

7. My own person.

"What are you doing here?" I stuttered, feeling taken aback by his presence.

"I wanted to see you, and we need to talk about that stunt you pulled this morning!" he snapped.

"Oh, that..." I uttered an exasperated sigh.

Jake was a beta, he also lived at the pack house so that he was close to the alpha and other ranking members. We lived on separate oors. Initially, our plan was for me to move upstairs with Jake the night of our marking ceremony. That didn't happen due to recent events, this resulted in my room resembling a hot mess with semi-packed boxes and clothes strewn all over the place.

Before the ceremony, I wasn't permitted to move in with Jake until we had become ocially chosen mates. Living with someone other than your fated mate was frowned upon, but Rick had agreed to make an exception for me after our ceremony. Not that that would happen now.

"Look, just give me a few minutes okay," Jake said, rubbing his neck while maintaining eye contact with me. "

"Two minutes!" I said sharply.

"You should know that we will be leaving soon," Jake declared

"Well, I wish you both the best. I hope you are happy together," I said, trying my best to ensure my face was void of emotion, void of sadness or anger or disappointment, the feelings that were currently overwhelming me internally.

"You're coming too!" Jake declared matter-of-factly, reaching his hand outwards to stroke the side of my left cheek.

My face dropped in shock. So Max was right. Jake really was serious. Seriously deluded. Did he even know me at all? I would never accept something like that.

"Jake, I'm not going anywhere with you. How can you stand here in front of me, and just expect me to drop everything and become your bit on the side, your mistress?" I spat out, Indigo growling furiously at the very thought of it. Jake looked unaffected, with not a care in the world visible on his face.

"It's already been arranged, Leo will take over as head trainer, Rick has already agreed to let you go, it's a done deal baby!" He said reaching out to caress my cheek once more.

"Over my dead body!" I spat out furiously.

"Now, now Kat, don't be like that," Jake replied condescendingly.

"No one has the right to make decisions about me, for me, I am my own person! How dare you! How dare Rick!" I screamed, having completely lost my composure at this point.

"I don't think you understand. I will be alpha. And I want you there with me!" He raised his voice, his eyes ashing black, signaling his wolf was ghting for control.

"No! It's over Jake. It was over the moment you claimed your fated mate in the ballroom!" I yelled frantically. "I will not be going anywhere!"

It was at that moment that I caught a whiff of her scent on him. While it was clear that they hadn't mated and marked, they had denitely done other things. The nerve of him standing here trying to stake some sort of claim over me.

Her scent was making me nauseous, come to think of it. I needed to get some fresh air. I couldn't let Jake in on my current condition. His behavior had changed drastically, and I was starting to think that I shouldn't tell him about the baby right now. I was beginning to think it was just best he didn't know, period.

"Jake, I've had a long day. I'm going to go get some sleep!" I said, slamming my pudding down on the counter, no longer feeling hungry.

As I went to walk past him, he grabbed my arm forcefully. "You're not going anywhere! We aren't done talking!" he said, his features softening somewhat.

"Jake, you have met your fated mate. We always knew this day could come, and I know you feel and accept your bond with her. I can smell her scent all over you!" I said, a solitary tear escaping from my eyes, and rolling down my cheek.

I couldn't do this right now. It was just too much. Jake wasn't interested in taking no for an answer and I was feeling unwell. I didn't have the strength to deal with this right now. So I took the easiest option possible. I mind-linked Max and asked her to come downstairs immediately.

Seeing that I was mind-linking, Jake was immediately on the defensive. "Who did you just mind-link?" He growled, pulling me closer to him.

"Max, she's on her way downstairs, so you should probably leave," I said casually, shrugging my shoulders.

Jake slammed his sts against the wall with force. He encroached even further into my personal space towards me, pushing me against the wall. My head slammed against it, and I whimpered involuntarily. My head throbbed.

"What the hell Jake!" I called out to him, angry that my head had hit the wall and that it was hurting, and angry that he was behaving this way. I watched as he began to inhale deeply, looking at me suspiciously, his eyes ickering, once again ghting his wolf for control.

"Jake?" I said with trepidation, although I already knew that I was no longer dealing with Jake. Brutus was not easily bargained with.

Ignoring my pleas, he acted impulsively, ripping my t-shirt off aggressively, and with that, a combination of shock and fear overtook me. I didn't have time to react with my sts as I would have in any other situation. A wave of nausea overtook me, and with that, I projectile vomited all over Jake.

"What the f**k!" He called out irately, his wolf retreating. I could see that Jake was back in control now, wiping yellowish green vomitus off his face, and dry retching at the stench. He looked both disturbed and enraged at the same time.

On the bright side, I was feeling a bit better. The nausea left almost immediately, but this feeling of relief was short-lived as my eyes caught Jake. That fearful realization that he was intending to do something unthinkable began to dawn on me.

The kitchen door creaking open distracted me from my thoughts. My eyes ickered back to Jake, who was looking at me suspiciously and I had a sinking feeling that he would no without a doubt now that I was pregnant. If he hadn't realized earlier on, he sure would now.

"Hey, what's going on here!" Max gasped loudly, taking in my appearance and Jake, eyeballing my shirt ripped from the front, as well as my shaking and pale state, my bra visible for the world to see, and Jake covered in vomit.

He stormed out of the kitchen in a huff, speechless and ignoring Max's question.

Max walked towards me empathetically. "Hey it's ok, let's get you cleaned up and you can tell me what happened ok?" Max whispered.

I felt safer now that Max was here, and she seemed more like the Max I knew and loved. Not the Max of recent days. I was thanking the Goddess for small mercies at this moment.

After spilling my heart out to Max, she offered to stay the night in my suite. My parents were away, so she would keep me company, just in case Jake came back. We made some snacks; I opted for crackers and juice. Max raided the junk food from my pantry and we set about watching a psychological thriller. I needed something to take my mind off my current worries.

I must have fallen asleep on the couch as I woke up in the middle of the night in desperate need of the bathroom. Max must have turned the television off and placed a blanket over me, not wanting to wake me. That was so kind of her.

As I made my way back from the bathroom, tip-toeing as quietly as possible. I heard some voices outside my door. Instantly, my hackles were raised. Who on earth was chatting in the hallway at this time of the night? I crept toward the door and that's when I realized it was Max outside.

I could only just make out what she was saying, and it sounded like she was talking to Jake. Why on earth would she be talking to Jake at this hour, unless he tried to let himself in? I was ready to walk out and confront him when Indigo told me to hold up.

"Something is amiss here," she warned.

"Back to the couch before they realize they aren't alone," she instructed me.

I quickly made my way back onto the couch and settled myself, making it appear that I was still sleeping. I heard the front door open and Max tip-toed back into the house and made her way to my bedroom.

After I was sure she was in bed. I lay awake for hours, wondering what that was all about. Why was she talking to Jake in secret? What was going on? Whatever it was, I felt like I could no longer trust her. And it was at that moment I was glad I hadn't told her about my pregnancy. I would be telling no one in this pack.

I was thinking other than my family, there was no one I could trust here. I felt like people were revealing their true colors and I did not like what I was seeing, not at all.

I had a feeling that people would not be accepting of my current condition, and I didn't want to make trouble for my parents and my brother. I could no longer trust my best friend and I had no intention of sticking around and being forced to move packs with Jake.

"I've got a bad feeling about all of this," Indigo said, stating the obvious.

"I know Indigo, I know," I replied to my wolf.

"Tomorrow Katya, trouble is coming. I can feel it," Indigo declared ominously.

"I do too," I said, agreeing with my wolf.

I couldn't take my chances with the pack doctor, and I had decided I wouldn't be telling Jake, he wasn't the boy I had grown up with, the man I had pledged my love to, he had changed, or maybe he was always this way and I didn't see it because I was blinded by love, whatever the reason, I knew I couldn't tell him, I needed to protect my pup.

After getting a few hours of sleep, I nally rose from my cozy spot on the couch. I gured Max must still be sleeping after her not-so-secret meeting last night. So I slipped into the shower to refresh myself. Feeling my usually-quiet self in the mornings, I managed to vomit in the shower and hoped that Max wouldn't hear me gaging over the shower. I tiptoed into my room to grab my clothes, so as not to the risk of waking Max, but she wasn't there. Looking at the clock I saw it was almost nine AM.

I made my way towards the kitchen, it would be quiet at the packhouse this time of day. Breakfast starts around ve AM here. My fellow pack members would be well into their days, at school, or work, or in meetings or training.

Walking into the kitchen I popped on the kettle to make a hot drink in the hopes of settling my stomach.

Once I had my drink and grabbed a plain bagel I made my way onto the patio. I took in some fresh breaths of air to calm myself. I noticed that it was quite chilly outside, but I welcomed the cold. Since realizing I was pregnant, I now understood why I was always so warm. My body temperature was increasing.

I was disturbed by my realization of the front door opening. "What are you doing out here?" Max asked me curiously.

"Just taking in the day. Looks like it's gonna be nice weather," I replied, moving from my seat to come inside.

"Would you like something to eat?" I asked my friend, secretly hoping she would decline as I was barely hanging on by a thread with my nausea as it was.

"Ah, no, I have to get going. I have some business to attend to at the pack house. Are you gonna be alright?" Max asked me.

"Yeah, I've got lots to do as well. Thanks for last night, I appreciated it," I thanked Max while walking her towards the door.

"You're welcome. Hey about Jake, you should talk to him, try to understand where he's coming from," Max said. She was trying to be sincere, but I could see right through her now. It felt like she had an agenda. I didn't know what it was but I was sure gonna try to nd out.

"I'll think about it," I said for her benet. I had no intention of giving him the time of day.

"See ya later," I called out to Max, quickly exiting the patio. I turned my back to the entrance and thought about what I needed to do rst.

Thankfully, when I phoned my co-trainer, Leo, the other day, he told me to take a few days off, so I didn't need to worry about work today. I felt a little bad leaving him in the lurch, but right now, I needed to do what was right for me and my pup.

As I turned on my smartphone, I was ooded with messages from Max. As I progressed through them, they became more and more aggressive. Then he appeared to calm down, then threatening again. Jake was on a rollercoaster of emotions, it seemed.

The last one was Jake telling me he would be coming over this morning to talk some sense into me again, he also said that they would be heading back to Quaking Aspine in two days, so that left me little time to gure out what I was gonna do.

After making my way back to my suite, showering, and changing into some comfortable clothes I had made my mind up. I knew what I needed to do. As I made my way through the packhouse hallway I could hear Jake's voice, he was speaking to someone, I wasn't sure who, but it sounded like he was giving them orders. I took this moment to back up and make my way out of the packhouse through the staff exit to avoid another confrontation with Jake.