

The Alpha's Guardian Chapter 1

Ali POV

A small breeze tickles through the trees leaving in its wake a chill and the scent of blood. Squatting down, I survey the leaf-littered ground searching for any sign of disturbance. Nothing looks out of place, no leaves turned over or dirt that looks freshly dug. I pop back up and walk deeper into the woods.

Using my enhanced hearing to listen for sounds that are out of place. Branches creak in the wind, the scratching of small paws skittering up the trees as squirrels go about their normal play. I close my eyes, focusing with more effort on my sense of smell. I can feel the breeze picking up as the air swirls around, tossing dead leaves through the forest with gusto.

There it is again, the scent of blood. My eyes pop open as I follow the smell cautiously. after a short period of time I find myself along a small embankment of rocks and a quaint babbling stream. Upon coming closer, I see dried drops of blood on the rock bed. This explains why the scent was so faint.

Someone had a meal here, probably of squirrel or mouse variety. I slowly spin, taking in the surrounding area. The little opening is lit by the midday sun, affording it a little more heat than the rest of the woods. It's peaceful, a small solitude from the dreariness of the dark, damp woods I will enter back into soon enough. But for now, I can afford a slight break to enjoy these fleeting moments of silence and peace.

I lower my hood and remove my blade from my back, placing it down next to a rock. I take out my canteen and slowly fill it up in the clear, cool stream. The water flows effortlessly over the rocks, casting small shadows from the sun's heavy gaze. I close my eyes, memorizing the sound, storing it away for a day when I need to center myself and escape the reality that is my life.

I carry the weight of life and death on my shoulders and often the weight feels as though it is too much to bear. For six years, I have worked my way to the top of the field I was destined for. Six years of death and security for the werewolf community that once spurned and hated me. Life has a funny way of changing people.

The sound of crashing brambles sets me on high alert as low growls echo through the woods no more than 25 feet from where I stand. A large Wolf of gray and black flies past me, leaving in its wake the smell of its fresh blood. Yipping, snarling sounds sound from behind this wolf as I run up the rocks propelling myself into the trees. I run along the branches, leaping and bounding from tree to tree, keeping speed with the wolves on the chase. The dull shine of their coats informs me they are rogues. Only those in a pack have the sheen of a shiny wolf's coat, a sort of luster that shows their wolf is at full strength and protected by a pack.

The chase stops abruptly when the gray wolf comes to a halt, spinning around to face his aggressors, shifting into his human form so he can communicate. He stands tall and strong, not an ounce of fear radiating from him as he speaks with his booming voice.

“I am Alpha Wade, of the Moon Shadow Pack. Your fight is with me and not my pack. What is it you want” His voice resonates through the whole of the forest with such authority even the trees get chills.

One by one, the lanky wolves shift into men and women standing and stepping forward. I hadn't noticed how many more had come until they stepped forward, their naked bodies looking creamy and pale against the shadows of the woods. One with a menacing scar across his chest and blood coming from his head steps closer to the alpha.

“We know who you are.” He smiles wickedly as he asks, looking the alpha up and down. “You wouldn't want to go down easily, would you?” The alpha steps forward.

His chest glistening with a mixture of sweat and blood that only serves to highlight his impeccable muscular stature that has even me raising a brow as I look him over. He is easily the fittest wolf

I've had to guard in the past few years. it's admittedly a refreshing change of pace.

He chuckles a low gravelly sound. “Not a chance in hell,” and with this, he shifts into his massive wolf lunging for the leader.

He is fast enough to sink his teeth into the rogue's front leg mid-shift and toss him against the tree I am in as if the rogue were a small toy. Within a moment, the sounds of howls erupt into the midday air and 8 wolves descend on the alpha at once. He jumps and dodges, nipping here and biting there.

I watch in awe, impressed with his agility and strength, though he appears to be slower and weaker on his left one side. Out of nowhere, a smaller brown wolf lunges from the shadows, clawing at his chest as he goes up on his hind legs to avoid her full force. His left leg seems to fold out from under him as he yelps and falls to the ground, the small wolf pulverizing his chest with bite after bite.

The rules state I am not to fight unless it is for the Alpha I am guarding, and I am not sworn in as the new Alpha's guardian until the ceremony of acceptance. But I can't really get 'accepted' if I let my new subject die while I watch. Standing, I take only a second to breathe deep and step off the branch, landing with a light thud on the ground.

Rising, I pull my hood over my head and raise my mask to cover my face to protect my identity from the rogues. I reach back for my blade and shock floods through me when I don't find it. The wolves stop and turn to face me. Their hunger and desire to kill is their defining personality trait as they leave the limp and barely conscious wolf and stalk me.

Sighing heavily at my rookie mistake of taking off my main weapon, I reach down to either side of my thighs and grab hold of my wide-bladed daggers. These will have to do until I can retrieve my blade. Alpha Wade shifts to his human shape, crawling to a tree stump to right himself. I will grant to him he is brave and doesn't give up, but this man is one with a death wish.

"Leave her!" He shouts to the wolves, who know he will no longer be fun to fight. They can't fight the pull of excitement of whole new prey. I laugh at the Alphas' cute attempt to protect me. He has no idea how unnecessary it is.

"Well, are we going to dance all day, or are you filthy dogs going to actually try to take down the tiny weak woman?" I taunt, the two wolves at the front growl angrily and lunge for me. I smile excitedly.

I swiftly spin to the right, easily missing the first wolf's lunge as I bury my blade into its spine and drag it down the length of its back. Without so much as a yelp, it falls to the dirt with a we*t thud. The other wolf soars over me as I reach up grabbing its hind leg with the dagger as I plant it deep into its leg. Grunting with the effort I whip it around to change its current course to that of a collision course with two wolves who watch in horror. There's a growl from behind my right side as an angry wolf leaps for me. I extend my leg, landing a powerful kick on the wolf's chest cavity with such force the cracks resound through the trees. Three wolves stalk me and I can't help but smile. Rogues seem to never learn.

"Oh, come on then. I have places I need to be boys"

A massive howl sounds out through the woods, followed by many more. The rogue's ears perk up spinning to gauge how far away the pack warriors are from us, no doubt frantically trying to get to and save their beloved Alpha.

"Sorry boys," I smirk at them. "Looks like we will have to have a rematch another time."

The rogues turn running off into the woods with no proper direction in mind. I can hear the steady sound of Alpha wades men closing in. Smiling and offering a wave to the Alpha, I break into a dead sprint, heading back towards the stream bank to grab my sword. I have only a certain amount of time to get cleaned up and prepared. After all, I have a meeting with The Alpha.

The Alpha's Guardian Chapter 2

The stout older woman looks me up and down in shock. I can feel the dried blood splattered across the only exposed part of my face and I am sure I have leaves sticking out of my hair. My denim jacket has strains of green from prancing from tree to tree chasing the rogues. Not a typical arrival of someone in such a highly regarded role. But then again, I've always been a rebel.

“Look, I am aware I’m a mess. I need to be taken to my quarters so I can clean up before speaking with the alpha.” I instruct her, pushing my way through the front door.

“The alpha is on the way to the healers currently.” She says as she steps back, “The rogues arrived and he single-handedly led them away, sacrificing himself. I am shocked he survived”

Tears brim her eyes, I can see her respect for her alpha, her genuine distress at the thought of him sacrificing himself. I find her loyalty odd. Omegas are mistreated and develop a sour nature towards their supposed wonderful leader. But this omega seems to genuinely care. Interesting.

“I’m aware of his condition. I need the room next to his so I can be close to his side if needed for any reason.” Turning, I sniff the packhouse and pick up the scent of the Alpha.

I follow it up the stairs, leaving behind the stunned woman. When I find his door I breathe deeply to make sure it’s the same scent as the man in the woods. When I’m sure it is his room, I open the door and enter, looking around to get a better idea of who he is. In my experience, a man’s room is like a looking glass into his true self.

A coffee cup on his desk sporting ‘#1 Alpha’ elicits a chuckle. Clearly, he has friends who are funny, or he has some young pups who look up to him. That’s a good sign, he is appreciated. His desk is a mess and his chair is knocked over. The top of his green comforter is wrinkled, indicating he slept on top of the bed and not in it.

He must be struggling to sleep or there isn’t enough time in the day for him to get everything done. Not super uncommon amongst Alphas. I saunter over to his desk, I can only assume he was sitting here and working when he got the mind link about the rogues and, in a rush, he didn’t take the time to pick up his chair.

“What are you doing in here?” a hiss comes from behind me and I leisurely look over my shoulder to find a beautiful blonde staring at me.

I smile at her, turning back and finishing my survey of the room. A single small potted plant sits on his window sill looking watered and healthy. He pays attention to details, good. Perhaps this assignment won’t be so bad after all. After a moment, I spin around to exit the room, not even bothering to spare the blonde a second glance as I walk right past her.

“Excuse me!” she scoffs, following me down to the left.

I open another door and find that this room is a mess, clothing is everywhere and plates from a few days past are stacked up on this man’s desk. This must be the Beta’s room. I close the door, striding past the blonde again and going to the very end of the hall. She clatters behind me in her pink heels. Opening the door, I find an empty room with 3 large

hot pink suitcases resting on the bed. Raising an eyebrow and turn to face the tail I know I have.

“You need to move your things,” I inform her with no emotion.

I enter the room, walking through to make sure it will do. It’s more lavish than I’m used to, but I think I can get used to extra luxuries. The room is a corner unit with one massive bay window facing the woods. A small desk sits before it with basic silver furnishings, paperweights, a lamp, and a stapler. To the right sets the bed with a grey comforter and way too many plush pillows. I look to my left and see an archway and walking through I see the walk-in closet with a makeup station and mirror and a door that leads into the bathroom.

“I will do no such thing!” She protests. “Who the hell do you think you are?”

“Who I am is of no consequence to you.” I am bored with her attitude already.

The moment I saw the suitcases, I knew who she was as a person and to the alpha. Unfortunately for the Alpha, I despise Alphas who refuse their natural mate bonds. If that’s the case, he is going to be in for a very rough time with me here.

“I am the future luna of this pack!” she demands. I roll my eyes and cross over to her, finally giving her the attention she has been desperately seeking.

“If you were his true mate, and the real luna, I would have smelled you on him and in his room.” I take a menacing step closer to her. “Which means that the only plausible reason for you being here is that you are attractive and mateless and he is growing desperate, so he intends to create a mate bond by breaking the one that was divinely given to him. Detestable.” the words come out as poison as I spit them at her with vigor.

Quickly, I turn from her and walk to the window opening it. I cross back over to the bed reaching for her suitcases. I easily toss them out one by one while she watches in horror. I get a sick satisfaction with the sound of every thud.

“Now. Please leave my room so I can clean up and meet The Alpha.” I smirk at her.

“Trudy!!!” the older woman from downstairs yells as she runs into the room. “What on earth is going on with your luggage?”

“Trudy was not informed of my arrival, and once finding out who I am, she has agreed to let me have this room for the duration of my stay,” I say.

“Oh. Well that’s out of character for you but very kind.” the older woman says looking at the woman named Trudy.

“Oh, shut up Ethel,” Trudy says stomping out of the room muttering under her breath.

“Ethel,” I say, heading for the bathroom and turning on the hot water. “Would you mind having someone bring up my bags from my bike? I believe it was dropped off two days ago with my things?”

“That’s y-y-our bike?” I can hear the surprise in her voice.

It has been the same reaction I have had for the last 2 committee members they tasked me with protecting. I remove my jacket and hood, place them to the side, and peak out around the door frame.

“Ethel, I hardly think a big burly guardian type would drive a black motorcycle with purple wings on it.”

“Well, that’s probably true, but they are just dangerous contraptions for a girl.” I frown at her. I hate that this is the common reaction to me having a motorcycle.

“Ethel, I protect the strongest alphas and committee members. Did you expect me to show up in a pink Volkswagen beetle?”

“Oh, I suppose not.” She stands there thinking for a moment and I’m losing my patience.

“Ethel. My bags, please. When I am done, I will need to know where the healers are so I can meet the alpha.”

I turn back into the bathroom, closing the door and peeling off my camo boots followed by my skin-tight skinny jeans and my tank top. I look around the bathroom, pleased with its design. Its stunning pale blue walls instantly washed me with a calming feeling as I stepped through the glass door and under the boiling hot waterfall shower. I tilted my head back, letting the water run down my face and shoulders, relieving the tensions from my mildly eventful day.

After I exit the shower, I’m relieved to find my bags are in my room. I lock the door and open my suitcase, pulling on fresh undergarments. Hesitating for a moment, I try to decide what to wear. I don’t want to appear lazy and uncaring, which seems to be my preferred taste. Sighing heavily, I grab an emerald green flowy blouse and my black leather pants and pull them on. The best of both worlds, blousy badass. I swipe on my eyeliner and mascara and quickly shove my feet into my shoes and walk out the door, tossing my wet jet black hair up in a messy bun.

Ethel meets me at the front door and hands me a piece of paper with directions.

“I’ve mind linked the Alpha. He will wait for you on the porch of the healer’s house.” I smirk at her. As I grab the piece of paper, I look over it, memorizing the contents and handing it back. I walk over to my baby and inspect her to make sure she is still in tip-top condition. Her smooth black paint is still in perfect condition, as are my purple details. Feeling pleased, I toss my leg over and bring her to life.

The vast expanse of the woods absorbs the sound of my bike as I drive down the long, winding road. I pull up to the house, put down my kickstand, and cut the engine. The sounds of life flood back into the void to replace the sounds of my engine. I can see a figure sitting on the porch with someone closely nuzzling them. Rising off the bike, I step onto the stone-covered ground and crunch my way to the steps. I take a deep breath, knowing this is going to be a rough start. I already hate that he doesn't value the mate bond. Taking a deep breath, I climb the stairs, turning and looking to my right.

A very handsome man sits with his chest bandaged with white gauze and a little blood. Werewolves heal fast, but he had taken a lot of bites to the same spot. His green eyes assess me, drinking me in as he tries to comprehend who is in front of him. Next to him, Trudy clings to his arm and a low growl emerges, showing my disapproval. He raises a brow, amused by my reaction. Clearly thinking it is one of jealousy.

"Alpha Wade," I say, nodding to him. He nods back in acknowledgment. "My name is Ali, as in the famous fighter. I am your appointed Guardian until my mission is complete."

"I'm sorry." He says, his tone is condescending. I sigh heavily, leaning back on the railing. I knew this was going to happen, it seems to be a trend lately. "But you're a girl."

"Alpha Wade. Let me start by saying, I have heard every sexist remark possible and none of them have been as frustrating as when I am told I am a girl. I am a fully developed woman." I look down to my spectacular breasts that are highlighted in my blouse and look back up "who saved your a*s tonight in the woods with only my blade and my body. Not only that, but I am your senior in age. So, calling me a girl insinuates you are a petulant little boy who is incapable of protecting himself and his pack. Is this what you are trying to insinuate?" my eyes glitter with mirth. As much as I hate these types of exchanges, I also find them oddly satisfying.

"How dare you speak to him like that?" Trudy says, jumping up from her seat. I toss her a dirty look and she squeaks as she sits right back down.

"I do not speak to heathen women who aim to marry into a role they are not worthy of."

"I am the future Luna of this pack!" She demands, sounding whiny, hiding behind her alphas bulging biceps.

"Enough! Trudy. Leave." Wade says, standing and walking over to me. He towers over me at a massive 6'3 to my 5'6. He looks down, trying to intimidate me, but that's not an easy feat to do so I sweetly smirk at his efforts.

"I do not need a guardian. I deny your protection." He says, locking eyes with mine, a challenge lingering in his gaze. Oh, I do I love a challenge.

“We will see, Wade.” Going up on my toes, I bring my face a measly inch from his. I intentionally leave out his title, Alphas hate that and I can see the rage at the insult. I smile brightly at him. I’m already winning.

The Alpha’s Guardian Chapter 3

Ching Ching Ching

“Ali. Could you please stop that?” Samuel says with a sigh.

“I am listening,” I mumble, annoyed, setting my whetstone and daggers down. Samuel, of course, heard about Alpha Wade’s rejection last night and called first thing this morning to remind me I can’t kill the alpha. It’s not that I was actually going to. Obviously, I would fail my mission if I did this, though a swift punch to the face in the past has proven worthwhile, though Samuel doesn’t like that route.

“He is important and must be protected.” he reminds me

“I know Samuel. I will get him to consent eventually, they always do.”

“Please, no force this time.”

“What!” I say, offended. “When have I ever injured who I am protecting?”

There’s silence on the other end of the line. We both know the last mission had been a committee member, and we were not the greatest of friends.

“OK, fine! I’ll try the gentle approach,” I say.

“Hah! I’m surprised you understand what the word means.” Samuel laughs through the phone.

“Ha! Ha! Samuel. So funny.”

“Aliauna. Truly, he is the most important mission of the century. You must be sure he accepts the Guardianship. If he doesn’t...”

“I know, I know. We won’t be in tune and it will make my job harder and more dangerous. I promise to make him see the light.”

“Very well, Be safe.”

“Always am”

I turn my phone off, tossing it down to my bed, annoyed. The little shit called my superiors. I'm even more annoyed with Alpha Wade now. If he thinks he can get rid of me that easily, he is sorely mistaken. I have half a mind to give him a piece of my mind, but since he is still in recovery and working from the healers, I should just let him be. Instead, I am making it my mission to learn the lay of the land. First up is a walk around the border, then a visit through the town and a meeting with his Beta. Though I am doubtful, his beta will be of any use to me, it's worth a shot.

It's a decent size pack surrounded mostly by wooded areas or farmland. The areas with farmland seem to be the most secure, it's easier to see, hear and scent a rogue from across the field. The wind carries better than the woods and the openness affords them no hiding places from our adept eyes. It's beautiful here, easily one of the prettier packs I have been to. I've only seen two patrol groups, which is a worrisome sign. Both patrol groups steer clear of me.

I'm certain they have been instructed to avoid me at all costs, it's understandable. Their alpha hates me and they all seem strangely in love with him. It's almost annoying how loyal they are. The pack is far too large for every wolf here to actually know him personally and, in my experience, everyone has at least 1 person who secretly hates them. Maybe Alpha Wade bakes cookies and passes them out, it's the only thing in my mind worth being loyal over.

My stomach growls at the thought of cookies, and I rub my tummy, looking around for the opening. Nothing but trees out here. A small breeze carries with it the smell of coffee and bacon. Opting to follow my nose, I walk through the woods until I come upon a tiny shack on the border. I have never been a shy person, so walking up I reach out and knock. The lopsided door creaks open as a preteen girl sticks her head out from within. Her eyes widen in shock as she slams it shut, yelling to someone to go out the back.

At a leisurely speed, I walk around the back door, listening to the clattering inside and the hiss of the fire being put out. The back door splinters open as two lanky teenagers fall at my feet holding bread and a small paper plate stacked with bacon. I raise a brow at them as they look up at me with worried smiles.

"What might you two be running from?" I crouch down and grab a piece of bacon off the top, taking a bite.

"We... are sorry. We know we aren't supposed to be here. Please don't tell anyone you saw us here." the young boy says, his voice cracking.

"Well, stand up," I say, reaching down and helping the girl off of the boy she had used as a landing pad. The boy stands up and they look at each other, worried. They bear a very striking resemblance to the other, both with large doe eyes that are a pretty, light brown. High cheekbones and little button noses. These kids are going to be beautiful in their own right when they grow into their lanky arms and legs.

“Twins I assume?” I am trying to make conversation.

“Yes.” the boy says, puffing his chest up. “I am Mason and this is my baby sister Robin”

“I’m only 8 seconds younger,” Robin mutters, hugging the loaf of bread closer to her.

“And I assume you guys aren’t allowed out here because of the rogue attacks?”

Both of them nod, looking down at their feet, and I watch them. They look shifty, but they also seem sincere.

“Fine. Give me another piece of bacon and you guys can go.” I sigh. Mason hurriedly shoves a piece of bacon in my hands. A large growling sound comes from behind us and I freeze. A thrill shutters through me as I get excited about the possibility of fighting someone after my rough day yesterday.

Mason and Robin grow pale, inching b

ack towards the door they just broke down. I spin to see an enormous wolf looking me over. There is no luster in his stark black fur but there is a sort of regalness about his movements as he stalks me, trying to circle me. He couldn’t possibly be the Rogue king. That would make my mission way too easy. I smirk at him, excited to play.

“Well, you coming for me, big boy, or what?” I bend my knees in an attack position, one hand on my thigh where my dagger lies.

“Shift! You can’t beat him in human form!” Robin squeals behind me.

“Want to bet on that?” I say, smirking as I make the first move. I lunge to his right and, using the momentum of his massive head, I jump high and onto his back. Immediately he is up on his hindquarters, throwing his back into a tree, pinning me hard between his spine and the rough bark of the pine tree. I bury my dagger in his side as he whimpers and moves back. He lunges for me, teeth bared. I underestimate his speed as he barely misses my arm and grabs hold of my blade, knocking me to the ground. Shit. I just sharpened this set.

I sigh as I stand up, readying myself again for another attack when an earth-shattering howl sounds from behind us. Shit. Looks like Alpha Wade is here. The black wolf growls, frustrated, and slowly backs away into the woods, little droplets of blood where he stood as he crosses the borderline watching and waiting for us to come to his territory.

Alpha wade shifts back to his human form as his Gamma hands him a pair of shorts. I turn to face him, looking him right in the eyes. His chest still has gaping wounds, though they look better than they had yesterday. He approaches me with force, walking straight into my body, I hold my ground instead of falling back like he had expected and we stand chest to chest. Mine rising and falling in sync with his anger.

“Why are you still here?” He booms.

“I am your Guardian,” I say simply. He laughs

“I do not need protection from a woman!” He booms. I roll my eyes. I really am getting sick of egotistical alphas belittling me because I have boobs.

“Good! I’m not a woman. I am a guardian and the sooner you see me as such, the sooner I can leave. And trust me, I want nothing more than to be out of your presence for good Alpha.”

“Leave!” he bellows, using his alpha voice in such a manner that every person surrounding us leaves.

“You have a lot to learn about the Guardian bond. I have no Alpha ties except to that of the elder committee. I will not do as you say, not until you accept my bond officially.” he breathes heavily annoyed as he puts some space before us.

“Can I send you away with my alpha voice if I accept you?” he asks, with a mild hint of humor in his eyes.

“Nope. there is literally no way to get rid of me unless I die or decide to leave on my own accord.”

“This is ridiculous!” He says, throwing his hands up, wincing slightly at the movement. “Why me? I’m not an important alpha, I have a mediocre size pack and average warriors.”

I shrug. “I’m only told where to go and what to do, not why I do it.”

“And you’re okay with that?”

“I know nothing else.”

“And what of your mate? How does he feel about all of this?” I stiffen at his question. The one thing I would trade this all in for is my mate. To finally be loved unconditionally, no matter my faults, my weaknesses. But they deny even that to me until after this assignment. At age 23, I will be lucky if my mate did not force a mate bond with someone else instead of waiting for me.

“I am not granted a mate until I fulfill my duties as a guardian,” I say, trying to hide my heartache over the topic. His eyes flash with pity and I grow annoyed. “And here you are, younger than I am and trying to force a mate bond with someone who is not even yours to claim!” It sounds jealous even to my own ears.

“Are you jealous, Guardian?” He asks, smiling, and I decide I like him much better when he is angry. When he smiles, my stomach does weird things and I like stability, familiarity. This feeling is far from either of those things.

“Of your ability to find a mate? Yes, Alpha. I am.”

“Do you want to be my mate?” his eyes darken a shade as he takes a step closer to me. I can see it now. His wolf is trying to find someone, anyone, to be his mate. It’s a pull much stronger for Alphas, the need to be with their mate weakens them, their resolve crumbles without a Luna and eventually, they go mad. I can see it clearly now, his wolf fighting for control and his struggle to stay true to what he wants. I tilt my head, getting lost in his eyes, watching his struggle, sympathizing with it.

“No,” I finally answer, whispering “No, alpha. I value the mate bond above all else. I find no temptation in you. Only pity.” His eyes snap out of their daze and he shakes his head. I’m not sure what to expect from him. I know the easiest way to snap an alpha back is through anger, and they hate pity more than they hate when their title is left out. He looks up at me, his green eyes meeting my hazel.

“Thank you.” So he knows I was actually helping him after all. At least he’s not dumb.

The Alpha’s Guardian Chapter 4

Alpha Wade POV

“Francis, I need you,” I call through the mind link. Standing, I limp over to my bed and lean down to pick up a shirt. My chest is looking much better today, though there is still a sizable divot in my left pectoral. The wound itself is scabbed over and I’ve been cleared to move about as normal. I pull my olive green v-neck over my head and down around my waist just as Francis walks through the door.

“What’s up?” he asks, closing the door behind him.

“I want to know more about my supposed Guardian.” I don’t mince words. He gapes at me.

“How am I supposed to do that? Records are locked down, asking questions to the wrong person can get you kicked out of your pack no matter what your rank is.” he stumbles over his words in fear. I understand his worries, but there is something about her I just can’t put my finger on and I have to know what it is.

“I don’t know Francis. Search her things?” I offer a shrug before crossing back over to my desk.

“Right. Well, I get you don’t really care or follow the gossip surrounding the guardians, but I do. This girl is legit Wade. I mean serious shit. She is who they use to protect committee members.”

“She is not a girl.” I smirk at him, recalling the mistake I made the day she arrived.

“You’re right. She is a damn beast, she is freaking big leagues.”

“Then why is she here? Admit it makes no sense that she is here protecting me. I’m a small pawn in the game. I’m strong, yes, and stubborn, but our pack is average at best. It feels like this is a big set up and I want to know what it’s really about before I do this stupid ceremony letting her into my head.”

“Maybe you will get more information if you just ask her,” he offers. I roll my eyes at him, annoyed. Francis is an excellent Beta. He works tirelessly and has always been insanely loyal. But he sure likes to whine when he doesn’t want to do something, even if he fully intends to do it.

“Francis, I am taking her for an official tour around the pack grounds in a couple of minutes. That would be the best time to snoop around her things.”

“Seriously, maybe she is more open than she looks?” he offers in a last-ditch effort to get out of what I’m asking him to do. I laugh at him. There is nothing about her that screams, asks me important questions and I will answer them. She is the ‘ask and you will receive a stoic silence until you figure it out for yourself’ type. And I don’t have time to waste, so I might as well try to figure it out.

“Just do it.” I say, grabbing my watch and placing it on my wrist. Ethel mind links me.

Trudy is on her way up to your room Alpha

Shit. I don’t have time for this right now. I made Trudy a promise and I have never in my life gone back on a promise until Ali showed up. An alpha needs a Luna. Luna’s keep our wolves sane. They deal with our animalistic side and keep us satiated. I have gone 3 years without one and in the past 2 weeks, my wolf has emerged without consent, taking control while common sense gets forced to the back. Each day is a race against time to find my true mate so I can be complete and lead my people. And if that doesn’t happen soon I will take Trudy as my mate as she is the only wolf in the area who does not have a mate at 21 as well.

It’s not the same for female wolves. They can live a life without their true mate, though they won’t ever feel whole. Male wolves eventually take over and they get in trouble acting fools and eventually getting ostracized out of a pack. It’s what makes Rogues that much more dangerous. Their human side is slowly whittling away, giving in to the wolf’s need for survival instinct as it wreaks havoc on the villages surrounding it, looking for its

mate. It's more aptly described as a love lust than blood lust, though they often leave a river of blood behind them when they search.

The door is whipped open and Trudy flounces in her short leather skirt and barely-there crop top has my wolf trying to jump out as I fight for control. She knows how to toy with my wolf's desires, and I have a feeling she enjoys the power she wields when she shows up randomly to force my wolf into overdrive. I close my eyes and breathe deeply, trying to calm the beast. I inhale a very faint scent. Lavender and honey with a hint of lemon and my wolf no longer have a desire for the woman before me. I breathe frantically again, no longer finding the smell as my wolf claws at my mind begging for control with promises of finding the owner of the smell and making the wolf his.

"Trudy. What do you need?" I bite out, my back to her. I can hear her saunter over to me, her high heels thudding against the carpet.

"I thought you said we would have our own ceremony this week." His voice is whiny and sounds like nails on a chalkboard. A life with her sounds more and more painful by the moment.

"Things changed," I say, turning to her.

I walk around her, giving myself a wide enough berth that she can't reach out to touch me. I grab my boots and slip them on quickly, bending down to tie them and then reaching into my closet, I grab my black leather jacket and shrug into it. Finally, facing her as she pouts and tries to walk towards me, I walk backward towards the door.

"Look, I'm sorry Trudy, but I have Alpha business to attend to. We can chat about this later in the office with Francis." I need to make sure I'm not alone with her, ever.

I turn quickly, pulling the door open and running into Ali, who is about to knock on my door. I quickly try to adjust, but land on my bum leg and begin to fall. She is quick as she spins to move out of the way, and I'm not sure if she could see the pain in my eyes or the odd angle at which my leg twisted, but instead of releasing me, she has me flush against the wall.

Her hand is splayed across my chest as she looks at me in such a way that I feel naked before her. Instead of stepping back, she steps closer to me, her nose mere centimeters from my own as my heart beats wildly due to her closeness. She spins, looking behind her at a shocked Trudy. And when she turns back again, her eyes are filled with disgust. I have never felt more ashamed in my life.

"Get your wolf in check, Alpha. My job is to protect you. I can't do that if you're busy screwing the only available flouncy around." Her words are full of poison. I place my hands on either side of her arms and remove her from in front of me.

“My wolf is in check, Guardian.” I take a quick glance down at my leg. It hurts more than usual today.

Healing has always been something werewolves thrive at. We heal quickly and we almost never have terrible scars, unless you are unlucky like me. The night I turned 16, I shifted. 2 years earlier than most and I was so happy I couldn’t help but take off running and embrace the feeling of euphoria it brought me. I felt invincible and strong. Until I came across a ground of grown rogues. They were merciless, tearing at me from every side as I tried to fight. I was the Alpha’s son, the strongest of wolves, or I would have been if I had been old enough to actually shift. After they brought me to the brink of death, they carried me to the abandoned well on the property line and threw me in.

I waited to heal, but it was slow and painful. After a long time, my pack found me bloody and still injured. I should have healed by the time they found me. I should have been able to crawl out of the well on my own, but I had only gotten worse. It wasn’t until I forced myself to stand that I noticed the little wilted blue flowers thrown down with me. Wolfsbane. They had tossed it in after me and they had even crushed it into my gaping wound in my thigh. It never healed right after that.

She follows my line of sight and looks at my denim-clad leg. Its full disfiguration is hidden but the outline of its lumpy state and is noticeable to anyone who looks closely. Her eyes fill with curiosity as she tilts her head and looks at me strangely. Her eyes meet mine and my breath hitches as her beautiful eyes swirl shades of green, morphing into a pale purple. I don’t even notice that the pain is gone until she closes her eyes too long to be a blink but not long enough to be anything else and she steps back.

“I’m ready for the tour when you are alpha.” She says, sounding robotic as she turns and walks away with a slight limp.

“Is she making fun of you?” Trudy whispers, her voice full of fury. Anger, rage, and humiliation roll through me. She was making fun of me and my injury. I pride myself on thinking before speaking and trying my best to always be kind and understanding, but I can not contain my rage as I stalk forward with murder on my mind.

The Alpha’s Guardian Chapter 5

I thunder down the stairs with such force that anyone in passing presses themselves against the wall to stay out of my way. No way would I let this woman get away with treating me like some weak piece of crap. I sniff the air, trying to catch her scent and grow more furious that I can’t sniff her out. I let out an angry growl as I enter the kitchen. My eyes land on her as she looks up at me, confused, her teeth sinking into an apple.

Within a second, I am looming over her, staring into her eyes that hold no amusement or fear, just confusion. Of course she tries to look innocent in the matter. She has just

offended an alpha whether or not I'm her alpha; it is a grave misstep to make fun of an alpha.

"Alpha?" she says, sounding strong and unphased by my presence. I hate her cool demeanor.

"Do you find it funny?" I seethe.

"Excuse me?"

"Do you find it funny?" I yell, my voice echoing through every corner of the house.

"Find what funny?" She says, irritated.

"How you are here to protect me? The weak Alpha incapable of protecting himself? Injured and weak. Is that what you think?" I can feel my wolf foaming at the mouth, trying to get out, begging to be released, and her eyes snap to mine. She can see it as well, but she holds no fear from me and it makes my anger grow. She must truly find me so weak that she doesn't find me to be a threat.

"Alpha Wade." she begins. I step closer, our bodies connecting as my chest heaves up and down violently. She refuses to back down as I press myself against her, trying to intimidate her. I have her cornered between the counter and me, yet she shows no fear.

"You do not get to laugh at me. Not over something you don't understand." I say through my clenched teeth. She raises her hand in a surrendering manner.

"Understood, Alpha" Her face contorts in anger as she places her warm palm on my chest again. Within seconds, the pain in my legs comes flying back in a fury so strong it swept away my breath and I stumble backward. She follows my movements and leans in close to my face so I can see the raw fury in her.

"I do not laugh at the injured, Alpha Wade. I gave you a sample of what a Guardian can do for their Alpha. We can share our Alpha's pain. Take it from them for a while. Did you not notice how you could so easily come down those stairs? Ungrateful fool." She mutters as she stands to her full height. I stand and straighten myself, wincing as I take a step forward. I hadn't noticed the pain was gone, and now I'm highly aware of its return.

"Can you heal me if I accept you?" I ask, thinking out loud.

"It varies." She shrugs, walking towards the front door picking up her apple on the way out.

"On what?" I ask, following her. If she can heal me, I mean truly completely heal my leg I would gladly accept her now.

“For starters, if I want to. And I really dislike you, Alpha Wade.” she plods down the front steps and turns to look at me. “Well, are we going or what?”

Ali insisted on walking around the pack grounds, which normally would be ok but my leg is more painful than usual today. I’m not sure if it is because I experienced what it was like to be in no pain for a short period or just one of those days where it acts up. Ali walks silently alongside me, looking over the buildings and watching everyone play.

A ball comes flying out of nowhere towards her face as she looks in another direction. Before I can call out to warn her, she turns her head slightly down and heads the ball directly up into the air. She then bounces it for a moment, back and forth between her knees. 3 young boys walk up, watching her in awe as she juggles the soccer ball. She pops the ball up one more time to head height, and she heads the ball towards the smallest of the group and he catches it in his hands.

“That was impressive,” I say honestly.

“Just some simple soccer tricks.” She says. “You haven’t shown me the training grounds.”

“Those are on the other side of the pack grounds,” I say, pointing over my shoulder. I’m ashamed to admit our warriors are lacking. They would do anything for me, but without someone capable of training them, I have found myself lacking in training them myself, though I show up daily with my uppers and we spare.

“Your training space should be in the center of your grounds.” She says, frowning.

“Why?”

“So that everyone can see. It inspires the young pups to want to be a warrior. They get an inside idea of what happens and it can build morale and support around your warriors.”

“Do you want to spar?” I ask her, raising a brow in jest. She looks at me, stoic as ever.

“You are in no condition to spar.” she says, continuing to walk

“Ah come on. I’ll be fine.”

“Alpha, when you are fully healed I will consider it,” she says, continuing on to walk. I can feel the tug of the mind link and I tap into it.

-I can’t find shit.- Francis pouts

-Try harder than Francis.-

-I need more time-

-I'll see what I can do-

"Well, I'm good for today. I'll head back, I have a call with the committee and I can't wait to tell them how swimmingly we are getting along." She says, turning to say to me. I snap my eyes to hers and I know she can see it, my panic at the thought of her leaving. Her face darkens as she walks closer, eying me suspiciously.

"How about I take you to my favorite spot?" I stutter. She looks shocked by the invitation and her steps slow.

"You look irritated, Alpha. Bad news through your mind link?" she asks.

"Nope," I respond too quickly.

I walk and my leg twinges again. Jolting forward a small step. She is next to me in a second, muttering under her breath, annoyed. I hate how weak she makes me feel. I shove her off in a fury. My one weakness is flaunting itself and I can see her annoyance with it.

"I don't need your help," I growl out.

She steps further back, her hands up. I can feel a cold sweat on my forehead as the pain wracks through my whole body. My leg is far worse than it has been in months. I bend over, nauseated from the pain, and I can see her stepping closer to me tentatively.

"This injury is from the rogue attack? I don't remember you being injured there." I look up, startled by how gentle she sounds. Immediately, I regret the decision when I look into her cold eyes and I can see her pity. I don't want her to know this isn't an unusual occurrence for me. I can't stand feeling weak before her, not when she is a warrior.

"It will heal soon enough." I snap, dropping my head again. She sighs, kneeling down before me. Reaching out, she timidly touches my chin and makes me look at her. Our eyes lock.

"I will take your pain for today, Alpha. Not because I believe you to be weak, but because I should have protected you sooner during that fight. This is a penance for me. I'm not asking you to accept this offer. My honor dictates that I must do it." She removes her hand from my chin, leaving behind it little tingling sensations as if being poked by tiny needles.

She places her hand once more on my chest and looks right into my eyes. Her hazel eyes shift and swirl again, flashing colors of green and lavender. This time I can feel it. The weight of the pain lifts from my body as my muscles relax and my body sings, happy to be rid of the toxic pain from the wolfsbane forever stuck in its fleshy tomb of my leg. She gasps slightly and winces, breaking our eye contact.

"I need to head back to the packhouse." She says as she promptly stands and turns to walk away. I stand with more speed than I have had in years and grab her wrist. I can see the

pain in her eyes. The flecks of lavender look like they are glittering in the sunlight. Who knew pain could be so beautiful.

“Let me help you.” I offer sincerely. She smiles weakly and shakes her head no.

“I have my pride to get me back, Alpha.” She turns and limps away from me, bearing my pain better than I have ever been able to.