

## Mated To The Beastly Alpha

### Chapter 31

## **Chapter 31**

After Liam threatened her in the forest, after slaughtering rogues, Nicole made a firm decision to let him go. She was tired of the back and forth, the hot and cold treatment she received from him.

She needed to focus on her secret job with Garrett, being a witch-bane and her mental health.

Garrett was right, Alpha Liam was incapable of compassion for her. He saw her as a means to fulfil an end.

It hurt to think about it because she ached for his acknowledgement. But she couldn't let what happened with Shane repeat itself. She had enough mental scars to deal with.

Plus, after seeing him going crazy as he murdered those wolves and screamed at her, she began to develop a fear of him. It was Shane happening all over, and she was ready to stop it by all means.

However, fate had other plans in store for her.

Because he left the pack for a week and came back differently. She could see it from the way he behaved, and she wondered if it was another tactic. She had just finished training with James, Asha, and Rose when she sensed him. She felt a mix of

emotions - surprise, anger, and most of all, confusion.

Nicole tried to keep her cold affront while she was fighting her attraction for him. Her fear for him also multiplied. It was like she could see Shane in him.

It scared her, and she ran away from him on two occasions. Since her encounter with him and the rogues, her nightmares about Shane had begun again. It plagued her mind and made her touchy and fidgety.

What was worse was that she couldn't speak to anyone about it. She felt like it would bother them, and she also felt stupid for playing into Shane's hands. He used her as a fake Luna for a long time while assaulting her sexually, mentally, physically, and emotionally.

Her nightmares were a reminder that she wasn't free. As long as she was bound to him and under his protection, she was a slave, it didn't matter if she was a powerful witch-bane. She battled with the feelings the mark gave her because she couldn't let herself get hurt again either.

Days turned into weeks, and Nicole tried to focus on her duties within the pack. She trained hard, worked on the powers she was supposed to have tirelessly, and even helped out with training

sessions. She could feel herself becoming stronger. She was also proud of the money she was saving up for her freedom.

Just when she thought things were finally settling down, Alpha Liam's sister, Lilian, a powerful Luna in another pack, came to visit.

"Nicole, Luna Lilian, my sister," Alpha Liam said, introducing the two of them.

Lilian looked Nicole up and down, her eyes filled with disdain. "So you're the one who's been causing my brother so much trouble," she sneered. Nicole tried to keep her composure despite feeling insulted by Lilian's words. "I don't know what you're talking about, Luna Lilian," she replied, addressing her with the respect that was due to her rank.

Lilian scoffed. "Don't play dumb with me, girl. I know all about your little fling with my brother.

And I must say, I'm not impressed."

Alpha Liam stepped in before the situation could escalate any further. "That's enough, Lilian. Get back to training witch-bane," he commanded, whisking Lilian away.

A sense of premonition tingled her nerves. She knew at once that Luna Lillian was trouble. Nicole was uncomfortable around Lilian. She heard stories from Asha and Rose about the Luna's temper

and how she could make life miserable for those who crossed her.

It didn't take long before she figured out the purpose of the Luna's visit. She had heard her brother's dilemma and came to help him get rid of the mark. Nicole felt a pang of jealousy, but she pushed it aside and tried to be objective.

Luna Lillian introduced her brother to countless women, but none of them caught Liam's interest. Nicole tried to hide that seeing Liam with other women annoyed her. She ranted her frustration out to Asha and Garrett.

Alpha Liam didn't seem interested in any of the recommended women. It made her a bit happy. Lillian, on the other hand, was getting more and more agitated. She was nagging Liam daily.

Nicole had been in the pack kitchen when they came in arguing.

"Why don't you like any of them, Liam?" she demanded. "Are you still hung up on this one?" She pointed at Nicole.

"Lillian," Liam growled, "you know we're fighting against a mark, right? It takes time."

"You need to hurry up and get over her," Lillian snapped. "The pack needs you. You have a battle to fight."

Nicole felt a knot forming in her stomach. She knew where this was going. Lillian was going to try

to make it look like it was her fault that Liam marked her. She wondered what she had done to her.

As she was trying to make her way out of the kitchen, Lilian turned to her with a sneer. "You know, Nicole, I heard about you and how gullible you are. You're a lone wolf and do not belong here. Maybe it's time for you to move on. You can save both of you the stress and leave Dark Moon."

"Lilian!" Liam barked, his dominance taking hold of both of them. Fear crawled up Nicole's spine as she began to suffocate. "Stop this instant." After a while, Nicole could breathe better.

"I'm sorry, Nicole," Liam apologized, avoiding her gaze.

Lilian growled, "You apologized to that thing? This is serious."

Nicole felt her blood boil. How dare she? "I'm not going anywhere, Luna Lilian," she said, her voice firm. "And never refer to me as a thing again." Lilian just laughed. "You think you're so tough, don't you?" she said, her voice dripping with sarcasm. "But let me tell you something, little girl. You don't stand a chance against me. I have more power and influence than you could ever dream of having."

Nicole gritted her teeth, trying to control her anger. Lilian had more power than she did. But that didn't mean she had to take her bullying lying down. Alpha Liam stepped in once again. "That's enough, Lilian," he said firmly, "let's go."

Lilian rolled her eyes. "Fine," she said, turning on her heel.

With that, she stalked off, leaving Nicole feeling shaken and angry. She couldn't believe the nerve of that woman. But as angry as she was, she couldn't help but feel a twinge of sadness as well. She had always hoped that Alpha Liam would choose her, but now it seemed like that was never going to happen.

Lilian's bullying continued. She would make snide comments whenever she saw Nicole, and she would try to sabotage her work whenever she could. Nicole tried to ignore her, but it was getting harder and harder to do so.

One day, as she was getting ready to go on patrol with some pack members, Lilian appeared out of nowhere. "You know, Nicole, you really should leave Liam alone," she said, her voice low and menacing. "He doesn't need a weakling like you dragging him down."

Nicole felt her heart sink. She was getting tired of this constant bullying. Maybe it was time for her to leave.

But before she could even think about it more, Alpha Liam appeared behind Lilian. "What's going on here?" he demanded, his eyes flashing with anger.

Lilian tried to play it off. "Oh, nothing, Liam," she said, trying to put on a smile. "Just giving Nicole some friendly advice."

Alpha Liam didn't buy it. "That doesn't sound like a friendly advice to me," he said, his voice cold. "What's going on, Lilian? Why are you treating Nicole like this?"

Lilian's smile faltered, and for a moment, she looked caught off guard. But then she regained her composure. "I'm just concerned about the pack, Liam," she said smoothly. "I want what's best for you and the pack. And I don't think Nicole is the best choice for you. She's not worth it, witchbane or not."

Alpha Liam's eyes narrowed, and his voice was laced with anger and power. "That's not for you to decide, Lilian," he said firmly.

Lilian looked like she wanted to argue more, but Alpha Liam's tone permitted no argument. She sighed dramatically. "Fine, Liam," she said, rolling her eyes. "Remember that discussion we had earlier about you sending her away? Have you made your decision yet?"

Nicole's heart skipped a beat. They were discussing sending her away. She didn't know how to feel.

Liam shook his head and clenched his jaw.

Lilian looked at him with a sense of determination.

"Liam, you can't keep living like this. You need to make a decision. You can't keep stringing Isabella along, and you can't keep holding onto your feelings for Nicole. They are not even real. It's time to be strong and do what's best for our pack."

With that, she turned and stormed off, leaving Alpha Liam and Nicole alone. Nicole could feel her heart racing in her chest. She couldn't believe the type of person Lilian was.

Alpha Liam turned to her, his expression softening.

"I'm sorry about that, Nicole," he said, taking a step closer to her. "She's been difficult lately. I don't know what's gotten into her."

Nicole was stunned, and Alpha Liam was apologizing a lot lately. She tried to keep her cold disposition up, but it was getting harder and harder to do so. She could feel her resolve crumbling.

"It's fine, Alpha Liam," she said, her voice cracking slightly. "I'm used to it by now."

Alpha Liam looked at her intently, his gaze searching. "No, it's not fine," he said, his voice low.

"You don't deserve to be treated that way."

Nicole's heart skipped a beat at his words. Was he actually defending her?

Alpha Liam seemed to sense her hesitation, and he took another step closer to her. "I know we've had our differences, Nicole," he said, his voice gentle. "But I don't want to fight with you anymore. I want to start afresh. What do you say?"

Nicole's mind was racing. She knew that she should keep her guard up, that she should be cautious of his advances. But at the same time, she couldn't help but feel a flutter of hope in her chest. Could it be possible that he actually wanted to sort out their issues?

But before she could even respond, the sound of a howl cut through the air, signalling that the patrol was about to start. Alpha Liam's expression changed, and he took a step back from her.

"We'll talk more about this later, Nicole," he said, his tone serious. "For now, we have a job to do."

And with that, he turned and walked away, leaving Nicole standing there, her mind reeling.

The patrol was long and uneventful, but Nicole couldn't shake the feeling that something was off. She kept thinking about Alpha Liam's words about his offer to start fresh. Was it genuine? Or was he just playing games with her?

She was certain that his sister had come to help him get rid of the mark. He also told her that another way to get rid of it was to agree that they weren't compatible after getting to know each other.

They ended up in one of their cabins in the woods because it was too late to go back to the pack house. Nicole was exhausted. She headed straight to her cabin, hoping to get some rest. But as she was about to close the door, she heard a knock. She opened the door, and to her surprise, Alpha Liam was standing there, a determined look on his face. "We need to talk, Nicole," he said, his voice low.

Nicole felt a flutter of nervousness in her chest. This was it. This was the moment of truth.

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Alpha Liam stepped into her cabin, and Nicole closed the door behind him. They stood facing each other, and neither of them said anything for a long moment.

Finally, Alpha Liam broke the silence. "I meant what I said earlier, Nicole," he said with sincerity

in his voice. "I want to start afresh. I want us to put all of our past disagreements behind us and try to build something new. Maybe it'll set us free or lead to something new. We cannot be too sure."

Nicole's heart was racing. She didn't know what to say. On the one hand, she wanted to believe him. She wanted to believe that he was sincere and that he truly wanted to give them another chance, but on the other hand, she was afraid of getting hurt again.

"I don't know, Alpha Liam," she said finally, her voice barely above a whisper. "I don't know if I can trust you."

Alpha Liam's expression softened. "I understand that, Nicole," he said, taking a step closer to her.

"And I don't expect you to trust me right away. But I'm willing to work for it. I'm willing to prove to you that I'm serious about this."

Nicole looked up at him, her eyes searching his face for any sign of deception. But all she saw was honesty and sincerity. Yet her insecurities jumped at her.

"Nicole, we need to talk. We need to discuss these things. It will then set us free," he said, his voice firm but gentle.

As he stood before her looking sincere, her mind flashed back to all the moments they had

together. She missed his scent and everything about him. She was fighting her attraction for Alpha Liam.

"Okay," she said finally, her voice barely audible.

"We can try to start afresh, but you have to promise me one thing."

"What's that?" Alpha Liam asked, his gaze steady.

"Pressure. I don't want it. We will maintain a cordial relationship if it develops into a good friendship, but I need it to be at my pace. You're Alpha, I get it, but I own my body too. If we are going to get intimate, it should be consensual. I don't want the hot and cold shit too," Nicole said, her voice firm. "I can't handle that kind of drama in my life anymore."

Alpha Liam nodded, affirming with serious expressions. "I promise, Nicole," he said. "I won't let anything or anyone come between us; between this. Too much is at stake."

Nicole felt a small glimmer of hope in her chest.

Maybe this time things will be different. Maybe this time they could make it work. Maybe they could finally get rid of the mark and set each other free.

Somewhere in her brain, her fear and distrust of him bagged at her, but she tried to suppress it so she could focus on working towards getting to know the real Liam.

Things between Nicole and Alpha Liam seemed to be improving. They spent more time together, and Alpha Liam was always attentive. But then Lilian had not given up; she worked extra hard to see everything fall apart.

Whenever Liam was away, she made sure to make Nicole feel like an outcast, belittling Nicole whenever she got the chance. She would make snide remarks whenever she saw Nicole and Alpha Liam together, or she would try to draw her brother's attention away from her. She was also trying to set Nicole up against Liam's former women.

Nicole tried to ignore it at first, but it was getting harder and harder to do so. She could feel herself becoming more and more on the edge; more and more defensive around Alpha Liam. It made it difficult for her to open up to him.

Nicole was walking through the pack grounds when Lilian appeared out of nowhere, blocking her path.

"What do you want, Lilian?" Nicole asked, her tone cold.

Lilian smirked. "Just wanted to see how my little brother's pet was doing," she said, her voice dripping with disdain.

Nicole felt a surge of anger, but she tried to keep her cool. "I'm not his pet, Lilian," she said. "And I'm not going anywhere."

Lilian's expression darkened. "You should leave him, Nicole," she said, her voice low. "He doesn't need a weak little wolf like you dragging him down. Don't start shit about you being a witch-bane.

You're nothing but a freaking slave,"

Nicole felt her temper flaring. "I'm not weak," she said, her voice rising. "And I'm not going to let you bully me anymore."

Lilian laughed, "Oh, sweetie," she said, placing a condescending hand on Nicole's shoulder. "You don't even know what it means to be a strong wolf. You're just a pathetic little pup."

Nicole's eyes flashed with anger and she pushed Lilian's hand away. "Don't touch me," she said through gritted teeth.

Lilian's eyes narrowed. "You think you're so tough, don't you?" she said, her voice cold. "But you're nothing compared to me. I'm the Luna of this pack and you're just an Omega. You don't even deserve to be in the same room as my brother. You don't belong here. Leave him alone!"

Nicole could feel the tears prickling at the corners of her eyes, but she refused to let them fall.

"I'm not going anywhere," she said, her voice shaking slightly. "I'm not going until he lets me go and I'm not going to let you take that away from me."

Lilian's expression turned even colder. "We'll see about that," she said, before turning on her heel

and walking away.

Nicole stood there for a long moment, trying to calm herself down. She knew that Lilian was just trying to get a rise out of her, but it was getting harder and harder to ignore her bullying.

Later that day, Nicole found herself with Garrett and Asha, venting about her encounter with Lilian. "I don't know what to do with Lilian," she said, her voice shaking with emotions. "She's making my life a living hell."

Garrett's expression was sympathetic. "I'm sorry, Nicole," he said, reaching out to take her hand.

"I know how difficult she can be. But please don't let her get to you. She's a bitch."

"A thick bitch! What I don't get is why she's like this with you." Asha added.

Nicole shook her head, it was full of doubts. "I don't know if I can handle this with Liam," she complained. "Maybe I need to leave the pack. For my sanity's sake. I only need the mark to fade."

Asha's expression turned to panic. "No, Nicole," she said, replacing Garrett's grip on her hand.

"Please don't leave. I need you here. We can work through this together."

Nicole shot Garrett a look and he looked away. She knew that he wanted her to go. He wasn't in support of her giving Liam another chance. He wanted her to negotiate her freedom.

Nicole felt a wave of sadness wash over her. She didn't want to leave the pack, but she didn't know how much longer she could handle Lilian's bullying.

Suddenly, the door burst open and Lilian walked in with a malicious smile on her face. "Oh, I see I interrupted something," she said, her voice dripping with sarcasm.

Garrett stood up, his countenance had gone sour, "What do you want, Lilian?" he said, his voice low.

Lilian's expression turned icy. "You too? Aren't you mated? Maybe she's the witch who's been attacking the Dark Moon and you all have been blind. Ask yourself why the witch disappeared after she was discovered.

I'm disappointed Tony, you have a mate, so why are you hanging around that thing? I can see through you. I know your ulterior motives and I won't let it stand," she said, looking pointedly at Nicole.

Suddenly, Alpha Liam joined them in the office. His face turned red with anger. "I don't want any other women," he said, his voice dripping with dominance and power. "I want Nicole!"

Lilian's eyes narrowed. "Suite yourself, it's the mark talking. We all know that," she said before turning on her heel.

Liam grabbed Lilian before she could slip off. "You asked a question. You asked that I should send her away and I haven't responded. Now I want you to listen clearly. Nicole is going nowhere! Not because of her position as a witch bane, but because I want her here. She's mine until she isn't!" He growled, his power made them tremble. "This should be the last time you ever belittle, taunt, or mock Nicole. She's mine and you will respect her. She's not going anywhere. She stays!"

Lilian wiggled away from her brother and stormed out of the office. Nicole felt her heart flutter, but she was still very hurt by Lilian.

They all stood there in silence for a long moment, neither one knowing what to say.

Finally, Alpha Liam spoke up. "I'm sorry about that, Nicole," he said, his voice apologetic. "She's been getting worse lately and I don't know how to handle her."

Nicole nodded, her eyes full of sadness. "I don't know how much longer I can take this. I need time alone."

She dashed out of the forest and into the woods. She continued running until she was far from the pack. A lot was happening in her head and she was a bit disoriented.

Nicole! Where are you? You're in danger!

But it was too late because someone knocked her out and all she saw was darkness.

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Alarms resounded in Liam's head a few moments after Nicole ran out through the door.

Nicole! Where are you? You're in Danger!

He screamed into his link with her as he stumbled out after her. But it was too late because in seconds his connection to her was cut off.

"Liam! What's going on?" Garrett shouted as he ran after him,

"Nicole," he growled, throwing his hands in the air, "I cannot feel her!"

Liam didn't stop, he continued running, following her fading scent that led him into the forest.

Get the scouts out here, someone attacked Nicole!

He commanded the warriors through the link.

He could hear Garrett's footsteps as he came after him. He thought he sensed Asha, her friend, but he couldn't be certain.

He snaked through the forest at a great speed, allowing his nose to direct him.

When did she get this far? Garrett said into his head. She just left a few minutes ago.

The scouts had arrived. They didn't follow Liam, instead, they spread out in different directions in search of the intruder and attacker.

Liam stopped short and sniffed the air. For the first time in a long while, sweat trickled down his forehead. His wolf was agitated and howling within. It wanted to break free and go after her itself.

He bared his teeth and inhaled the air.

"I cannot sense her. Her scent has thinned out!" He roared.

"Spread out, delve deeper into the woods. There are intruders in the forest. Use does resistance to the witch's powers as forerunners. I suspect magical foul play!" James screamed, his eyes flashing black and gold, showing that he was also communicating through the link as he arrived at the scene.

"Alpha, at what place is her scent prominent?"

James growled.

Liam wasn't paying attention, his eyes were closed as he tried with all his might to establish a connection with Nicole.

"Speak to me, Garrett! What happened?"

"There was an argument with Lilian and she ran out. A few seconds later, he felt that something was wrong."

"Okay, Beta, get Asha out of here. We need you at the pack in case this might be a trap. Alpha, where's her most prominent scent?"

Garrett nodded, grabbed Asha and returned to the pack. Almost at the same time, Liam took off again and James followed.

Hours passed by and she still wasn't found.

24 hours later, Liam paced about the conference hall with the eyes of almost thirty werewolves which made up the panel/stakeholders of Dark Moon.

"We should retreat the scouts in the woods. It's obvious that she's now untraceable." One of them said,

"It might be a plot to get us. The werewolves searching the forests are fatigued at this point. Maybe they want to weaken our defenses."

"Yes, why are we so concerned? She's just a witch bane. It's not like she's a core member of the pack. I think she's disposable."

"This is an obvious ploy, the witch bane is most likely to defeat the Witch and so she was abducted. The good thing is that we've trained most of our warriors and pack members. Why worry? What was she before we discovered her importance? A slave? An Omega?"

"We should call back our scouts and troops and fortify Dark Moon."

"If the witch abducted her, she must have killed her by now and would have greater confidence in defeating us. She also knows that you might fall into her trap and go after Nicole; this would weaken our defenses, and at the right time, she would strike."

"Yes, we shouldn't fall for it. It seems like you're falling apart, Alpha. Your state is demoralizing the pack members,"

"Enough..." Garrett growled, getting to his feet. Liam was still pacing around. Their words fell on deaf ears, the only thing he cared about was getting Nicole back immediately. He ran his hand through his hair and tugged it. He couldn't sense her, but he knew that she was not alright. It was like he was under intense torture and his wolf was not helping at all. It was clawing at him from within and raging.

"Is that all you think of her? Have any of you ever asked yourself why your alpha would bring back a fake Luna?" Garrett raged,

"Even if she's nothing to us," James cut in, giving Garrett a side eye, "when did we change from the norms in Dark Moon? I thought anyone admitted into the Dark Moon was to be protected.

When did we change? When did we lose our sympathy?

Even with strays, you know quite well that your alpha is ready to go to the ends of the Earth to save anybody who can be identified as a Pack member. So why should Nicole's situation be different?"

"She's even the freaking Witch bane! Probably our hope in this perplexing war. The impetus is alarming," Garrett hissed, slamming his palm on the table and clenching his fists.

"You want the scouts to be called back?" Liam said suddenly, his voice was the authority that made them shake. "Fine, they are worn out. But if they come back, the warriors go out in their stead."

The room was immediately filled with grumbling and rumbles.

"Silence!" Liam hissed, his voice as low as passing wind. "I need to hear my thoughts," his eyes were black pools showing that both man and wolf were present.

The room was pin-drop silent as they all stared wide-eyed at him. Everyone knew how formidable Liam was when his wolf was present. Werewolves were naturally beast-like, but Liam's wolf was the embodiment of the beast itself.

It was a monster with no iota of fear, regard, or respect. Everyone knew that they had to watch

their words because the aggravated Liam's wolf could snap and rip out their throats in seconds. It had happened before; he had slaughtered 10 panel members in less than 5 minutes.

"I respect you. I respect the panel because I believe that one cannot lead alone. So I'm going to ask you all to stop your chattering and chittering. You're not birds, neither are you monkeys. We began this meeting about 2 hours ago, yet you are still running around in circles. It's annoying. What has the Panel decided?"

The room was silent for long minutes and Liam, who had been pacing about, slumped on his throne seat.

"Anyone?" Liam growled.

"Uhhh... Alpha. We are still considering the circumstances..."

"Don't. I've given you enough time." Liam growled, "We-we think, We have decided to let it be. We think you should forget it. This is a trap and the moment you step out something may happen."

"You realize that 24 hours have gone, right?"

"She might as well be dead," someone whispered.

Liam tugged his blonde hair and banged the table.

"My patience with every person in this room is being tested each second. It will be horrible when I lose it, but I guess you guys are over-familiar

with that story and have forgotten the truth. It would be bad if I lost one of you because of your insensitivity."

"We have decided that you shouldn't go out; you become exposed to risks both in the forest and here."

"What risk? Do you realize that we're at greater risk if she's killed?" Liam growled.

The room was silent.

"I'm giving you 30 minutes and if I don't get the response I want or a better idea, I'll head into the forest," he declared, storming out of their presence. Blind with rage, he bumped into Lillian who had been eavesdropping on the conversation.

"Wh-what's their decision?" She stammered.

Liam was exuding so much power combined with ire, that it suffocated anyone close to him.

Lilian staggered back, clawing at her neck.

"Liam!" She gritted out panting heavily. "Stop it, you're killing me."

Liam growled, his wolf was very angry at her. It remembered how Lilian had taunted and bullied Nicole. Liam paused, allowing himself to cool down.

"Lilian, what do you know about her disappearance?" He asked icily, his voice was calm but

dripping with menace.

Lilian trembled and then blew out a breath.

"Are you out of your mind? How dare you accuse me of such?"

"Accuse?" Liam snarled. "I only asked a question," Lilian's eyes shot wide, then brimmed with tears.

"You... you may have not said anything, but you implied it!" She stammered.

Liam raked his hands through his hair. "Do not fuck with me, Lilian. My wolf is seconds, mere seconds from losing its mind. It can smell guilt off you."

"Liam," Lilian growled, wiping the tears falling out of her eyes, "you will not bully me!"

"What the fuck are you talking about?" Liam growled. "Why are you suddenly sweating?"

"You-you-you"

"Answer me,"

"No," Lilian sneered, "I have no idea where your Omega-witch bane is. Neither do I know why you'd think I'd done something like that."

Liam stared intently at her for some seconds, then snapped his eyes shut and rubbed his face with his hands. His wolf waged war on his head. It didn't believe Lilian, but to him, she looked sincere.

"Besides, this is the chance we've been waiting for. You've grown attached. You should use this opportunity to sever these bonds and ties you're developing with her. She is not your mate, and neither is she Luna Material."

Liam couldn't believe what she was saying. He paced around trying to keep himself in check. If he let loose, he could cause serious harm to his sister.

"Liam," Lillian said affectionately. "All these things you think you feel are not real. Cross-examine yourself and you'll realize that these feelings are from your wolf and not you. Once again, you are allowing your wolves' emotions to control you. Fight it, you are above that."

Liam growled, his eyes turning to gold pools. His back arched as his wolf threatened to make its way out.

"You did this!" He growled, In a second, he grabbed Lillian by her throat and lifted her into the air.

James and Garrett ran out and tried to wrestle Lillian out of his grip. Lillian's fingers transformed into claws as she scratched and struggled viciously for freedom.

"Where's she?" Liam asked, his voice becoming deeper and laced with authority that slowed James and Garrett down. It signified that his wolf was present and almost in complete control. Within him, Liam fought to keep his sanity. Lillian's attacks and clawing weren't having any effect on him. After about a minute, he let her go and turned to James and Garrett.

"Alpha," Garrett growled, his wolf was also present and his eyes were black and gold. "Liam, control this rage. Do not go Feral,"

Grunting, Liam doubled over, holding his lap and panting heavily. He shook his head a couple of times, but his wolf was still insistent.

"Liam... How could you?" Lilian, who had collapsed to the floor, croaked as she gasped for air. "I cannot believe you-"

Liam's head snapped up, his eyes now completely black, he bared his fangs at Lilian, whose eyes widened on seeing his expression.

They all exchanged looks and swallowed, fear crept up their bellies.

Lilian was annoyed for two reasons— one, that her brother was going feral on her, and two, that he was doing it for a girl who wasn't worth it. She snarled and automatically got to her feet.

Her eyes flashed golden and she bared her teeth at him.

"Stand down!" Garrett growled at Lilian, using his authority as Beta. He and James were the only ones who could stand up to Liam's wolf when things went out of hand.

Because Lilian's wolf was also an Alpha wolf, she growled in defiance.

"Can't you see!" She screamed. "You're letting the bond develop. You hit me because of that!"

Liam remained in the same position, breathing hard as he fought with his wolf.

"Get her out of here!" Garrett commanded James. In a flash, James grabbed Lilian by the waist and darted off.

They could hear her screaming,

"I won't stand for this! She has corrupted your mind for you to accuse me, Brother! It must stop. It must end..."

"Liam," Garrett said carefully, "It's okay. Just calm down."

"Nothing is." Liam snapped, "What did the Panel decide?"

Garret stood rigidly, unable to say anything.

Liam grunted, then took off toward the forest, changing into his wolf form as he went in search of Nicole.

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