

Chapter 0078

An hour or so later, I woke up for the second time. This time, I was by myself in the bed. I rubbed my eyes and stretched as I sat up, only to notice that Brady was standing by the sliding glass door, staring at the ocean outside. He had obviously showered and changed his clothes. I silently wondered whether he had someone bring the clothes to him or if he went back to his room and came back.

I got out of bed, adjusted my robe, and then cautiously approached him. "Brady?"

He turned and looked at me sadly. "You are up."

I nodded.

"Lily, about last night...."

I shook my head. "Don't worry about it. I know you were drunk ---"

Brady put his hand up to stop me from saying anything else. "No, Lily. I remember everything, and I do not regret kissing you. If anything, I should have done it sooner."

I studied his face. "Where did you go last night? Why were you so drunk when you came to my room?"

"One of the guards brought a couple of bottles of wolfsbane whiskey with him. I paid him \$500 for one of the bottles. I drank it alone in my room before I came over."



"Why would you do that?"

"Because I know that there is a very good chance I that am going to lose any chance I have with you once you meet with James today."

I gulped. The look in Brady's eyes was so sad and so sincere that I every instinct in my body wanted to hug him and tell him that it was not true.

"But you can't, Lily," Rose linked me. "We do not know what is about to happen."

I sighed. I wanted to reprimand Rose for listening to my private thoughts uninvited again. I also wanted to remind her that I did not want to be with James... but I was too tired to do either, and I knew this situation was too confusing to not have both of us working on it together anyway.

"Brady...."

Brady shook his head. "Please don't, Lily. Do not try to make me feel better. Do not tell me that I am wrong to feel threatened by him. And do not tell me that I am wrong. I know that I am not. Whether I like it or not, James is your mate."

"No, James WAS my mate," I corrected him. "And you know the history that I had with him. I... I don't know if I can get past any of that."

"Maybe not, but I also know that a part of you wants to try... wants to find out if you can make it work...."

I noticed that Brady was beginning to tear up. Seeing an

alpha wolf like Brady tear up was not something I saw very often. I reached out to touch his cheek, and I gave him a half-smile.

"Brady, we don't even know if James wants me back ---"

"Yes, we do. Lily, I saw the look in his eyes last night. And I know you did too."

I said nothing.

Brady turned away from me and looked out the glass door again. "The way that James behaved... the look in his eyes... it was the same for me, when I finally discovered what a big idiot I was ---"

"---when you rejected Evelyn," I finished for him.

He nodded sadly. "Yes, when I rejected Evelyn."

"Are you going to tell me what happened?" I asked gently.

"Yes, I will. I promise. But not now."

"When?"

He then turned around to face me. "Soon. But please understand that when I tell you the story, you have to believe me that I am not proud of what happened with her. Who I was back then is not who I am now. I learned a lot from that experience, and to this day, it is one of my biggest regrets." 1

Brady then reached out and grabbed my hand. "Going through it taught me to never, ever let a chance for happiness slip through my fingers again."

“What are you saying, Brady?” I asked cautiously.

Brady gripped my hand a little tighter as he responded in a much more confident, determined voice.

“I am not going to let James take you from me, Lily. James does not deserve you, and I will not let him have you. I know we have not known each other for very long, and I know it may seem too fast, but I have already fallen in love with you.”

I took a couple of steps away from Brady, forcing him to release his grip on my hand. A part of me started to feel angry and frustrated. “If you feel that way, why are we here? Why did you force me to come here?!?”

“Because I know in my head that it is the right thing to do, both for you and for your overall safety. We need to close the James chapter of your life before we can move on. But we will move on, Lily. We will move on together. I promise you.” 2

“Brady, I don't ---”

“No. Do not tell me I am wrong. Not right now. Let me believe that I am right for a little bit longer.”

Brady then grabbed me again, slamming his lips on mine before letting go.

“Get ready. We meet with James in an hour. I will be back in 45 minutes and we can walk down together.” 2

With that, Brady walked out the door.