

Chapter 62

Lily

I lay in my mates' arms for hours, finally somewhat content. The stress of everything in my life seemed to wash away for now. But just like the changing tides, everything came crashing back; In my case though, it was Dimitri who spoiled my mood.

"You should talk to him." He said. I'd thought he was asleep, my hand running over his chest. It came to a halt at his words.

"Excuse me?" I scoffed.

"You heard me. Lily." He rolled over, hovering above me, eyes meeting mine. There was no hint of sarcasm or joking in his depths. "I have lived without my dad for so long now. Not a day goes by where I don't wish he was still here with me, Mom too. But my parents are never coming back." He swallowed hard, his Adams apple bobbing. "Trust me when I tell you, you shouldn't give up this chance. Don't push him away."

"There's a difference though. Your parents didn't want to leave you." I snapped.

"Neither did yours!"

I rolled my eyes heavily.

"I'm not saying don't be mad. You have a right to be mad. But don't hate him for his mistakes. He hates himself enough for both of you."

My eyes narrowed at him. "You don't hate him, do you?" I gritted my teeth. Wasn't he supposed to be on my side?

"No, I don't. I can't. I can't hate him because he helped bring you into this world." He kissed my cheek.

"What about him abandoning me?!"

"I can't hate him for that either. Okay, maybe a little. But if he hadn't left you there, I probably wouldn't have found you. You don't seem to realize that he could have dropped you anywhere, the other side of the world even. If he hadn't left you at Snow Moon, we never would have met."

Okay, he had a point. A bit, I guess. But that didn't mean that I was going to rush off to my father's arms and forgive him for everything. Part of me wished I still had scars on my body, my back. The sadistic side of me wanted him to see proof of what he'd left me to face by myself. And a whole other part of me, mostly my wolf, wanted to give in and finally have the fatherly love I'd always wanted. I'd scolded Aya, but I couldn't fault her- even though Gideon wasn't a wolf, he was my dad. And so Aya felt a connection with him. Nothing like the mate bond, but a family bond. Since regaining my memories, she recognized him, wanting to be with our family.

I sighed. "Can we just not talk about this right now?" I pleaded with Dimitri.

His eyes hardened. "You can't run away from all your problems Lily."

"I'm not." I replied sharply.

"You are. You never want to talk about anything, nothing hard. Your past, your traumas, your abuse. You put it all on the back burner, locking it away. I'm your mate; You should trust me to talk to, to be open with me."

Anger bubbled up at his words. "Why can't you just drop it?!" I growled. "And you can't talk anyways! Have you ever explained the reasoning

behind your behavior towards me in the beginning? No! So don't preach to me what you can't practice!"

As soon as the words were out, Dimitri rolled off me. I was too angry to feel guilty. He sat with his back against the headboard, breathing hard while I made to get out of bed; I was hungry. But his words froze me in place half on and half off the mattress.

"I killed my grandfather." He deadpanned.

Slowly, I turned to look at him.

"What?" I whispered.

Dimitri gave me a hard look, anger and an array of other emotions burning in his eyes.

"My grandmother was my grandfathers fated mate. They met when she turned eighteen, she was an Omega in the pack. She worked in the kitchens; she made the best chocolate cake. Grandpa went down that night for a midnight snack and she was making a cake for another girl who had the same birthday."

"That's sweet." I mumbled.

But Dimitri scoffed loudly. "Not so much, actually." My eyebrows furrowed at his words. "Grandpa was disgusted to have such a weak mate. How could she be Luna, when she was simply an Omega? Not good for anything other than housework?"

He rolled his eyes, and I could tell he was quoting his grandfather's past words.

"He made it clear as soon as they accepted each other that she was his mate in name only. She was there to serve one purpose, and that was to make him a stronger Alpha. She would continue to work in the kitchens accept when he required her to be in his bed. She would produce him pups, but if they turned out to be weak like her, he would kill them."

I gasped audibly.

"Fortunately, grandma only had two children, two sons. My Dad, and his brother a year later. My uncle died when he was sixteen, at the hand of rogues. My Dad went on to become Alpha. His whole life, he watched his mother suffer when her mate screwed other women, hit her, raped her even. She was never seen as Luna of the pack, never given the respect and love she deserved. When my dad met his mate, he promised he would break the cycle. My mother was from a different pack, she was the daughter of the Gamma. Still low-class in grandpas' eyes. He wanted Dad to treat her the same way he treated grandma. To teach her place, to be seen and not heard."

Bile rose in my throat, and I had a hard time swallowing it down.

"Grandpa threatened to take the Alpha title away from my dad if he didn't comply. He was adamant that Lunas were more of a hindrance to a pack than a blessing. If an Alpha loses his Luna, it could literally drive him insane. He ordered my dad to keep his mate around to make him stronger, and that was all. But Dad didn't want that. He loved grandma, he didn't want his mate to have the same lonely life. And when they had me, he tried to shield me as much as possible from grandpas skewed views."

Dimitri took a long breath, blowing it out slowly before continuing.

"I didn't spend a lot of time with my grandpa. Or grandma. My parents made sure of that. The older I got, the more I understood why my parents wanted it that way. I thought he was sick, to have mistreated his mate so badly. A couple months before my parents died... I killed him."

"Why?" My voice was barely audible. Dimitris eyes held mine, holding me in place. I'd never seen too much hatred in them before.

"Because he killed grandma."

My eyes widened; the exclamation stuck in my throat.

"I was walking around in the woods when I stumbled on them. He was beating her mercilessly. After so long, so many years, she finally tried to reject him. And he killed her for it. I'm not sure why she did it then, instead of before. Maybe it was because of her kids, maybe it was because her grandkids. I never got the answer before she was murdered. He made her to accept the rejection before he did it too, so her death wouldn't affect him. He looked me in the eye standing over her corpse and said 'A mate is only good for one thing, to make you stronger. Your father is a fool; Sooner or later, that bitch will be the cause of his downfall.'" Dimitris eyes closed with the memory. His hands shook, balling into fists. "I didn't care if he was right or wrong, all I knew was he took the life of his mate. The one he'd abused for years. In a way, I think she might have been happy it was finally over. I remember warriors and my dad bursting in on the scene. I'll never forget the look on his face as he looked at his mother's dead body lying on the ground. I'll never forget his screams either. He loved her, unlike her mate. He ordered his own father's execution right there. But he was so shaken with grief, he couldn't do it. So, I did. I slit his throat and watched him die."

Tears welled in my eyes throughout his story. It was no wonder Thara and him were always so private about their family life. After learning their parents were dead, I simply assumed it was too painful to talk about, so I never pushed the subject.

"What about Thara?" I asked.

"She was far more protected than I was. Mom kept her around almost twenty-four seven, except for school. She didn't see or hear as much as I did growing up, thank the Goddess. She still knows everything, but I guess it affected her less than it did me."

I nodded, not sure what to say. But Dimitri wasn't done with his story.

"When my parents died, I spent a lot of time blaming myself. If I had been with them, maybe I could have stopped them from being killed. Or at least

one of them. I don't know. As the future Alpha, it was my job to protect members of the pack. And I failed. The two most important people in my life, aside from my sister, were ripped away from me, and... I got mad. At them, for leaving. At the Goddess for taking them. The rogues who killed them. Myself for not preventing it. I was just mad at everything, the world. I had to take on a huge pack way before I was ready, all by myself. So, then I got angry at you, my would-be mate, for not being there to help me when I needed it. I searched for a long time to find you, until I figured out the Goddess was punishing me for my parent's deaths. She didn't intend to give me a mate. So, I stopped looking.

My grandfathers twisted beliefs started to make sense to me. The world was cruel, heartless. It didn't care about my happiness. I strived to be the best damn Alpha for Blood Moon. I was merciless with our warriors; I whipped them into the best fucking army this side of the world. I took this pack to a whole other level, by myself. The only thing that would make us stronger was having a Luna. And when you finally came into my life, I was still so fucking angry at you for not being there before. And then I was angry that you were so weak, so fragile. Angry that I needed a strong Luna, and you were anything but. I didn't even want you anymore, you hadn't helped me achieve anything. I'd done it myself. You were here to serve one purpose."

"To make you stronger." I said. My voice was weak, his words were breaking my heart. I knew he loved me, but hearing how much he loathed me at first was hard.

"Yes." Dimitri paused. "But you weren't what I expected. I told you that Ajax says you remind him of my mother. But honestly, you remind me more of my grandmother. She was never overly strong, physically. But she was Firey, she had a fierce attitude. Throughout all her abuse, she never lost her spark, her spirit. She had no problem calling us out on our bullshit, and at the same time, she would tend to us if we were hurt or scared. She loved my mother like the daughter she never had, while

grandpa brushed my mother off. The little time I spent with her, I grew to love her a lot. You have the same spirit, the same spark. But just like her, you hide your trauma and focus on everyone else."