

## Prologue

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"It's the eye of the Tiger..."

The song blasts through the quiet and dark room. That annoying thing is making noise way too soon I think. I ick my hand around blindly in the direction I think the noise is coming from because I am not ready to wake up. I start to smack my hand on my bedside table and move it around knowing my phone is there somewhere. BINGO! I found it. I squint my eyes to look at my phone knowing it is going to blind me if I don't and turn to attempt to hit the snooze for my alarm. I put my phone back down and roll back over and snuggle back into my blanket burrito.

My bedroom door swings open and my mother says, "Ari why aren't you up and dressed yet? We have to leave this house in two minutes or we are going to be late. You know how the Alpha is about punctuality."

It only took me a moment to hear what my mother was saying and once it registered my heart rate picked up speed. I jumped out of bed and rushed straight into the bathroom and into the shower to start my morning routine at hyper speed. I did NOT want to anger the Alpha by being late AGAIN. The last time I was stuck cleaning all of the communal toilets in the packhouse and training facility and had to clean up the locker rooms after the evening training. Needless to say, that is not an experience I want to have again. I thought boys my age could be gross, but the warriors are even worse! Yuck!

I took the quickest shower of my life and even avoided shaving my legs to save time. I rushed out of the bathroom and quickly dried off and got dressed in the rst pair of pants and shirt I saw. I quickly put my hair up into a messy bun and decided to go without makeup. I grabbed my school bag and the keys off my study table and ran down the hall into the kitchen where I saw my mother and father sitting at the table leisurely eating their breakfast. Father wasn't even dressed yet and mom was still in her bathrobe and curlers.

"Mom! Seriously! Again!" I huffed out as soon as I realized my mother had once again duped me. When would I stop falling for the same thing? Ugh! You would think after getting this same thing happen to me at least once a month since I turned ten I would have learned my lesson by now.

Mom's giggles brought me out of my thoughts and slowly a smile appeared on my face and then I joined in with her. "I...can't believe...you keep falling...for...that same old...prank!" Mom said between laughs.

My dad just looked at mom affectionately while she continued to laugh and snort. I loved how much my parents love each other. I hope that when I nd my mate that they will love me the way that my father loves my mother. They didn't have the easiest start, but they managed to make it through all their troubles.

You see, my mom is not just a normal werewolf or she-wolf. She is a female purebred or Lycan. There are only a handful of Lycan families left in the world, and my mother is the only lycan female. Well at least the only lycan female that is known. We won't know if I am a lycan like my mother, werewolf like my father, or a new combination of creature for another two years. I am sixteen years old now, almost seventeen in a few months and won't shift for the rst time until I am eighteen when I can also nd my mate.

Let me introduce myself. My name is Arianna Black. My friends and family call me Ari for short. I am the only child of my parents Asher and Claire Black. We are members of the Bloodmoon Pack. My father is actually an Alpha by birth, but because of the things that happened to my parents when they rst found each other, my father gave up his title and his pack to his younger brother, my Uncle Max of the Green Orchard Pack so they could go into hiding. Dad keeps his alpha aura hidden so that we can blend in.

When my parents came to the Bloodmoon Pack my father had to pledge to the new Alpha and agree to be ranked as omega in the pack because he was trying to be ranked as a delta and the new Alpha didn't like that idea. My father agreed because of my mother and me, but I know that it rankles him sometimes because of how the Alpha treats our family. We technically aren't mistreated, but my father is given the worst jobs to do around the pack and my mother is always stuck in the kitchens or in the laundry room of the packhouse. I am lucky because I am still a minor until my wolf shows up at eighteen therefore not required to work for the pack yet. I do help my mom out when I can. Especially when there is a big event and the Alpha is too cheap to hire out to a catering company and makes my mother do the majority of it on her own.

I eat my breakfast while my parents go to their room and get dressed. This morning before I have to go to school there is a mandatory pack meeting for all members with students of highschool age. Dad and I think that it is because of this new academy the elder council had constructed. All the ranked members' children will attend and only a handful of us regular people are able to go, and the selection process was grueling. I can't tell you how many different interviews I had to do and how many tests I had to pass. If my father hadn't given up his title I would have automatically been able to go. Instead I get to ght with a bunch of other kids who want to go.

I followed my parent's car to the meeting hall because I would have to go straight to school afterwards. We arrived just in time to take our seats before the Alpha showed up. The room became quiet as the Alpha took to the stage. He was a tall man and at one time you could tell that he had a large mass of muscles, but now he looks like he has more uff than muscle.

The Alpha cleared his throat and said, "Thank you all for coming to this meeting this early morning. I will not keep you because I know you all have important tasks that need to be done. As you know the elder council has established an academy for all supernaturals. All of our ranked members in high school will be attending the academy. Our pack was offered seven more spots because of our size. We have spent the last four months going over every candidate with a ne tooth comb. We are condent we have chosen the right wolves to represent this pack. When I call your name please stand. Darren Adams, Marissa Buffort, Ryan Dauz, Aaron Lee, Jen Nusak, Emilio Juarez, and for some reason Arianna Black."

Hearing my name I jumped up too fast in excitement from my seat and in doing so I knocked the chair I had been sitting in over making a loud crashing sound. Everyone in the room turned to look in my direction and I just know my face is as red as a tomato. God, why do embarrassing things always happen to me?

"Yes, well, those of you who were picked will be sent emails shortly giving all the details you will need for the upcoming school year. Those who were not chosen at this time, there are always opportunities to take an open spot when it becomes available. I am sure there are some students that are bound to drop out because they can't handle the work." Why is he looking at me when he says that? What a jerk! "That is all. You are dismissed!"

My family and I walked out of there quickly. I know I am doing it before the Alpha can rescind my acceptance or make me do some god awful chores or something. My parents on the other hand were rushing out to get their jobs on time. The Alpha doesn't care much about the rest of the Omegas, but he has a huge problem about caring what we do that it is almost borderline obsessive to me.

I give my parents a hug goodbye and get into my car and drive to school.If it wasn't for my Uncle Max sending me this car for my birthday I would be stuck on public transit or walking to school still. Sadly my uncle went towards practicality more than beauty, but I still love my car or I guess SUV is a better description. My uncle had said that a teenage girl has no use for a tiny car. His logic was because the trunk was small compared to laying all the seats down in the SUV to carry all the shopping bags that could accumulate. What he didn't realize is that I do not have the ability to go crazy shopping like that. It was a miracle how my father was able to explain my car.

As I pulled into the parking lot of our pack school I saw my best friend Jen standing with my boyfriend Aaron. Aaron and I have been dating for the last six months. He is the son of a pack warrior and has been mine and Jen's friend since before I can remember. Jen and I have always been friends. I don't remember a time when I didn't have Jen in my life. I was excited that we will all get to go to the new academy together.

I park my car beside where Jen and Aaron are sitting. I get out and before I can grab my bag Aaron has his arms wrapped around me with his head nuzzled into my neck. He has been doing that an awful lot lately. He is turning seventeen soon too so his wolf will start making an appearance over the next year until nally shifting on the eighteenth birthday. I have been wondering if the reason he is so fascinated with my neck and more importantly my marking spot lately is if he is my mate. We won't know for sure until I turn eighteen though.

After I was able to extract myself from his arms I grabbed my bag from the back seat and then locked it up. We headed into the school towards our lockers so that we could grab our things for the rst classes of the day. "Can you believe that we all got into the new academy? I was sure that the Alpha would have had more say in it." Jen said as I grabbed my math book from my bag to put into my locker and grabbed my history book out.

"I know. I don't think he would have stopped either of you from going, but me for sure I thought he would have put his foot down. I don't know what it is that I have done to insult him, but he really does not like me." I said in return.

"I don't know why babe. You are a very likable person." Aaron said as he wrapped his arm across my shoulders.

I just rolled my eyes at his cheesy response. We made our way towards homeroom which is the only class we all have together. Actually it is the only class that I have with either of them. All of my other classes are advanced placement classes. As we sit down in our seats I feel an odd sensation behind my eyes and a tingling sensation over my whole body. As quickly as it came it was gone. I still felt a residual sensation against my skin, but it wasn't horrible.

That was odd. The teacher walked in at that moment and started her talk about the goings on of the next week. They had one week left of school after today before the summer so there were a lot of exams next week having left this week for review and last minute extra credit for those who need it. My exams are all actually projects in place of a paper test except for my math exam which I have Monday. Next week is really just a slack off week for me. The bell rang to signal homeroom was over. We went our separate ways to our next classes and would meet up again at lunch.

It was a very slow school day for me. There isn't much to do in my classes except work on my end of year projects. So I just read, I was already nished with all of my projects. That is one thing that my parents enjoy about me and Jen teases me relentlessly about. It doesn't matter if we are given one day or one month to do an assignment. I will have it done the day it was assigned or as soon as I could have it done. I don't like to put things off till the last minute. Jen is forever a procrastinator though and so is my mother.

The nal bell rang out, nally signaling our freedom for the weekend. I met up with my friends at our lockers and I put all of my books away and grabbed everything else that was in my locker that I wouldn't need anymore for next week. Since neither Jen or Aaron have their own car I drive us all home. "So, are we going to the end of year party that the Beta's son is throwing at the clearing?" Jen asked as she was trying to nd something she wanted to listen to on my playlist.

"Sure, why not? It might be the last party we go to where everyone is going to the same school. After the summer all the teenagers of the pack are going to be split for school. I know this is supposed to be a great opportunity to broker peace amongst the species and all, but isn't it going to cause a divide in the packs and covens? Making those that get to attend the exclusive academy on a higher scale than those who don't get to go?

Essentially the only people who don't get to go to the academy are the omegas and deltas. It is going to cause a problem in the future I fear." I say, voicing my concerns. I mean don't get me wrong. I know this is a great opportunity and it is a great honor to get chosen. I just can't help but see how this can be a problem in the future where it will cause more trouble than it solves.

"You can't think about that now. It isn't going to be our problem. We are going to be part of that elite babe! That isn't anything that is going to concern us." Aaron said.

I can't believe he just said that! That is exactly what I was talking about. It is already starting and the doors haven't even opened yet. Luckily I pull up to Aaron's house and drop him off before I can open my mouth and we start arguing. We agreed to meet up at the party tonight. "Ari, I know Aaron is our friend and your boyfriend, but I don't know if I agree with what he said. He basically just proved that your concerns are valid. It is already starting. I'm worried that he is splitting away from us with his values. I hope I am wrong, but there is just something going on with him that I can't put my nger on." Jen said.

"I know what you mean. Remember last month when we got into that big argument?" I waited until she armed what she heard then continued, "It was because he wanted to take our relationship to the next level, and I said I wasn't ready. That I probably wouldn't be ready until I turned eighteen and found my mate. I have always pictured my rst time with my mate. We have a hunch that Aaron is my mate, but that is just it, a hunch. I just don't want to take that chance and be wrong. You know?"

"Ari, are you saying that he didn't talk to you for over a week because you wouldn't put out? That asshole! Why didn't you tell me? I am going to give that boy a piece of my mind." Jen fumed.

"That is exactly why I didn't tell you. We dealt with it, and we moved on. I didn't want to add anyone else into our relationship. Anyway, ever since then he has been acting strange. It isn't anything bad, just, I don't know. Not normal? I can't explain it, but I know something is not right." I said to her.

"Sorry. You are my best friend and I don't like that he treated you that way. You have every right to decide what you do or don't do with your body. I am just glad that you are condent enough in yourself and beliefs that you didn't let him convince you to change them. I don't know Ari, if Aaron keeps acting like this I don't know if I can continue being his friend. He is becoming so hyper focused on ranks. He is a delta, but he is treating some omegas pretty badly. Alice from chemistry class said that she saw Aaron trying to harass Natalie. Calling her some very vulgar names. You know her, she works at that diner on main we go to all the time. She helps take care of her sick mom and her baby sister which is why she is always working and not hanging out with friends." Jen said.

"That doesn't sound like our Aaron, Jen. Is Alice sure that she is thinking about the right Aaron?" I tried to defend. If I was honest with myself I have heard the same thing from other people about different omegas he is being mean and rude to. I haven't had the heart to confront him about it. Afraid of what the outcome would be.

Jen just shrugged her shoulders in reply, and the car fell silent the rest of the trip. I got to Jen's house and dropped her off, promising to pick her up later for the party. My parents still weren't home by the time I got home and so I tidied up the house some to help my mom out. After I was done I decided to lay down and take a nap knowing I would be up most of the night tonight. I lay in my bed with the thoughts of how great the summer was going to be. With those thoughts running through my mind I fell into a blissful sleep full of hopes and dreams of an amazing future.