

Chapter 3

Zeke Michelson buttoned up his shirt and tried to tune out Claire's voice in the background. He didn't give a shit about whatever she was complaining about. They had only been here a few hours, so only the Moon Goddess knew how she had found so much to complain about.

He put his tie on and straightened it before he ran a hand through his still-damp hair.

"Are you even listening to me, Zeke?" Claire whined.

No, he answered as he turned to pick his blazer up.

He held her gaze, daring her to complain about that. But Claire lowered her eyes and kept her mouth shut. Her blonde hair fell over her face as she sat naked on her bed. For a moment, he considered rejoining her because the woman knew how to use her body to please him. But she was already too clingy; he didn't want to give her any more ideas.

He left her room without a word, ignoring the shocked looks he got from the female residents of this dorm. But none of them would dare to report him. He was the future Alpha of the biggest pack in all of America. Once he graduated at the end of this year, his father would step down and

make it official because he had already proved in many ways that he was more than capable.

Once out of the building, he found his friends leaning against his car, wolf-whistling the ladies as they walked past to settle into their dorms. Most of them would probably end up in their beds before the semester was out. Zeke shook his head as he unlocked his car and jumped into the driver's seat.

“And how is our future Luna?”

He threw Myles a withering look before he started the car. Claire would never be his mate, and this idiot knew it. He had only stayed with her all these years for convenience. He was too busy to mess around with many girls. When he had started here, he'd already been shouldering many responsibilities for the pack.

Besides, his father had already arranged a suitable match, one that worked perfectly for his plans. He would be mated before he became the Alpha,

“Did you even talk to her this time?” Derek laughed as he jumped into the passenger seat.

He turned his withering gaze from Myles to Derek before he started driving out of the car park. Zeke had stopped at Claire's dorm first before he had even gone to his appointed residence. Their bags were still in the trunk since they had driven down from the plane together. Being allowed to do that here was a privilege every student was allowed after

surviving two years of this hellhole. By then, it was expected they knew the consequences of breaking any of the school rules.

“Check out that fresh meat,” Myles said from the back seat.

“She’s a vampire, you fucker,” Derek said.

“I didn’t say I want her to be my mate,” Myles laughed as he rolled down his window and called out his usual pick-up lines.

The vampire’s fangs elongated and then she snarled as they drove past.

“You can bite me anytime, baby,” Myles called out.

Zeke shook his head. They had been raised together and trained together, so he knew Derek and Myles would be perfect for their Beta and Gamina roles when it was time. He just sometimes forgot that what was expected of him was on a different level. He could never be intimate with the other species, and that was so fucking ironic because the whole reason the

Academy was founded was so they could all learn to co-exist. It was not forbidden for everyone else, but it was forbidden for him.

As he drove past the main building, he caught a scent in the air and wondered what fruity dish was being made in the kitchens. They had their own kitchen and could order food, but he didn’t think the main kitchen had ever made anything that smelled that good before. He took a long, deep breath and the scent seemed to coat all of his insides. His

wolf, Shadow, unfurled and agreed with him. They had to have whatever that was, Shadow was practically salivating.

“What time is it?” he asked.

Maybe he would go for lunch in the cafeteria to taste that amazing dish before anyone else.

“About ten,” Derek answered. “You weren’t in Claire’s room too long?”

“You were there for an embarrassingly short time, actually,” Myles snickered.

He rolled his eyes as they finally drove down to his parking spot. As a future Alpha, he and his chosen Beta and Gamma also had the privilege of living in their own house in the residential areas set behind the main buildings and other dorms. There were other Alphas nearby, and future leaders from all the other species, except the vampires who preferred to nest in the dorms because of the extra space.

Before they got out of the car, he caught an unwelcome scent and looked in his rearview mirror to watch the man walking up their driveway. His wolf tried to force himself out at the nerve this traitor had to even show his face, but he forced him down. There were rules at the Academy, and he had followed them for three years. He would not fail now that he was almost out of this place.

“Shall I get rid of him,” Derek asked through the mind link.

“No. I’ll deal with him.”

He got out of the car and walked to stand behind it, waiting for the man to approach. He didn't sense any fear or guilt coming from the new arrival, and that was what rattled his wolf the most. The need to dominate this insignificant asshole had consumed him for three whole years.

"Welcome back," the man said as he stopped a distance away.

Sensible. Any closer he would have given in to the temptation to rip his throat out.

"What do you want?" he growled.

"Aww, don't be like that Ezekiel. We're all friends here," the asshole said with a grin.

He clenched his fist when he felt his claws lengthening.

"I wouldn't be a good neighbor if I didn't stop by and invite you to my party tonight, to kick the semester off right."

"I'd rather chop off my balls."

The asshole grinned and shrugged.

"Whatever, dude. Just being courteous. See you around."

And then he turned and gave his back to him, something that reeked of disrespect because away from this place, you never turned your back on an enemy.

He felt his wolf thrashing around, ready to end the fucker on the spot. Though Jared was a future Alpha, too, his level of dominance was well below his own. Jared would never survive a real fight. He hid behind the rules of the academy that lulled everyone with a false sense of security, made them all believe that they were on the same level.

Derek and Myles came to stand on either side of him as they watched Jared whistle as he walked off their property. In a place like this, their houses and dorms were sacred and had the same rules as their territories at home. Any interlopers were always unwelcome. If anyone were not invited, it was better to keep away, because there were other ways to punish people at this school that didn't break the rules. Jared knew that better than anyone else.

“One more year. Zeke. We'll get him,” Derek said.

He managed to calm Shadow down and retracted his claws after Jared stepped out of his territory. He was pissed off with himself. He'd been taught control when he was a pup, long before Shadow had even emerged and tried to break him. Then a little shit like Jared rolled along and rattled him like this, throwing it all out of the window.

“We'll get all of them, Myles added somberly.

Zeke patted his Gamma on the back before he turned to open his trunk. Myles had just as much reason to wish Jared and all of his pack dead. They would get their revenge.

“Let’s get all this shit into the house, he said as he pulled some of the bags out.”

As future leaders, they had Omegas assigned to them to maintain the house and run around wherever they were needed. He never had much use for them; he left them alone and they didn’t get in his way. The academy took care of the laundry and food was delivered from the kitchen whenever he wanted it. He didn’t need anyone to cook for him. His Omegas were always first years and mostly just pissed him off with how terrified of him they were. At least they would have the house to themselves for a day or two before he had to deal with the stench of fear everywhere.

They walked into the spacious two–storey house, and the fresh scent indicated somebody had thoroughly cleaned before their arrival. He wrinkled his nose. It had all the usual scents, but for some reason, he wanted whatever scent he’d driven past to fill his home.

“I’m going to have lunch at the cafeteria today,” he announced as he walked to the stairway with his bags. “Whatever they’ve cooked today smelled good, and I’m starving.”

“I don’t think they do lunch early, especially on the first day,” Deck said as he followed.

“They did today. Didn’t you smell it?”

He looked back at his friends and they shrugged.

“Tell us when you’re ready, then,” Myles said as he stopped at the door to his room. Derek stopped at the opposite one and he carried on to the end of the hallway.

Shadow was still restless within him, obviously because of the visit from Jared. A run before lunch would soothe him. Tomorrow would be the first formal day of lessons; he needed to make sure he remained in control. Nothing could go wrong now when he was so close to everything he had worked hard for.