Lily. I love you too."

"And you told me the Alpha Ball was boring."

"It usually is. This is by far the most fun I've ever had at this thing."

She smacked my arm, both of us laughing quietly. She grabbed my hand, playing with my fingers.

"I have a new ability." She whispered.

"What?"

"I think... I'm not sure, but it seems like I discover them when I'm emotional. It came out of nowhere."

"What is it?"

"I'll show you."

She sat up, climbing onto my lap. Taking my face in her small hands, she closed her eyes. I waited, curious. Then, an odd humming sounded in my ears. Lily scrunched her eyes tighter, concentrating hard. Suddenly my vision clouded, going black. I couldn't see anything, but I could feel everything. It was mildly uncomfortable, like touching a sunburn. I didn't understand what this ability was supposed to be until I felt a wave of emotions. Lily's emotions. They hit me as hard as a truck, more intense than even the mate bond. Instinctively, I knew she could feel everything from me as well.

I gasped for breath when my vision cleared, the garden surrounding us once more. Lily sat back, wiping sweat from her forehead.

"What was that?" I asked breathlessly.

"The best way I can describe it, is now I know Evelyn was telling the truth. I could feel her emotions, her intents. She really is sorry about how she treated me all those years, she really is trying to become better. Just like I know that you really aren't sorry about what happened with Alpha Theo. And I know there's something you're hiding from me."

She looked at me expectantly.

"I'm not hiding anything."

"Please don't make me do that again. It's exhausting."

"Fine." I sighed. "I got Luke to get information on Snow Moon. About your past. I'm sure there's more than what he found out, but I read enough to get the gist. I didn't want you to know, I figured you'd talk to me about it all when you were ready."

"You could have just asked me." She frowned.

"You haven't talked to anyone since you got here about it, not even my sister. I didn't think you'd talk to me, even if I asked."

Lily bit her lip. "You're right. I wouldn't have. But I will. Someday."

"No rush sweetheart. But you know it's not good to keep all of that inside. And I'm here for you."

"I know." She kissed my cheek lightly.

We stood together. I was going to suggest finding Ben and getting a drink but as I opened my mouth, a piercing scream echoed through the garden. A second later, the smell of blood coated the air around us.