

CHAPTER 54

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CHAPTER 54 Enjoy the Night

Garrett gestured for Lily to take a seat, his expression serious as they settled into the comfortable corner of their living room. The crackling fire cast dancing shadows across the room, creating an intimate atmosphere for their conversation.

"Lily, there's something important we need to discuss," Garrett began, his voice carrying a weight of concern. "The Winter Moon celebration is fast approaching, and there's something you should know."

Lily looked at him curiously, her brows furrowing. "What is it, Garrett? What's going on with the Winter Moon celebration?"

Garrett took a deep breath, his eyes focused on Lily. "This year, things will be different. For the first time, the werewolf packs and prides will be attending the celebration together."

Lily's eyes widened with surprise. Werelines usually couldn't stand being around werewolves, excluding Tiffany. Tiffany and her pride were seen as outliers. "That's unexpected. Werewolves and werelines don't usually mingle at these events. Why the change?"

Garrett nodded solemnly. "You're right, it's a significant departure from tradition. The decision to include the werelines this year marks a shift in the dynamics of the celebration."

Lily's curiosity grew, and she leaned forward, eager to understand the implications. "But why now? What does it mean for us?"

Garrett's expression turned grave. "I have yet to be told the reason for this."

Usually, forced socialization was due to a shared threat. It means we have to approach the Winter Moon celebration with caution. While it may seem exciting to have both werewolves and werelines together, we must remember that it's still a serious event. It is a very political event that even though it is a union of events, rank still matters and is even flexed at times."

"You're acting like someone may die at the celebration," Lily said.

"That is a strong probability," Garrett stated matter-of-factly.

"You're joking, right?" Lily said, her disbelief evident in her voice.

Garrett shook his head. "Many old traditions are still held as law amongst our community. Sometimes they are initiated through a heated scuffle, or disrespect occurs. Both parties must follow through no matter what, even if it means someone may die. I haven't heard of anyone dying recently but it is still could happen."

Lily's excitement tempered, replaced by a sense of unease. "What kind of traditions are we talking about? Can you give me more details?"

"Honestly, Lily, I can't provide all the specifics. It's been years since I attended the last Winter Moon celebration, and things might have changed. Some traditions may have been banished and replaced with new ones I'm unaware of."

Lily's brow furrowed with concern. "So, we're stepping into the unknown?"

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can we navigate through this if we don't have all the information?"

Garrett's voice carried a hint of regret. "I wish I had more answers, Lily, but I don't. We will rely on our instincts and be cautious throughout the celebration."

"What about your father, Alpha Jack? He's experienced in these matters. Maybe we can seek his guidance," Lily suggested.

Garrett's expression hardened. "Lily, let's not bring my father into this. Our relationship is complicated, and I'd rather not involve him."

Lily's tone became more persuasive. "Are you going to be upset with him forever? I don't know what happened between you two, but he is your father. You don't want to regret it later."

"Do you regret not speaking with your father anymore?" Garrett shot back.

"That is not the same, Garrett," Lily replied.

Garrett pressed. "How isn't it? He betrayed you. My father betrayed me. How is it different?"

Lily's anger flared, and her scent shifted, signaling the onset of her heat cycle. Garrett fought the primal urge to pounce on her. Berric's warning echoed in his mind, 'Calm her down or she will be in full-blown heat. Change the topic.'

"I'm sorry," Garrett said. "It wasn't right for me to make assumptions."

Lily's gaze softened and she sighed. "I respect your decision, Garrett. We'll navigate this together. But I need you to promise me that you'll be careful too."

Garrett met Lily's eyes, a mixture of surprise and admiration in his gaze. Her constant changing of emotions was going to give him whiplash. "You're always worrying about everyone but yourself. I promise, Lily. I'll do everything I can to keep both of us safe during the Winter Moon celebration."

A pause settled between them as they absorbed the weight of their conversation. Garrett's expression hardened again.

"Oh, jeez. What else is there?" Lily asked, noticing Garrett's expression change.

"We need to talk about Matthew and Brandy," Garrett said.

"What about them?" Lily asked. "They'll be there, I know. Of course, Brandy would try to make the celebration all about her."

"I can't imagine how difficult this must be for you. Are you sure you want to go through with attending the celebration?" Garrett replied.

Lily snorted and frowned. "Do you think I would just run away? I am not doing that again. I won't let their actions deter me. I'll face them head-on, show them that I've moved on and grown stronger."

"You have nothing to prove to me," Garrett stated.

"But I have everything to prove to everyone else. You are the eldest son. So, really, it should be you announcing to be your father's successor," Lily added.

"I don't want it. The pack is nothing more than ruthless mongrels, except for my mother," Garrett said.

"I know that, but if things change, if you change your mind, I need to be there to show them that no matter my rank, I will be a Luna to be respected," Lily said firmly.

"Then, do what you believe is best. You will have I and Adam's full support,"

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Garrett agreed.

Lily nodded. "Thank you, Garrett. Really, thank you. Knowing that you have my back gives me a little more confidence, as I know Brandy will probably have something planned for me. No matter what it is, I'm going to enjoy the night, and we're going to look great doing it."