

## CHAPTER 4

Rhey stood still, dumbfounded for minutes after Tommy had stormed out of her ope. It didn't help that she was feeling his rage due to the bite.

Her wolf blamed their misfortune on her but Rhey was quick to dish out her own accusations. "You shouldn't have bitten him." She scolded her wolf who shot back, 'and risk the imposter marking our mate?'

Rhey groaned walking back to her seat and slumped down carelessly. In as much as she was pissed at her wolf, a part of her was relieved it was them who got to mark Tommy and not Amelia.

Minutes later, the ope door was opened aggressively and the retired Alpha sauntered in. "Is true?" His expression was unreadable but Rhey already had a suspicion of what her father was referring to.

She nodded carefully and almost shook her head when her father's eyes clouded with distrust and something else... disappointment. Her heart sank. The retired Alpha Ryan is one person Rhey couldn't bear to disappoint. All her life she has heard how perfect of an Alpha her father was. That made her strive to follow in his footsteps for she felt he was a metric of what a great Alpha should be. Ryan sank to the opposite seat looking all weary. His helpless sigh had Rhey rushing from behind her desk and kneeling in front of him.

She took hold of his hand, "I am sorry, papa."

Ryan shook his head, "you hurt that boy. I just met with him and he is hurting so badly."

Rhey sucked in a breath.

Her papa and Tommy were always close, so she wasn't surprised why her mate chose to share his misfortune with her father. "I will x this Papa, I promise."

"I sincerely hope you will," Ryan answered shifting his feet. "About that imposter, I want her watched at all times."

"Way ahead of you," Rhey conrmed getting on her feet and leaned on the desk, "she is here for something big, I can feel it."

"We will be ready for whatever she is planning," Ryan growled remembering the last time they dealt with a phony. They had lost a lot...

"I will have Michael and Logan on the case also," Ryan added.

For a brief moment, Rhey's mind drifted back to Tommy who was with no doubt in the presence of the imposter. What is he doing? She wondered. A disturbing thought of him and Amelia being intimate dared cross her mind. She sighed ceasing her face which made Ryan lean closer inquisitively.

"Should I ask?"

Her eyes snapped back to her father fast. Ryan tilted his head narrowing his older and wiser orbs on his stubborn daughter. "I marked him," Rhey murmured helplessly as if that was supposed to explain everything. At her father's sly smile, she grumbled, "but I bet he told you that already." Ryan grinned wider.

"What will I do Pops?" She asked in dire need of advice.

"The right thing,"

Rhey scoffed, "I don't know what that is anymore." Ryan stood and took his daughter's palms in his larger ones stroking them lightly, "give that boy time, I am sure he will forgive you."

Rhey frowned at her father,

"I lied to him for three years and marked him without his consent. Would you forgive me?"

"Well..." Ryan trailed and Rhey had her answer. "He might never forgive me," she said curtly pulling her hands out of Ryan's grip. "What if he rejects me?" She whimpered with a thoughtful frown, "my wolf won't survive it."

"Can you blame him if he does?" Ryan asked seriously,

Rhey didn't hesitate, "no." Hearing the answer out loud and for her own lips showed her how f'cked up her situation was. "Unless Luna arrives..." she trailed but Ryan already knew what she wanted to say. And though he blamed Rhey for hurting Tommy, he really hoped the Beta won't reject his daughter. And from Rhey's bummed mood it was obvious that the mark she gave Tommy was already consolidating the bond between the two. "Cheer up, everything will be okay." Ryan comforted glancing at his watch.

He rose and kissed her forehead before he excused himself to get started on Amelia's investigation.

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Tommy got back to his house after running for a few hours to clear his mind. He found his supposedly mate waiting for him sprawled naked on the bed. He headed directly to shower fearing she might smell Rhey's scent all over him. He had just nished lathering his abdomen when the bathroom door opened and a naked Amelia stepped in locking the door behind her. Thankfully the soap had washed away Rhey's scent from his skin.

Amelia's eyes traveled on his toned frame hungrily and in as much as he hated her presence currently, he couldn't push her away without giving out an inkling that he knew she was an imposter. She started by trailing tiny kisses on his back as her ngers roamed on his chest lingering over his n\*\*\*\*s.

He could still smell her fake pheromones and it was messing with his head. His wolf on the other hand loathed Amelia's touch a d wanted nothing more than to tear her throat out.

Amelia lifted Tommy's chin turning him to face her. She held his face in her palms making their gaze meet and hold. Tommy tried to appear as collected as possible but he couldn't hide his disgust when she got on her toes and kissed him. He indulged her chastely for a second before pushing her back gently.

"I need to introduce you to my parents before we complete the mating." He offered lamely.

Fearing that she might see the mark his real mate had just left on his neck, he shifted ensuring his left side was facing the wall, further from her prying eyes. Amelia seemed shocked by the rejection since Tommy hadn't seemed to mind her affections before they arrived in the pack. But as the smart woman that she was, she quickly

tried to hide her disappointment. "I understand, but that doesn't mean we can't have a little fun before your folks get back." Tommy's parents were out of town to visit their elder daughter who was mated outside the pack. They were expected to return in two days or so.

"What's wrong?" Amelia cooed tracing Tommy's limp manhood with her ngers in an attempt to harden it but nothing. Tommy's wolf couldn't let him have an erection despite their 'mates' obvious attempts. "I am just tired," he nudged her hands off his body. Amelia hid her embarrassment with an 'it's okay' crap but her gruff tone betrayed her.

Tommy didn't bother with her further as he re-opened the shower and stood under the warm water wishing he could wash away all the traces of her, alone. Amelia awkwardly left the bathroom with a promise to wait for him in the bed. Tommy began thinking of the last pull neck he owned.

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Ryan knocked on his brother's door for the third time, "how long does it take to get dressed?" He yelled just a Logan opened the door his hair disheveled as he struggled to button his shirt.

"Really?" He asked dryly eyeing Michael who was just a mere inch behind Logan.

"Blame him," Logan smirked pointing at Michael who scoffed, "your brother is..." He started but Ryan cut him off, "I don't want to hear about your s'x life, I already know too much."

"Then why are you here?" Logan shot back closing the door after his brother. Ryan eyed the couch warily debating whether to sit there or, "it's safe, sit down." Michael offered,

Logan chuckled pouring himself a glass of water. Ryan sat down with a deep sigh, "We have a problem,"

"What kind of problem?" Michael asked taking a seat beside his mate.

"Tommy has found his mate," Ryan announced making Logan spit back into the glass. Both men glared at him before Michael asked, "Who is she or he?" He ignored his mate's bizarre reaction but Ryan wasn't fooled. His gaze narrowed on his brother.

"You knew," he accused. He didn't need to elaborate because the 'oops,' expression on Logan's face conrmed his accusation. Michael didn't miss the tension between the two brothers and his curiosity rose.

"What does he know?" Michael asked Ryan whose eyes didn't waver from Logan.

"Do you want to tell him?" Ryan asked harshly.

With a defeated sigh, Logan dropped to the nearest couch.

"Rhey slipped a while ago about Tommy being her mate."

"What?" Michael screeched, "When? But how is that even possible?" He red,

"Akoko helped her mask her pheromones, Tommy had no idea." Ryan summarized stiy.

"Wow," Michael breathed shaking his head in disbelief, "and you knew?" He added immediately getting on his feet and pointed an accusing nger at the man he loved. "How long?"

Logan looked at his mate, then his brother, and back to his mate again. They were going to kill him for sure. "Two years," he uttered hesitantly. Michael ranted about how unbelievable Logan was and Ryan agreed wholly.

"Anyway, I am here because of the Amelia woman," Ryan cut the chase,

"Who is Amelia?" Michael asked in confusion casting his mate a brief look but Logan shrugged.

"Tommy's imposter mate," Ryan offered.

"Now I am lost," Logan grumbled.

It took a while for Ryan to get them up to speed but in the end, they were all pissed.

"Another f\*\*\*\*g Jonathan," Logan growled his hands forming a st automatically. "She picked the wrong pack," Michael moved closer to his mate and rubbed his back soothingly. He knew how painful Jonathan's memory was to Logan.

"Calm down babe,"

"I am calm," Logan muttered shaking Michael's arm off his back. "Is she in the dungeon?"

"Not yet," Ryan answered making Logan frown,

"Why the hell not?" He bellowed,

Ryan understood his brother's rage, and if it were up to him she would have been in the torture chamber already. "Rhey has it under control," Ryan said. "Plus that's why I am here." He added quickly. Logan breathed and gave his brother full attention.

"Rhey and Tommy have a lot going on. I am afraid they might miss something, that's why I need you and Michael to keep a close eye on her, whatever brought her here must be important for her to use the Beta as a bait."

"You can count on us," Michael agreed readily draping his arm loosely on his mate's shoulders.

"She is about to get the surprise of her life," Logan agreed.

Though Ryan and Michael were pissed at Logan for keeping Rhey's secret, they knew their sole objective was to unmask Amelia and her plans. And that's why by the time Ryan left his brother's house they had put down important measures to ensure the safety of their pack.

There were ready this time...

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Hours after Ryan had left, Michael was still peeved. He had always assumed that there were no secrets between him and his mate but it was obviously not the case. He wondered why Logan felt the need to hide the truth from him. He would have kept it a secret too, for his mate because that's how much he trusted and respected him.

Logan on the other hand felt his mate's cool and didn't dare utter a word. From experience, he had learned to let Michael wath down before attempting any kind of explanation. But today wasn't that day, "I can't help but wonder what else you are hiding from me." Michael spat viciously desiring a justification instantly.

"What happened to 'I will never lie to you bullshit?' He mocked Logan's vows to him bitterly.

"I am really sorry babe," Logan attempted stretching out his hand to hold his mate but Michael slapped it off, stepping back distrustfully.

"I wasn't meant to know, she just slipped by accident and made me promise no one else will know." Logan defended.

"I am not anyone else dammit," Michael growled, "you know I wouldn't have told a soul."

Logan groaned with a deep exhale, his mate was right, as always. And it only made Logan feel like a jerk...

"I will take the rst watch," Michael muttered heading for the door. Logan scurried towards him but Michael held out his palm, "not now." Logan stopped and watched his mate helplessly, "I am sorry."

"I know," Michael answered in a defeated tone, he opened the door, and left. Logan walked back to the closest couch and sagged into it. He rubbed his palms exasperatedly over his face at the day he was having. Not only was he caught in a lie by his brother and mate, but there was also an intruder in their pack who probably meant his family harm.

He grunted under his breath needing to hit something, hard. His wolf paced in his head infuriated mostly by the imposter. Logan knew the only way he could quiet his anguish was by running. And without hesitation, he stripped, shifted, and took off to their forest.

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Michael took cover in the shops near Tommy's house. Since one of the shop ladies was his friend it was easy for him to pass time there without looking suspicious. Almost three hours into waiting he saw Amelia exiting the house looking rather furious. He followed her disappear behind Tommy's house in a hurry. He waited a few minutes before he watched her cautiously.

He hadn't expected to see Amelia holding a raven. What surprised him more was the fact that she was talking to it and the bird seemed to understand her. Using his super hearing, Michael caught some words like, 'I have had some minor setbacks,' and 'soon I will have good news for you, my love, the rwinve pack will be yours to command.'

Ryan was right, whoever she was in cahoots with meant harm to their pack, which meant harm to his mate and Michael couldn't have it. He tiptoed back cautiously and once he was in the clear he took off. Upon reaching their house, he found his mate wasn't there. From the discarded clothes on the oor, he knew Logan had gone for a run. His protective side kicked in, his mate wasn't safe alone in the woods, not after the conversation he had just eavesdropped on.

Without bothering to strip, he shifted shredding his clothes, and followed his mate's scent to the woods. He needed to see he was safe and to ensure he stays that way. Although Logan was a strong wolf, Michael feared the latest happenings might throw him off his game because Logan still blames himself for Jonathan. He had accepted him too readily, and convinced everyone else too.

But whatever happens, Michael will keep his mate and their pack safe from the phony... No one will harm what is his, he swore as sprinted scenting his mate close.