



## Chapter 7: Drake

We begin running again. Kella runs beside me and we begin to make a game of who can more easily navigate the land in the forest. I'm impressed over and over again at her grace and strength as she leaps as easily over fallen trees as I do. Even when I playfully push her to try to get ahead of her, she's right back, catching me quickly and nipping at my heels. Our afternoon run is the most fun I ever remember having in my life.

It's sundown when we stop for the night. I can see Lily wants to push on, but they both need to eat and get some sleep. I, myself, haven't slept in over 48 hours and I desperately need some rest.

We find a place, up on a hill, where we can keep watch overnight. Kella and Hera catch a couple of rabbits to eat and even from here, the scent of the blood makes my mouth water. I don't even like the taste of rabbit blood, but I've waited too long to feed. If I wasn't so exhausted, I'd go find a large animal that I could drink from, but right now, I'm not sure I could even catch one.

"Can I ask you a question, Drake?"

"Of course, Guardian Lily."

"Please, call me Lily. Do you know if your father is working with werewolves?"

I laugh. Honestly, I can't see it. But then, I didn't see my father killing my grandfather to take over the coven either.

"My father is many things, but collaborative isn't one of them. Why do you ask?"



"We've heard that vampires and werewolves are working together to kill the Guardians," Leana says.

Rage unlike anything I've ever felt washes through me like a tidal wave.

"Who?" I snarl. Who dares to threaten my mate?

"We don't know, but your father seems to be against the Guardians, so we thought maybe it was him."

I take several breaths, getting control of my anger. Anger and hunger are a very bad combination in a vampire. When vampires get angry, we tend to lash out quickly. When you add hunger to that, people die.

"It's not my father. He may want to try and show that vampires are the strongest of all supernaturals, but he isn't in collaboration with werewolves or anyone else. My father has the mindset that vampires are the best and should be the rulers of the world."

I look at Leana. "He's delusional. I hope that your easy show of strength made him rethink his crazy ideas."

I watch as they build a fire. Since I don't feel the cold, I don't have any need for one and other than collecting firewood, I have no idea how to make one. The two of them, however, are very adept at it.

"Do you need to hunt? We understand if you do," Leana asks me as the fire begins to burn brightly.

I'm surprised and embarrassed that she would notice. I'm trying to show her that I can be a normal mate. I'm obviously failing. "No, I'm fine."

"I'm going to check in with Dad and then try Aolis again," Lily says, walking away from the fire and into the darkness of the forest around us.



As soon as she's gone, Leana begins trying to get me to go feed.

"I don't want to risk feeding this close to you," I finally tell her. It's the truth. Her scent is so strong and enticing, that once I start feeding, I could be drawn to her even more. Especially now that I'm tired. All of it is just adding to my need to wait to feed.

"I'll feed tomorrow morning, after I've rested and have more strength."

"Won't feeding give you the strength you need?" she asks.

"Yes, and if it were a simple matter of eating a rabbit, it would be fine. You don't seem to understand how intoxicating the scent of your blood is to me, Leana," I growl just as Lily comes back.

I turn away as she asks Lily about her conversation with her father.

How can my mate not understand how delicious her blood smells. How can she not realize, after everything her mother went through, how dangerous I am? I'm trying to be as human as possible with her. But there is nothing human about a vampire when we're feeding.

When their conversation ends, I can tell Leana wants to continue our conversation.

"Okay, well, I'm going to get some sleep. Long day tomorrow," Lily says, obviously feeling the tension between me and Leana.

Leana stares at me until we hear Lily's breathing change to that of a deep sleep.

"You need to feed. Why are you fighting me on this?" she asks me.

I move in front of her, taking her hands in mine. "Don't you understand? I'm terrified that I will hurt you."



"I'm a Guardian. Kella and I will hold you. You can drink my blood. I'm your mate. I trust you. Between your desire to keep me alive, my desire to live and our Guardian strength, I think we can manage this. Drake, if you're terrified that you'll kill me every time I get a scratch or a cut, how can this ever work between us?"

It's that question that makes me hesitate. She's right. If I'm always terrified that I'll kill her, then there is no future for us. And I really, really want there to be a future for us.

"Are you sure you can help me control my blood lust?" I ask her.

"The Moon Goddess made me for you. I don't know why, but I do know that our Goddess doesn't make mistakes. If she mated me to you, then it's because I can handle you," she says confidently.

"Okay, let's feel this Guardian strength you've been telling me about."

I feel her aura wash over me and I don't fight it. It's strong and it holds me in place, even though it feels like a warm blanket around me.

I watch her as she raises her wrist to my mouth. I take her arm in my hands and slowly, so slowly, my fangs come out. I feel more confident that she's helping me to keep control, so I keep my eyes on hers as I sink my fangs into her wrist.

The moment her blood hits my mouth, I close my eyes as the taste, the strength, the ecstasy of her blood and her power flows through me. I begin sucking and drawing her blood into my mouth. 1

"Drake, stop," I hear a voice, but it's far away.

I growl, holding on to this source of absolute bliss and sucking harder. I feel a pressure against me, trying to push me off, but it only makes me



hold on tighter, sucking even harder. I can feel my body having orgasm after orgasm as the blood flows through me. I've never tasted blood like this before. There will never be anything that comes close this taste, this feeling.

"NO!" I hear a scream and I open my eyes to see a woman coming at me.

I snarl, holding the blood source closer, drinking the warm, delicious blood as fast as I can. I won't let anyone else have it.

She slams her fist into my face, breaking the bones in my nose and ripping my teeth from the blood source as I go flying backward.

I'm up in an instant, ready to fight to get it back.

"I don't want to kill you, but I will if you don't get ahold of yourself." I can hear the wolf in the woman's voice, feel the power that she pushes out at me.

I stand, ready to fight her, but she pushes another blast of power at me, knocking me backwards. The jolt has me shaking my head, trying to clear it. What's going on, what was that taste.

And then I see her, lying on the ground behind Lily. My mate, who is more pale than any living creature should be, the gaping wound in her arm from where my teeth ripped out of her spilling her much needed blood onto the ground. What have I done?

I watch as Lily licks her wound, helping it to heal. I take a step forward, wanting to make sure she's alright, but Hera snarls at me.

"Stay back. What were you thinking?" she snaps.

"L...I didn't want to, I told her I couldn't control it. But she saw how thirsty I was and wanted to help me. She thought her Guardian aura could



help me control my desires. But obviously it didn't work." I look at her pale skin, the pink hue from before gone.

"Her heartbeat is so faint," I say, listening as her heart makes fluttering sounds instead of the thumping sound it should be making.

"She's lost a lot of blood." Lily says, looking at Leana, then back at me. "You, stay back. I won't hesitate to obliterate you if you try to come for her again. Got me?"

"I won't touch her. I just want her to be okay," I say, sitting down to watch and make sure I didn't kill my mate. I knew it was a bad idea, the worst. I thought I could stay focused, that with her and Kella I could remain in control and aware. But the moment that her blood entered my mouth, I had lost every bit of my humanity and had become the bloodsucker that others call us.

Lily moves her closer to the fire and then begins to lay her clothing over top of her.

"Here, take mine." I say, and pull my shirt over my head, tossing it to Lily and watching as she lays it over Leana. Maybe my scent will help her to heal.

But I can only sit, and wait, hoping that I didn't kill my mate.