

Chapter 6 – Pleading For Clarity In The Locker Room

I glanced between Noah and Liam. The energy in the room was tense, like at any moment either one of them was ready to let out the beast in them.

Noah's chest rose quickly, up and down in furry. He took a step towards Liam, his hands clasped in a ball like he was ready to throw punches any second from now. "Ella yours? You must be out of your mind, Liam."

Liam's teammate turned to me and snared, "Liam, this girl isn't even hot."

"Shut it, Bryson," Liam said. But he didn't take his eyes off Noah.

Noah walked past his teammates, past me, and got right in front of Liam. He puffed out his chest and drew himself up as tall as he could. Which wasn't very tall. "In what world do you think you can —"

"Simmer down! And get the hell out of here." Liam growled, using the deep, powerful, Alpha voice within him.

Noah flinched then at the ferocity of Liam's voice. He took a step back. And it was clear right then, who was really in charge between the two brothers.

Noah glanced over at me, his eyes narrowing. "You know what, you're not even worth it. Let's go guys."

Noah pushed past Liam in the doorway, shoving Liam hard in the shoulder as he made his way out. The rest of the team followed behind Noah. They were all talking about me in hushed voices as they went. But I tried to ignore them as best I could.

When Noah and the rest of the team had left the locker room, it was suddenly completely silent. That's when I really noticed that it was just Liam and me left, totally alone.

I clutched at the sleeves of my hoody, trying not to make my nerves look too obvious. I don't know why being a lone with Liam, always made me so damn nervous.

"Hey, um, thanks for sticking up for me. Saying that I was yours. I know you were just trying to look out for me," I said, finally glancing up at Liam.

"I meant every word," Liam said.

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I shook my head. The butterflies in my stomach started to go wild, "Liam, no, just, no. I know what kind of guy you are."

"What kind of guy am I, Ella?" He asked.

"You're a playboy. Everybody knows this!" I took a step closer to Liam, annoyance suddenly rising up in me, "I know all about your one-night stands. Hell, I bet I'm the only person who's actually seen every single one of them."

And of course I had. With our bedrooms right across the lawn from each other, I knew what kind of she-wolves Liam usually went for. Beautiful girls who commanded attention. Who had all the guys salivating at their feet. Hot girls who looked nothing at all like me.

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Liam took a step toward me, closing the distance between us. His eyes bore into mine. "Ella, I swear, all those other girls didn't make me feel the way you make me feel."

"This is another one of your playboy tactics, I'm sure of it. You'll do anything to get girls in your bed. Not that you have to try all that hard, I'm sure."

Liam winced, "Ella, please, just listen."

"No. You already got me into your bed, but it's not happening ever again," I said.

"Ella—" Liam, began, but I cut him off.

"I refuse to just be another notch on your bedpost. I want more out of a relationship, Liam. I want to be with someone who actually sees a future for us."

"I Want that too, Ella, and I want that with you. I'm done with all the casual shit with girls."

I turned away from Liam. His words, they were the words I'd wanted most to hear in my life. I wanted somebody that wouldn't be embarrassed to go out into the world with me on his arm. Someone who wouldn't care that I was a human girl and not a she-wolf.

"I don't believe you," I whispered.

Liam held me around the waist and turned me around, pinning my back against the cold surface of the wall behind me. Infront of me, heat radiated off his hard body. He was so close, I could smell his woody, manly smell. And the I got a flashback of the night before.

The way Liam held me reminded me of our night together. It reminded me of Liam's body intertwined with mine. It reminded me of feeling completely protected in Liam's big, strong arms. It reminded me of feeling comfortable, something I knew I shouldn't feel where Liam was involved.

My legs began to shake. Liam felt it, and held me tighter.

"How do you know I can't give you the future that you want if you don't give me a chance, Ella?"

Liam whispered. His eyes pleaded with me. I could see flecks of gold in them.

I had to leave. I couldn't let myself fall for his words. This was all just too much.

"Liam, please," I whispered. And as if he read my mind, Liam's face fell. And then his hands fell away from my waist. He stepped back. And I hurried out of the locker room.

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When I got back to my dorm, Monica wasn't there, and I was glad. I needed time to myself to think about everything that had just happened.

I stood by the door, by back pressed against it as I took in deep breaths. I just needed to calm down. I walked to my desk and sat down. In the corner of my eye was the garbage can and inside was the manuscript that I'd trashed earlier in the day.

I pulled it out and shook my head. This story that I'd been working on was inspired by my relationship with Noah. The quiet moments we'd spend in his house or mine, watching movies, talking, kissing. I had felt so in love with Noah then.

But look at how he'd treated me. Look at all the hurtful words he'd spat at me in front of his teammates. I shook my head. I'd known I loved Noah. And I thought that he had loved me too. But clearly, he hadn't.

After everything I'd been though I wondered, was there even such a thing as genuine love? Well, maybe there was, but I didn't know if it was possible for me. I was a human in a world ruled by werewolves. Maybe being human meant that I was destined for heartache.

Maybe I just had to accept my fate.

I picked up my manuscript and tossed it right back into my trash can. I was done being delusional about love.

I walked over to my bed and threw myself onto it. I needed to sleep. I needed to end this intense, roller coaster of a day that I had just been through. I closed my eyes, ready to drop off into a deep sleep. And then my phone buzzed.

I pulled it out of my pocket. It was a text from Liam. I opened it. He'd sent me a shirtless selfie, his hard abs on full display, a smirk on his face.

I groaned in annoyance, in frustration, in desperation.

I needed this boy to leave me alone.