Chapter 61

Liam fought the urge to snap back, reminding himself of the importance of maintaining his composure. He glanced at James, silently conveying his appreciation for his presence. James offered a reassuring nod, a silent reminder that they were in this together.

"Lilian, please calm down," Liam said, his voice firm but tinged with underlying exhaustion. "Returning to your pack is not a viable option at the moment. It's not safe."

Lilian growled and shut the door in his face. Liam's wolf lost control and raged in his head. It took all the self-control to hold it back. Noticing Liam's internal struggle, James stepped forward.

"Lilian. Open the door." James growled, his eyes flashing gold.

The protests and screams ceased for a moment before Lilian's voice, filled with defiance and frustration, responded. "I don't want to talk to you! Just go away!"

Liam's jaw clenched as he laid hold of his thin temper. He exchanged a glance with James, who offered a nod of silent support. Steeling himself, Liam decided to enter the room regardless of his

sister's protests.

As the door swung open, revealing Lilian's disheveled appearance and tear-stained face, Liam's heart sank. Despite their differences and the strain in their relationship, he still cared for her and wanted to protect her.

"Lilian, we need to talk," he stated firmly, his voice laced with a mixture of authority and concern. "I understand that you're upset, but this behavior won't solve anything."

Lilian crossed her arms defiantly, and her eyes bore a mixture of anger and sorrow. "You never understand, Liam! You're always so busy with your precious pack. You never have time for me!"

Liam's frustration simmered beneath the surface, but he forced himself to remain calm. "I have responsibilities, Lilian, just like you. But that doesn't mean I don't care. We're in the middle of a crisis, and I need you to understand the gravity of the situation."

Lilian's shoulders slumped, her anger momentarily replaced by a flicker of vulnerability. "I just... I feel so lost, Liam. I don't know where I belong anymore. Everything is changing, and I don't know how to handle it."

Liam's heart softened, his anger dissipating as he approached his sister. He reached out, gently

placing a hand on her shoulder. "I know it's difficult, Lilian. But we're family, and we'll get
through this together. I promise."
Lilian's tears flowed freely now, her defenses crumbling in the face of her brother's understanding.
"I'm scared, Liam. Scared of losing you, of losing everything."
Liam held onto Lilian, holding her tightly. "You're not going to lose me, Lilian. I'll always be here
for you, no matter what. We'll face whatever challenges that come our way as a family."
Lilian's eyes narrowed as she stared in defiance and desperation, "Lies. Lies, Liam. I don't believe
any of this anymore! Not after you stopped caring. I want to be in my pack with my people. You
can't keep me here against my will!"
Liam had never seen Lilian this angry or crazed in a long while, and it pained him to witness her
in such a state. Her words cut through the tension, each one fueled by frustration and desperation.
"I want my pack, Liam! I want my mate!" Lilian exclaimed, her voice laced with anguish. "I can't
stand being trapped here, away from them. I need to be with them!"
"Lilian, please, try to understand," Liam gritted out. "You were just attacked. The witch is still out
there, a threat to all of us. It's not safe for you or your pack."

Lilian sneered, her voice dripping with frustration. "I also have a pack to care for, Liam! I have responsibilities, just like you. I miss my mate, and I can't bear to be separated from him any longer."

Liam's jaw tightened, a mix of emotions swirling within him.

"Lilian, I understand your longing, but we can't afford to lose focus," Liam responded firmly, his words tinged with a touch of regret. "The witches are still a threat, and we must remain united and vigilant. I can't risk your safety or the safety of our pack."

Lilian's eyes welled up with tears, her voice choked with sadness and aggressiveness. "You've changed, Liam. Ever since you met Nicole, everything has been different. You're losing sight of what truly matters!"

Liam stepped back, releasing her from the hold.

Lilian's face contorted with anger, her voice growing louder. "You always think you know what's best for me! You've never cared about what I want!"

Liam's patience began to wear thin, his jaw tightening. He fought against the rising urge to argue, to defend his actions. His wolf was on a rampage against him. It was tired of the disrespect.

"Lilian, please understand that Liam is doing what he believes is necessary to protect you," James interjected calmly, his voice carrying a note of authority. "We all have our roles to play in this war, and your safety is paramount."

Lilian glared at James, her fists clenched in frustration. Her gaze flickered momentarily towards Liam, her expression softening. "I just want to be heard, to have a say in my own life. Is that too much to ask?"

James looked away.

"Oh, please. Stop with the shit. You know quite well that my brother has lost his mind since he met that witch! The Liam I once knew would have crippled that stupid witch a long time ago!"

Liam's temper flared, and his patience was pushed to its limits. He struggled to keep his voice steady as he responded, his anger simmering beneath the surface.

"Don't you dare accuse me of losing focus, Lilian? Everything I do, I do for the pack and for our family. Nicole has brought light and love into my life, but that doesn't mean I've forgotten my responsibilities. Don't fucking mention her."

Lilian's eyes widened, and then she burst into maniacal laughter. "Love? Light? Oh, her charms got you bad, brother!"

"Silence," Liam growled, his wolf taking control as his dominance flooded the room.

Lilian rose up to the challenge as her wolf was a female alpha, but Liam held a lot of power.

They growled at each other. A heavy silence hung in the air, the tension between them almost suffocating.

Lilian snorted as she backed down, her gaze softening; sadness and resignation reflected in her eyes.

"I'm leaving this place, Liam." She said.

Liam's shoulders slumped, a sigh escaping his lips. He had to compromise, to find a middle ground that would satisfy Lilian's yearning for her pack while ensuring her safety.

"Very well," Liam reluctantly agreed, his voice weary but resolute. "Someone will accompany you, Lilian. But promise me that you'll exercise caution and prioritize your safety above everything else."

She sneered, wanting to argue, but Liam's dominance flooded the air.

"Fine, Liam," she conceded, her voice conveying a dual feature of defiance and defeat. "I'll do as you want, but I want James to accompany me. I need someone I trust by my side."

Liam nodded. "Very well."

Instinctively, he pulled her into a hug. Wondering when things went so badly between them.

"You know I love you, right?" Lilian whispered.

"I love you too." With that, Liam reluctantly released Lilian from his embrace and turned to James, who had been standing silently by their side. He made eye contact with his chief warrior, conveying unspoken instructions and a plea to protect his sister.

"James, accompany Lilian back to her pack," Liam commanded, his voice steady but twined with concern. "Ensure her safety and keep a watchful eye on her. Return as soon as you've ensured everything is secure."

James nodded, expressing absolute loyalty. "I won't let anything happen to her, Alpha. You have my word."

As James and Lilian departed, a mix of relief and unease washed over Liam. But he ignored it. He was eager to return to Nicole's warmth.

Chapter 62

Chapter 62

As Liam entered his chambers, his heart swelled with happiness at the thought of being reunited

with his mate, Nicole. The memories of their time together brought a smile to his face, filling him with warmth. His wolf was also elated.

But as he entered the room, his elation quickly turned to confusion and hurt. Nicole stood before him, her demeanor withdrawn, and her eyes filled with fear. It was as if a dark cloud had descended upon the room, casting a shadow over their once joyful moments. His wolf growled as he wondered what was happening.

"Nicole, what's wrong?" Liam asked, his voice laced with concern. He approached her, wanting nothing more than to hold her and chase away whatever demons plagued her.

Nicole hesitated, her voice barely above a whisper. "I... I need space, Liam. I need to be alone for a while."

Liam's heart sank, a wave of pain coursed within him. He had thought everything was perfect between them, that their bond was unbreakable. The sudden change in her demeanor left him feeling lost and unsure of how to proceed.

"But... why?" Liam managed to utter, his voice laced with confusion and a tinge of pain. "We were happy, Nicole. What happened?"

Nicole avoided his gaze, her voice trembling with vulnerability. "It's not about you, Liam. It's

about me. I... I just need some time to sort through my thoughts and feelings."

Liam's heart dropped, a knot forming in his stomach. He had never seen Nicole like that, and it pained him to witness her fear and withdrawal. He reached out, attempting to touch her arm gently, but she flinched and stepped back, staring right into his eyes as fear and repentance flushed over her.

"I... I can't explain it, Liam," Nicole whispered, her voice barely audible. "The memories, the pain... it's all coming back. I need to be alone."

Liam felt a surge of pain and confusion wash over him. He struggled to understand what had triggered Nicole's sudden withdrawal, desperate to find a way to comfort and reassure her.

"Talk to me, Nicole. Let me understand. Did I take too long?"

"No." She said, shaking her head firmly. "I said it's not you. Everything is happening too fast. I'm just finding it hard to process it."

Liam gulped. "Nicole, you're not alone in this. I'm here for you, no matter what," Liam vowed, his voice filled with total assurance. "I'll do everything in my power to help you overcome these fears, to show you that you're safe with me."

Nicole's gaze softened, her eyes reflecting a mix of gratitude and fear. "Liam, I want to believe

you. I want to trust that everything will be okay. But the pain is overwhelming, and I need time to process it all."

At that point, Liam wondered for the umpteenth time what she had experienced in her dreams and why it affected her. He ached to get rid of whatever it was that made her so vulnerable.

It seemed like she was blaming herself, or was it him that tortured her in that induced sleep? Was it why she refused to talk about what she saw and was afraid of him? He was connected to her now, more than ever, and needed her to keep himself sane.

How he ached to hold her, to inhale her scent. He wanted to bring the world to her feet. He wanted her to see how pristine she was, how strong and powerful.

"Nicole," Liam tried again, his voice filled with desperation. "I want to help you. I want to be here for you. You can talk to me, let me understand."

Nicole sighed, her eyes conveying a mixture of pain and uncertainty. "Liam, I can't explain it. It's... it's not easy for me to trust, to let someone in. I've been hurt before, and the memories of the past still haunt me."

"Nicole, I would never hurt you," Liam whispered with sincerity in his tone. "I'll do everything in

my power to make you feel safe and loved. Please don't push me away."

Nicole's gaze softened, tears glistening in her eyes. "I know, Liam. And I don't want to push you away. But I need to confront these fears and heal from the wounds of my past. It's not about you. It's about me finding strength within myself."

Liam's wolf howled within him, yearning for the connection they shared. He had never felt such a profound desire to protect and cherish someone, plus the thought of being without Nicole was unbearable.

"Nicole, I understand. I won't force you to be with me, but know that I'll always be here, waiting for you. Whenever you're ready, I'll be here." Liam added keenly.

Nicole's eyes met his, a glimmer of love and gratitude shining through her tears. "Thank you, Liam. Your patience and understanding mean more to me than words can express. I just need some time to find my strength again."

Liam's wolf roared within him, yearning for his mate's touch and the reassurance of their bond.

But he understood how important it was for her to warm up to the idea. He took a step back, giving Nicole the space she needed. Patience, it was patience that he needed. She shuffled past him, hugging herself tightly.

"Wait," he said suddenly.

Nicole froze, avoiding his gaze.

"Stay here." He commanded.

Nicole narrowed her eyes and then opened her mouth to speak. But Liam beat her to it.

"Like it or not, staying here with my scent surrounding you is going to calm you down." He gestured to the room.

Nicole's eyes widened. However, he continued, "We're mates. You seek my company the way I'm dying for yours. Staying here will give you a sense of protection and comfort and will slowly ease off your fears. I promise you'll feel worse the moment you step out of here."

Nicole nodded meekly and headed back to the bed.

Liam smirked, "I'll send in food for you."

Chapter 63
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The moment Liam walked out of the room, he sighed and collapsed on the door. A realization hit him immediately. Nicole had been okay until Garrett appeared. He pretended not to have noticed the look in Garrett's eyes when he saw Nicole because he was eager and focused on meeting his

sister, but now he saw it clearly.

Anger coursed through him. His emotions ran high as Liam's anger flared, fueled by the frustration and hurt he felt over Nicole's sudden withdrawal. The realization that Garrett might have played a role in her emotional turmoil ignited a fire within him, threatening to consume his rationality.

He remembered that instead of following him, Garrett stayed behind, and he was sure that he might have said a few things to her. Fury coursed through his veins, fueling the fire of his rage. Without a second thought, Liam made his way to Garrett's location. The moment he laid eyes on his Beta, the simmering anger within him erupted into a full-blown inferno.

Confronting Garrett, Liam's voice boomed with a ferocity that echoed through the halls, his words filled with a potent portion of fury, "What did you do, Garrett? What did you say to her?" he bellowed, his eyes blazing with a fury that matched his wolf's.

Garrett, his own temper flaring, didn't back down. He squared his shoulders, meeting Liam's gaze with a defiant glare. "I didn't do anything, Liam! I was only looking out for her. I reminded her of her past, of the dangers she faced. I wanted to protect her!"

Liam's fists clenched, his voice seething with bitterness. "Protect her? By pushing her away? By making her doubt herself and our connection? You had no right!"

The tension in the room grew palpable as they faced off, their voices rising to a crescendo of anger and frustration. Their words clashed like thunder, echoing through the chambers and all through the pack's environment, drowning out reasoning and understanding.

"What the hell is your problem, Garrett?" Liam roared, his voice laced with a raw intensity. "Why are you acting this way? Why are you bent on messing things up? She was okay until you appeared."

Garrett's eyes flashed with defiance as he squared his shoulders, meeting Liam's gaze head-on.

"You think you know her, but you don't, Liam. You're blinded by your infatuation. You are letting it cloud your vision."

"You don't know shit, Garrett. You don't know anything about what's happening between Nicole and I!" Liam raged.

Garrett scoffed, "I know enough. I know enough to keep her away from you."

Liam's fists clenched at his sides, his wolf straining against his control. "You have no right to her, Garrett. She's my mate."

The words hung in the air, a bombshell that shattered the tense atmosphere. Gasps echoed through
the room, the shock reverberating off the walls. Even James, who had been observing the
argument from afar, stood frozen, his eyes wide with astonishment.

Stiffly James tried to intervene. He stepped between the two raging werewolves, his voice firm,
but tinged with desperation. "Enough! This isn't helping anyone. Liam, Garrett, please calm
down!"

But his efforts were met with disdain as the anger within Liam threatened to consume him
entirely. His voice laced with a feral edge, Liam snarled at James, his eyes flashing with a wild
intensity. "Stay out of this, James! This is between Garrett and me."

Lilian's anger flared, her voice dripping with venom. "Your mate? How could you keep this from
me, Liam? She's a slave, a nobody. She doesn't belong in our pack."

Garrett, sensing an opportunity to strike back, his voice dripping with sarcasm, taunted Liam
further. "Oh, so you finally admit it? Nicole is your mate, isn't she? No wonder you're so
protective of her!"

His words hung in the air, a shocking revelation that left everyone frozen in disbelief. Liam's eyes widened, his chest heaving with regret and astonishment. He had let it slip, the truth he had tried
so desperately to keep hidden.
Silence enveloped the room, the weight of the revelation sinking in.
Lilian was raving mad. "What are you saying?" she spat, "Nicole is your mate? How dare you believe any of that?"
The air crackled with tension as the truth hung between them, a catalyst for further chaos. Liam's anger swirled within him, his instincts fighting against reason. His wolf longed to break free, to unleash its fury upon those who dared to challenge their mate.
Liam's rage surged, his eyes blazing with a feral intensity. "Watch your tongue, Lilian. Nicole is mine. She's fucking powerful to be mine. She has endured more than anyone should ever have.
She's the witch bane. She's a slave; she's my equal, my partner, my everything. Don't make me rip out your tongue."
He turned to Garrett. "Garrett, what's your problem?" His voice was laced with burning anger. "Is it because you're jealous? Because you can't stand to see someone else share a connection with

me?"

Garrett's voice grew cold, his words dripping with disdain. "Jealousy has nothing to do with it, Liam. I'm trying to protect her from you and our pack from the unknown. You're a danger to her. You use and discard! She can't afford to let her guard down with you."

Lilian, who had been pacing around in anger, scoffed.

"Oh! She got you really bad, brother. Look at you. This is not the Alpha I know."

James, sensing the escalating tension, stepped forward, attempting to intervene. "Enough! Both of you, calm down. This argument won't solve anything."

Liam turned his blazing gaze towards James, his voice filled with power that crackled. "Stay out of this, James. I'm not going to say it again..."

But James refused to back down, his voice firm. "Liam, you're blinded by your anger. You need to think rationally. There must be a way to resolve this without tearing our pack apart."

Liam burst into laughter as his wolf took control. You're right, Lilian. I've changed. I've let myself become a fool."

Lilian smirked and folded her arms. Liam shut his eyes, allowing his frustration to feed his anger further.

In a second, he snatched Lilian by her neck and slammed her into a wall. She let out a piercing scream and the sounds of broken bones could be heard. Before anyone could react, he grabbed Garrett too.

His eyes opened, revealing black pools. James growled, but it wasn't as strong as it used to be. He was clouded with fear, knowing that Garrett's life was in imminent danger.

Chapter 64

Chapter 64

Nicole paced back and forth in Liam's room, her mind consumed by confusion and self-doubt.
She couldn't understand why she was pushing him away, why she was denying herself the love and happiness she had found in his arms.
Every fibre of her being longed to comfort him, to erase the pain she saw in his eyes when they last spoke. Yet, she couldn't bring herself to do it.
Her wolf, a mirror of her inner turmoil, growled and snarled within her, restless and angered by her actions. It knew that Liam was their mate, their destined partner, and it couldn't comprehend why she would distance herself from him.

Suddenly, the sound of raised voices echoed through the walls, reverberating in her ears. At first, she tried to ignore it, hesitant to involve herself in the chaos unfolding outside. But as the sound of Liam's unmistakable growl reached her ears, her heart skipped a beat, and her instincts took over.

Without a second thought, Nicole rushed out of the room, her steps fueled by a mix of curiosity and concern. She needed to know what was happening and why Liam's anger reverberated through the air. Whatever the reason, she couldn't bear the thought of him being in pain.

As she neared the source of the commotion, the voices grew louder, their angry tones cutting through the tension like a knife. Nicole's heart pounded in her chest, the anxiety building as she prepared herself for the scene that awaited her.

And there, in the midst of the turmoil, she saw him, Liam. His eyes blazed with fury and hurt as he stood tall and his presence commanding. He seemed to be on the brink of losing control, his wolf yearning for release. Since Lilian was lurking around, she hid in the shadows.

Nicole's breath caught in her throat as she witnessed the clash of emotions between Liam and Garrett. Their voices clashed like thunder, filled with anger and accusations. She could see the

pain etched on Liam's face, the weight of their argument bearing down on him.

Her gaze then shifted to James, who stood between the two furious werewolves with the voice of a desperate plea for calmness and serenity.

The atmosphere crackled with tension, their voices laced with anger and frustration. It was as if the world around her had frozen, and she found herself unable to tear her gaze away from the tumultuous scene unfolding before her.

Liam was on the brink of losing his mind. His eyes blazed with a mix of fury and pain, his wolf clawing at the surface, yearning to protect and defend Its mate.

The sight of him in such a state stirred both a mix of fear and longing within Nicole. She wanted to rush to his side, to calm his raging emotions, but something held her back. Her eyes darted around as she desperately sought for a way to diffuse the tension.

James's eyes met Nicole's briefly, a flicker of worry and concern passing between them. He seemed to be trying to pass information to her, and she didn't understand.

Nicole's heart ached as she took in the scene, torn between her desire to comfort Liam and her fear of the unknown. The chaos around her mirrored the chaos within her own heart, the

conflicting emotions threatening to overwhelm her. The venom and anger brewing in Liam's eyes reminded her a lot of her dreams and torture. Part of her wanted to see him as a beast and fear him, but her bond with him fought the idea. The scent of fear pooling out of their bodies swamped the air.

As the argument escalated to a dangerous climax, Nicole pushed herself forward. Just then, Liam tossed Lilian and grabbed Garrett, with his eyes turning black.

"Stop!" She screamed, rushing forward. The room fell silent, every eye fixed on her. Liam's wild gaze locked onto her, his feral instincts momentarily subdued by the presence of his mate.

His grip on Garrett, who was now writhing as he suffocated, remained as strong as ever.

Nicole met Liam's gaze, "Liam," She whispered slowly.

Liam growled, and his wolf was in control.

"Nicole, careful," Garrett sputtered, "He's almost feral, and when he's like this, he doesn't remember anyone."

Liam's wolf turned to Garrett, mad at him for daring to speak up. It raised a claw to strike him.

"Liam!" Nicole screamed, taking another step forward. Instinctively, his hand stopped halfway.

"Nicole," James whispered. "Garrett's right. Be careful, and do not go closer. He's not himself

right now."

Ignoring him, Nicole took another step forward. "Liam," she whispered again. Her chest was constricted from chaos, fear, and every other thing rambling in her head. For some reason, she wasn't afraid of either Liam or his wolf in a feral state.

What she was mostly afraid of was the jealousy she scented in the air. She didn't know if it was from Garrett, Lilian, or Liam. It was intoxicating and powerful enough to drive each of them crazy.

Liam looked at her, and venom dripped down his fangs. Nicole kept her eyes trained on Liam, knowing that if she dared to look at Garrett, he was as good as dead. She cared for him as a friend and nothing more.

She was even annoyed at him for trying to drive a wedge between them. And she couldn't understand what the problem with him was.

"Liam, listen to me. You're scaring everyone. This anger isn't who you are. We can't let it consume us."

Liam chuckled darkly, "This is exactly who I am. This is why you are afraid, right?" His voice was different. It sounded unreal and grainy.

Contrary to what he believed, Nicole was terrified because of her experiences with Shane and

how he had treated her as a sex object at the beginning.

Not of his current state. In fact, she discovered that she loved the power oozing from him. It seemed to caress her body and make him even more alluring.

She gulped and took another step forward, not stopping until she was within his reach.

Growling protectively, James sought to push her out of the way. Even Garrett, who was losing his breath, struggled. But Liam was quicker. He pulled her into his arms and pinned each of them with a death glare as he sniffed her hair.

"It's okay," Nicole muttered, wrapping her arms around him. Liam grunted as he struggled through his hazy mind.

With minimal effort, he let go of Garrett and pulled her in closer. Somewhere in the depths of his mind, he loved how protective they were of his mate. It was a sign that if he wasn't around, they could and would take care of her.

He let go and stared into her beautiful hazel.

"It's okay," She muttered again.

Liam's eyes softened as the affection and concern shining through her eyes pierced through the haze of his anger, reminding him of the bond they shared. Slowly, his wild features relaxed, his wolf retreating to the depths of his being.

Chapter 65

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"Nicole," he exhaled, "Nicole."

"Yes." She responded. Nicole's body was charged with electricity as he breathed her name into her ears. The power in his voice made her tremble. They remained in each other's embrace for some time, soaking in each other's essence.

Taking a deep breath, Nicole turned her attention to Garrett, her voice firm yet gentle. "Garrett, I understand that you were looking out for me, but this isn't the way. We need to find a better way to communicate and to support each other without tearing each other apart."

Garrett, still reeling from the intensity of the confrontation, nodded sheepishly. "Nicole, I... I'm sorry. I didn't mean for things to escalate like this. I just wanted to protect you, to ensure your safety."

Nicole's expression softened, sympathy shining in her eyes. "I know, Garrett. But we're all on the same side. We need to work together, not against each other. Let's find a way to resolve this without causing more harm."

Garrett nodded, his gaze shifting between the two. "I apologize, both to you, Liam, and to you,
Nicole. My actions were misguided. I don't know what came over me."
Lilian, consumed by her anger and resentment, had allowed her emotions to spiral out of control.
She couldn't bear the sight of Nicole standing strong, independent, and unyielding. It ignited a fire
within her, threatening to unleash the wildness of her wolf.
Lilian's footsteps echoed with purpose as she stormed towards Nicole, her eyes blazing with fury.
She closed the distance between them, her voice dripping with disdain.
"You think you can come into our pack, seduce my brother, and take everything away from me?"
Lilian spat, her words laced with venomous accusations.
"You pathetic excuse of a wolf. How dare you think you can come between Liam and me? You're
nothing but a lowly witch bane, an aberration!"
Liam growled, but Nicole stopped him with the wave of a hand.
Lilian's anger flared like wildfire, consuming her from within. Her eyes blazed with an intensity
that bordered on madness as she locked her gaze on Nicole, her adversary. The animosity between

them crackled in the air, an electric charge that threatened to ignite chaos.

Nicole stood her ground, her expression a mask of determination and resilience. She didn't know what emboldened her, but she was no longer willing to be a victim. She drew upon her newfound strength, fortified by Liam, and refused to cower in the face of Lilian's aggression.

As Lilian lunged forward, her claws elongating and her fangs bared, Nicole skillfully sidestepped, evading the attack. She met Lilian's ferocity with calculated precision, her movements fluid and controlled. She didn't want to fight, but she wasn't going to let herself get beaten either.

Lilian's eyes narrowed, her lips curling into a cruel sneer. "You. I see you've become craftier," she scoffed, her tone dripping with disbelief.

"But let me tell you. Despite all the deceit that's going on here in the name of training, you don't know the first thing about battles. All you know is how to use your powers to manipulate those around you. You're a witch bane, a cursed creature. And you're not welcome here."

"I won't let you intimidate me, Lilian," Nicole retorted, her voice laced with firm determination.

"You may be Liam's sister, but that doesn't give you the right to treat me with such disdain. I am his mate, and I deserve respect."

Lilian's eyes flashed with fury, her wolf straining against her tenuous control. "Respect? Do you think you deserve respect? You're just a pawn, a tool for the witches. Liam will realize his mistake soon enough, and then you'll be cast aside like the worthless creature that you are!"

Lilian's control wavered, her wolf barely contained beneath the surface. She leaned forward, her eyes glinting with the primal instinct to attack. "You will regret crossing me, witch bane," she growled, her voice filled with a dangerous edge. "I'll make sure you suffer for every moment you've stolen from me."

Before Lilian could make another move, Liam appeared by Nicole's side, his eyes ablaze with a mixture of protective fury and disappointment. "Enough, Lilian!" he bellowed, his voice echoing through the room. "You will not lay a finger on Nicole. She is my mate, and I won't tolerate your hatred or violence towards her."

Lilian recoiled at the authority in Liam's voice, her anger momentarily halted by his fierce determination. "You're choosing her over your own sister?" she spat, her voice trembling with disbelief and hurt.

Liam's gaze softened, a hint of sorrow lingering in his eyes. "I'm not choosing sides, Lilian," he

responded, his voice tinged with regret. "But I won't stand by and watch you attack my woman.
We are family."
Lilian growled in defiance.
"Garrett," Liam's voice cut through the tumult, commanding attention. "Take Lilian back to her pack. I need her away from here. James stays."
Lilian watched in disbelief and then snarled. Hatred dripped from her words as she hissed at Nicole.
"You will never belong here," Lilian spat, her voice dripping with venom. "You're nothing but a weak interloper, a stain on our pack. I will make sure you suffer for your audacity."
Liam's eyes narrowed, "Garrett," Liam called out, his voice low and laced with authority. "Take her away, now."
Garrett, who had been watching the conflict closely, sprang into action. With a swift and precise motion, he moved between Lilian, Liam, and Nicole, effectively separating them. His voice carried the weight of authority as he addressed Lilian.
"That's enough, Lilian," Garrett stated firmly, his gaze unwavering. "You will return to your pack and calm yourself. Your behavior is unacceptable, and it will not be tolerated."

Lilian, her chest heaving with exertion, glared at Garrett with defiance and fury. She begrudgingly conceded to his command, her wolf snarling beneath the surface.

And with one final disdainful look at Nicole, she turned and stormed out of the room, her departure leaving behind an uneasy silence.

Nicole, breathing heavily and covered in a sheen of sweat, turned to Liam, gratitude and admiration shining in her eyes. "Thank you," she whispered, her voice filled with genuine appreciation, "For standing up for me."

Liam wrapped his arms around her, drawing her close, their bodies fitting together as if they were made for each other. "I will always stand up for you," he murmured against her hair, "You're my mate, and I will protect you with everything I have."