

Chapter 312

Lily finally got her opportunity, finally managed to slip under his defences while his huge body blocked her from the others. Her subtle shift was instantaneous, her wolf alert for it, sharp claw breaking through her fingertips. They imbedded deep into Mac's right side, punching hard and ripping down. Blood flowed, the rich, heady scent of it filling her nostrils and making her head swim.

She saw shock in his gaze, his lips tightening against the pain, then his black eyes turned feral and her heart thumped painfully hard in her chest. Agony like nothing she'd ever experienced ripped through her. Mac's talons tore through her shoulder as they stood locked together.

"Does that hurt, sugar?" he whispered, gritting his teeth as her claws flexed inside him, curling instinctively against the pain she was experiencing. "You don't know what real pain is, little girl."

Lily screamed hoarsely, white light exploded in her head as he ruthlessly dislocated her shoulder from within her body. Her claws retracted, her hand coming up to grip his wrist and pull him away. But Mac was already moving, releasing her as soon as she released him, backing up to watch her with cold, expressionless eyes.

The pain was excruciating and not something which would easily heal without some intervention on her part. He would expect the wound to right itself in the manner of vampires and that wasn't going to happen. She turned and blurred out of the clearing, vanishing into the surrounding trees.

She shadowed herself the moment she was sure she was alone, using the Vârcolac's unique skill of appearing invisible, unseen by the eye, their scent completely masked. Picking a spot, she stood silently so as not to give away her position.

Her shoulder was throbbing; her blood had stopped flowing but she needed to knock her shoulder back into place to complete the healing process and that was going to hurt. She also knew Mac was going to come looking for her.

Mac stood in the clearing trying to fathom just what had happened. Sparring could be tough at times and pain was a necessary teaching tool, but what had just occurred crossed the line, even for his tough standards.

He'd become frustrated with Ruminskey as they'd sparred even as he'd been impressed by how good she was, how she managed to block his attacks with such skill and precision. She'd been exquisite and deadly in her movements, catching his interest as both a fighter and a man, which was how she'd managed to pierce his side. He'd become distracted by her and left himself open to attack.

That had infuriated him and he'd lashed out to counteract her blow. Something dark and dangerous had passed through him as she'd clawed inside him. Her actions had enraged him. Inside his head he could hear a word chanting over and over again. Wrong. It was wrong for her to hurt him. He couldn't explain it but he had reacted to it.

Her resulting scream had pierced his soul. Somewhere deep inside him pain had blossomed and it had nothing to do with her talons clawing at him. It had felt wrong for her to hurt him but that was nothing compared to what it felt like returning the favour. It wasn't just wrong for him to hurt her; it was unforgivable.

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He'd released her at the same time she'd released him, trying to conceal his stunned shock. Her eyes were clouded with pain, her shoulder at the wrong angle. The scent of her blood was in the air, his hand red and slick.

Before he could say or do anything, she turned and vanished into the trees. Her retreat confused him and he could only stare at her as she disappeared. Then he took off after her, ignoring everyone else as he hunted down his prey. For the first time in a long time he had no idea what he was going to do with someone once he caught up with them, and he didn't like that one bit.

Andrea Ruminsky was messing with his head and he had no idea why he was letting her.

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Lily held her breath as Mac streaked past her. She followed his scent, waiting until he was far enough away before pressing her lips tightly together and ramming her shoulder into the large tree trunk beside her. More agony raced through her but she managed to contain her scream this time. She leaned on the strength of her wolf as colours pulsed behind her closed eyes and tears slipped down her face.

After a few moments, the pain receded and she flexed her shoulder carefully to check the injury. There wasn't even a twinge now that her healing abilities could complete the process. As she wiped at her wet face, her wolf growled in fury, livid with their mate for causing so painful a wound.

"It hurt like a bitch but we scored against him too," Lily soothed her beast. "He is lethal though, isn't he? An excellent match for us. I think he's almost as good as Dad and that's saying something."

She wanted to be pissed at Mackenzie for hurting her but she had to concede that he'd won that battle. True, she had been hiding some of her more enhanced abilities and he probably wouldn't have caught her off guard so easily if she'd been at full strength, but his skills had been impressive. Even she could admit to that.

She slipped through the trees carefully and returned to the clearing. All eyes were watching the tree line, waiting for the combatants to come back. The Praetorians appeared surprised that she sauntered in on her own. She opened up her abilities and tested their emotions. Interesting! Shock, concern, surprise, and also respect. Something told her the recent sparring session had not turned out as most sessions usually did.

Walking casually over to the open chest, she inspected the many weapons contained within. Was her test over or would Mac expect to continue when he returned? She pulled out a short sword, balancing it on her palm. Would fighting him with weapons be a smart move? The man was lethal enough with his talons; things might get out of hand if they moved on to swords and knives.

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She felt Mac approach and turned to watch him stride back into the clearing. His expression was neutral, his black eyes devoid of emotion as a slight breeze rippled through his inky locks. He looked like an avenging fallen angel, all dark menace and evil intent as he came to stand before her.

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