

Chapter 0025

"Okay, Rose. I do not think I can open my eyes again anyway. Or speak. It hurts too much."

"I know, Lily. I am sorry. I am so sorry. I promise we will get out of here though. We will follow our plan. Just hold on a little longer for me, okay?"

"O—okay."

Three minutes later, I hear footsteps that I know belong to Nick and my father.

"What happened to her?" my father asks. If I did not know any better, I would think that he is outraged about what he is seeing.

"Mother said she saw her fall down the stairs."

I feel someone pull back my blanket... or is it my shirt?

"How would she get marks like these from falling down the stairs?" my father asks.

"Mother said she was carrying plates of food. Perhaps the plates cut her?"

"Nick, look at these marks. What you just said does not make any sense. These marks look like they were left intentionally."

"I know, Father, but Mother was the only one here, and she was pretty adamant that that is what happened. Maybe after she fell, Lily intentionally cut herself?"

"Like a suicide attempt?"

"Maybe? It cannot be easy for her to be here on Stephanie's death anniversary. The guilt has to be eating her alive, especially now that she is an adult and can really appreciate the consequences of her actions back then."

"Maybe..." my father says, in a voice that tells me that he is not at all convinced.

For a brief moment, my heart starts to fill with hope and joy. From what I have heard of this conversation, my father is horrified at how badly I have been hurt; he is not aware of the abuse that my mother has been inflicting on me; and he doubts that I have tried to commit suicide. Perhaps my father does still love me, at least a little bit?

Sadly, any hope I have quickly gets destroyed by the next part of their discussion.

"Nick, we cannot take her to the memorial service like this. She will be a distraction and take away from the attention that should be on Stephanie today."

"I know, but James was pretty adamant. Maybe we can wrap her in a black blanket that will hide most of the injuries?"

“Do you know why James is acting so weird with respect to Lily today? I do not understand it. Who cares if Lily is at the memorial.”

“I do not know. I agree that he has been acting strangely all day, though. He even told me that he thought you all gave him the ultimatum so that you could force him to marry Lily.”

My father gasps, and then starts laughing. “He thought what?”

“I am not kidding. It was the strangest conversation. I have not laughed that hard in a long time.”

“I would never be that cruel as to demand James marry Lily. Lily does not have what it takes to be Luna, and she could never live up to the kind of Luna that Stephanie would have been. Lily needs to go and find a nice warrior or Omega to marry.”

“Or a human,” Nick suggests.

“Yeah, or a human. A human could probably accept her more easily than anyone around here. A werewolf male would only see her as a burden.”

I feel my heart break in pieces for the second time in one day.

Nick and my father’s conversation does not necessarily surprise me... but suspecting that this is what they think about me versus hearing first-hand that this is what they

think about me are two different things. The latter is fair more painful.

I suddenly feel a blanket being draped over me. I am then lifted into the air.

I guess I am going to Stephanie's memorial.

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