

Chapter 0026

My dream has me on edge most of the morning. That or maybe it's the constant whispers and not so subtle comments about who my mystery man might be.

By lunch time, I feel like a nervous wreck. But, I'm also excited. I have to admit, I'm enjoying the attention. Artemis is over the moon with the attention she's getting from what she has determined is a worthy male. Stupid wolf, it takes more than some flowers, food and music to make me swoon.

Artemis snorts in my head, 'You do realize that we share mind space and I actually do know that you are just as taken with this attention as I am, correct?'

'Whatever.' I try to push her back, but she refuses. She's expecting a gift and she's ready to receive it.

As I walk into the lunch room, it seems that every possible square of space is taken up. Who knew this many students had lunch during this period.

As I walk in, there is a person standing by the door with a huge gift basket. "Cara Nelson?"

"That's me."

“This is for you.”

“Is there a card?”

“Right here Ms. Nelson.” He hands me my card. I thank him and head over to my table. Lacey and Jason have grabbed me lunch, which is lucky since everyone starts crowding around my table to see what I’ve gotten today.

Jason looks up and around at everyone. “Do you mind? If you’re going to be nosey, at least give her some room to breathe.”

Everyone takes a step back, but it only helps so much. I open the card first.

Dearest Cara,

As a Guardian, you protect and fight for your pack.

But who looks after the Guardian, when the fighting is done?


Who ensures that your cuts and bruises are tended, your muscle aches relieved?

I will look after you when the battle is won.

You will never be alone, your needs will always come before my own.

So please accept my gift, let me help you unwind
To remind you that your wounds will never be left
unattended

And the hope that these gifts will relax you; body,
soul and mind.

-From my heart, Your Secret Admirer 

Wow, I'm once again speechless. His cards have
become more bold every day, and today is no
different. He's telling me he wants me as his mate. If
Liam hadn't acted so angry the other night, I would
really think it was him.

I open my gift basket and it's a plethora of relaxing
products - lavender and floral scented candles, epsom
salts that smell like eucalyptus and peppermint for
soaking my aching muscles in a bath, vanilla scented
bubble bath, body wash and lotion and a bottle of
wine, which just happens to be one of my favorites.

It's perfect. It's exactly what I need at the end of a
hard day of training. 'And thoughtful' Artemis
chimes in.

Now that everyone has seen the gift, they begin to
drift off while continuing their conversations about
who it could possibly be.

As I'm looking over my gifts the room suddenly goes quiet and the scent of the woods, blood, and fighting assaults my nose.

Artemis pushes forward, ready for a fight. Out of the corner of my eye, I see Rik and Chase stand up, looking toward the door. I can see in their eyes that both of their wolves have come forward.

I look in the direction of the door and freeze. Liam is walking directly toward me, Cyran front and center in his eyes. His clothes are filthy, torn and bloody. There is a huge, bloodied slash mark across his chest. But that isn't what is most startling. Over his shoulders, he has a huge, dead black bear. 2

It's so large, I have no idea how he can even carry it. It's easily twice his size or more. He stops right in front of me and I stand up. "Liam, what..?" I'm cut off by Cyran's deep, gravelly voice.

"I bring an offering for Artemis." And he drops the bear at my feet.


Artemis practically throws me to the ground in my mind to push me out of her way. "Cyran" she purrs as she looks at the giant bear. "You killed a bear for me?"

He steps up to me and cups my cheek in his hand. Artemis leans into his touch.

 +15 BONUS

“I wanted to show you that I can provide for you and protect you, Artemis. As a Guardian, you don't need my protection, but I will always provide it to you. Do you accept my offering?”

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