

Chapter 311

"Fuck!" she hissed through clenched teeth, landing on her back but rolling instantly to the right and coming back up before Mac could launch himself at her again. She was furious with herself for being caught napping like that.

"Try helping me rather than rolling over on your back in submission," she derided her wolf, her eyes flashing with annoyance. Her wolf growled and crouched down low, eyeing their male with irritation. He was a sneaky one but they were sneakier. He didn't know just what was about to hit him.

Mac's lips curled in a slight smile, watching the irritation in Ruminsky's eyes as he landed a blow. She really didn't like that at all. He'd been surprised when she'd countered his first attack so easily, sure she was distracted enough that he'd land his first blow.

He wondered what she'd been thinking of that allowed his second blow to connect. He'd naturally pulled his punch. Breaking her sternum wasn't the goal today but he'd packed enough of his strength into it to ensure it hurt -- a lot.

He watched the irritation fade from her eyes to be replaced by calm thoughtfulness. He was impressed by how quickly she regrouped. Perhaps she was as good as his men reported her to be. He was instantly on alert.

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When she moved, she was so fast, so graceful that for a fraction of a second he could only stare at her in amazement. He braced for her attack, watching alertly to gauge where she was going to try and catch him off guard. She was almost on him when she suddenly veered away, catching him by surprise.

That split second of inattention was all Lily needed. Her gaze locked with Mac's and she saw the almost imperceptible widening of his eyes. She blurred as if moving left, watched his head tilt in that direction to track her. Her fist slammed down hard as she immediately countered her movement, catching him on the side of his face. Her other fist hit him in the sternum in the exact place he'd caught her a moment before.

She was over his head, flying gracefully through the air and out of arm's reach a nanosecond after her blows had landed.

A startled gasp resounded from the spectators as Mac slowly shook his head and turned around to face the woman who had just done the impossible. No one had ever sucker punched the head of the Praetorians in that manner. Sure, he took the odd hit now and then when sparring, but Ruminsky had just made him look like a clumsy novice.

While he could acknowledge that she lived up to her impressive file, there was no way he'd let her get away with making him look foolish, even if that's how he'd behaved. His attraction to her had knocked him off balance and he'd tempered his initial blow because she was female. He was furious with himself for making such a rookie mistake.

"Never underestimate your opponent." His tone was factual, calm, and steady. It masked the lethal anger he was battling deep down. "And always learn from your mistakes."

Lily read the intent in his eyes but managed to keep her expression impassive. He was pissed and that meant this sparring match was about to get ugly. She would have to be at full strength to avoid being hurt, but she couldn't do that without Mac realising there was something different about her. An Elder at her supposed age simply could not beat someone as old as Mac.

"Crap, this is going to hurt, girl," she told her wolf with a sigh. "You need to follow my lead. Don't get pissed and try to shift." She took a deep breath and felt for her animal's agreement.

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She could hold her other half by sheer force of personality but she liked sharing equally with her wolf. She believed that was what made her so good when it came to fighting, her respect for her wolf and acceptance of her duality.

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Mac attacked before she got her animal's full agreement and she hissed as she was suddenly overcome by a thing of sheer beauty. Even as she dodged away from the vampire he was flowing through the air, all sleek muscles, deadly speed, and bone-crushing accuracy. Talons raked down her left cheek, slicing into her neck and hitting her collarbone.

"Sweet Jesus!" she groaned not even trying to counterattack, deciding to use her speed to get away from him before he could touch her again. Her face and neck ached and she could feel her blood flowing under her top and over the curve of her breast.

"You concentrate on keeping our scent masked while I work on healing," she told her wolf. She usually healed as quickly as vampires did but she wanted to make sure that nothing gave her away, so she split her concentration to ensure the wounds closed as quickly as they should.

Her eyes glittered as she kept her gaze locked on Mac's face. His expression was impassive but she could have sworn she saw his nostrils flare slightly, as if the scent of her blood was a weakness to him. Pity she couldn't let it flow longer and keep him off balance. Still, it would dry on her skin and hopefully tease him mercilessly.

So the gloves were off? Fire raced through her, adrenaline making her body coil with expectation. He'd drawn first blood but he would not get away with it. She would have the scent of his before their sparring session was over.

She smiled a slow, lazy smile full of respect and also a hint of amusement. She already knew Mac didn't like it when she smiled. He'd be pissed that she was amused by his little nail session on her skin.

"Have we finished pissing about?" she asked tauntingly. "Let's do it then, Mackenzie. I was starting to get bored with your little love taps." She crooked a finger at him insultingly. "Come and get me."

It had the desired effect. It shouldn't have. Mackenzie was too old and experienced to fall for a ploy as blatant as that but her quiet laughter, her deliberate taunting appeared to infuriate him. He came at her with talons out and fangs elongated. Lily suddenly had to use every single trick Gard had ever taught her to keep him at bay.*WwW.noV&ℓw(◊)rm.com*

They spun, slashed, and danced around each other in a flurry of strength and speed. Mac managed to land blows but nothing as hard as his last hit, just as her own blows glanced harmlessly off him as she attacked and then spun away.

Her male was lethal, poetry in motion as he parried and struck, twirling at superhuman speed to try and get under her guard. She danced towards him and then away, waiting for the moment when she could be close enough to draw his blood and be so quick about it that no one would notice her wolf claws coming out.

It was exhilarating, sheer joy to spar with her mate, to see and feel his strength flowing around her. She was strong and fast and she needed a mate who could keep up with her, who could earn her respect enough that she'd be willing to submit to him. Mac was proving to be everything she could need and more.