Chapter 7

Ali's POV

say no...

Alpha Ralph marches up the stairs with his suitcases and Ella and I exchange glances

before following silently behind him.

Instead of turning towards our narrow hallway, he takes a sharp right and Ella sighs as she reluctantly trudges after him.

No need for me to tag along.

Shutting and locking the door to my Luna suite, I rush over to the bed and get on my knees to grope around for my due bag.

Pulling it out by the handle, I dig out the little bottle with a sigh of relief.

Probably wouldn't be a bad idea to keep it on me at all times now, for safety reasons.

Since I am staying for ve days now.

Which by far has got to be my worse idea yet, but for some stupid reason, I just couldn't

I turn the small bottle around in my hand.

Just can't let Alpha Ralph's sister see this.

Kind of inconvenient for her to show up, even if I do like her. She seems nice.

Not a fan of all the questions though.

How much does she know about potions?

I guess as a healer she is bound to know a ton.

I close my hand tightly around the bottle.

Maybe...could she possibly help...?

Nah.

I don't want to involve Alpha Ralph's sister in to this mess that I have created.

It wouldn't be safe.

And she probably wouldn't be able to help anway.

No one can.

An hour later, my damp hair in a thick braid down my back, I sit cross-legged on my bed and glance for the hundredth time at the connecting door between Alpha Ralph's room and my own.

Weren't we going to have lunch?

Did his sister mating with his Beta make him change his mind?

Or did he just forget about me?

He was deantly distracted when I last saw him.

Scratching at an old stain on my black athletic shorts, I wish I had more clothing options.

Or at least better clothing options.

It wasn't like I could t a whole wardrobe inside my due bag, or that I carefully picked

them all out as I hastily threw them in.

My three tank tops, sweatshirt, ripped jeans, these stained athletic shorts, and black dress are all that I have.

And the only reason I have the dress was because it was what I was wearing when I

escaped...

nightclubs.

Not that it hasn't come in handy when I need to nd a little extra cash by crashing

Well, it didn't exactly work last time.

Or maybe it did.

I glance at the tall dresser against the wall where I hid the cash that Alpha Ralph already gave me and I tell myself, this is why I am staying.

I will have enough money to start over.

I can have a life.

I could actually survive this ordeal and have a future.

Far away from here.

From Alpha Ralph.

Who is so kind...strong...handsome...

And who really, really doesn't want his sister to be mated to Beta Chris.

Stiing my giggle with my hand, I can't hold it back when I think of Alpha Ralph's stunned look of disbelief outside of the training center.

Kind of comical.

If it weren't for him being so dead serious about it.

Ella wasn't kidding, he does seem over-protective regarding his big sister.

And what was it she meant by 'especially after what happened' when she said that she hoped that he had found his mate?

That sounds like a very interesting story.

Also, good to know that he doesn't have a mate.

I mean, I assumed, but still nice to have the verbal conrmation.

Ugh!

Where is he?

He totally forgot about me.

Unfolding my legs, I hop out of bed, throw one last glance at the door, and shrug as I make up my mind.

I'm hungry.

While I have food being given to me, for free, I am going to take advantage of it.

My hand is on my doorknob when I hear a door slam shut from Alpha Ralph's room.

He must just now be getting in.

Hesitating for a second, I gure, why not?

My stomach gives a little lurch of nerves and excitement as I make my way to the

adjoining door, raise my hand, briey close my eyes, then knock.

Alpha Ralph opens the door two seconds later.

His wavy brown hair is damp and falling over his forehead in a messy, yet tantalizingly sexy way.

His face is sweaty, and as my eyes move downward, I notice his bare chest is sweaty too, but sweaty doesn't really seem like the right word.

Glistening.

That's better.

Glistening seems a more appropriate word.

As he stands in front of me in just his athletic shorts and bare feet, he raises his hand and runs it through his hair to push it back, his bicep bulging as he does so, his pec muscle

tightening.

How am I ever going to leave this place when this man is here and looking like this?

No, not a man.

More like a god.

He looks like a freakin god.

"Tess."

And I realize I was just openly staring at his amazing, glistening body.

Gawking.

Drooling.

All of the above.

"Hey...I thought maybe...lunch? Did you want to do..."

My voice trails off.

He looks distracted, his eyebrows furrowed.

"I'm sorry. I forgot. Went for a run."

He gestures me in and goes over to the giant armchair and sinks into it, his long legs stretched out in front of him.

"No problem."

I follow him in and sit on the couch, pulling my feet under me as I lean against the back cushions to face him, trying to focus on keeping my eyes only on his face.

Which isn't too hard.

It's a nice face.

A really nice face.

"You okay?"

He glances at me, then sighs.

"Of all the guys out there...why did she have to mate with Chris?"

"Is he really that bad? I mean, he is your beta..."

"I didn't pick him."

He rubs his face and then lets his hands drop over the chair.

"Ah, sorry. I just worry about her. She had a rough time with a mate in the past. Chris isn't that bad, I guess. He just isn't what I want for her. I think she would do well with someone, well, less cranky and less slightly biased against werewolves."

"He is biased against werewolves and he is Beta to an Alpha of a werewolf pack?"

He waves his hand dismissively as if this is no big deal.

"He is getting better about it, sort of. But obviously, he would prefer to be back with his fellow Lycans."

Pulling a throw pillow against my chest, I think of something else that he said.

"Wait, what do you mean that she had a rough time with a mate in the past?"

"This is her second mate."

He catches my expression and shrugs.

"It's a thing apparently, rare, but it happens sometimes after being rejected or if your rst mate dies."

"Was she rejected?"

My voice is barely a whisper.

Ella is so pretty, obviously smart if she is a healer, and she seemed super nice, so why would her mate reject her?

Alpha Ralph stares at me for a moment, as if deciding whether or not to tell me, then nally speaks.

"Yes, her rst mate rejected her. It about killed her. She was devastated. That is when she

ran away. She lived with our aunt for a few months before going to the healing academy. It was hard to see her in so much pain."

He gets a faraway glazed look and I wonder if he is mind-linking or just remembering the past.

"That's...terrible."

"Yes." He straightens up in his chair. "It was."

"Did she ever get over it? She seems...okay?"

He nods.

"She was better. Is better. And just when she gets better and comes back home, she gets

mated to Chris."

His last few words are spoken through gritted teeth.

I am not quite sure how to respond to this, so I don't.

But then...there is an entire minute of silence, so I have to say something.

"I'm sorry."

He looks at me in surprise, and then his face seems to relax.

"No, I am. Weren't we supposed to have lunch?"

He glances at his watch.

"Nearly dinner time now."

He glances downward to take in my outt.

My old tank top and stained shorts.

"How about I take you into town for dinner? My treat."

Oh, why didn't I take the extra time to choose my outts more carefully?

Like a date?

"Like a date."

My heart starts to race in excitement.

A date with this beautiful man in front of me...

It's as if a window was slowly starting to open to reveal this beautiful light that I want to be in, to see, to bask in, just outside, then it slams shut as I remember...I can't leave here.

I'm on the run.

It's already a risk to stay inside of the pack territory.

The less amount of people who see me, the better.

"Or we could stay here."

He seems to read my hesitation, to understand what I am thinking.

He is pretty good at that.

"We could even stay right here."

Our eyes lock and there is no mistaking his meaning.

that I want more than to stay right here with Alpha Ralph.

All thought of food vanished the moment that I had laid eyes on him and there is nothing

Nodding, I keep eye contact with him as he slowly rises from the chair and moves onto the

couch.

us.

My heart feels like it is literally going to explode as he scoots closer...closer...

Just inches away, he grabs the throw pillow between us and tosses it onto the oor beside

There is nothing between us now.

Except clothes.

Mostly mine.

He places his right hand on my neck as he leans in, his other hand moving to my thigh.

Oh god.

This is unreal.

Unreal.

Who needs a mate bond when being with Alpha Ralph feels this good?

Gently placing my hand on his bare chest, I close my eyes and take a deep breath.

Oh, that's right.

I can't smell him.

I wish I could smell him.

Will I ever know his scent?

His breath is against my cheek, his lips almost to mine...

Last night unwillingly comes to mind and before I can stop myself...

"I thought you couldn't do this..."

Fuck.

Why did I say that?

Alpha Ralph pauses and I lean my head back to look at his face.

It's unreadable.

Is he mad?

Will he stop?

Why the hell did I bring that up?

I swear I should just never open my mouth!

If I just ruined the chance to be with him, when we were this close

Running my hand up and over his chest to wrap around his neck, I lean closer against him.

"Hopefully, this means that you changed your mind."

He runs his thumb over my lower lip.

"You aren't mated, are you?"

The question catches me off guard.

How can he even ask that?

Look where I am right now.

Look at what I am doing.

Would I be letting another man touch me if I had a mate?

I shake my head.

"Of course not. Are you?"

His lips curl upward.

"No."

What was all of that about?

But the question and any concerns evaporate the moment that Alpha Ralph presses his lips against mine.

His large hands pull me onto his lap, sliding underneath my tank, then it's on the oor in an instant, followed seconds later by my bra.

He pulls back so that he can see my exposed breasts.

Placing my hands on the couch behind him, I pull my shoulders back, making my breasts lift in invitation.

His crooked grin that he shoots me is so hot that it almost makes me moan, but the next moment when he bends his head to ick my n****e with his tongue, I do moan and then start twisting my ngers into his hair.

Straddling him between my knees, I press down against his lap, feeling his growing hardness rubbing between my legs.

This is totally happening.

Alpha Ralph wraps his arm around me and rolls us on to the couch so that he is on top of me, holding himself up so that his weight doesn't squish me.

Moving his hands down my sides, he hooks his nger around my waistband, and I lift my hips so that he can easily slide them down my thighs, his hand leaving a trail of goosebumps as it glides from my hip to my foot, then tosses my shorts over the back of the couch.

He places a soft kiss on my lips, my chin, my throat...then he slides further down...kissing my chest, my belly...

Oh god...

His lips softly graze against the top of my panties, his hands moving up my inner thighs

toward my center as I clutch at the back of the couch, my head thrown back, eager for him to touch me...

Alpha Ralph lets out a low growl and I jerk my head upward to look at him in an almost drunken confusion.

"f*****g worst timing."

He grunts and then I hear it, a soft knock on the bedroom door.

Noooo.

He rests his cheek on the inner thigh and closes his eyes briey.

Then he kisses my thigh and stands up with a look of regret.

"Stay just like that. I will be right back."

He goes to take a step, stops, runs his eyes slowly over my entire body, then gives me that sexy grin with a wink.

"Seriously, just like that."

And then he disappears behind the couch and I hear the bedroom door open and close.

Did that really just happen?

Setting up on my elbows, I look around me, at my clothes scattered on the oor.

Should I get up?

He said to stay, but it feels kind of awkward just lying here naked in his room all alone.

I mean, I could always just lie back down when he opens the door.

That way we can get right back into it.

Smiling, I roll onto my side and hide my face against the cushion.

I know it's wrong of me, so wrong, to stay here.

Even more wrong to develop feelings for someone, knowing that I cannot stay or be with

them.

But it feels so good to be with Alpha Ralph, so right.

I can't help it.

I like him.

Rolling back over, I start to sit up when I hear the door open again and look over the back of the couch to see Alpha Ralph come in and slowly close the door behind him.

My heart seems to drop to the oor.

He is no longer smiling.

Instead, he looks distracted.

And worried?

He glances at me and I move my arm to cover my chest as he makes his way over

"I am sorry to say that we have to press pause on the fun. Very sorry. It seems that we have some visitors with inconvenient timing."

Visitors?

Is it him?

Oh my god.

Hopping up from the couch, I quickly start gathering my clothes off the oor when he grabs my wrist and raises an eyebrow at me.

"It's just some old friends of mine."

Still feeling panicky, I look past him for my shorts behind the couch.

"Friends from my old pack..."

Clutching my clothes to my chest, I pause in relief and look down at him.

Obviously not him then.

Alpha Ralph runs his hands up my arm and sighs.

"Very inconvenient timing though."

He tugs my arm so that I tumble onto his lap with a squeal and then he pulls me in for another deep kiss, before pulling me back upright.

"Damn the timing."

I can't stop smiling back at him as he stands and turns to help me up before leaning over the couch and tossing me my shorts with an exaggerated sad sigh.

"We need to do this again, soon. Uninterrupted."

I nod.

His eyebrows pull together again as he rubs the back of his neck.

"Well, I should probably go downstairs."

"Give me a second to get this on."

I start to tug my bra out of the wad of clothes in my arms when I catch his expression.

"Or you just go on. I can catch up with you later."

There is another soft knock on the door.

"Give me a minute!"

Alpha Ralph throws me an apologetic look.

"My sister. Just got here and she is already a pain in my ass."

I try to return the smile, but something feels different. Feels off.

"Can I catch up with you later?"

"Sure."

He bends down and drops a kiss on my forehead before grabbing a shirt off his bed and

That was...abrupt.

leaving the room.

Disappointing.

Confusing.

Pulling my clothes back on, I start to go out the door, but decide to go through to my room, just in case.

Don't need anyone knowing that I was in the Alpha's room.

"Oh, sorry!"

Bertha is in my room with a handful of folded towels.

She smiles and sets them down on the bed.

"No worries. Just grabbed your used towels and brought you some fresh ones."

She turns to go and I voice my question before I can stop myself.

"Did you see that there were visitors who just arrived?"

Bertha turns to look at me as she reaches the door.

"Oh, yes. Alpha Ralph's good friend."

She pulls the door open.

"Alpha Caleb and Luna Lily."

Not sure why, but for some reason, my stomach gives a little lurch.

Who are these people? And why do I suddenly feel so uneasy ...?