

## Chapter Three: The Pull

Dominic's hand rested rmly on the small of Amber's back as he guided her through the dimly lit nightclub, ushering her toward the elevators in the casino with an easy condence. The heat of his touch seeped through the thin fabric of her dress, leaving a trail of warmth that sent her pulse racing. Amber's heart pounded, a melody of excitement and uncertainty. Behind them, her friends exchanged glances, but she barely noticed—she was too caught up in the electric pull between them, too caught up in him.

At the bar, Mark and Grant were already moving in, as if they could sense Dominic's plan before he even had to ask. With a quick mind link, Dominic issued the order: "Distract her friends. I need some time alone with her."

"Roger that, boss," Grant's voice echoed in his head, followed by a faint chuckle. "Wingman mode activated."

As Dominic led Amber toward the elevators, Grant and Mark swooped in, engaging her friends in animated conversation. He could see from the corner of his eye that they were doing their job well—Amber's friends seemed to be warming up to them quickly, laughing at whatever charm-lled lines the guys were throwing out.

"Are you sure my friends will be okay?" Amber asked, glancing back at her friends as they chatted with Grant and Mark looking like vultures ready to pounce on the two statuesque men.

Dominic cast a quick glance over his shoulder and smiled. "They'll be ne. Looks like they're in good hands."

"Good," she said, a teasing smile playing on her lips. "I wouldn't want my friends to think I've vanished with a stranger."

Dominic's grin widened. "I promise, I'm not just another guy at the casino. I'm Dominic by the way," he said, extending his hand as they stepped into the elevator.

"Amber," she replied, shaking his hand rmly, their eyes locking for a moment. The connection felt electric, sending a jolt of awareness between them.

The moment the doors closed behind them, the atmosphere shifted. The space between them felt charged, like the air before a storm. Dominic's pulse quickened as the elevator began its smooth ascent, the hum of the machinery the only sound between them. He was hyper-aware of her presence, the way her breath quickened in the conned space, how her eyes ickedered to his every so often, as if she was gauging his reaction, her interest igniting the tension in the air.

Amber leaned against the wall, her ngers brushing a strand of hair behind her ear as she glanced up at him. "So, do you live here or something?" she asked, her voice light but tinged with curiosity.

"Just staying for a few nights," he replied, his eyes tracking every subtle movement she made. "Business."

"Ah, the mysterious business trip," she teased, her smile widening. "And here I thought you were just another guy at the casino."

He chuckled, stepping closer, the distance between them shrinking with every second. "Just another guy, huh?"

Her eyes icked up to his, and for a heartbeat, the playful façade dropped, replaced by something deeper. The tension between them thickened, the pull undeniable now. "You're denitely not just another guy."

The words hung in the air between them as the elevator slowed, coming to a stop. When the doors slid open, Dominic didn't waste a second. His hand found hers, and he led her down the quiet hallway toward his suite. Every step was a test of his control, the primal part of him wanting to rush, to claim, but he forced himself to stay calm. For her.

When they reached his door, he slid the keycard into the lock, and with a soft click, the door opened. He stepped aside, letting her walk in rst, and then followed her into the dimly lit space.

The suite was spacious and modern, with sleek furniture and oor-to-ceiling windows that offered a stunning view of the city lights below. The twinkling lights seemed to mirror the racing thoughts in his mind as he took a moment to assess the situation. But Dominic barely glanced at any of it—his focus was entirely on Amber, on the way her gaze icked to the balcony.

"You weren't kidding about the view," she murmured, stepping toward the sliding glass doors that led out to the balcony.

Dominic followed her, sliding the door open and stepping out into the cool night air. The city sprawled out below them, glittering like a sea of stars. The balcony was large, with comfortable seating and a small table where two glasses and a bottle of bourbon waited—courtesy of his pack's preparations.

He poured them each a drink, the clink of ice in the glasses the only sound breaking the silence. When he handed her a glass, their ngers brushed, and a spark shot up his arm, the same one he'd felt all night.

"To... new beginnings?" she offered, raising her glass with a small, almost shy smile.

Dominic chuckled softly, tapping his glass against hers. "To new beginnings."

They both took a sip, the warmth of the bourbon sliding down, mixing with the heat already building between them. Amber stepped closer to the railing, her eyes scanning the cityscape, but Dominic couldn't tear his gaze away from her. The way the soft breeze tousled her hair, the way her lips curved around the rim of the glass—it was all driving him wild.

"You know," she said after a long pause, her voice soft, almost thoughtful, "there's something about tonight... something that feels different. I can't explain it."

Dominic's chest tightened at her words. He felt it too, a gravity pulling them together in a way that transcended mere attraction. Jealousy ared brie as he thought about the breakup she'd mentioned earlier, a shadow creeping into his mind, but he pushed it aside. Tonight was about them. About this moment.

"I know exactly what you mean," he said, turning slightly to face her fully. "Some things just... click."

Her gaze lingered on his for a moment longer before she looked back at the view. "Maybe you're right. It's just... it's been a while since I felt this way about someone."

Dominic's heart raced at her admission. The idea that she hadn't felt this way in a long time struck a chord deep within him. "I get that. It's been a while for me, too." He lied, truthfully no one had every made him feel this way. He had searched the neighboring pack for years and never found his mate. Who would have known she would turn out to be human. His voice dropping to a more intimate tone. "But there's something about you, Amber. Something that pulls me in."

She stepped closer, the warmth of her body igniting the air between them. "So what do we do now?"

Dominic's grip on his glass tightened as he stepped up beside her, his body mere inches from hers. The air crackled with tension, the city lights casting a soft glow over her skin. "We take it slow," he murmured. "But we also don't deny what's happening here."

Amber's eyes searched his, and he could see the conict playing across her features. "What if it doesn't work out?"

He shook his head, leaning closer, closing the distance between them. "What if it does?" The question lingered in the air, heavy with possibility. "We owe it to ourselves to nd out."

The weight of his words settled around them like a blanket, creating a moment that felt suspended in time. She didn't break their gaze, her breathing shallow as if she were testing the waters of a deep end she hadn't expected to nd. Dominic could sense her apprehension but also her desire—her instincts urging her to step forward, to embrace the unknown.

"Okay," she nally said, her voice steady. "Let's see where this goes."

The relief that washed over him was palpable. "You won't regret it," he promised, his heart racing as he leaned closer, his breath mingling with hers. The moment was electric, charged with potential and longing.

As if propelled by an unseen force, he lowered his lips to hers. The kiss wasn't gentle—there was nothing tender about it. It was rough, intense, a clash of lips and teeth as he poured everything into her. His hand sted in her hair, tugging her head back to deepen the kiss as she responded eagerly, her body pressing against his, craving more.

The kiss ignited something primal within him. He lost himself in the heat of the moment, the mate bond roaring to life. He could feel his wolf rising, demanding to claim her, to assert their connection in a way that transcended mere words. It was a erce rush of need, a deep-seated desire that took over every rational thought.

"Amber," he murmured against her lips, his voice husky and raw, as he pulled her even closer, their bodies tting together perfectly. The world around them faded, leaving only the two of them and the unyielding chemistry that crackled between them.

"Wow," she breathed when they nally pulled apart, her cheeks ushed and her eyes wide with surprise, lled with a mix of exhilaration and awe.

But Dominic wasn't done. The intensity of the mate bond surged through him, and he leaned in again, kissing her harder, more passionately this time. He felt an urgent need to stake his claim, to show her just how much he wanted her. He could barely think, his wolf howling with approval, pushing him to give in to the wild instincts that surged within him.

Amber responded instantly, her hands sliding up to his shoulders, ngers gripping him as if anchoring herself to reality amidst the whirlwind of emotions and desires. The kiss deepened, a primal dance of exploration as he lost himself in her taste, her warmth, the intoxicating mix of bourbon and something uniquely her.

Dominic pulled back slightly, his forehead resting against hers, both of them panting, the night air thick with unspoken promises. "I've never felt this way about anyone before," he confessed, his voice low and earnest.

"Me neither," Amber whispered, her breath mingling with his. "What does this mean?"

Dominic searched her eyes, feeling the weight of that question. "It means we take this one step at a time. But I won't hide what I feel. Not from you."

Her smile returned, bright and hopeful, and in that moment, she knew they were standing on the edge of something incredible—something that could change both their lives forever.