

Chapter 0044

At the risk of being a stalker, I have no intention of leaving as I watch Liam and Cara head inside. I shift back so I can hide more easily. I need to know how far Liam is willing to go, and how far Cara will let him go.

I listen as they discuss the bear meat and my fists clench when Mr. Nelson tells Liam to call him Clint. It seems Liam also has a better relationship with Cara's father than I do.

When they go outside to grill the steaks, Liam thanks Mr. Nelson again for the training today. They chat about the training facility that Mr. Nelson has created and discuss different ways of training.

When they go back inside, it finally gets good again. Mr. Nelson begins interrogating Liam about his intentions. I'll admit, Liam's response is admirable. He seems to really care about Cara. And he apparently thinks they will be fated mates.

Kai growls in my head, and I don't blame him. There's no way that he can be her mate if she is our mate. Liam is old enough to feel the pull to his mate, but I feel a pull too. Could it be that one of us is really feeling the pull to her as a Guardian, rather than a

mate? What if neither of us is her mate?

I'm happy to hear that Cara is waiting for her mate. That gives me hope that her relationship with Liam is only so strong. If we are fated mates, as I believe, she won't reject us for him. I was also happy to hear Mr. Nelson deny Liam's request to train his warriors. I scoff. As if he'd train Liam's pack when he refuses to train his own. Although, he agrees to reconsider if Liam is Cara's mate. Another reason to make sure that she's MY mate. 3

When I hear Liam ask Cara to walk him to his car, I move around the house so I can continue to eavesdrop on their conversation. It's all I can do not to snarl out loud when he kisses her. Kai is thrashing around in my head, ready to fight Liam and Cyran for Cara again. Holding Kai off is taking all of my strength and concentration.

Even so, I almost lose it when the scent of her arousal hits my nose at the same time I hear him tell her that he wants to watch her cum. My body is shaking and fur starts sprouting on my body. I lose the battle and shift when I hear Cara begin to scream his name. Kai takes a running leap before I get control again and force him back behind the house. He is inconsolable, furious that someone else is touching what is ours. 5

'She's not ours yet. And even if we knew that she was, she doesn't know it yet. She still may not even realize we know who she is.'

The faint smell of blood has me rushing back around the house. I see that she's ok and that he's about to leave. While I'm not thrilled that he touched her, I am glad that they both were honest about her waiting for her mate. If, no WHEN, she realizes that I'm her mate, I want to be the only one that has had the luxury of being inside her beautiful body. 3

My hopeful fantasy abruptly ends when I hear Liam ask about today's gift. So, she didn't tell him earlier. I'm not sure if I should be glad or not about that. But his reaction is perfect. That's right dickwad. You'd never have been able to give her everything she deserves. That is reserved for me. I feel my spirits soar when Cara acknowledges that I'm serious about my intentions. Not that she wouldn't have known at this point, but I like hearing it directly from her.

I can tell that she's confused about his response that things will be interesting tomorrow. Oh yeah! We'll be on MY turf tomorrow.

I watch as Liam starts to back out, then looks right at me. Bastard knew I was there and he wanted to let me

know he is still in the game. Only it's not a game and it seems we're both playing for keeps. 4

I head back around to the back of the house, hoping to see Cara before I leave. I need to wait for her to go to sleep so I can leave her final gift. I watch as she comes to sit in the window seat. At first, she just looks out into the night. I'm guessing she's thinking about Liam and what they just did. My jealousy flares and a low growl leaves my mouth. Sooner than I would have expected though, she pulls a large book into her lap. It's *The History of the Guardians*. She starts glancing through it before going back to the beginning and settling in to read. I watch her for a while, enjoying the way she has to continually push her hair behind her ear to keep it out of her face. I have no idea how long I watch her, but I could have watched her all night.

When she finally stands and she begins to take off her clothes, I turn away. Nudity is common among shifters, but she doesn't know I'm here and I don't want to be a creepy stalker. It's weird enough that I was privy to the interaction between her and Liam earlier.

I head back to the packhouse and without bothering to shift, I go up to my room, shifting right as I get to


+15 BONUS

my door. I can smell the faint scent of rosewater and I vaguely wonder what Sheila was doing on my floor. I unlock my door and grab a pair of shorts and a t-shirt. While it's still winter, wolves run warm and as an Alpha, my temperature runs even warmer, so I'm never cold.

I grab the rectangular box elegantly wrapped by the store, with a big fat bow on it. I grab my card and tape it to the box. I head back out to Cara's, walking instead of driving so no one figures out what I'm doing. When I get back to her house, her light is off, so I quietly walk up to her front porch and leave her gift at the front door. I spray a vanilla and lavender body spray over the box in the hope that it will overshadow any scent of mine left after a night in the fresh air. ¹

I walk back to the packhouse, whistling and thinking of how great my birthday will be tomorrow.



Cooper  Author

" Whew! Rik was not happy, but sounds like tomorrow is the day when he finally lets her know! "

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