

Chapter 340

Mac ended the call, his gaze going to the pack that he'd tossed against the wall. He had planned to stay away from the compound for a few of days to clear his head but Lily had halted that escape. Now it looked like he would get his chance after all.

The thought of leaving Lily alone was like a punch in the gut, though. It hadn't felt this bad before, but after their confrontation in the study he loathed the thought of being away from her. He knew Karn would protect her but it didn't feel right leaving her protection to someone else.

He knew it was her mating instinct calling him. Her Were heritage was asserting itself fully, actively seeking the one man who was destined to be hers for eternity. Mac couldn't afford to be that man.

And yet, he found himself stopping outside her door on his way out. He wanted to walk away but found it impossible. Leaving his pack in the hallway, he opened the door silently and stepped into the room. The yards of fabric were the first thing he noticed. There were swathes of the stuff in different colours covering every inch of the walls.

He stared in shock and wondered how she'd managed this feat even as his lips curled in a reluctant smile. She was a Vârcolac and he knew they shared some of the magic the triumvirate used. He also knew she'd prettied up her room to send a great big 'fuck you' in his direction. He couldn't help but admire her determination even if he had no intention of letting her win the battle.

His gaze swung to the bed. Despite the darkness he could see her just as clearly as he could see the material. Lily lay curled on her side, her hair loose and partially covering her face. She'd kicked the top sheet off as if she'd been restless in her sleep and her soft curves were covered in a bright red silk camisole and panty set.

It was enough to send him to his knees. He couldn't breathe as his eyes ran slowly down her body, lingering on the swell of her breasts before moving down to areas he knew better than to dwell on. Need slammed his body hard and a groan ripped from his throat.

"Mac?" Lily breathed sleepily, her head rising from pillow. She rubbed at her eyes, a gesture that made her appear younger than she was. "What are you doing in my room?" There was no irritation in her tone, just curiosity.

Mac let out a slow breath and walked to the bed. This was sheer insanity but he couldn't stop himself. He wanted to reach out and run his fingers slowly along the tempting curve of her bare leg. Instead, he held himself rigid as he stared down at her.

"I have to go away from a while," he answered, his voice coming out thick and husky. He watched a shiver run through her body even as she started to frown.

"I didn't take you for a coward, Mac. Running away doesn't seem like your style."

"It's work-related, Lily," he sighed, moving to sit on the side of the bed. Every instinct he possessed told him he should be running away from the temptress before him and yet here he was sitting on her bed. He should never have come into her room.

"I need to go to Scotland," he explained when she looked sceptical. "I didn't want you to panic in the morning when you found me gone. While I'm away you have to stick close to Karn at all times. No going off on your own. Try to keep a minimum of three Praetorians around you. And don't you dare shadow. If I find out you've slipped the leash even once I'll make you pay for it when I get back."

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Lily was wide-awake now, so completely conscious of Mac sitting on her bed. Her hormones were going haywire and desire was flooding her body. Despite Mac's stern words she could feel his tension, scent his arousal. He wanted her even though he was keeping himself in check.

Underneath all the emotions she sensed from him, though, the prevailing one was fear. She knew he feared for her safety, that he was leaving to protect her in some way. She didn't know what was going on and didn't want him to leave, but she also knew she couldn't stop him if he was determined to go.

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He wasn't going to get away easily, though.

"I will promise not to shadow while you're away but I have one condition," she breathed softly, sitting up until her body was so close to his they were almost touching. She felt him stiffen but he didn't move away.

"Name your condition." His voice was so low and raspy she barely heard him.

"I want a kiss goodbye. Not a peck on the cheek or lips, Mac, but a proper kiss. Give me that and I'll give you my word."

~~He froze, his breath catching in his throat. She was so close all he had to do was lean forward and their lips would be touching. One kiss? He scoffed silently at the thought. He didn't trust himself to stop at one. She was just too tempting.~~

"Lily!" It was a growled warning when he caught her looking at his mouth.

"Then I won't give you my word, Mac."

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Anger flared at the determination in her voice. He almost forced her to promise him, to dominate her as he'd done in the study, but the memory of her fear was too close to the surface and he knew he couldn't do that again. Not if he wanted to stay sane.

His eyes dropped to her lips. She sat so temptingly close to him. He could feel her breath caressing his face, feel the heat of her body. He wanted to kiss her just as badly as she wanted him. Surely he could stop at one kiss if he tried hard enough?

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Mac found himself reaching for her, brushing the back of his fingers down the soft curve of a perfect cheekbone. Lily shivered and his fingers trailed down the side of her throat before moving to cradle the nape of her neck.

God, she was so soft, her bones so fragile beneath his large hand. His head bent and he closed the distance between them, brushing his lips against hers gently. The instant they touched, his hand tightened painfully hard on the back of her neck. Lily let out a soft whimper, her lips parting for him. Then he was really kissing her, slanting his mouth over hers, claiming her completely.

The sound she made went straight to his head; the softness of her mouth was a temptation he couldn't resist. She literally took his breath away, and fire raced through his veins as she moaned softly, her mouth hungry against his. Mac lost all conscious thought, was completely caught up in the moment and the exquisite taste of Lily's mouth. He groaned and dipped into her sweetness, sliding his tongue against hers in slow, languorous flicks.

His heart was racing, his body hard and aching with need as he wrapped his arms around her body and forgot that he was supposed to stop with one kiss. He dragged her onto his lap, desperate to feel her soft curves against him as he slid his hand against the sensuous material of her top.

A warning was screaming in his mind but he ignored it, a deep growl erupting from his chest as he pulled Lily's body astride his and rocked his hips up to rub himself against the scalding heat that teased him through the tiniest silk panties he'd ever seen.

The kiss deepened and became more frantic as Lily writhed on his lap and tried to grind herself against him. Her small hands were in his hair, keeping his mouth to hers. His own hand had moved into the mass of luscious brown silky waves that rippled down her back and draped over his thighs. He clenched his fist in the heavy weight of her hair and kept her pinned against him.