

Chapter 320

A loud "Fuck you," followed by a rude hand gesture was all the answer she got. The rest of the room burst out laughing.

Vampires were a strange bunch. When they weren't beating the crap out of each other or someone else, they were either having sex or getting drunk and partying, which usually required an enormous amount of alcohol because their metabolism burned it off so quickly. For some reason Lily had thought the Praetorians would be different what with their 'holy' mission to protect the Vârcolac. It would appear they were just like everyone else.

Mac stayed away as long as he could but eventually the noise drew him downstairs. About the only time his people had a social night off was when they welcomed new recruits. It had been a long time since they'd increased their numbers and it sounded as if his team was making up for lost time.

He stood in the doorway, his eyes searching for Andrea. She was dancing with one of her team, the dark-haired one he'd watched her laughing with outside from his bedroom window. They had seemed close then and appeared even closer now. Brandon's arm was snaked around her slender waist, his lower body grinding against hers suggestively.

Both were laughing and clearly under the influence of alcohol. Considering the party had been in full swing for a number of hours he wasn't surprised to see a few of the younger ones had already succumbed to a more drunken state. His longer-serving team members were obviously pacing themselves, ensuring some in the compound were still alert, just in case. He made a mental note of who they were so he could commend them later on.

The closeness between Lily and Brandon was setting his teeth on edge. He had to fight the urge to cross the room and rip her out of the other man's arms. The intensity of his proprietary and territorial reaction surprised him.

He didn't even know her, let alone want her for himself. He'd tried to make that abundantly clear this morning in his study. So he'd almost kissed her. She was beautiful; sexy with all the right curves in the right places. Most males would want a taste of her. Didn't mean they wanted to keep her.

Karn appeared beside them, slapping Brandon hard to the back of his head. His slap was powerful enough to snap the male's head forward at just the moment Andrea grabbed her wine glass and put it to her mouth to take a sip. It was an accident waiting to happen.

Even as Mac was moving to intercede, Brandon's head banged forward, shattering glass against Andrea's face. The scent of her blood filled the air as did her unladylike curse. He reached the trio just as Brandon slumped to the floor with a groan and Andrea landed a punch on Karn's nose.

"Asshole," she yelled at his number two, blood running from the open cut on her cheek. A large shard of glass was imbedded in the wound, keeping it open.

Karn grunted, wiped the blood from his nose and then flipped her the finger. "No fornication!"

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"I'm surprised you know what the word means. Can't imagine why anyone would want to fornicate with a miserable old bastard like you."

Brandon groaned and pulled himself to his feet, using Andrea to steady himself. He was well out of it, grinning madly. "I've heard of glassy-eyed stares, Andi, but glassy cheeks? That's a new one, girl. Is this a new craze 'cos man, if it isn't you're gonna be a trendsetter!"

"Crap! You cut me?" Lily didn't know who to glare at in outrage. Okay, so it was Brandon's thick skull that had broken the glass, but if Karn hadn't hit him in the first place his head wouldn't have connected with the glass.

She had to think this one through—slowly. She'd had a few too many. She'd been smart enough to hand over control of her safeguards to her wolf before she'd decided to get plastered. Her animal was keeping her scent masked for her and ensuring she didn't try to shift into wolf form accidentally. She'd been known to do that before when drunk.

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Pain in her cheek washed over her and she tried to concentrate on what she was doing a moment ago. Oh yeah, that was it, she was working out who she was going to punch for cutting her face. She glared at Karn and he glared back with four eyes.

"That is so fucking unfair, Karn. Four eyes are just so not allowed. You're a complete freak of nature." She squinted at him, leaning forward slightly. "Is that blood on your nose?"www.NoVLeLwOr©M.Com

"You should know you punched me, Ruminsky," he growled back at her trying to keep a straight face. Four eyes? She was totally wasted.

"I did?" she echoed, looking very pleased with herself. Her fist struck out and she caught Brandon on the side of the head. He groaned and went down again. "Guess it was his turn then," she smiled and then hiccupped loudly.

The sudden movement made her cheek sting and she raised her hand to find the offending piece of glass that was seriously killing her alcohol buzz. A hand wrapped around her wrist instantly, large and so warm she uttered a startled gasp. Lily turned around slowly and found herself staring up into Mac's dreamy black eyes.

Mac wasn't sure whether to laugh or scoop her up in his arms and take her somewhere where he could shake the living daylights out of her. Andrea's blood was flowing openly from her cut face, sliding down her neck and seeping under her red tank top. She was clearly so drunk she could barely stand and yet she'd managed to successfully punch out two of her contemporaries.

"I'll take it from here, Karn. Make sure Brandon gets to his room okay."

"You came to the party," Lily breathed. She leaned into him at such an acute angle he had to wrap his remaining arm around her to keep her upright.

A shudder went through her body and she uttered a small moan under her breath. His arms felt so good around her, well his one arm did. His other hand had a tight grip on her wrist for some strange reason.

"Come on," Mac said through what sounded like clenched teeth.

She squinted up at his face but his expression appeared totally bland. She said the first thing that came to her mind. "At least you don't have four eyes. There's something really dodgy about your friend Karn. I'd watch him if I were you."

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Mac's lips twitched. He didn't want to find this amusing but her earnest expression was so adorable it was hard not to smile. "I'll bear that in mind, Andrea. Now come and let me get you cleaned up and ready for bed."

"But..."

"No buts, sugar," he sighed, lowering his mouth close to her ear. "You don't want to piss me off again do you?"

Lily gulped audibly and trembled. "No sir, Mackenzie," she whispered fervently. "The last time you ripped my shoulder to shreds and that hurt like a bitch. It hurt so much I even cried. I fucking hate crying. It's such a wimpy thing to do."

His body tensed at her words, his arm tightening around her. He raised his head and looked into her face again. Her eyes were huge in her head, liquid chocolate with golden swirls. He'd hurt her so much she'd cried? Just the thought of it made him feel like a bastard. He knew she would never have admitted that if she'd been sober.