

Chapter 5: The Factions

ARDEN

A middle-aged, handsome man with hair as white as snow stood on the podium with a microphone pressed to his lips. “Good morning, everyone. Please settle down.”

The noise didn’t subside. It seemed they didn’t care much for this man. Nevertheless, he continued speaking. “My name is Allen Winters, the headmaster of Elite Order Academy. Today marks the start of another semester. To all the seniors, welcome back, and to all the freshmen, welcome! You are the chosen few, and we are honored to have you here. First and foremost, you’ve been chosen not only for your intelligence but also for your potential…”

“This will take a while,” Tessa said. “Headmaster Winters is known for his long speeches.”

I turned to her with raised eyebrows.

“How much do you know about Elite?” she suddenly asked.

I tilted my head to the side. As I thought about it, I realized I didn’t know much. My parents and brothers never bothered to share any stories. All I knew was that it was the most prestigious school, and young wolves who graduated from it were placed on a pedestal.

For most of my life, I had wanted to prove myself to everyone who had underestimated me. I thought graduating from Elite would be the best way to do it.

“That it’s the best school in the country?” I muttered.

Tessa clicked her tongue. “So, not much then. Well, you’re in for a wild ride.”

“Elite Order Academy isn’t what it seems on the surface. For most, it’s where you build your strengths, shed your weaknesses, and become some of the most influential people in the werewolf world. However, what they don’t tell you is the process involved,” she began.

I listened intently.

“As you already know, our country is divided into four factions. It’s the same here. Four chosen leaders run the school. Most people stick with their factions. For example, if you’re from the South, you choose the Alpha of the South. However, choosing another Alpha has become more common—especially if they are known to be the strongest.”

“Like I said, choosing your Alpha is crucial. They must accept and respect you. You must prove yourself to them. Otherwise, you are as good as trash, and they will treat you like one,” she muttered.

I frowned. This sounded more complicated than I had expected.

“Here’s the first Alpha,” Tessa said, nudging my shoulder.

“The Alpha of the East,” Mr. Winters began, “Elias Rue!”

The hall erupted in cheers as a tall, lean man with black-rimmed glasses matching the color of his hair, with lips pressed in a tight line came to the front. Even from a distance, I could tell he possessed something extraordinary.

"Elias Rue," Tessa continued. "The youngest son of the current Alpha of the East. Even though he is the youngest in the family, he is expected to become the heir due to his remarkable intelligence. His IQ is out of this world, and his strategies are top-notch. He's here as a freshman and has already dethroned his older brother, who is a senior."

“The Alpha of the South,” Mr. Winters announced, introducing the next Alpha, “Rowan Wrenmoor!”

My brows furrowed as a familiar figure walked onto the stage. “This guy,” I muttered under my breath. The audience's excitement increased, with squeals that far exceeded those for Elias. A wink from Rowan sent the crowd into a frenzy.

Tessa let out a sigh, shaking her head. “Rowan’s still a playboy, I see.”

“Hmm?” I turned to her.

“Rowan Wrenmoor,” she explained. “He’s the oldest son of the South, notorious for being a player. He’s also in his first year here. It’s said that hundreds of girls line up for him in their packs. He doesn’t even have to try. Moreover, he comes from immense wealth; his family owns multiple businesses. Right from the start, many people want to get on his good side, hoping for a little spare change—which would easily surpass our rent in the Hades’ Dorm.”

I observed him, nodding slowly. The way he dressed spoke volumes.

“Alpha of the West—Jaxon Trevane.”

My gaze snapped to the stage at the mention of a name I dreaded. My fists clenched unconsciously at my sides as cheers erupted once more. Jaxon waved and smiled, blissfully oblivious to the chaos he had left in his wake.

“Jaxon Trevane,” Tessa began to introduce him, but I raised my hand.

“I already know about him,” I murmured.

“Oh, are you from the West?”

I nodded.

“Well, at least I can share what others think about Jaxon,” she continued. “He’s the only son of the West and is treasured by your faction. Jaxon is known to be reliable, kind, and, of course, strong. He’s said to be formidable in battle, whether in his human or wolf form.”

He was also a cheater.

But of course, everyone had covered that up, or perhaps they simply didn’t care. Even though I was the one being cheated on, they still believed I was the seducer.

I couldn’t deny Tessa’s claim that he was strong, though. Next to Elias and Rowan, both already muscular, he appeared even more buff.

Before the last Alpha was announced, whispers swept through the crowd. I glanced around, noting the excited expressions on their faces.

“He’s finally here.”

“I saw him a while ago. He’s so handsome.”

I focused intently on the front.

“And last but not least,” Tessa began, her tone filled with anticipation compared to the other introductions. “The Alpha of the North. The best bet.”

I pursed my lips. Since the formation of the factions, the North has always been regarded as the most superior. Their numbers were unmatched, their resources abundant, and their land the most expansive. It hadn’t always been this way, but the North’s leaders were known for their efficiency, which had propelled them to success.

“Everyone wants to be on his good side and, of course, in his good graces. If the other Alphas possess a notable merit, this Alpha has it all. In a survey conducted right after the acceptance letters were sent, it was revealed that he was the most popular choice among Alphas.”

Tessa’s words heightened my anticipation for his arrival. Then, after what felt like an eternity, he finally stepped into view.

“The Alpha of the North—Caden Callahan!”

A small gasp escaped my lips.

Dark brown hair. Striking gray eyes.

He was the one I had bumped into at the entrance!