## The Alpha's Guardian Chapter 11

I wait for everyone to clear out, and when I'm finally alone; I let my guard down. My leg quivers in pain as I wince, trying to get it to move. Each step shoots up and into my back, bringing agonizing pain. I grunt with effort, closing my eyes and forcing myself to breathe through it. I usually rely heavily on the strength of my wolf to help keep the pain at bay, but my control over him slips more often lately.

In fact, it seems to be a similar thing to all the wolves in the pack. Everyone is on edge, grumpy, and quick to anger. I can only assume that it is the stress of the rogue attacks and the potential danger that lurks just outside our borders. I know that more and more lately I find myself hard-pressed to want to check the Eastern border near the meadow and spring.

I make a misstep as I move down the stairs and tumble down the last three, landing with a dull thud and groaning in pain.

"Fvck!" I yell out in anger.

Why is it so bad today? I call for my wolf to help, but the moment he eases my pain, he tries to claw out for full control. I wince as he tears into my mind, fighting me. A loud, pained scream rips from me in frustration. Within a minute, I feel a gentle pressure at the base of my neck and I gasp in relief.

Whatever it is, feels cool and calming as it radiates at the base of my skull. My wolf settles and yips in obedience as he trots to the back of my mind laying down. I can feel his strength flow into me in a much more controlled manner as the pain in my leg morphs into a dull ache. Finally, some peace in him. He has been restless for months.

The pressure on my neck falls away, and I open my eyes and stand up, turning to face Ali. My face blushes red in embarrassment. I can take losing to her, hell she was stunning when she destroyed me. But her seeing me weak like this? When she is supposed to protect me like I'm some important person? Man, it does nothing for my ego, well, other than completely deflate it.

"Alpha." She starts.

"Ali. We should head back. You need to prepare for the ceremony."

"You should visit the healer first." She says. "Your leg seems to be getting worse."

"My leg will never heal," I say bitterly. Her hard eyes look me over carefully.

"It's a previous injury, then? Before the rogue attack?" she asks.

"It's an injury as old as my wolf," I say, walking towards the doors.

"What happened?" she pries. I stop and put my hands on my hips as I chuckle and shake my head.

"I got hurt, Ali." I throw my arms up in an aggressive 'what' manner and she sighs. "What are you doing here, anyway?" I ask, annoyed.

"There are things about the ceremony that you need to know." She says, walking towards me. I turn and we walk next to each other in silence for a moment while I wait for her to continue.

"Ok, like what?"

"For starters. It is similar to the mate bond, as it mirrors some aspects of it. I will feel what you feel when I need to check in on you. This is handy for the battlefield, so I can always be sure you are safe, even if something separates us. If you are kidnapped, I can use the bond to listen in on what is happening to you, I can also share your pain if you are being tortured, this is like the healing hand as by taking your pain it provides you strength to get out."

"That's kinda cool," I admit.

I had tried searching the guardian bond for hours the other day and failed miserably. No one who has had a guardian seems to really talk about it, which I guess is a form of respect for the art, but all insanely frustrating for someone hesitant to take one on. By the end of my searching session, I had learned only a portion of what Francis seems to know.

"That is only part of it. Since it is similar to the mate bond, you will feel a draw to me as well. This ensures you stay close to me."

"Wait. What do you mean I will be drawn to you?" I say, now feeling a little more skeptical about this bond.

"You will have a desire to be near me. Don't worry, it's not in a sensual way. You just will feel an uptick in your need to be around me." She pauses for a minute and chews on the inside of her cheek.

"What else?" I say, getting anxious.

"Well, this one might be a little hard to swallow." She frowns? "You won't be able to find your mate until the guardian bond is done."

"I'm sorry what? You are saying I won't be able to find my mate until after whatever threat that is supposedly looming goes away?" I ask, aghast. She nods.

"But I need to find her before my wolf goes crazy!" I say, growing angry. My wolf is not a fan of the idea of waiting even longer for our other half. He perks up and fights me for control

"The bond will satiate your wolf. You won't struggle with him during our bond because he will feel a connection to me, a sort of kinship if you will." She assures me. I scoff and throw my hands up.

"Sure, of course. This bond fixes everything apparently." I mutter "Fine whatever. Let's get this over with."

We walk in silence the rest of the way to the packhouse, my mind reeling with thoughts of what's coming. I am about to let this woman into my head. I'm not sure I want anyone in my head.

"Will you be able to, you know, hear or see my thoughts?" I ask, growing worried. I mean, she is a gorgeous woman. But I'm not sure I want her to know my thoughts about her when she walks around in her sports bra. She laughs, a sound that I enjoy a little more than I should.

"No. I won't be able to read your thoughts. It doesn't make me telepathic. And it goes both ways. We will feel each other's powerful emotions if we aren't blocking it."

"So I will also be able to feel your emotions?"

"Yes, if I don't have a barrier up. Which I am very good about keeping in place." She explains.

"Huh. interesting," I mutter as we walk up the steps into the packhouse.

Ali excuses herself for a shower while I grab a quick granola bar and head up to my room to shower as well. I slide into the stream of hot water, sighing as it pounds on my leg. My scar looks grotesque. A large, thick, jagged line runs from the front of my mid-thigh down just behind my knee. It's a stark red and brown against my skin and I swear I can see the muscles quivering below it. I grab my herbal slave and painfully knead it into my muscles, biting my lip to keep from groaning loudly in pain.

As I wrap my towel around my waist, I catch that elusive scent again. Lavender and lemon linger in the air. I sniff frantically, trying to find its source. I follow it to the window and toss it open, hanging half out as I sniff like a madman trying to figure out where the gas leak is. As quickly as the smell found me, it disappears again, as if it's been snatched right from the air. My wolf is pacing and panting in the back of my mind as I try to keep him calm.

"Mate" He howls, ravaging my mind with his constant growling and calling out to her. But she is gone already, and we are about to willingly keep her away for some time.

"The bond will satiate your wolf. You won't struggle with him during our bond because he will feel a connection to me, a sort of kinship if you will." She assures me. I scoff and throw my hands up.

## The Alpha's Guardian Chapter 12

#### Ali POV

I chew on my lower lip as I look over my guardian ceremony outfit. It is the only time I ever wear a dress. And it's not because I want to, but because I have to. I also didn't have a choice in choosing it. It's flattering, and I don't mean it in a small manner. I mean, it's really flattering to my shape and my muscles. Which is why Samuel had it made for me. Male guardians get some version of a tuxedo. I, however, get a busty, emerald green chiffon gown with a slit up my right leg highlighting my muscular thighs.

My only objection to it is that it wasn't my choice, and it's not purple. Which is my signature color since I've been told my eyes flash purple when I use certain Guardian techniques. No other guardian's eyes do that, so it's obviously just meant to be my color. A knock has me pulling my eyes from the dress and sighing as I walk over and open the door.

"Ali," Trudy says in a flat tone. I internally scream. This chick rubs me the wrong way. Mostly because she is rubbing up on a man who isn't destined to be hers and it drives me insane when alpha-hungry groupies do that.

"What do you want?" I say equally flatly.

"Wade wanted me to tell you that the ceremony is at 7 pm" She smiles a fake tight smile and rolls her eyes, turning to walk away.

"Alpha. It's Alpha Wade." I correct her in a cool tone. And she scrunches her nose in distaste.

"Whatever." She spins and sashays down the hall, walking right into the alpha's room.

I slam the door and head over to my closet to grab a zip-up hoodie, pausing only to toss my wet hair up in a messy bun. Now I have time for that lunch with the twin Omegas. I stuff my feet into my tennis shoes and grab my phone as I exit my room, making it all three steps before my phone rings, and I see that it's Samuel again.

"Yes?" I say, a tinge of annoyance in my voice. He has been extra in my business with this mission.

"Is that attitude I detect?" he says and I can imagine his smirk on his face.

"It's been a day. I'm sore and tired and I have to go meet someone." I rush out, starting my walk down the hall.

"Who are you meeting?"

"Some really ripped hot warrior I met on my way to this pack," I say, my words dripping with sarcasm.

"No partners when you are on duty," Samuel warns, and I roll my eyes.

"No worries, it's just hot steamy se\*x," I joke. Samuel laughs. Now he knows I'm joking.

"I heard a rumor that you have a ceremony tonight."

"Yep." I pop the P for a little extra oomph.

"Good. Be safe." and the line went dead. The moment I make it to the stairs, I stop and sigh heavily. I know the Alpha has been behind me for a few minutes. And that he probably heard my conversation with Samuel, but what I am more interested in is why he is trying to be sneaky about it.

"Alpha, can I help you with something?" I ask without turning to face him.

"You are off to meet someone?" he says. His voice sounds angry and forced. I spin to face him and he steps into me, pinning me to the wall. His hands go to either side of my head and I hitch my chin up in defiance. I could easily remove myself from this situation, but I think I'd rather like to find out what the hell is going on with him.

"Yes. As I'm sure you heard, I have a hot date." His muscular arms ripple in anger and I raise a brow at him. His eyes grow black as his wolf fights for control of him. This is a very interesting development.

"I thought you hated anyone who didn't wait for their mate?" His voice is low and growly.

I place my hands on his chest. His breathing seems more labored and his heart is pounding on his ribcage as if looking to explode out. I tilt my head and look him in the eyes, giving him a hard shove as he stumbles back from me.

"Alpha Wade. Control your wolf." I say calmly. He shakes his head and looks at me as he pants.

"I'm trying!" He shouts angrily, his hands flying to his head and covering his ears. "I don't know what is happening."

I can hear his distress and something inside me seems to click. This Isn't a normal alpha who is mateless beyond the mating age? His bedroom door slams down the hall as Trudy comes running, buttoning her blouse. Her hair is disheveled and her makeup smeared.

"Wade! Are you coming back or not?" she says angrily, her eyes roaming over my body.

"Trudy, just go home," he says, exhausted.

"Wade!" she screeches, her shrill voice bouncing off the walls.

"ALPHA!" Wade bellows, the wall reverberating with the violent force of his voice. "It's ALPHA Wade." Trudy shrinks in fear and backs against the opposite wall, slinking along down the stairs and slamming the door behind her as she exits. Only after she is gone do I make a move to walk over to Alpha Wade.

I reach out to him, pulling his hand gently from his face. Using my index and middle fingers, I turn his chin so he is facing me and I look over at him. His face is distorted in pain and his eyes are flashing between black and hazel. I catch glimpses of anguish and anger. Something is not right. He is in no physical pain, so why is he struggling so much with his wolf. And why so close to the ceremony?

"Mindlink Francis. Tell him to come meet us in my room." I say as I gently take his hand and lead him towards my room. When I get him in, I quickly move him to the bed and lay him on top of it.

"Are you feeling ok?" I ask him. He says nothing as he grabs a pillow and places it over his eyes. Francis enters a moment later, looking worried.

"What is going on?" he asks

"I have a feeling that Alpha Wade is slowly being poisoned," I say, trying to remember the name of the plant. "There is a flower, similar to wolfsbane, but it disorients the wolf rather than killing them. It Confuses them, making them angry and impossible to control."

"Like in his food?"

"I'm not sure. But he was fine when I left him earlier. I need to check his room." I say, moving to the door. It doesn't escape my notice that Francis goes rigid when I mention going into the alpha's room.

"What is it? I'll look for it." He says,

"You don't even know what you are looking for, besides it will affect your wolf more so than Alpha's because he metabolizes things faster than anyone else," I explain.

"What about you?"

"I'm an Omega, I have no wolf. I can't recall its name," I remind him. He looks nervously at Alpha Wade, who is groaning on my bed.

"Francis. What don't you want me to see?" I take a step towards him, my curiosity piquing.

"Nothing." He says shortly, refusing to look me in the eye. He is definitely hiding something from me.

"Right," I say, turning and walking out of the room.

The moment I walk into his room, I'm enveloped in his masculine scent. His bed is a mess and there is a hole in his wall. Unchecked aggression, apparently. I walk over to his bedside and rifle through his things. After 5 minutes of searching, I close my eyes and focus on my scent. What smells different, wrong from the last time I was in here looking around a few days ago.

I smell fresh flowers from his desk, an array of wildflowers and greens. The smell of pine and the fresh scent of the forest waft through the open window. I step closer to this desk. I can smell the leather of his chair and the smell of paper. And there, a smell of something woodsy and sour. Faint and watered down. I snap my eyes open. Watered down tea. I grab his mug and take a sniff.

"Ah. Pansy." I remember the name.

Now to find out how it got into his teacup, though this will take more time than finding out there is indeed something in it. That's when I see it, the small wooden box that I know was in my room earlier. Did Francis have Sammy grab it from my room when she grabbed my clothes? Perhaps I let them open it, maybe they can figure out its contents for me. After all, if it's answers about my past they are looking for we are on the same team.

## The Alpha's Guardian Chapter 13

"Francis," I say peeking my head through my bedroom door. He walks over and comes out to the hallway.

"Pansy," I say handing him the cup. He takes it from me, bringing it to his nose and scrunching it in distaste.

"It smells so sour. How would he not notice?"

"I think he has been drinking it for a while. He's not consuming enough to kill him or anything. But definitely enough to disorient him and make it harder to control his wolf."

"Ok. Does he need an antidote or something?" Francis asks, looking concerned.

"I'm sure he will be fine after a couple of hours of sleep. I need to figure out where it came from."

"Look at you, not even sworn in and still taking care of him" Francis smirks at me and I look at him weirdly.

"I can hardly get sworn in if he is dead."

"I thought you said he wasn't in danger from this?"

"Well, not anymore," I say as I wink at him and turn on my heels making my way down the steps.

Tea is made in the kitchen, so that is where my first order of business is. Check the tea, coffee- well the whole kitchen really and see if I can find more. The next order of business after that is to track down the person responsible. I enter the empty packhouse kitchen and try to deduce where the tea containers might be stored. After noisily slamming through cupboard after cupboard Ethel enters and gawks at me and the mess I have made. I am great at finding and figuring things out. Keeping things tidy in the process? Not so much.

"Oh, dear," Ethel says scanning over the mess. "Is there some way I can help you Ali?" she asks.

"Yes. I need the Tea canisters for starters."

"Sure" she nods as she walks over to the counter and pulls two jars forward on the counter. great, hidden in plain sight. Real hero over here. In my defense, though the tea is in a flour jar, that says flour.

"In a flour jar?" I ask, smirking at her. She shrugs.

"It's his favorite tea and everyone else drinks it if they know where it is." She smiles gently. I scoff at her comment. And Alpha sharing his favorite item? Doubtful.

"I find that hard to believe, he is the Alpha. Everyone is afraid of him, why would they touch his stuff?" My tone is ruder than it needs to be, but I'm on a mission and I intend to get to the bottom of this before the ceremony tonight.

"Alpha Wade is not a normal Alpha," Ethel assures me as I walk over to her side and open the canister.

I sniff it and immediately I can smell the Pansy. I turn the canister upside down and sure enough the small bulbous yellow flowers tumble onto the counter. Ethel reaches out and looks at it strangely, rolling it between her thumb and her forefinger.

"This is strange. I don't recall this ever being in his tea before." She looks like she is in deep thought.

"Ethel, do you know what that is?"

"No, but I know it's not normally there. He has been drinking the same tea for years and I am usually the one who makes it."

"Has anyone else been making his tea?"

"Just Trudy and sometimes one of the other omegas. But it is usually me. Is something wrong with the Alpha?" she asks, getting worried.

A knock on the door pulls Ethel away from the conversation as she goes to answer it. After a moment she walks in bickering with two teenagers. I smile when I finally realize it's Robin and Mason.

"You two made it after all." I look at the clock and chuckle. "An hour late but you're here."

"Sorry, Robin was stopped by that a\*\*\*\*e from earlier."

"Mason! Your language" Ethel warned, turning to start the task of cleaning up my mess.

"What, he is" he mutters under her breath. Robin stands silently near the doorway.

"Well. We can grab a snack and talk on the road. I am on official guardian business and you two are coming with me." I announce finding a banana in the fruit bowl, feeling disappointed that there are no apples. They are my favorite after all.

"Wait what?" Ethel says, turning around looking concerned.

"They are only Omegas, they won't be of any use," she says. And I smile at her.

"Ethel," I say walking over and placing my hand on her shoulder. "I promise you they will be of total use to me." She nods after hesitating for a moment and I lead the kids out the front door.

I have decided that they are going to train to be warriors. Who says they have to be completely useless. As omegas, we lack a wolf, yes, but we have other uses that make us special. We have an immunity to the things that would otherwise render a wolf useless. Like wolfsbane and pansy.

We also have more level heads as we don't have a blood-thirsty crazed beast in our heads trying to fight us for control. I admit it's not common for omegas to be weak and basically human when it comes to strength and other senses. But I have a theory about that, that I plan on testing with these two.

"So, where are we going?" Robin asks, finally speaking.

"We are trying to figure out who is poisoning the alpha. But first I want to go to the one area where all the warriors and patrollers tend to feel weird about and not really check. I want to see why, but I have a hunch.

"And what's your hunch?" Mason asks excitedly.

"Have you noticed wolves in the pack acting weirder than normal?" I ask as we walk briskly towards the border.

"Not really," Mason says.

"Yes," Robin whispers. I stop and turn to face her.

"Explain," I demand. She cuts her eyes to Mason looking for help, he offers her an encouraging smile.

"I-I-I'm only 16. And that boy, erm, man? He saw me and his eyes went black and he called me 'mine' and got mad and tried to pull me away from Mason. Before Mason attacked him his eyes went back to blue and he looked so-"

"He's an asshat and you are rejecting him," Mason says with an air of authority. I put my hand up to stop Mason.

"Continue,"

"He looked horrified and hurt. I don't think he had any control over his wolf," she says, hugging herself tightly, looking at the ground.

"He shouldn't have been able to sense you for another 2 years," I mutter out loud. "That doesn't make sense unless it's an effect of the pansy? But I didn't think that it was going to be affecting more than Alpha Wade" I stop to process everything.

"Is the pack on Well water or city water?" I ask them. Mason shrugs.

"It's Well water," Robin responds. Mason shoots her a baffled look.

"How do you know that?" he asks.

"Granddad had to put the new well in because they couldn't access the old well because it was surrounded by wolfsbane and no matter what they did it would pollute the water somehow and people would get sick," Robin says like it was just common knowledge when clearly it wasn't.

"Well, aren't you the history buff." he shrugs, looking surprised with her knowledge.

"Do you know where it is?" I ask, trying to reign in my impatience.

"I do," Robin says smiling, looking mighty proud of herself.

"We are following you then"

# The Alpha's Guardian Chapter 14

We crash through the thick brush until we find the small cement building. It is overrun with weeds and vines of ivy that creep up its outer walls. The entire area is overgrown and unkempt. Wild weeds sway in the small breeze that tickles my nose with various scents of musky building and wild vegetation. To the left is a crumbled brick well with a broken crank that would have once been used to pull water from the well. Weathered boards lay loosely across the top, acting as a weak barrier.

I put my hands on my hip and spin around, trying to understand how this place could be the new well. When I heard about the new well, I had expected something newer. Not this abandoned shed.

"This is it?" I ask, unsure if I believe them.

"Yep."

"Who is in charge of it?"

"How would we know? We are omega kids." Mason says, annoyed. I smirk, knowing all too well he is hungry and angry. I reach into my hoodie pocket and toss a granola bar I had been hoarding at him. He quickly puts his hand out and catches it in midair. My eyes widened slightly at his reflexes. He could be a warrior with the right training.

"Grump," I mutter as I walk towards the building. I open the door and I'm immediately slapped in the face by the smell of pansy. I scrunch my nose as the sour scent swirls around me.

"Oh damn. What is that smell?" Mason whines.

"It's Pansy."

"Like the yellow weed? I don't recall them smelling like this." Robin asks and I smirk. She seems to know more than she lets on.

"Yes, but this smell is when they are steeped in liquid for an extended period. It's a poison for wolves."

"Like wolfsbane?" Mason chimes in,

"Uh. kind of though this isn't nearly as fatal. It disorients the wolf."

"And you are thinking that this is why all the wolves have been acting crazy and gaining control over their human forms," Robin says, connecting dots I hadn't even noticed I had been laying out.

"That is exactly what I'm thinking. I thought maybe it was an accident. It was in Alphas tea this morning."

"I don't understand why anyone would want him to lose control," Robin says, thinking hard.

"I bet it was Tramp Trudy." Mason chirps in. I struggle to keep my composure at his nickname for the alpha's girlfriend, it's freaking perfect.

"What makes you say that?"

"Um... because she is a tramp?" Mason misunderstands my question.

"No, I mean, why do you think she did it?"

"Oh, easy. If a wolf is in control, he wants to mate or fight. If he isn't in control while they are, uh, doing mating stuff, then he could lose control and mark her." he shrugs.

"Wow, Mase. That was actually somewhat smart."

"Thanks, sis," He says through a wolfish grin.

I shake my head and trudge forward through the dark hallway, using our phones as flashlights. Mason has a point. Trudy very well could be a part of the equation, but she isn't the answer, not just her anyway. She has a wolf. The pansy would also affect her. This means if she is responsible, she has to have a human or an omega helping her.

We finally make it to the office and I'm surprised to find the tiny room tidy. There is a small metal desk where a plush chair sits on tiny caster wheels. The computer screen is on, so someone has to be here somewhere. I crane my head around looking for the person who should be here at their desk.

"Hello?" I call out, expecting no response, so I'm not surprised when one doesn't come. "It's the middle of the workday so someone should be here," I mutter while walking to the desk.

"Maybe they are on a bathroom break?" Mason asks.

"Can I help you?" a voice says from behind me.

I turn to see a very tall lanky looking man, maybe in his mid-twenties. His face is gaunt and his eyes look sad. If he had a little more meat on his bones, he would be an attractive man, but instead, he looks sickly. I tilt my head looking him over, his dark deep-set eyes reddened as if from crying.

"Frank!" Robin says, smiling brightly. He turns to face her, but the pain stays at the forefront of his mind.

"What are you doing here?" he asks, his voice coming off harsh and menacing.

"Ok, rude!" Mason says, walking over to him. The man rubs his face roughly with his calloused hands and looks at Mason.

"Sorry. I'm just going through some stuff." Mason reaches out and gives the man a big hug.

"Ok, introductions please," I say, looking down at my watch. I'm running out of time before the ceremony.

"Oh, right." Mason turns to me, looking proud. "This is Frank! He was our older brother's best friend."

I stare at Mason and look from frank to robin hoping maybe someone will give me the explanation that is clearly needed. The word choice that Mason used is past tense, insinuating that either there was a falling out or their brother died. After a moment of awkward staring, I roll my eyes and ask the question.

"Was?"

"Jacob went missing some time ago," Robin said, staring at the ground.

"He is dead, Robin," Mason growls.

"We don't know that," Frank says his eyes are soft as he offers Robin what little comfort he can.

"Nice to meet you, Frank," I say, looking for a topic change as the room now feels a little too heavy for my liking. "Look, I don't have much time, so I'm going to jump right in. Someone has been poisoning the water supply with pansy."

"That's not possible," he says, his eyes wide. He clearly didn't know based on his reaction.

"Can't you smell the sour smell?" I ask.

"Frank lost his sense of smell years ago," Robin says, looking at me. This is an interesting note.

"Frank, you are also an omega then?" I ask, and he looks away in shame, only nodding his head in acknowledgment.

"There is nothing shameful about being an omega," Mason says, clearly irritated by Frank's reaction to the question.

Suddenly, Frank doubles over in pain. He screams out in agony, all three of us running to his side. There is no physical ailment as I look him over, confused. I touch his head and his eyes snap open at my touch. Our gaze locks on each other and where I once saw sorrow and pain, I now see agonizing heartbreak. His eyes are begging me to stop the pain, to make it go away. But I know what this is, and it's not a pain I can stop. My stomach boils as a feeling of deep-seated anguish washes over me.

I lift my hands, looking at them curiously. I hadn't touched Frank, so I am certain this pain is my own. It is foreign and confusing. Frank's heart-wrenching cry pulls me from my own musings and looks at him once more.

"Frank. Who is your mate?" I ask him softly. He sobs as he shakes his head no. "Frank! who is your mate!" I demand as I grab his shoulders and give him a shake.

"What are you doing? What is happening?" Robin shrieks as she frets over her friend.

"His mate is mating with someone else," I say, simply looking at him with pity.

"What? who would do that?" Robin says, standing in a fury.

"Trudy," Frank whispers softly as the pain takes over, and he passes out. His appearance makes sense now. He is wasting away as his mate's bond with her is still in place and she continues to sleep with others.

"I'm going to kill that stupid bitch," Robin says and spins on her heel. Mason makes a move to run after her, but I stop him by grabbing his arm.

"Mason, stay," I say standing "I will go with her, I have some questions for the Lunawanna-be."

# The Alpha's Guardian Chapter 15

#### Wade POV

My mind rages like a sea during a tumultuous storm. Pain ebbing and going on the outskirts of my mind as my beast ravages me mentally for control. He howls as he bounces against the mental barrier between us. Nothing I do calms him, no words can soothe the ache of his need to be free. Only two things are on his mind and he can't decide which he wants more. Blood or mate.

A hand touches my shoulder and it feels like searing hot pain. I growl lowly at whoever dares come near me in a warning. I am not safe around anyone. My warning is heeded as the hand rips away from me quickly. I try to utter words to make them leave. All coherent thoughts have turned to guttural sounds of painful grunting.

Someone places a cool towel over my eyes, and I sigh in relief at its touch. Little by little, the movements around the room become more noticeable. I can feel someone to my right as the air swirls around me from their movements. A clinking of glass moves to my left, and I'm finally able to focus on the murmur of the voices in the room. I groan as I move my heavy arms to push myself upright.

The cloth falls away from my face and I blink rapidly, trying to bring the blurry faces into view. Kane stands at the foot of the bed whispering low to Francis, whose brows are drawn tight in concentration. To my right is Ethel, who smiles at me and takes the cool cloth, dipping it into the water basin on the bedside table. She wrings it out and places it on the back of my neck this time. Goosebumps erupt over my heated skin at its contact as the coolness seeps into my body bringing me sweet relief.

"There." She says "This should help cool you off Alpha." She smiles sweetly at me, and I'm grateful to have her.

I hate the fact that I had almost punished her grandchildren today and yet she is still tending to me in a time of need. I feel guilty that I wasn't able to control my anger and evaluate the situation at hand. After a little further investigation, Francis had discovered that Isaac, the warrior who had been attacked by Mason, the young omega, somehow could scent his underaged mate and his wolf, had gone crazy. Mason had been protecting his twin sister from a beast they both didn't have the strength to fight.

I turn to my left and I see Trudy sitting next to me typing away on her phone furiously. She is a beautiful woman by any right. If you like the fake barbie doll type who listens and obeys. I once thought that was what I wanted. Honestly, it is all I'm used to here in our pack. I'm not really a ladies' man. I wanted to wait for my mate, but my beast has fought me harder and harder every year. Two years ago is when I gave in. It was the first time I lost control of my wolf.

I had been on a run in the woods and she had been there in her wolf form. I swear she had been waiting for someone else, but she found me. She claims she knew I was for her. Trudy believes her true mate is dead and thinks I am her second chance mate. It could be true, no one can really truly know, but her conviction had been enough for my wolf to give in. And now I live with the choice we made.

My wolf howls in pleasure as he makes himself known and tries to push himself forward further into the front to take over the reins. My shirt disappears and I can feel her skin come into contact with mine. It feels wrong. Her flesh is clammy and cool as if she is feverish and her hands clamor to touch every inch of my body and make it her own. My wolf is howling so loudly that I can no longer fight him and I fully give in to his fight.

I find myself in the back recesses of my mind watching those actions that are my body but not my own. My hands reach around her, pulling her tight against me as I crave her touch. No, not her touch, but my mate's loving touch. My wolf just wants to be loved, to know what it is to be truly fully mated. Not just do the act and pretend there is a bond. My wolf craves a bond.

She teases me for what feels like hours, gyrating back and forth, making me nearly burst with fury at how long she is taking to get the task done. Slowly her hands move to my pants unbuttoning the top of my jeans and running her fingers along the rim of my boxer briefs. My breath hitches at the thought of being released from what now feels like a tiny prison. And she giggles at my reaction.

"Do you want me, baby?" she asks.

I have no words that I can get out as my wolf growls in affirmation and she pulls back, looking at my eyes that I know are fully black with beastly lust. She smirks a mischievous smirk.

"Mark me. And I will do anything you want." My wolf freezes in a panic, and I try to fight him for control.

No way in hell I am marking this woman. Our mate is so close, we can't give in to temptation. My wolf, using my body on his own accord, leans forward. I curse him and his stupid dog mind. Trying to reach out and take back the helm. He is about to ruin us both.

I grab her by her shoulders and spin on top of her, thrust my hips into her pelvis as she giggles sensually and meets me with her own hip movements, driving my wolf wild. I reach down and pull her skirt up to her waist. Baring my teeth, my wolf rears back as I scream in my mind. Bloody murder for him to stop.

A loud bang comes from the side of the room as I am tackled to the floor with a grunt and my teeth land firmly into the flesh of someone. Blood trickles out from my mouth as I lick the person I bit and step back, coming back myself. I open my eyes, looking down at none other than Ali. My guardian, who is looking at me with bulging eyes. Oh shit. Did I just mark my guardian?