

Chapter 335

Andrei did know the power of a mate. He knew exactly just what he'd been willing to do to keep Loretta safe. He'd done terrible things in the past when she was threatened. He wouldn't hesitate to do far more terrible things if she was in danger.

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Somewhere out there was another male who felt that way about his daughter. While he could never be completely happy that this male was taking his Lily from him, just knowing that she was with someone who would give his life for her settled him down a bit.

"What did she tell you about this mate?" he finally asked Kallum, reluctantly conceding that there was nothing he could do to stop the mating even though he dearly wanted to. He knew it was his problem, not Lily's or the male she'd chosen. It would be hard to work through the issues but thankfully his own mate would help him through it.

Kallum finished his sandwich as he watched his parents, swallowing down a glass of milk. "Not a lot, but she sounded pretty determined." He started to laugh. "She told me to fuck off and leave her alone so I figured I'd give her a couple of days' breathing space before getting in contact with her again. I suggest you give her some space too. Trust in her. She knows what she's doing."

"She was frightened, Kal. She told me she was a monster." Andrei's tone was harsh.

"Dad, she's so much like you at times. I'm sure you've done things that have frightened you. I know she'll work through it and only become stronger because of it. You have to let her discover who she is as a person. She obviously couldn't do that here at the compound. She'll come home when she's good and ready."

Loretta walked across the kitchen, pride shining in her eyes as she looked at her son. Kal leaned down and embraced her, feeling her lips brush his cheek gently.

"You are the most amazing young man," she sighed softly. "I'm so proud of you, Kallum. I couldn't wish for a better son."

He tried not to puff up too much from the warm approval in his mother's voice but he was fighting a losing battle. He may be an Alpha male and was sure of himself in that role, but he would always crave his parents' love and approval. He squeezed Loretta in a big bear hug, revelling in her warmth and love.

A moment later his father squeezed his shoulder, respect apparent in his eyes when he turned to look at his son. "You'll keep us informed when you speak to your sister again?"

"I won't let anything happen to Lila, Dad. I love her just as much as you do."

There was a second Jeep parked in front of the main house when they arrived back at the compound. Lily's eyes connected with the man that was loading a pack into the back of the vehicle Mac's expression was remote; nothing showed in his eyes as he quickly perused her and then turned to Karn.

The blood on the other man's clothes automatically caught his attention. "What happened?" His tone was as devoid of expression as his face though the tension in his body was unmistakable. www.Novell.com

"Ruminsky, why don't you head inside and check on Brandon?" Karn said quietly keeping his gaze fixed on his friend.

For a moment Lily considered arguing with him. She wanted to know what he was going to tell Mac, and hoped to learn where her mate thought he was going. Karn's pale blue eyes turned towards her. She swallowed at the coldness she saw in them and decided to head inside as ordered.

She shot Mac a final glance but his entire attention was on Karn. It was as if she didn't exist. With an angry scowl on her face she stomped up the steps into the house.

Karn breathed out slowly as Lily vanished in the house. He quickly scanned the area to ensure no one was hovering around and then he turned to his friend. "Where the fuck do you think you're going, Mac? You're not dumping this shit in my lap. This is your problem, not mine."

Cold blackness met his words. Mac's eyes drilled into his as his muscles tightened even more. "Answer my question," he said calmly. There was no threat in the words but it was there in the calm tone he used.

"Lily's what happened," Karn hissed out as quietly as he could. "You had me take her to your little fuck nest, Mackenzie. Did you think she wouldn't put two and two together and come up with four? She lost control of her wolf and just about ripped my fucking throat out. So I'm asking you again, where the fuck do you think you're going because I am not going to take care of your problems for you. I like my head firmly attached to my body, thank you very much."

Mac stared at Karn, shock rippling through him. Lily had almost killed him? The thought was just ludicrous and yet his friend was deadly serious. He was turning to look back at the house even though he tried hard not to. She'd been upset about him taking women to his bed the night before. It wasn't as if she wasn't aware of that fact. Why had being at the apartment caused her to lose control of her wolf?

He stared at the door for a long moment then he walked around the car and pulled out his pack. He slammed the rear door loudly. "Send her to my study in fifteen minutes." He turned and walked towards the house with Karn falling into step beside him.

"What are you going to do, Mac?" Karn's anger had faded as soon as he'd seen the expression on his friend's face. He'd only seen that expression a few times and usually someone ended up seriously hurt at the end of it. He was suddenly afraid for Lily.

"I'm going to teach her it's unacceptable to attack a member of my team without provocation, Karn. I suggest you fuck off and find some way to clear the rest of the house while you're at it."

"Mac...!"

"Just do it, Karn!" www.Novell.com

Karn watched Mac take the stairs three at a time, his concern escalating at the barely restrained fury radiating from his friend. He should have handled this differently but it was too late now. Once Mac made a decision there was no swaying him.

He turned and headed into the living room, spotting Lily on one of the sofas with her partner-in-crime, Brandon.

"Ruminksey, Mac's office in fifteen minutes. Brandon, get everyone front and centre now. We're all going for a little run."

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"But Mac said last night we had the day off today," the younger man protested. He was only just awake and didn't fancy going on any hike. He gave a startled gasp as Karn suddenly blurred and pulled him up by his throat.

"That wasn't a request, boy," Karn said quietly, his face a bare inch away from Brandon's. He tossed him roughly in the direction of the open doorway.

Brandon didn't need to be told twice, quickly recovering his balance and hurrying from the room.

Lily was staring at Karn in shock. She'd never seen him react in such a feral manner before. It made her heart thump in a painful rhythm. "Karn?"

His expression was completely closed as he looked at her, his big body tense. "Don't challenge him," he finally said, working to push down his unease. "He's dangerous and don't you ever forget that. He won't hurt you physically but he's a cruel bastard and isn't loath to use more psychological means to achieve his aims."

She felt a thrill of fear rush through her body even as her brain refused to accept that Mac would ever do anything to hurt her. Karn may have known him for a long time but Mac wasn't his mate. There were different rules when it came to mates. They didn't hurt each other. So why did she suddenly feel so afraid?