

## Chapter 323

"Mac? Did you bring the blood?"

He swallowed hard and crossed the room slowly, working to even out his breathing. Lily looked like a tempting goddess but there was also an air of innocence about her too. She may be dressed for sin but she was under the influence of alcohol and not in control of actions. He would never dream of taking advantage of her.

"Here," he answered his voice sounding gruff in the quiet room. "Why don't you slip under the covers while I open it for you?"

Mac's body screamed at him as he clenched his fist hard to stop himself from reaching out to her. Maybe he should have pulled the covers back for her. Watching Lily crawl on her hands and knees, her lace-covered bottom wiggling at him was not such a good idea. That position brought up all kinds of kinky thoughts. It teased him to press his hands against her soft flesh and...

"Fuck!" Mac's strangled groan filled the room as he turned his back to the bed and started counting to a million. He was sure that once he got there he'd be under some form of control.

"Is something wrong, Mac?" Lily's voice sounded uncertain and he risked a glance back over his shoulder to find her tucked under the virginal covers, her luxurious hair framing her face like a satin curtain.

The view was only slightly better but he figured he had enough control to approach the bed safely without ripping her clothes off and pounding into her hard.

"Have you heard of flannel?" he asked hoarsely as he opened the bottle for her. "I hear it's all the rage these days in sleepwear. I could pick some up for you if you'd like." She'd probably make even flannel look like an invitation to have sex.

Lily giggled, pulling up her knees so she could wrap her arms around them and rest her cheek comfortably. "You don't like lingerie, Mac? I thought all men liked it."

"That's the problem," he grunted back sitting on the edge of the bed and passing the bottle to her.

She frowned and wrinkled her nose in distaste. "I hate blood. I don't know how you manage to enjoy it."

Her reaction surprised him and he frowned too. "You said you could drink it."

"Didn't say I liked it," she countered reaching for the offending bottle. "We prefer to feed our wolves rather than our vampire, though I do like my meat extremely rare. Blood is so thick and slimy and just gross."**Wwww.n.vêlWôrm.Çó@**

"You could always try heating it up first," he suggested. "Maybe it's because it's cold that you struggle with it? Bottled blood has sufficient nutrients to sustain us but it doesn't compare to a drink from the vein."

Lily's hand tightened on the bottle and she raised her head to look up at him. "Do you do that, Mac, drink from a woman when you're having sex with her?" Her eyes were huge in her face, unhappiness marring her features.

He suddenly found himself wanting to apologise for every woman he'd ever lain with, for all the times he'd ever taken their blood as he'd taken their bodies. It was stupid to feel that way and he knew it. He was a vampire and he'd lived a long time. She was a mere babe compared to him and didn't need to live on blood alone.

"Many times," he finally answered her keeping his voice neutral. "I'm a vampire, Liliy. I need blood to live and blood banks have only been around for a very short period of time since I've walked this world."

"What's it like?"

He shifted uncomfortably. "None of your business," he bit out a tad more harshly than he meant to. He softened his tone. "Drink, Lily, and go to sleep. We'll talk about this in the morning when you're more your normal self."

This vulnerable side to her was killing him. He'd glimpsed a small part of it in his study earlier when she'd thought her body was unattractive. He'd been astounded by her transformation from a confident, sensual woman into an unsure young girl. Now she was displaying that same insecurity and he had to fight the urge to comfort her.

Lily thrust the bottle at him, misery washing over her. She knew she'd fucked up and was going to pay for it in the morning. Her head was swimming, she was hungry, and there was no food, and her wolf was pretty pissed at her.

Mac was treating her like a kid sister, being so careful around her, ignoring her best lingerie set which had been a complete pain in the ass to put on when she was under the influence.

Her whole plan had gone right out the window and she knew she was going to regret waking up in the morning and seeing the accusations in Mac's eyes. He'd probably send her home and her father would lock her up for the next five hundred years until he deemed she was old enough to make her own decisions.

"Take it," she whispered miserably. "I don't want it. I'll just go to sleep. I'll slip out tomorrow and go find some real food, that's if you don't pack my bags and toss me out the moment I wake up."

Mac searched her face, his heart clenching at the defeated note in her voice. Lily wasn't the type to give up. He didn't know how he knew that but he did. She was a fighter, a skilled soldier who had managed to bloody him while sparring. She was fast and lethal, strong and brave. She was meant to fly free, not be caged in a world that clipped her wings and stole the light from her eyes.

He took the bottle and quickly drained it. He was an Elder and didn't need to feed often, but it had been a few weeks since he'd last indulged himself. He placed the bottle on the bedside table and turned back to her.

"Come here, Lily." His voice was gentle, full of warmth, and it pulled at her until she shifted forward.**(w)Ww.nOvr(i)worm.coM**

He was going to regret this, but her unhappiness was a knife to his heart and he'd do anything to ease it. He unbuttoned his shirt and tugged it away from his body even as he was reaching to pull her into his arms.

"You need to eat something, sugar," he growled softly, fighting his body's reaction at having her so close. This wasn't about sex; it was about taking care of her. He burrowed his fingers in her thick hair and tilted her face back, taking in each exquisite feature and resisting the urge to kiss her trembling lips.

"Let me provide for you, Lily," he murmured softly, slicing the side of his neck with one of his talons. He pressed her mouth against the wound and his body went taut with strain.

Lily moaned softly, fascinated by the hard muscles of Mac's chest. His sexy voice was washing over her, his words tempting her as she curled her hands into fists against his hot flesh. He was pressing her head to him and the most wonderful flavour was suddenly on her tongue. She moaned again and licked greedily at the sweet taste.

Pleasure exploded deep within her. It was so intense it made her head swim and she wanted more. She began to suck at his neck, taking the rich, hot essence of him deep inside her. It was the most delicious thing she'd ever tasted, the most erotic moment of her life. She took what he offered and felt his blood within her, warming her entire body, giving her life.

Mac groaned, tightening his hold on Lily, fighting hard not to disgrace himself in his pants as her mouth sucked at his neck, sparking a fire so intense he thought it would consume him from within. She was burning him up, stealing his very soul as she fed from him.

Possessiveness swept over him mingled with a deep feeling of satisfaction that he was providing for his woman. This was right; this was how it should be. Lily should never be left wanting for anything. Her every need, her every hope and dream should be catered for in an instant, and he was the only one meant to take care of her.

In that instant he acknowledged the truth. Liliانا Rose Romanov belonged to him. She was his mate as he was hers. Nothing would ever separate them except death, and he had no intention of allowing even death to come between them.

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He closed his eyes and savoured her mouth against his hot skin. He felt the moment she sighed and stopped feeding, felt the weariness engulf her as sleep claimed her. Very carefully, he eased her back under the covers, trailing a hand slowly down one perfect cheekbone.**www.n(o)vrellWôRm.CoM**

She was perfection, his beautiful Lily Rose. She was also opinionated, stubborn, deceitful, a terrible drunk, and the most vibrant person he'd ever come across. Total perfection.

With a sigh, Mac reluctantly pulled his shirt back on and picked up the empty bottle from the bedside table. Tomorrow was going to be a pain in the ass and he needed to get some rest so he could deal with it. With a final glance at Lily, he headed out the bedroom.

Karn was leaning against the wall, his arms folded and his pale blue eyes intent. Mac stiffened slightly and then shrugged. He should have known Karn wouldn't have missed her scent. He was too good not to.

"This is fucked up, Mac."

He agreed with Karn wholeheartedly, his expression saying it all. He nodded and passed his friend the empty bottle. "No one goes near her, Karn," he answered before heading up to his room. "She's mine."

A loud snort sounded behind him. "Like I said, fucked up!"

To be continued...