



Chapter 0088

"What is this?" she asked me as we got out of the car and she looked around at our surroundings.

"This is a real working chocolate farm. Hawaii is the only state in the United States that grows chocolate trees, or at least that is what their website claims. The chocolate here has won awards around the world, including even in Paris and Brussels. I thought we could do a tour of the farm while the daylight is still out, and then we can go inside and learn how to make chocolate ourselves. At the end, the owner has agreed to put together a private dinner for us on the balcony overlooking the farm, complete with chocolate raspberry cake." 1

The smile on Lily's face told me that all the strings I had pulled to put this together at the last minute were worth it. "Chocolate raspberry cake? You remembered?"

I smiled. "How could I not? It is my favorite too. Every time your mother would make her famous chocolate raspberry cake, I would find an excuse to eat dinner in the beta suite with your family."

Lily thought for a moment. "Do you remember that time when I was around 12... my mother made the cake, but I had a school project to do first, and by the time I was done all the cake was gone? You shared your piece with me..."

I could tell Lily was a little hesitant to bring up the memory, so I decided to finish it for her. "Yes, I remember. Your

project was on how humans and werewolves heal and get sick differently. You were excited to show off your project to your dad, and you had created these bizarre drawings to go with it. You were really disappointed that the cake was gone before you were done with the project. I offered to share my piece of the cake with you, and you ended up eating almost all of it."

Lily smiled, so I kept going.

"I want you to know that letting you eat my cake was no small sacrifice by me; typically no one gets between me and chocolate. Well, no one but you. I have never shared chocolate anything with anyone else."

Lily smiled even bigger. "I can't believe you remember that day. I also can't believe you thought those drawings were bizarre. They were of a human and a werewolf."

"I do remember, and the drawings were so bizarre that I thought they were aliens at first. You had things coming out of those figures that I do not think have ever come out of any human or werewolf before. I think the drawings are why I remember that day so well. Of course, I also remember many of the other days too... do you?"

She looked at me curiously. "What other days?"

"Maybe you were too young to remember. Even on the days that you got your own slice of your mother's chocolate cake ... or your own candy bar... or your own chocolate ice cream ... or your own chocolate pudding... you would find an excuse to demand a bite of mine. It annoyed me, but I somehow could never tell you no. By the time that day

happened with the chocolate raspberry cake, I guess I was just used to having to share with you.”

“I do remember a little bit of that now that you say it....
Wow. How had I forgotten all of that?”

“After all I did to you in the years after that, I cannot blame you for forgetting many of the good memories,” I said sadly. “But I promise you, Lily, I am going to work on making things better between us again, okay?”

Lily nodded, but I could tell she was still unsure and holding back. I decided to let it go. I grabbed her hand, and we headed to meet our tour guide. 1

The rest of the evening went exactly as I hoped that it would. Lily and I enjoyed the indoor and outdoor tours; we got to make our own special chocolate candy bars; and we had a delicious dinner on the patio, complete with chocolate raspberry cake.

The only thing that we did not do was talk about the serious stuff, but I was grateful for that. I wanted us to at least have a little bit of time to just be us. Sort-of the us that we could have been had all the crap not gotten in the way.

We still needed to have more serious conversations, though. I needed to know how serious Lily's feelings for Brady were, and I needed to find out if Lily was willing to trying to repair our bond. I also needed more answers about what had happened back at the pack. I decided that I would push my luck and try for those conversations later.



Of course, hindsight is 20-20. In retrospect, I wonder if things would have turned out better or worse had I not pushed.

 **Lady Gwen**  Author

" I have another chapter ready to go, but I think it needs to go up at the same time as another chapter or two that are not quite finished. I am at an out-of-town work conference right now, so I am not sure if I will be able to get that second chapter done today. If not, you will get a double update tomorrow.

Thank you all for reading!!! I love reading your comments and support for this story!

 Comments

 Vote (9.0K) 

Chapter 0089

(Lily POV)

Tonight with James has been perfect.

It was supposed to only be a dinner between two friends, but it quickly became much more than that. Whether it was a date or not ultimately does not matter. The fact is that James put a lot of effort into making tonight special for me, and I have had a lot of fun.

Actually... no... It goes beyond fun. I have genuinely enjoyed spending time with James. In fact, I wish I could spend more time with him. I now understand why the Moon Goddess paired us together. But for everything else, I think we could have made each other really happy.

Unfortunately, it is the "everything else" that scares me. And not just a little bit.

The fear in me is so palpable that --as James and I get back into his car and head back to the resort-- I feel my brain and my emotions start to go into panic mode.

In less than 12 hours, James has managed to convince me that he has changed. He has also managed to remind me of the wolf that he once was before everything happened. Worse, James has made my heart desperately want to see if our mate bond can be salvaged.

The problem is that --while my heart is ready to dive right back in-- my head is filled with nothing but doubts, concerns,

and questions. For example:

---James actively and intentionally hurt me for six years. How can I forgive all of that in just one afternoon? The (broken) mate bond may be powerful, but surely I am smarter than to forgive him that quickly.

---Forgiving James comes with risks... am I willing to take them?

---Forgiving James comes with complications... am willing to face them?

---If I decide to try again with James, I will have to go back to West Mountain. Am I willing and ready to do that?

---West Mountain was not safe for me in the past. Will it be safe for me in the future?

---Being with James means eventually becoming luna. Could I stomach being the future luna of a place that still worships my sister as though she was and is a saint? Would I feel comfortable sleeping next to James while large pictures of my sister adorn most walls in our home? Could I ask James to take some of them down? Would that be wrong of me to do? Would he be willing to do it?

---Would the pack be willing to accept me as their future luna? Or would they always wish that I was Stephanie instead?

---I already decided that I do not want to live in Stephanie's shadow anymore. That shadow goes beyond just pictures and un-earned sainthood. If I accept James and go back to West Mountain, how would I prevent her shadow from

continuing to haunt me?

---How would I deal with being around my mother again? Would my mother accept me as her future luna? What about my father? He told Nick that he does not think that I have what it takes to be luna. Would he grow to accept it, or would my own family be the ringleaders of a challenge against James and I being together?

---What would accepting James do to my relationship with Brady? Obviously, I cannot be with Brady and James at the same time. Okay, sure, there are circumstances in which females take on two mates, but that idea has never appealed to me. So I have to pick one of them. Or neither of them. But I cannot pick both.

---Am I willing to give up Brady for the mere chance of working things out with James? Brady has done nothing but blindly and unconditionally support me, and he has shown me what it feels like to be wanted and desired. He has also given me a home and a pack when I had nothing else. Am I really ready to let someone like him go? 2

---If I do pick James over Brady, will Dr. and Mrs. Hyder still want me in their lives? They are like the parents that I never had, but if I hurt their oldest son, will they still want me around? 3

---Even if everything else can be worked out, am I too damaged to go back to James and West Mountain? Is it simply healthier for me to move on? I do not have panic attacks like this at Brady's pack. Doesn't that mean something?



Ultimately, I do not know the answers to any of these questions, and the war between my head and my heart makes me feel like a big part of me is suffocating right now. I do not know what I want, and I do not know what to do.

 Comments

 Vote (9.0K) 