

Chapter 325

She blushed scarlet and he laughed. "Oh the hidden depths," he chuckled as he tossed the garments on the bed. "You've got ten minutes to get ready. Meet me outside." He turned for the door.

"Is he sending me home?" Lily managed to keep her voice calm and composed. Inside she was anxious, wondering if Mac had sent his number two to do the dirty work. It wasn't his style to delegate unpleasant tasks but it was something he might do if he was fighting the mating pull.

"Get dressed, Ruminsky." The door closed behind Karn, leaving her none the wiser.

Cursing under her breath, she got up and took a quick shower. She was dressed and on her way downstairs within her time limit. It was never wise to keep Karn waiting. She'd learned that pretty quickly during her initial training. He hadn't told her to pack so that had to mean Mac hadn't issued that instruction -- yet.

She found Karn outside, waiting beside a Jeep. Without a word, he got into the driver's side and waited until she'd walked around the vehicle and climbed in. He started the car and pulled off down the dirt road leading away from the compound. Lily's anxiety ratcheted up a notch.

"Where are we going?" She was annoyed that some of her fear leaked into her voice. Displaying fear to Karn was like bathing in blood and telling him he wasn't allowed to lick you. Not that she'd ever done that, but she could imagine how he'd react if she had. *wWw.n0v@()worm.CoM*

His gaze snapped to hers for a moment and then he looked away. "You'll see when we get there."

"Karn, I swear if you're taking me back to the pack, I will fight you every step of the way! If that's what Mac has ordered you to do then you'd better just tell me now and stop the car because I'm not going."

The utter conviction in her voice brought his gaze back to her. "I'm not taking you back to the pack," he finally said and there was anger in his voice. "Just so you know, I do not agree with Mac's decision. Not even a tiny bit. If I had my way I'd been dumping your ass back with your Daddy and to hell with you, Ruminsky." He snarled when he used her name.

His hostility cut her to the quick. She really liked Karn, respected him immensely. He'd always treated her fairly, their relationship being more like a mentorship, a strong friendship. Experiencing his displeasure hurt. His quiet calm was gone and in its place was rejection and disapproval.

All Karn saw when he looked at her now was a Vârcolac. He didn't see her any more, just as no one ever looked past the label that hung over all of them.

Lily wanted to scream in frustration. Instead, she lowered her head and clutched her hands tightly in her lap. She mourned the loss of respect and friendship she had felt from the man at her side. She cursed herself, hating what she was with every fibre of her being. She didn't want to be different. She just wanted to be herself.

The silence in the car was oppressive. Fury roiled off Karn in waves when she tested his emotions. Tears threatened and she had to swallow hard to contain them. She'd never felt so alone before, so unsure. She reached out to the one person she could always rely on.

"Kal."

"Lily? Where the fuck are you? Do you have any idea the trouble you're in? Dad is ready to kill something. The whole pack is in an uproar. What are you playing at?" Her brother's strong mental voice was filled with anger but also relief at hearing from her. It threatened more tears which she had to swallow again to contain.

"I miss you too, little bro," she answered, managing to include the mental image of a smile in her words.

He was silent for a moment and then she felt a strong surge of love, the equivalent of one of Kal's mental hugs. "What's wrong, Lila?" His use of his pet name told her he at least had forgiven her. "You sound so sad."

Lily sighed softly and closed her eyes, shutting Karn out completely. "I found my mate, Kal, but it's complicated. I had to pretend I was someone else and my secret is out. Understandably some people I like a lot are pretty pissed at me right now."

"Do you need me to come get you, Lila? I won't tell anyone where you are if you don't want me to. Are you sure this male is your mate and not just a way to try and escape the compound? I know you've always found it hard being confined here, but you know it's just because they worry about us so much. Dad loves you so much he's just scared something bad will happen." *wWw.n0vE()orm.CoM*

Lily smiled as she listened to her brother. He was an Alpha to his very core even though he had no pack to call his own. Protecting people came easily to him. He formed his own opinions and made his own judgement calls as quickly and as naturally as breathing. She knew she could trust him with her every secret and he'd never betray her. He accepted what she told him because he knew she would never lie to him.

"I don't know where I'm heading at the moment," she finally answered. "I am safe, though. Apart from needing a hug I'm doing okay. He is my mate, Kal. I've known that for twelve years now. I can't explain it all right now but if you go to Annie and tell her I said 'Mac' she will explain everything. I think she'll tell you if she believes we've spoken and I've agreed to it." *wWw.n0v@IW0rM.com*

More warmth travelled down their mental bond, so much love and assurance from Kallum that a tear did escape her closed eyes. Thankfully, it was on the cheek farthest away from Karn's view so a slight turn of her head was enough to conceal her weakness.

"Will you contact Mom and Dad; let them know you're okay? They're worried about you, Lila. We all are. I feel so much better now you've contacted me."

"I will later today. I intended to when I got up this morning. Annie's already had words with me about it." She could sense his curiosity about Rhianna's involvement in this.

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