

Chapter 433

The sound of his voice seemed to shake Lily further into consciousness. Her eyes fluttered open blindly, and then the roots snapped further, forcing them to drop a few inches.

"Lily, I can't hold us both!" Kothari yelled.

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Lily scrambled in confusion, reaching up blindly and finding the hard edge of rock just as the bushes gave way. They rent from the rock in a sickening sound, sending Kothari downwards. "Kothi!"

Throwing out her free hand, Lily reached for him, catching his shoulder as he fell. For a moment, only Lily's grip on the rock was what held them suspended and then Kothi's hand snaked up and grabbed the ledge. He pulled himself up quickly, landing agilely in a crouch and grasping Lily's arms tightly to pull her up beside him. There was just enough room on the ledge for both of them. For a moment, they simply sat there leaning against the cold rock face, breathing hard, the sounds of their thumping hearts loud in their ears.

"Kothi. Oh God, Kothi." The words stammered out of Lily's mouth, fear and disbelief making her voice quiver. The sensation of falling was still surrounding her, Mac screaming her name as the ground gave way, everyone's screams resounding in her head.

"It's okay, Lily. You're okay." Kothari pulled her trembling body into his arms as shock kicked in and she began to shake and sob. He could sense Dara in his mind along with the others, she was still weeping for Lily. He had to reassure her.

"I've got her. She's fine. A little shaken up but she'll be okay." He sent the message down all mental bonds, feeling the collective sigh of relief that went up from everyone. "Give her a little time. She's a bit shocked right now."

Kallum reached Mac just as his message came through. The Praetorian was on his hands and knees screaming for Lily at the cliff's edge. He had never seen Mackenzie so out of control before, a wildness to him that was frightening. "Kothi has her, Mac," he called; afraid they'd lose the vampire over the edge of the cliff too he sounded so desperate.

"The black thing? I saw something black crash into her and then they were out of sight." Wild eyes met his, pleading in them. "She's okay, isn't she? Please say she's okay."

"Lily, please Lily, tell me you're okay." He sent the message down their mate bond. His heart wouldn't stop pounding, fear an acrid taste in his mouth. Lily had to be okay. Anything else was just unimaginable. His vision swam from the tears falling, the horror of watching her fall playing in vivid colour in his mind.

Kallum nodded, his own heart barely starting to beat normally at the scare they'd had. He couldn't begin to imagine how Mackenzie felt watching his mate fall. "She's fine, a little scared but unharmed. Just give her a moment. She took a knock to the head." He did his best to reassure Mac even though his protective instincts were now rearing up and his eyes turned hard as he regarded his sister's mate.

Now that Lily was safe, the adrenaline was fading and leaving endless questions in its place. His sister had almost lost her life and she'd been alone with her mate at the time. It was unheard of for mates to hurt each other but there was always a first time for everything. Lily had told him Mac didn't want to have any children. Had the vampire tried to get rid of the baby? He hated thinking like that but he had to know. "What the hell happened, Mac?"

Mackenzie shook his head, trying to calm his heart and shake the image of Lily falling from his mind. He'd never been so scared in his life watching the ledge crumble and his Lily vanish before him. He dragged a shaky hand through his hair as he stood up, not oblivious to the subtle accusation in Kallum's voice.

He didn't blame him. If Lily had been alone with someone else when she fell, he would be equally as suspicious and demand answers. "She was too close the edge. She was coming to me and then it just crumbled beneath her. I couldn't get to her in time, Kallum. I tried, but I just couldn't get to her."

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There was so much guilt in his tone that Kallum softened. Everyone had just had the fright of their life and they needed to let everyone work through that. Mackenzie's expression, the anguish in his eyes and voice as he spoke told him all he needed to know. He hadn't tried to hurt his sister. It had been an accident and the main thing was Lily was safe.

He leaned over the ledge and looked down trying to sight his sister and his friend. "They're further down than up. I'll tell them to make their way down and we'll meet them at the bottom."*(v) w w . N @ (v) e l @ o r r m . C @ m*

He turned to find Mac already heading for the trail down. Shooting a quick message off to Kothi, he followed him, jogging to catch up. "It'll take them a little while to get down. Lily needs to get herself together before they can start. Take your time, Mac. This has been a shock to all of us."

He reached down his bond to his parents. "Mom, Dad, Lily's fine. Let her have a bit of time to recover from the fright. I'm sure she'll be in touch soon."

"Who do I need to kill?" The cold determination in Andrei's tone was frightening.*w @ W . N o v e (l) w o (r) m m . c o (m)*

"No one, Dad. The ledge crumbled, it was an accident. I'll ask Karn to get some of the Praetorians up here to check the place out and make sure no one gets too close to the edge again."