

Broken 571

Chapter 571

In the two months before Anders takes over as Alpha, he and I, as well as Charles, Calvin's son and Anders* intended Beta, begin a new schedule of training. Patrick is slowly passing things over to Anders and while we take the time we have to go away and spend with our mates, most of our time is spent taking over the duties of the pack. Anders had Lily and I take over morning training, letting us train together in the afternoons while he and Charles took over afternoon training.

One day, as Anders and I were finishing up our training schedule, we walked toward the kitchen to find our mates for lunch. When I hear my mate's snarling voice, I stop to hear what's going on, pulling Anders' arm to get him to stop too. "Ladies. Are you so desperate and petty that you have to sit around the kitchen, talking about the good old days when you had your 15 minutes of heaven with someone that is no longer available and will

never be yours? I mean, if it were me, and, of course, it's not because I'm mated to a Guardian, but if it

were me, I'd be more concerned about who was available that maybe I could actually have a chance with, not sitting around like a bunch of old maids talking of the days gone by. And, if the purpose of this

conversation is to make your future Luna uncomfortable with the fact that her mate slept with someone

other than her, rest assured that she already knows. But that is in the past. No

one and nothing will take Anders away from Calista.”

“Excuse me?” One of the she—wolves that Lily is addressing says.

“Yes, you do need to be excused. All of you need to get a life. Get over it. You may have slept with

Anders. Maybe you slept with Clint. That was then, this is now bitches. Those men are off the market. Go

find your own.”

“And if we don't?” Another girl stands up. Seriously? These she-wolves need to get a life. Anders and I haven't been interested in anyone else in months. And no one will ever be able to turn our heads from our

mates.

“Not one of you even trains, do you really think I couldn't take every one of you at once and not even break a sweat. Don't embarrass yourselves any more than you already have.” I hear Lily say.

“Lily.” I hear Calista's soft voice say, just as Anders takes a step forward. I can see the anger on his face that pack members have been making his mate feel uncomfortable, but I know my mate has it under control. I grab his arm again, holding him back.

“Ladies, I understand how difficult it must be for you. You wanted to be Luna, or perhaps you thought Anders loved you. But that's not the case. I know any of you

would take a chance to spend another night with my mate, and I can't blame you for wanting that. Anders is an incredible lover. But he is mine. He will always be mine. It would be better if you recognized that and stop trying to make things in this pack uncomfortable with your constant chatter or your time with my mate." Calista's voice echoes down the hall. It's obvious that as she speaks, Shali comes forward more and more.

Anders pulls away again and he and I walk into the kitchen. As if we had planned it, we both come up

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behind our mates, wrapping our arms around them.

"Let me be clear." Anders says, running his nose up Calista's neck and into her hair. "There is no one that I will ever want, other than my mate. She is everything to me. Anyone that hurts my mate, will answer to me." His head comes up and he pins each of the she-wolves with his stare, his Alpha aura coming out and Zakai coming forward. "I will not tolerate any disrespect to my mate and your future Luna."

They all lift their necks in submission and a chorus of "Yes, Alphas ring out in the

room. He turns Calista in his arms and pulls her into a passionate kiss. Anders isn't one for public displays of affection, so I know he's making a point. Maybe the pack hasn't seen how much he truly loves Calista, and he's making sure they see it now. It doesn't take long before Anders and Calista get lost in the kiss, forgetting about everything else around them.

When the she-wolves leave, I lean down to my mate's ear. "That was so hot."

She turns in my arms. "Which part?" She asks, while nipping at my throat.

"All of it, but I especially like how you reminded them that you're my mate."

"Hmmm." She gets a contemplative look on her face. "Am I your mate? I forget. Maybe I need to be reminded." She gives me a seductive look, biting her lower lip.

That's all the suggestion I need. I reach down, throwing her over my shoulder before taking her to our room and reminding her for the next couple of hours just who's mate she is.

Two months after graduation, Lily and I stand on stage beside Anders and Calista as they swear their oaths and fealty to the pack as Alpha and Luna. Charles and his mate, Donna, are then sworn in as the pack Betas. Afterward, Lily and I are sworn in as Anders* and Calista's Guardians. We had all discussed it and since my mate was a Guardian, and Anders already had me as his Guardian, it was decided that Lily would be Calista's Guardian. Lily was thrilled and I think Calista was too. Honestly, it makes everything much easier for all of us. Any time Anders has an Alpha event, he can feel comfortable bringing Calista, knowing Lily will be there to protect her and that keeps me and Lily together more often.

It's a beautiful evening full of dancing and celebrating. I know other males in our pack are jealous and watch my mate with hopeful eyes. But I know she's all mine. I make a point to show her at every opportunity how grateful I am that she's mine, how much I love her, how special she is to me.

And, I have to say, when my mate jumps in, she jumps in with both feet. There is never a day that goes by where she doesn't show me how much she loves me. Every time she looks at me, it makes my heart stutter in my chest. Her love and

respect for me are always on display for everyone to see. I am the luckiest man alive. I'm sure most people who have found their mates feel the same way, but they would be wrong. No one and nothing is more special than Lily.

Chapter 572

A couple of months after Anders and Calista take over the pack, we receive an invitation to celebrate

birth of Liam Holstin, Alpha Leander and Luna Fetulla's child. Calista and I are excited to see Estella

again and meet her new son, while Clint and Anders begin talking of the work they can accomplish while we are in Shadow Falls pack. Look at Cali and roll my eyes, making her glagte,

We drive to Shadow Falls, leaving Charles in charge of our pack for the weekend. There are several milestones that are important in a pack, especially when it comes to ranked pack members. The birth of the future Alpha is one of them. Many packs have been invited to this momentous occasion.

Alpha Leander asked us to come a day earlier than the others. When we arrive, he escorts us into his

office, Luna Estella joining us. Because we are in an alliance, and have been friendly for many years, the feeling in the room is relaxed. We sit around a table together, Calista and I hugging Estella when she

comes in.

"I'm sure you are wondering why I have asked you to come here earlier than the others." Alpha Leander begins. "As you know, the birth of my son is very important, not only to me and Estella, but also to the pack. Our relationship with Alpha Benjamin has been tenuous at best in these last couple of months. He seems to have become more aggressive, power-hungry since we last saw him at your birthday party.

Alpha Anders."

"Please, we are all friends here, call me Anders. And yes, my father and I have noticed the same thing. While Alpha Jerome has been labeled as an enemy to our pack, Alpha Benjamin seems to have almost

become closer to him. We have men watching both packs to make sure they do not plan an attack

against us."

Leander is nodding his head in agreement. "We have noticed the same. And what you may not know is that, after the incident in your pack with Guardian Lily, we also labeled Alpha Jerome and the Silver Dawn

pack enemies of the Shadow Falls pack."

I can tell Anders was not aware of this. "Our alliance with Canyon Ridge has always been very strong.

Any act against your pack, is seen as an act against ours. Therefore, your enemies are our enemies. Which brings me to my request today. Your pack is

strong, stronger even than mine. What I would like to

request is that, while you are here for the party, would you allow your Guardians to watch over my mate

and our son, ensuring nothing happens to them. If I could have found a way to not invite Alpha Benjamin to these festivities without practically declaring war, I would have. However, I do not want him here and I

do not trust him.”

He looks at Anders and Clint. “You have both found your mates. You understand the concern I feel and the need to protect mine. And, while you do not yet have an heir or children of your own, I’m sure you can understand that a parent’s love of their children is second only to the love of a mate.”

I watch as Clint and Anders mind link before Clint links me. “Would you be willing to watch over Estella. It would look more natural if you and Calista were around her and the baby.”

I look at Anders, giving a brief nod of my head. I see Leander’s entire body relax, as does Estella’s. I turn to her. “Looks like I’ll be getting lots of time holding that new baby of yours. Where is he?”

After deciding the best approach to watching over both Estella and Liam, Estella has her Beta female bring him in. Calista and I coo over baby Liamn, while Estella watches with the total love of a mother in her eyes. “I knew I loved him

while he grew in my stomach, but the moment I held him? It's like nothing I've ever felt before. In a moment, something inside me changed, and I never want to change it back. I've never been a jealous mate, never felt particularly possessive or protective of Leander. But with Liam, I swear if anyone ever threatens my child, they will see fury like they've never seen before.”

We talk of babies and our plans for having them, saying we want to put it off for a couple of years to adjust to our new roles and just enjoy being together before we bring a child into the mix. “I think that's a great plan. Leander and I took a year before trying. It only took me going into heat once and now we have Liam.” She says smiling at her mate as we talk over lunch.

That night in bed, Clint is more amorous than normal, which is saying something. “What's gotten into you?” I ask him, laughing.

“I liked seeing you holding that baby today. I can't wait until your stomach is growing with my child, watching you hold our baby girl or boy.” He says, nuzzling my ear.

I can feel my body responding to him. It doesn't take much. There has never been a time when I didn't want more, want him like I hadn't just had him inside me for hours.

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“Which would you prefer? A boy or a girl?” I ask and my voice breathy with my need for him.

He's curled up behind me and his fingers begin working their magic, strumming

my body like it's his guitar while he murmurs in my ear, sending shivers all over my body.

“One of each? Maybe more than one of each. Knowing how much I want you every minute of the day, we could end up with an entire pack of babies if you want.”

“Well then, Guardian mine, you'd better start practicing.” I love that my mate takes his practice very

seriously.

The next morning. I'm a bit tired after Clint kept me up most of the night. But my body feels amazing, if a little sore. We agreed that Calista and I would stay near Estella when the Alphas and their packs arrive. As soon as he exits his car, I can see that Alpha Benjamin is still angry at not having his chance to take me as his mate. His barely contained snarl flashes across his face when he sees Anders and Clint standing near Leander.

However, when he approaches, he's the epitome of a perfect Alpha. “Alpha Leander, Luna Estella, what a pleasure to see you. I'm honored to have received the invitation to meet your son and heir.” He says. looking down at Liam. If I wasn't watching Estella so closely, I wouldn't have noticed her body tense Alpha Benjamin looks at Liam and gently runs a hand over his head.

as

“The pleasure is ours, Alpha Benjamin. Have you met my Beta, Daniel? He and his mate, Mila will show you and your pack members to your rooms.” Leander

says, effortlessly putting himself between Alpha Benjamin and his mate, steering him away from his son.

There are eight additional Alphas and pack members that arrive, including Alpha Christopher whose human mate, Emily, recently learned she is pregnant with their first child. Alpha Eric also arrives. He still has not found his mate. I can tell the lack of a mate is starting to take its toll on him. The laughter and flititiousness I saw in him several months ago, is gone. His eyes have begun to look haunted, and they've lost the light that used to shine in them. He's very close to going feral. He smiles and says all the

right things when he approaches Leander and Estella, but I can see the need in him, feel his desire to find

his mate and have a child of his own. My heart breaks for him.

At dinner that night, I watch the other Alphas. Leander was right about Alpha Benjamin. There is

something shifty and underhanded in the way he watches Estella. I can tell she feels his eyes on her, but she does an excellent job of hiding it. There is something to be said for women meant to be Lunas. I would never be able to sit quietly and maintain my composure while someone outwardly seemed to be plotting against me and my child. But she does, and I know if Cali was in this situation, she would be doing exactly the same thing. The Moon Goddess doesn't choose her children and their mates lightly and she doesn't make mistakes. It

makes me wonder about Alpha Eric and why he hasn't found his mate yet. It makes me wonder if she was killed or is being held against her will somewhere,

keeping him from finding her.

Alpha Leander put the four of us on his floor in the packhouse. Clint and I are next door to the nursery

and Anders and Calista are across the hall. I asked Estella for a spare baby monitor, just to have in our

room so I could make sure we didn't miss anything. Clint and I have both noticed that, since our marking and mating, our senses, strength and just about everything that makes us Guardians has become enhanced. So, while I don't need the baby monitor, it makes me feel better knowing I have it.

In the middle of the night. I hear a shuffling sound. I lay in bed, listening to the sound, trying to make sense of what I'm hearing. It isn't until I hear the cooing of the baby that I jolt up in bed. I told Estella that if she went into Liam's room at night, to quietly let me know. That way, if I heard anything, I'd know it was her. I didn't need to bother, the entire time she's in with Liam, she coos and sings to him. However, there is no sound other than the shifting of clothing.

As I move to get out of bed, I feel Clint climbing out behind me. I turn and look at him, but he's listening intently as well. Someone is in Liam's nursery and there can only be one reason. Someone is planning

kidnap or kill him.

Do you think Alpha Benjamin is making his move?

Chapter 574

I felt Lily tense in my arms. I immediately come awake, listening to the sounds coming from the baby monitor. As Lily moves to get out of bed, I'm right behind her. Someone is in the nursery that shouldn't be.

I toss her a shirt as I put on a pair of shorts, and we quietly make our way to the door to our room. I mind link Anders but he's asleep. I shout in the mind link, trying to wake him up before we sneak out of our room, quietly moving to Liam's room.

"You grab the baby. I'll get the person that is trying to take him." I say to Lily in the mind link.

She nods and we burst into the room. There is a figure in dark clothing, reaching into the crib. He snatches Liam up into his arms turning to face us.

"Stand down, Guardians, or I kill the Alpha heir. This isn't your fight."

"On the contrary, any fight against Shadow Falls is our fight. You've just waged war with not one, but two packs." I say.

He chuckles and as my eyes adjust to the nightlight in the room, I can see that this is Alpha Benjamin's

Beta.

“Does your Alpha know what you are doing?”

“Wow, you really are stupid. All brawn and no brain. Who do you think set this up?” He looks between me and Lily again. “What I want to know is how you are still standing. We knew she would be.” He nods at Lily. “But how are you?”

“What are you talking about?” Lily asks him.

“We poisoned everyone with wolfsbane. It was in the food. The entire pack is incapacitated and now Alpha Benjamin will make his move. We will take over this pack and since we've already weakened your Alpha and Luna as well all we need to do is eliminate the two of you and he'll take over your pack too.”

“You'll find we're not so easy to kill.” I say to him.

I see the flash of a knife in his hand and Lily is moving. I'm a half second behind her. She grabs his arm, pulling it away from Liam. I take his arm from her as he throws the baby. Lily catches Liam mid-air as he

begins to scream.

The Beta's arm comes up to hit me, but Donovan's claws have already come out and I slice them through his throat, holding his arm as he drops to the floor, drowning in his own blood.

I turn to Lily. “You need to quiet him down. If the others know he's awake, they'll come looking for him. If we're all this pack has standing between them and death, we need to be stealthy.” I tell her. She looks around, grabbing a bottle from the mini fridge in the room. She pops it in a microwave, heating it quickly. She checks the temperature and pops it into Liam's mouth, effectively quieting

his cries.

15 BONUS

“You stay here. I'm going to check on Anders and Calista.” She nods, walking and gently bouncing Liam as she feeds him.

I move quickly to their rooms, hearing the sounds of movement on the floors below us in the packhouse. Once I check to make sure they are alive, I pick them up and carry them to our room.

As I pass the nursery, I poke my head in and see Lily changing Liam. “They're alive, I'm going to check

Leander and Estella now.”

I find Liam's parents unconscious, but both are still alive. I quickly pick them up and move them to our room with Anders and Calista. I put them on the bed and go to get Lily. She follows me into our room and puts a now sleeping Liam in between his parents on the bed.

As quietly as possible, we close and lock our door, barricading it with dressers and anything else we can find. Once we're done, we sneak out the window. She and I became adept at climbing on roofs when we'd sneak out to meet up at night. We make our way to the next floor down. I find the window and check to see that the hallway is empty. I raise the window and we slide in quietly.

Chapter 575

We listen and don't hear anyone on this floor yet. We check the rooms and pull the quests staying on the Beta floor into the Bela's room, barricading it as best as possible before sneaking out the window and going down to the next floor.

This time, there are several warriors on the floor. Three of the four doors are open. I carefully pull open the window and slide inside, Lily right behind me. We can hear the sounds of several people in one of the rooms, laughing over the murders they are committing

We slide into the room, quietly. Lily and I quickly take down a warrior and I turn and slice the throat of the third in this room. Lily goes and checks the pack's Gammas. She looks at me, shaking her head. We carefully walk out of the room, check the other three as we go. The Gamma children have also been murdered in their beds. However, we find that the other Alphas on this floor, Alpha Christopher and his mate and Alpha Eric, were left untouched. The must have drugged Luna Emily with something, since she's human and the wolfsbane wouldn't affect her.

We quietly make our way to the bottom floor of the packhouse. The omegas have been piled in the center

of the floor. Some are awake and crying, while others are passed out, or at least I hope they are unconscious and not dead. Benjamin would have no reason to kill omegas.

As I look around, I see Lily put a finger to her lips, asking the omegas that are awake to stay quiet about our presence. They've been roughed up, but I see a couple of them nod and one carefully points to another hallway.

I nod and Lily and I begin to make our way to that hallway. We can hear the crying and pleading as they pull the omegas from their beds. They are dragging the ones that are unconscious by their hair or feet,

not caring if they injure them.

Lily and I back up against the wall as one passes by us. She nods that she'll take the one that just went by, and I turn to continue on. I hear the soft thud as the warrior hits the floor behind me. At that moment, another one comes out the door of a bedroom, pulling an omega with him. She is screaming and kicking trying to get away and it gives me the moment of distraction I need to slice my claws into his heart from

behind.

The omegas eyes go wide, and I put my finger to my lips, telling her to stay quiet. "Hide." I whisper to her. and she nods her head, turning to find a hiding spot in

her room.

I feel Lily pass behind me, going to the next room. We continue down the hall taking out warriors one at a time, and then pulling them into rooms so it's not obvious that they are dead to anyone glancing down the hallway. When we're done, we've taken out another 20 warriors.

We quietly walk back to the main hall. The omegas are still sitting there. They look at us, their eyes going wide that we are back. I hear the sound of footfalls and watch as the omegas that are awake flinch.

"Where the fuck are the rest of the omegas?" I hear Alpha Benjamin shout. He's

not concerned that

anyone but his pack members will hear him.

He turns and looks down the hall that we just left. Lily and I are skirting around the room, staying quiet and moving out of sight.

Benjamin calls out to the dead warriors down the hall. When no one answers, he turns, looking at the warriors that came in with him.

“Find the Guardian!”

Alpha Benjamin is definitely making his move. Good thing there are two Guardians to help.

Chapter 576

Clint and I work well together. Not only are we in tune as mates, but also having trained together for months. We trust each other and know that we've got each other's back, so it frees us to be able to focus on the immediate battle in front of us.

When Benjamin tells them to search for me, we realize we have an advantage. He still hasn't realized that Clint is awake. We both know we're about to be in the fight of our lives. There is no one else to help us. The fate of this pack and

possibly our own, lies with us.

“Stay together, Lily. We're stronger together.” Clint says in our mind link.

1 nod. We continue to move around the packhouse, taking out warriors. We hear Benjamin roar from above us. We realize he has found the three warriors we left dead and most likely realized that we've barricaded the others in the Beta's room and our room.

When he comes back down, he pulls his ace card. He knows I won't stand by and let him kill someone while I hide. He grabs one of the omegas from the floor, putting her in front of him. A claw extends and he lays it like a knife across her throat.

“Come out, Lily. I know it's you killing my men. Come out now, and I won't kill this innocent omega. You don't want her blood on your hands, do you?”

“Lily, no!” Clint links me.

1 turn to him, kissing him quickly. “I trust you. We can do this. You go around, get

behind him. I'll distract

him.”

“Lily!” He says, but I'm already moving forward. I watch him dart away, not willing to leave me on my own against Benjamin and his remaining warriors.

two

“Lily!” Benjamin calls out to me. “I’m going to count to three. One

I’m out of time and have

to hope that Clint gets into position quickly. I step out of the shadows, closer than he was expecting me.

“Let her go.” I say, making him jump.

He turns, keeping the omega between us. He looks me over. I don’t know what he sees, but it makes him

sneer at me. “You killed my Beta.”

“Your Beta was going to kill an innocent child.”

“An Alpha heir to a pack that is now an enemy of my mine.”

“Perhaps you should have thought of that before you came to a celebration of his life where there would

be two Guardians.”

“One of those Guardians has been eliminated. Once he is dead, I will mark you and make you mine.”

I chuckle at him. I can’t help it. “As if I would ever let you mark me. You are not an Alpha worthy of the title, much less a Guardian, and you’ll find that my mate is hard to kill.”

“You should have been my mate months ago. But Alpha Jerome ruined it by trying to take you out in front of everyone. I have much more finesse, more patience. I've bided my time and here we are. No one to stop me.”

“Wrong.” Clint says, coming up behind him and injecting him with something in his neck. Instantly, his claw retracts and he grabs his neck.

He turns, looking at Clint, his eyes wide. “What have you done?”

“Injected you with what smelled like liquid silver. I think I got it into your blood stream. It should be pumping through your body right now. When it gets to your heart, you'll be dead. NO ONE threatens my mate.” He snarls as Alpha Benjamin falls to the floor.

From the corner of my eye, I see a warrior leap at Clint. Andra shifts and takes him out before he reaches Clint. I stand beside Clint, guarding his back as he turns to the warriors.

can get

“You've lost your Alpha and your Beta, along with close

40 thirty warriors. If you choose to stay and fight, you will die along with them. There may only be two of us, but we're Guardians. We're stronger than you, we heal faster than you and we're both immune to wolfsbane, as you can see. I suggest you think long and hard before deciding to attack us.”

Alpha Benjamin is writhing in pain at our feet. His warriors look at him. He's trying to speak, but he can't make coherent words. One after another, the warriors turn and leave. I don't move until the last one moves out of the back door.

Clint turns to me. "Stay here and check these omegas. I'm going to make sure they leave and call Charles. We need back up."

Chapter 577

I shift back. "I'll call Beta Charles while I check this group. You follow them, let me know if you need assistance." I grab him and lock my lips on his in a passionate kiss. "Be careful with my mate."

He kisses my forehead. "Take care of mine. I'll be back as soon as I can. Watch your back in case any double back or are still lingering."

I wait until he's out the door before looking at the omega who Benjamin threatened. She hasn't stopped

watching him writhing on the floor. "Where's your phone?" I ask her.

She points to the wall against the kitchen, I grab the landline and dial Charles' number. He answers

groggily but as I fill him in on the events of what happened, he wakes quickly, growling and promising to have warriors here in a couple of hours to support the pack until everyone wakes up. He is also going to

send doctors, since Leander's doctors are also going to be recovering.

I hang up and turn around to find the omega kicking Benjamin and cursing him for hurting her and her

pack. I walk up to her, looking down at Benjamin who is now dead.

"Hey, hey." I wait until she looks at me. "I need your help. Focus."

When she nods, I get her name, Lucy, and get her to round up the omegas that

are awake. There are only 20 of them.

"We need to know who in the pack has been killed, who is still unconscious and who might be awake. If anything seems wrong, get back here immediately and let me know."

I break them into groups of two, so they won't be alone and send them out to start checking. I have two stay in the packhouse to help me search the rooms and those laying on the floor in the main room.

I'm on the floor, checking the omegas when someone shouts. "Guardian, look out!" I turn, seeing a warrior coming at me in a partial shift. I move to protect myself when someone reaches out and grabs him by his throat.

Alpha Eric, while wobbly on his feet, holds the warrior off the ground. "Now, why would you be trying to killardian?"

The warrior can't answer since Eric is holding him by his throat. Eric turns to me.

"What the fuck is going

Son?"

"Alpha Benjamin and his pack poisoned everyone and planned to take out all the ranked members and warriors of Shadow Falls while they were unconscious. You have wolfsbane in your system."

He extends his claws, slicing through the warrior's throat, letting him drop to the floor dead, before stumbling. I catch him before he falls, supporting his weight as I walk him to a chair.

"What's the situation?" He asks, taking control as the only Alpha awake.

I fill him in, starting with saving Liam to killing Benjamin and Clint following the others to make sure they leave the pack lands, I let him know our Beta is sending help and medical staff to care for everyone as they start to wake up.

"How are you awake already?" I ask Alpha Eric. No one else is showing any sign of consciousness.

He gives me a rueful smile. "I guess feral sickness is good for something. I didn't eat much at dinner."

Clint comes back in. "Alpha Eric, how are you feeling?"

"Like I've been injected with wolfsbane." He says sarcastically, a semblance of his former self coming through.

“What happened here?” Clint asks, pointing to the dead warrior at nearest us.

“He stayed behind and tried to get me while my back was turned. The omegas warned me a moment before Alpha Eric grabbed him by the throat.”

“Thank you.” Clint says to Alpha Eric, pulling me against him.

The omegas begin returning, giving us the numbers of who is dead and who is still unconscious.

I'm compiling the numbers to provide to Alpha Leander when he wakes up, when the front door opens. Our warriors come in and Clint immediately walks to them. I see Alpha Eric's head whip around and a growl rips from his lips as he stands and stalks to one of our pack members. She stands there, eyes wide and looking stunned. I race over to him, hoping he isn't

having a feral moment when he pulls one of our newest doctors into his arms and takes her mouth in an ardent kiss.

He pulls back, looking at her. “Mate.” He says, before kissing her again.

Chapter 578

The next morning is chaotic. Lily and I took charge of the situation once Alpha Eric found his mate. While

I understood that he just wanted to take her somewhere private and mark and mate her, he was recovering from wollsbane, and she was needed to provide medical attention as people woke.

We began pulling all of Benjamin's dead pack members outside, away from the packhouse. More carefully, we began collecting and laying Alpha Leander's dead inside the packhouse. We covered them with blankets that the omegas brought to us. As people woke, they began looking for their loved ones. Many felt the severed bond when they woke.

While we couldn't save everyone, Lily and I protecting Liam inadvertently helped to save many of the other pack members. If we hadn't woken when we did, who knows how many pack members would have died.

The ranked members wake up first. Anders and Leander must have realized what happened when they

woke up in our bedroom, barricaded in. After checking their mates and baby Liam, they moved the

barricades and came rushing down the stairs.

Leander took charge of the situation, sending pack members as they woke to see the medical personnel. Lily reported what she had gathered about the dead and those impacted by the wolfsbane. When Alpha Christopher woke, his concern for his human mate and her fetus had him heading home to be treated by

his medical team.

By mid-morning. Lily and I were exhausted, having battled through most of the night and into the

morning. Once everyone was awake, we went to our room, showered and collapsed on our beds

exhausted.

We didn't wake until late afternoon. When we re-emerged, all the visiting Alphas, except Alpha Eric had

returned to their packs. While it seemed that Alpha Benjamin had acted alone, they wanted to make sure

their own packs were safe.

Anders and Leander sent word to the elder council about what had happened. Alpha Benjamin's pack would be dismantled, and the pack members would face trial for their attempt to kill multiple Alphas and

their collusion in the attack on Shadow Falls.

The event, while devastating to many, did strengthen the bond between Estella, Calista and Lily. The celebration of Liam's birth was cancelled in light of all the deaths that had occurred in the pack, but

before we left, Estella, Calista and Lily made plans to get together again.

Over the next couple of months, we hear that Alpha Benjamin's pack was disbanded. Several groups of his now-rogue members attack our pack, attempting a retaliation. Lily and I are always involved in defending our pack. She and I have become a powerful fighting machine. We work in tandem, not needing

communication. We just know and understand what the other person is going to do. None of the attacks on our pack present much of an issue when the two of us get involved.

Eventually, we hear that many of the displaced pack members join Alpha Jerome's pack. He welcomes them with open arms. It makes us wary of his intentions, but other than the occasional unexplained death in his pack, their activities do not impact us or Shadow Falls.

Lily, Calista and Estella have developed quite a friendship and get together at least once a month for lunch or shopping.

Alpha Christopher's mate had a little girl but died in childbirth. We were never sure if it was because she was a human, or if the drugs that Alpha Benjamin and his people gave her weakened her beyond her human body's ability to recover. Either way, Alpha Christopher grieved, refusing to take another Luna and raising his daughter alone.

Alpha Eric mates with our previous doctor, Zoey, taking her as his Luna. Four months after officially making her his Luna, they welcomed their first child, a boy. We were invited to the Harvest Moon Pack's celebration of their Alpha heir. It was nice to see Zoey again and see how she's come into her own. I don't know if they struggled with her being Luna and maintaining her medical practice, but they've made it work.

We stay the night at Harvest Moon after the celebration. That night, I curl up with my mate. "Are you still okay with waiting to have a child?" I ask her. We're at an

age where many friends and other packs are finding their mates and beginning their families.

She turns in my arms, facing me. "Are you?"

I smile at her, kissing her nose. "I asked you first. What do you want my sweet Lily bud?"

She looks thoughtful for a moment before focusing on me. "I've watched what has happened with Luna Estella. I know she loves her mate, and wants time with him, but being a parent and running a pack pulls her in many different directions." She licks her lips, looking at mine. I can feel my body responding to the non—verbal cues she's giving me.

"I'm not ready to give that up yet. I like that we're both adventurous in the bedroom, or, wherever the urge takes us." I smile, knowing she's thinking of me taking her against the side of Harvest Moon's packhouse during the celebratory party earlier tonight.

"I want more time for us to play, explore, be together without a child pulling our attention from each other. I want to try new positions that we haven't thought of yet, have the opportunity to wake you in the middle of the night with my mouth because I want you right then, wake up early in the morning to your hands exploring me and making my body sing before we have to go train. I love that after you've made me forget my name, we can lounge in bed, while you learn a new song on your guitar to sing to me. We can eat naked, feeding each other if we want, have sex in the shower as many times as we want. I'm not ready for that to change. Does that make me selfish?"

I reach down, nipping at her bottom lip. “If it makes you selfish, then I guess we're both selfish. Nearly a year after taking you as my mate, I still can't get enough of you. I want you every minute of every day. So, if you want to wait, so I can take you every conceivable moment that we have, then who am I to argue?”

She giggles in my arms, and I proceed to show her exactly why it's still a good idea for us to wait. I show her over and over, all night long, just because I can.

Alpha Benjamin's pack joining Alpha Jerome's doesn't bode well for the future.

But I love these private moments between Clint and Lily. I hope you do too.

Chapter 579

Several years go by. Life with Clint is everything he promised and everything I knew it would be when I fell in love with him. On the first anniversary of our mating, he took me back to Maine. This time, we were able to do a full-on white water rafting trip, just like he promised me. I didn't know that he had planned to take me there, so I had gotten him a picture of us in Maine. I had it blown up so we could hang it on our wall. It was a picture of the two of us in front of the ocean. He was behind me with his arms wrapped around my waist. His eyes were watching me intently as I laughed. My hair was blowing in the wind and my head was turned toward him, listening to what he said in my ear. He remembered the moment, remembered that he was telling me he'd never love anyone the way he loves me, which made it that much more special.

On our second anniversary, he took me to the Rocky Mountains. He made sure that where we were going still had snow. He got us a cabin removed from everyone and everything. We spent a long weekend letting our wolves run through the forest and making love in front of the fireplace.

On our third anniversary, he took me to the islands. He rented an entire island, so

we let our wolves run free and we spent the weekend naked, lounging in the sun, making love in the ocean and learning the fun that could be had with bondage.

For our fourth anniversary, he took me to Oregon and the wine country. We spent our days tasting wines and our evenings finding creative ways to “spill” wine on each other before licking it off. Never in four years has my love or desire for this man waned. If anything, my need for him, my desire for him has only gotten stronger. Every day we find ways to touch each other, caress each other, flirt with each other. My heart is so full of love for this man that some days, it takes my breath away and brings tears to my eyes.

When we return from Oregon, Anders calls us into his office. We arrive to find Calista sitting in his lap. In front of the pack, Anders and Cali are still reserved in their affection. Behind closed doors, Clint and I see a very different side to them. Their love is obvious, even if they are not as outwardly affectionate as Clint and I are.

“We wanted to talk with the two of you. Cali and I have decided it's time for us to begin trying to have a pup.” My mouth breaks into a huge smile.

“That's awesome!”

Cali smiles at me. “Hear him out, Lily.” I sit back, not sure what to expect.

“Neither of us is aware of the two of you also wanting to have a pup right now?”

It's more of a question than a comment. I look at Clint. It's been something that has started to push forward in both our minds, but we haven't decided to start trying yet.

“Not yet, but what does that have to do with anything?” My mate asks.

Anders looks at Cali. “I’m concerned about both Cali and Lily being pregnant at the same time. I know I will become extremely protective of my sweet mate when she’s with child.” Anders says, kissing the side

of her head. I know that look in his eyes. I’ve started seeing it more often in Clint’s. It’s the look of a man that wants to see his mate’s stomach growing with their child.

“I don’t want to keep the two of you from having a child, but I’m asking you to wait to start trying until Cali is pregnant. We don’t know how long it will take for her birth control to stop working but if I have my mate and a Guardian both pregnant at the same time, neither I nor Clint will be able to focus on anything, especially if we are attacked. I need to know that at least two of the three of us can be objective and

focus on the protection of my mate.*”

Chapter 580

I look at Clint. “We want to start trying soon, but we’re not there yet. Maybe, the Moon Goddess will see fit to give us both pups within a year of each other. And if we’re really lucky, you’ll have a boy, and we’ll have a girl, and they will be mates one day. The future Alpha and Luna of the pack!” I say, practically bouncing in my seat and clapping my hands at the idea..

Anders and Clint laugh. “Lily bud, how about we get you girls pregnant first and

we can worry about

mates later.”

He pulls me into his lap, kissing my temple. But as I look at Call, she’s giving me a thumbs up where Anders can't see it. Perfect! We're in agreement.

It takes six months for Cali to go into heat. When she does, everyone except Charles, Donna, Clint and I are ordered to leave the packhouse. Even I can smell Call's pheromones and as much as I love my best friend, I would have preferred NOT to have heard her screaming our Alpha’s name all day and all night for a week.

During that time, Clint and I guard our Alpha and Luna and work with Charles to protect and run the pack. We get word of the death of Alpha Jerome’s son and also his Beta. The news that we got was that his Beta killed his own son and the Alpha’s son. Alpha Jerome beheaded his Beta for treason and banished his youngest son.

“Do you believe that?” Clint asks Charles.

“No. Alpha Jerome is vicious, cruel. There have been too many unexplained or poorly explained deaths in his pack and this is just one more.”

“I liked his Beta. He seemed like a good man when we met him at Anders*”

birthday party. Emerson, I

believe his name was. I can't imagine him killing one of his sons and the Alpha's son. That doesn't make any sense. Does anyone know where the banished son is?" I ask.

"No." Charles says. "I've sent men out and told our patrols to be on alert. But it's unlikely that a 12-year-

old boy, even one with Beta blood, will survive on his own."

When Cali's heat finally ends, Clint and Charles fill Anders in on everything that happened while he was

out. I pull Cali into my room and ask her about being in heat. My sweet friend's cheeks go pink, but she

tells me about how intense it is, how her body craved Anders" even more than normal.

"Be prepared, Lily. It's intense. You don't want to eat or sleep, you just want to... well, you know."

I can't help but tease my friend a bit. "Oh yes, I do know. You were screaming Anders name to the roof tops. I think they might have heard you two packs over." Her eyes go wide, and her cheeks turn a brilliant shade of red. "Oh my goddess, Lily. Was it that bad? I honestly was so out of it, I didn't know and didn't care."

“All I have to say is, I hope it worked. If it's that much fun to go into heat, I can't wait.” I say and we both burst into giggles.

Two weeks later, we get the announcement. Calista is pregnant. The next day, I go off my birth control

What do you think now, hearing the other side of Eli's father's death and knowing what we do about Alpha Jerome? And now Calis pregnant with Rik And we know Lily's hope of their children being mates will

eventually come true.