

Chapter 423

Lily took a deep breath and forced her fear down. There was no way she could have been poisoned so this strange sickness had to be related to something else, though what that something else could be she had no idea.

A light sheen of sweat broke out over her body and she shivered slightly as the nausea returned. Maybe she should call Mac and ask him to come and get her? As soon as she had the thought, her heart skipped a beat.

One of the things she'd always loved about pack life was how they gathered together and told stories of their history. A story was coming back to her right now and it was enough to fill her with dread.

Her mom had been laughing as she'd told them about the day she'd called Andrei to come get her because she was too sick to move and her dad's panicked response. He had thought she was dying when all the time she was pregnant with Lily.

"No!" the word whispered out of Lily's mouth, her hands automatically going to her abdomen. Lord, she couldn't be pregnant! She'd only spent one night with Mac and after their conversation this morning...

"No, no, no, no!" She pulled herself up onto her knees, her entire body shaking with the effort as she delved inside her body, searching with her magic, looking for something that couldn't be possible.

Lily touched the tiny spark, felt her essence wrap around it as her wolf thrummed happily and surrounded the blossoming life within. A moan of despair issued from her lips.

Mac would think she had done this on purpose.

She tried to comprehend what her body and wolf were telling her and what it would mean to her relationship with Mac. Dear God, she was pregnant! They had made a baby, a child that Mac didn't want.

Another moan escaped as Lily bent over and threw up again; only this time it had nothing to do with her pregnancy and everything to do with the terror she was feeling inside. She had meant it when she'd told Kal she couldn't lose Mac. She knew that if she told him she was having a baby then she most probably would.

She gagged again, fighting the reflex and slamming up every barrier she could on all her bonds. A little voice inside warned her about Rafe's words but she ignored it. She needed time to work out what to do, how to fix this before she lost everything that mattered to her.

And deep down inside, battling the fear of losing Mac, was a slow seed of joy springing to life at the thought of the miracle that was beginning within her body. She was going to be a mother after all; nature had taken the decision out of both her's and Mac's hands.

Lily started to sob quietly, torn between the joy of being pregnant and the fear of losing Mac. She knew she couldn't have both; her mate had made that abundantly clear to

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Why had this happened now, just when she'd resigned herself to what her life would be? What was she expected to do? Choose between Mac and her child? Like her mom had once had to choose all those years ago? She didn't think she was strong enough, not like her mother. She would never be able to live with the guilt of losing her child.

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Lily sobbed and rocked back and forth on the ground, her arms protectively around her abdomen. She couldn't lose her baby and she couldn't endure to see the accusation and pain in Mac's eyes when she told him she was pregnant.

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He would walk away without a backward glance. She knew it with every fibre of her being.

Lily felt as if her heart was splintering. It hurt to think, it hurt to breathe. Anguish raged through her as she threw her head back and screamed up into the air.

"Why?" she sobbed aloud. She had no idea who she was talking to and knew there would be no answer. "What did I ever do to deserve this? Am I such a bad person that this is all life has to offer me?" Silence greeted her words, just the sounds of her sobbing filling the evening air.

Lily cried for what felt like an eternity, her throat raw as her sobs finally subsided. Her wolf was anxious, pacing furiously around the spark of their child, protecting the unborn life within.

As she rose on shaky legs, Lily knew that the life of her child had to be protected at all cost. At some point since discovering she was pregnant, she had made a choice she never thought she would ever be able to make.

Mackenzie was her soul mate, the one male put on the planet just for her. She loved him intensely, had looked forward to spending her life with him, but children were not part of his world, of their life together. And she couldn't bear for him to hate her for destroying their life by choosing to keep her child and proving to him that his love wasn't enough for her.

Stroking her abdomen gently, Lily turned to gaze at the blanketed mountain range ahead. She was still shadowed and it didn't appear to have any effect on the burgeoning life within her body. A tear streaked down her cheek as she forced her legs to begin to move away from the Praetorian Compound.

"I'm sorry, Mac. Please forgive me."

"What do you mean nobody knows where she is?" Mackenzie's words were spoken softly to the assembled group but there was no mistaking the hard edge to his tone or the dangerous expression on his face.

Brandon shifted uncomfortably under his stare though Karn, Liam and Kallum didn't appear to be affected by it too much.

"Lily said she was going for a walk. She needed to clear her head," Kal replied. He could understand Mac's concern because he was concerned about his sister too but Lily was a grown woman and didn't need to be protected every second of the day.

"Yes, I got that bit, Kallum," Mac grated out, spearing him with an annoyed glare. "What I don't quite get is why my mate, and your sister, is out 'clearing her head' all alone when everyone knows of the threat from the European vampires!"

He yelled the last part of the sentence, a feeling of foreboding overcoming him as it had once so long ago. There was no reason for the feeling but it was there and it had his emotions at danger level.*www.VelvetRoom.com*

"Don't you think you're over-reacting a bit?" Kal countered, his tone sounding tetchy. "You must be able to sense her through your bond. I can sense her through mine and she's just fine."