

Chapter 0035

As happy as I was that it was Friday, I was terrified of another public display of wills between Alphas. I could only hope that my offer to Liam of training and dinner helped him feel calm enough that he didn't show up at school again today.

By lunch time, I was a nervous wreck. Not only was everyone, and I mean EVERYONE at the school talking about what happened yesterday (even two teachers asked if I had a preference for one of the Alphas. Seriously??), but what if my mystery man was scared off? Or worse, what if he wasn't and Liam showed up again?

When I walked into the cafeteria, I wasn't sure if I was relieved or hurt that no one was waiting for me.

Artemis piped up in my head, 'If Liam scared him off, he wasn't worthy of us anyway.' In some ways, I don't disagree. Artemis is a very powerful wolf and needs a powerful wolf for a mate, but I also know that Liam is a strong and powerful Alpha. He intimidates almost everyone. 'Almost being the operative word,' she retorts.

I get my food and join Lacey and Jason at our table. “

So, I guess Alpha Liam scared off your mystery man.” Lacey says.

I shrug, not really knowing what to say. There is no gift. Was that intentional, or was no gift planned today? Or maybe, because it was Friday it was planned for the end of the day. It was anyone’s guess.

As we are talking, a hush and then a loud buzz of chatter begins in the room. I look up to see the most beautiful, delicate, exquisite man I have ever seen. He was easily seven feet tall, but lean and lithe in a flowing gown that seemed to float around him as he glided over to me. A deep, melodic voice asks, “Cara Nelson?”

I nod, yes, because I can’t get my mouth to work. He must be a fae. I’ve never seen one before, they are rare and almost never interact with werewolves, but he looks exactly like what I would expect a male fae to look like.

In his hands, he has a gift, wrapped in plain brown paper and tied with twine. “This is for you,” and he hands me the gift. I look up at him. “Thank you. Is there a card?”

He arches an arrogant eyebrow at my question. “It requires none.” And he turns on his heel to leave.


Before he exits, he states loudly, “My debt is paid in full.” And he walks out.

I stare down at the gift in my hands. For some reason, the lack of a card and decorative wrapping has me nervous of what this could be. I untie the twine and open the wrapping. I gasp and my hand flies to my mouth. I am in awe.

After a minute, I reach out a shaking hand to touch the leather cover of the tome. In elegant writing that looks like it was burned into the leather the title reads: *The History of the Guardian*. There is exactly one version of this book in the world, and it is now in my possession. I know my father has searched for this book for decades and has never been able to find it, but my mystery man has found it and given it to me. I feel tears prick my eyes at such a priceless gift. 1

“Thank you.” I whisper, but since you can hear a pin drop in the room, I know my suitor can hear me.

I clutch the book to my chest. I need to get this home to my father. It’s too precious to even have with me at school the rest of the day. As the bell rings, I finally look around to see others with a questioning look on their face. Everyone wants to know what the gift is so they can understand my response. My eyes meet glaciers and I am locked into his gaze. He doesn’t look

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surprised or like he's wondering what I received. He looks..... happy. With my response? I have no idea.



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Chapter 0036

Did he get this for me? Why? He doesn't even know who I am. Does he? Could this be a way for him to stake a claim because Liam did? It could explain his response to Liam yesterday if he felt the need to claim what another Alpha wants.

The gift today is different from the others. It wasn't brought by a delivery person, but the fae that owed the favor. That, in and of itself, means my gift giver is special. And there is no card, so perhaps this gift is not from the original gift giver, but a new suitor.

As I watch, Rik inclines his head slightly in my direction, as if to say 'You're welcome.'

I don't know what to do with that, so I collect my things, holding the tome close to my chest. I let Jason know that I have to leave and he can come with me now or catch a ride later. He opts to catch a ride later, and I head home to show dad this amazing gift. ①

It's so much more than I ever expected. Someone has shown me that they see me for who I am. A Guardian, who wants to know my history and roots, to understand who I am and where I come from. To be the best that I can be. I feel as if my soul has been

made bare to this person, and I don't even know who it is.

Could it really be Alpha Rik? And if so, when and how did he realize who I am?

When I arrive home, Dad isn't in the house. I listen in and hear him in the indoor training facility. After dropping my bag in the kitchen, I follow the sounds that he is making, still clutching my book to my chest.

When I walk in, I nearly forget why I came out here. Dad is blasting the stereo while he is creating something that looks like it came off the set of American Ninja Warriors. I have no idea how he has even put this together, but apparently dad is taking the whole 'training an Alpha' to a new level. It looks like, not only will I be competing against Liam, but we'll be on the clock to see who the ultimate winner will be. I can't help the smile that spreads across my face. Tonight is going to be fun.

I'm still looking around when the music cuts out. "Cara? What are you doing home so early?"

I turn to look at my dad, "What is all this?"

He smiles a smug smile. "If I'm going to be training an Alpha and a Guardian, I figured I'd better up my game."

He turns his gaze back to me. “Now, why are you home?”

I don’t say anything, I just walk over to him and hand him the tome of our history. He looks down and goes completely still when he sees the title on the cover. In a whisper, he asks, “Where did you get this?”

I tell him of the fae man who brought it to me, the statement of the debt repayment, the lack of adornment in decoration and that there was no card. 1

My father still looks dumbstruck as he reverently slides his hand over the leather book cover. He then looks up at me. “Do you know what this means?”

It means that we can find out if there are secret powers known only to the Guardians that dad and I possess. It means we can finally learn how the Guardians came about and if we are the last two alive in the world. It means, we will finally have answers to all of our questions.

I smile, “I do. But dad?” I pause until he looks at me. “Now I have a serious problem, because whoever did this for me is very serious about wanting Artemis and me and now, I’m not sure I can or want to resist.”