

# The Alpha's Guardian Chapter 21

I place her gently on a ledge of the tub and grab her a towel to cover herself with. It's less for her modesty and more for me to keep my breathing regular. I turn the water on warm and walk out to grab her herbal remedies and the salve for her wounds. When I get back to the door, I hear a clatter, and, trying to push it open; I find it locked.

"Ali?" I call out to her.

"I can bathe myself, Alpha Wade."

"I'm sure you are capable of a normal bath all on your own. This is a medical wound cleaning." I say, trying to convince her of the innocence of the act. I may be achingly hard, but that doesn't mean I can't control myself. Maybe.

"I will be fine."

"Ali, I promise not to do anything." There is silence, and I hear her groan in pain. I place my hand on the door, trying to listen for her. The lock pops open and she slowly peeks out around the door.

"Give me a minute to hop in the tub? I need to hear what you are thinking so I can trust you won't try anything, so barriers are down."

"I can't promise clean thoughts, only clean actions," I say, leveling my eyes on her and she bashfully nods. The door shuts and I can hear the faint sound of water splashing and after counting to 60, I open the door and enter. She sits with her back to the door in the tub, her knees hugged to her chest securely. I watch her for a moment. Taking all of her in. She turns slightly and looks over her shoulder. This is a picture I want to hold on to forever. She looks so vulnerable in this state, so broken and yet strong enough to accept the help I know she doesn't want. She is breathtaking.

"Your barrier is still up." She says, looking me over quizzically. I walk over and remove my shoes and my shirt, stepping in behind her. She panics and spins to look at me in shock.

"What are you doing! Don't hop in!" I attempt to look directly into her eyes and I can't stop the laugh from coming out.

"Concern yourself with covering your exposed breasts, Guardian. Unless you are hinting at something?" I quirk a brow in jest as her eyes bulge with my understanding.

"Just. Hurry." she sighs heavily, resigning herself to the next couple minutes of me basically bathing her.

The warm water seeps through my jeans as I slide in behind her gently. My long legs overtake her on both sides as she tries to make herself smaller so I can fit. Her squirming is doing nothing to help. I close my eyes as I steady my thoughts of all the things I'd rather be doing in a tub with her. Once I'm confident, I'm mostly in control. I drop my mental guard and let her into my mind as I flood into hers. Her hesitancy floats around in my mind. Her inner conflict of needing my help and feeling she is crossing a line. She is worried about her professionalism in this field and I can't help but feel guilty for putting her in this predicament.

"No need to feel bad, Alpha," she says into her crossed arms on her knees. "This is my job."

"Look, I'm not keen on you getting injured for my sake," I answer honestly. I hate when others put themselves before me. It is my job as Alpha to protect them, even if that means offering myself up for them.

"It's not your choice to make. And if you dislike it that much, then you need to take better care of yourself when you are fighting." I can feel her frustration through our bond, and I know she can feel mine.

Rather than respond, I reach over into the bag that Francis brought and grab out a clean rag, soak it in the water and gently wring it out over her back. She releases a slight hiss of pain from her lips as the water trickles down her back. It dances around her cuts and trails over her dried blood, turning pink as it drips into the water below. I do this a few more times, trying my best to moisten the crusted parts and then, as gently as I can, I use my rough hand to rub circles on her back, acting as a sponge, careful to avoid her wounds.

Her lashing marks are mostly healed now and I take that as a good sign that she is indeed a fast healer. I knead my hand around her back, trying to help her release the tension she is carrying from holding onto the pain. She moans slightly and I smirk. I'm finally doing something right. Next, I reach over and grab the Betadine to clean her wounds out. I carefully dredge each bite mark in it as it weaves its way down her back, dripping into the tub, the sound echoing in the silence of the marble encased room.

"Why did you protect Isaac?" she asks. I take a minute to think about her question.

"Isaac is a pack member,"

"But he is a warrior, he should be able to protect himself." She says with conviction.

"I wasn't just protecting him. I was protecting Robin."

"Why? Most Alphas couldn't care less about their omegas."

"A pack member is a pack member. Wolf or no wolf. If you live in this pack, you are protected. I've never understood why the mistreatment of omegas is so widespread. Every

single pack member plays a vital role in pack life, omegas admittedly get the crappy tasks though this is something I have been looking at adjusting more recently.”

“Hmmm” is all she says.

I can feel her mind spinning as if trying to deduce something, but coming up short. Her emotions change by the minute and admittedly it gets taxing trying to understand, so I focus on my own emotions and mind.

I finish my task in silence and stand up to get out of the now cold tub of water. My jeans are soaked and my movement feels restricted in them. After stepping to the side, I reach down and pull them off. I toss them into the bathroom sink and stalk over to the towels, standing only in my wet boxer briefs. A small wave of embarrassment enters my mind, right before the barrier flies back up. I smirk, knowing she was checking me out as I wrap a towel around my waist. Grabbing two extras, I make my way back over to her and set them on the edge of the tub.

“I’m going to change into dry pants. I still have to bandage you, but you should be able to get dressed. There is a low back tank top and a pair of shorts.” I say, pointing next to the sink. She nods at me, still in the same position she has maintained the entire time.

“Ali, do you need me to stay and help you?” I ask sincerely. I know all too well how her allowing me to help her in this manner has shaken her ego.

“I will be fine.” She offers, looking up at me finally and making eye contact.

The color in her cheeks has returned and she no longer looks like she was knocking at death’s door. I make my way hastily to my room, discarding my soaked boxers and grabbing fresh clothes. The moment I am dressed, I run out my door and enter her room just as she comes slowly out of the bathroom, looking green in the face. Her eyes meet mine and she tries to hide the pain with a genuine smile. I make my way to her side and help her onto her bed, belly down, shaking away all s\*\*\*\*l thoughts from my head.

I find the gauze and tape still in the bathroom and grab it with the salve that Francis brought and head back out to her. The bed dips beneath my weight as I move closer to her, a small pained groan escaping her lips.

“This will not feel great,” I warn her. She just nods into her comforter. “Is there not any way you can share the pain back with me? Give me half the wound to heal you faster, like the healing hand, but kind of in reverse?” I ask, not wanting to cause her any more pain. She turns slightly to look at me, frowning.

“I am fine. I promise you, the pain is not too much. I’m just exhausted from blood loss, which is making it difficult to channel my pain. This is how I learn, how I get stronger.”

“But this is my doing, it’s my injury.” I am dismayed. She is hurt because of me. And her being hurt feels worse than any pain I have ever known. She pushes herself up to her knees slowly and turns me face to face.

“Alpha. I know right now you are feeling things, things that seem overwhelming, and you want to protect me. You feel guilty. That is the bond. The bond mirrors the mate bond, so with it comes these feelings.” She reaches out and touches my cheek and I feel small tingling. “This. This is the guardian bond. It seems unfair and mean, but it really is for me to protect you. My life is forfeited for you. And the bond makes that choice easier. I apologize if you feel it strongly. Each Alpha feels it to a different degree.”

“Is it really just the Guardian bond?” I am not totally convinced. I know she claims this is the bond, and perhaps she is right. She is the expert in all of this, but those sparks were apparent to me before we performed the bond. This attraction to her was there from the moment I saw her in the woods, saving me.

“I am positive it is just the strength of the bond. I think we have the potential for a beautiful friendship which strengthens our bond,”

“Have you ever experienced this before? This strong I mean.” She grows rigid slightly and looks away.

“Yes. once,” she says barely above a whisper. Then, clearing her throat, she turns her back to me, hinting that the conversation has ended and I should finish my job.

## The Alpha’s Guardian Chapter 22

Ali POV

A pounding on my door jolts me out of sleep. The cool air in the room envelops me as I toss away my blankets. I quietly curse whoever is at the door. As I move around in the darkroom, I rely on my memory and senses to guide me through the pitch black. The end of my bed makes way to a clear path straight to the door. If I can make it to the path, I can make it to the door with no lights needed.

“Oof-” I stumble forward over fabric that I know had not been there before as I lurch forward, hands reach out to stop my descent, but I slip through them, landing roughly on what I presume is someone’s stomach.

“What the fvck?” The groggy voice of Alpha Wade says. I freeze in surprise as I scramble to find my footing. I continue to slip on the silky sleeping bag below and the knocking on the door raps louder.

“Ali?” Mason whispers. The door creaks open and the lights flood through the small opening landing on me, straddling the Alpha like a spotlight on the stage. Mason pushes the door open further, grinning. He crosses his arms and leans on the doorjamb.

“Well, that must have been some bond,” Mason says, looking smug.

“Wipe that smirk off your face before I murder you,” I say to him through gritted teeth.

“Hey, I’m just here about Robin.” At the mention of her name, his face grows tired and sad. Panic rises as Alpha Wade, who I’m certain is just trying to keep me on top of him, releases me and pushes me to stand.

“How is she?” I ask, walking over to him.

“She is going to make it.” He says, looking much older than he is in the dim light. “Turns out having your mate with you, even if you are an Omega, does indeed speed the healing process.”

“So Isaac wasn’t lying about it then?” Alpha says walking over and pulling a shirt on. “They really are mates.” Mason looks at me with a questioning brow, and I roll my eyes.

“Why are you even here?” I ask, turning to Alpha Wade.

“What, after everything that happened last night, you would kick me out so ruthlessly?” he grins.

This a\*\*\*\*\*e is definitely enjoying making this seem like more than it is. I groan in annoyance.

“Can I see her?” I ask, looking back at Mason. I decide that ignoring the handsome obnoxious man to my right is for the best.

“She is sleeping now. But I thought you would want to know. I came looking for you earlier, but Francis said you were hurt. Are you feeling better now?” he asks, looking concerned. I offer him a soft smile and reach out to touch his hand in a reassuring manner.

“I feel much better. Thank you for telling me about Robin.”

“Alpha,” Mason says, clearing his throat. And puffing up his chest. “On behalf of my family, I want to offer you our sincerest thanks for saving Robin today. I know I am only a low-ranking Omega, and I’m not as strong as the others but, I would like to offer my services as a warrior of this pack.”

Mason stands, looking proud and firm in his decision, even if his voice wavers at his claim. Alpha Wade looks him over and sighs heavily. I can feel his confliction through the

bond as he focuses on Mason and his request. His hesitation forms in my mind like a seed of doubt. How can he trust an Omega to protect the pack if they can't protect themselves?

-Alpha. Turning down his offer would destroy him.- I say through our mind link. Wade turns to me, looking surprised. Realization hits him and I can feel his thoughts leaving my mind.

-I can't in good conscience allow him to put himself in danger.-

-We have free will, Wade. We govern ourselves and ourselves alone. Denying an omega their right to make decisions is its own form of captivity. Please let him train. Training isn't the same as fighting. He deserves to know how to protect his loved ones like how you try to protect the pack.- I plead with him.

"Mason. We will discuss this another time. Ali needs her rest so she can heal," he says, stepping forward and slapping mason gently on the shoulder. Mason nods as he steps out of the doorway and waves a small goodbye.

"I should check your bandage," He says, taking a step for me.

"Alpha Wade," I say, clearing my throat. "We need to go talk to Trudy."

"Sh!t. I forgot about that," he says, rubbing his face with his hand. "Let's go then"

I look him over in his sweatpants and raggedy old t-shirt and smirk. He must not realize how rough he looks right now. He notices me watching him and a small smile plays across his lips, his eyes darkening. My mind is gently immersed in desire and lust.

"Fix your emotional barrier, Alpha. I'm not checking you out because I want you. You look like a mess. I'll meet you downstairs in 5 minutes." I say as I walk to the closet.

I slide into my brown leather pants, tank top, and tactical vest. Though I am technically always on the job, I only wear my gear when I'm on official business or knowingly entering a dangerous situation like scouting or border patrol. I slip my throwing knives into their slots at my waist, stick my daggers in their usual thigh straps over my pants, and place my sword on my back. Gingerly, I toss my hair in a ponytail and stick my camo baseball cap on my head.

By the time I make it to the door, Alpha Wade is standing next to it talking to Francis, who is looking like he just rolled out of bed. It is still dark outside, and I hadn't taken the time to even look at the clock. I slide a glance at the clock on the wall and inwardly wince. 4:17 am. I offer Francis an apologetic look as I step next to him, slipping my feet in my combat boots and lacing them up.

"How are you feeling?" Francis asks.

“Ready to sort this out,” I say as I stand from tying my laces and reach for the door. “Let’s get this over with.”

The entire walk to the holding cell is silent. Wade’s barrier is up, so his thoughts and emotions are silent and I enjoy the solitude while it lasts. It is mentally exhausting having to feel not only your emotions but others. An alpha’s mind is much stronger and quicker to certain emotions than that of others, so often I find myself with a headache trying to keep my block up at all times.

We walk into the large brick building and move our way through the brightly lit hallways towards the back, where we find the jail cells. I can hear her before I see her as she growls menacingly at me. It gets old, the jealousy that comes along with being bonded to an alpha. Whether it’s the alphas jealous of others with me or the woman jealous that they don’t have a chance. it all gets annoying and tiresome. Read more free novels at [Jobnib.com](http://Jobnib.com)

“Trudy,” Wade says coldly. Trudy refuses to look at him.

“We have some questions for you,” I tell her.

“I’m not telling you sh!t,” she snarls. “You stole my mate from me, you b!tch.”

“Well, technically, I don’t have a wolf. So I can’t really be a b!tch,” I taunt her.

## The Alpha’s Guardian Chapter 23

“And you’re proud of that?” Trudy asks, trying to hurt me.

“How did you learn about the properties of the Pansy?” I ask, knowing she won’t answer.

She leans forward and spits in my face. I smile nicely, readying myself to cut her down with my words when Wade steps up to me. He lifts his shirt, revealing his impeccable abs, and gently he uses it to wipe the spit from my face. My heart flutters at his action and the tenderness in his eyes. He then releases his shirt and looks at Trudy.

“If you do not give us what we are asking for, I will put her in the cage with you.” He says, looking smug.

Trudy’s eyes bulge in fear as she looks to Francis, who just nods in agreement.

“W-why? You could just use your alpha voice and demand it.” Trudy stutters out.

“I want you to tell me of your own accord. Don’t worry, I’ll use it at the end to verify you are telling the truth.”



“I did it because I love you! And I know you love how I make you feel,” she says seductively.

I snort in amusement.

“Oh yeah, remind him of all the times you took advantage of him because he was drugged. That will help you.” I say softly, growing impatient.

“Can we hurry this up?” I ask, annoyed.

“Trudy. Answers. Now.” Wade says sternly.

“I don’t know who it was.” She whines. “I just found out that Frank was my mate. I mean, Frank! Really? Look at me. Do I look like someone who would be with Frank?”

“Keep going,” I urge her. She hisses at me.

“I just wanted to get out, you know? Think about things and then he walked in. He was so handsome. A little old, but still yummy. He had bleached blond hair, so many muscles, and the prettiest eyes I have ever looked in. We chatted. I told him how I deserved to be with an Alpha and he said he agreed.” She pauses, looking over at Wade, who looks very unimpressed. “

“We talked about how you didn’t have a mate yet, and he said maybe we were second chance mates. Then I told him about your injury on your leg and we talked about wolfsbane and then he mentioned Pansy and what it does and you know.... I was desperate. I wanted to be yours, Wade.”

“Alpha, it’s Alpha Wade.” Francis corrects her, growing angry.

I turn slightly, looking at him over my shoulder. I’m not used to his anger. In fact, he is the calmest person in this entire pack. It’s arguably what makes him such an excellent Beta to Wade. He is the calm to his storm.

I turn slightly, looking at him over my shoulder. I’m not used to his anger. In fact, he is the calmest person in this entire pack. It’s arguably what makes him such an excellent Beta to Wade. He is the calm to his storm.

“Alpha... Wade,” she says, looking a little frightened. “The point is, I never got his name. He dropped the pansy off every month and I told Frank it was a sort of purifier for the water, the idiot didn’t even question it.”

“He isn’t an idiot,” I growl at her.

How can she speak like this about her mate? He is her other half, whether or not she wants him to be. Trudy stands and walks over to the bars, grabbing hold of them



“Yeah, he is.” She scoffs. “He thinks I will love him one day. He is stupid and delusional.”

“I see why you were mated then,” Francis quips.

I find myself just staring at him wide-eyed. Woah. pissed off Francis is a feisty fellow. It looks like Francis is in a mind link. Wade looks over to him and gives him a sad look, nods, and with that Francis leaves us, his eyes watery. Something just happened and I have no clue what.

“What’s his issue?” she sneers.

“Ali, can you go to the front of the building and bring Frank in?” I look at him, stunned, and Trudy gasps.

I nod, doing as I am asked, and quickly move my way to the door to Frank. I find Frank pacing in front of the doors, looking green in the face. His sad eyes find mine as I push the doors open for him to enter.

“I-is she alright?” he asks, worried.

This is the one thing I hate about the mate bond. How sometimes, just sometimes, the best kind of person is mated to the worst. Almost like they meant to even each other out. It seems so unfair for this meek, kind guy to be sick with worry over this woman who has not a care in the world for him.

“She is fine,” I respond.

He follows me in silence. He is fidgeting with his hands, and I can tell he is nervous. What would it feel like to be so close to your mate and never be able to be with them? He looks so sick that I’m not convinced he isn’t dying of some disease or terminal illness.

“Trudy.” He breathes when she comes into sight.

He shuffles slightly, trying to figure out what to do. Trudy rolls her eyes and steps back from the bars. She moves to the cot and plops down, rolling her eyes.

“Why did you come?” she seethes

“Alpha Wade asked me to come,” he says, turning to Wade.

“Frank. I think it’s time you move on.” Wade says, walking up to him.

Frank takes a minute, trying to comprehend what Wade is saying, and I stand frozen. Wade is going to have Frank reject Trudy? The breaking of a mate bond is a big deal. It is rare, and it is painful. Frank is already so sick that I’m uncertain that he could actually handle this.

-Alpha- I say through our link -Frank won't survive a rejection-

-He isn't being rejected. She is. And you are going to help-

My eyes go wide as I look at him. He wants me to heal Frank somehow, to keep his pain at bay.

"No," I say out loud. "That's not how it works, Alpha. It's not possible."

"Frank. Just like we talked about." he urges him.

Frank looks distraught as he clears his throat and wraps his hand around one of the metal bars.

"I, Frank White, reject you, Trudy Miller."

Frank falls to his knees as shivers wrack his body. His mouth opens in a silent scream, his cries lost, stuck in his throat. I look over to Trudy who is on the ground sobbing and holding her chest. She crawls across the dirty concrete floor over to where Frank is and she reaches out for him. My heart aches for them.

The mate bond is sacred, a once-in-a-lifetime chance to live a life feeling complete. Sometimes, the very lucky few are granted a second mate. But it's rare enough that most people are afraid to ever reject their mate for fear of living as a shell of who they are.

"Wade," I say in disbelief. "How could you make him do this?"

My words come out in a sad whisper as I bend down and reach out to help Frank. Wade crosses over to me and pulls me up, wrapping his arm around my waist as I try to get to Frank. I turn my fury to him. His eyes soften when he sees my anger and I let my mental barrier down, berating him with my emotions. And then he laughs.

## The Alpha's Guardian Chapter 24

Wade POV

Her anger crashes like waves in a tumultuous sea, violently slamming into my barrier. It becomes almost painful trying to keep it up, but I refuse to take it down. Instead, I throw all my thoughts into the tingles on my arm as I hold her away from Frank. A laugh breaks from my lips at everything unfolding. It's not appropriate to laugh, I know. But I can't help it. She looks so damn cute when she is angry.

"Calm down I whisper in her ear" she just looks up and scowls.

I focus again on Trudy. Trudy, who is so desperate to be something she isn't destined to be that she destroyed her own mate and poisoned my entire pack. This woman has no idea of the suffering she will endure in these cells. Especially after the news Francis just got. After 4 years of trying to get pregnant, Sammy was finally able to tell Francis that he was going to be a dad.

That excitement was short-lived after the doctor informed them that Pansy is extremely toxic to unborn pups. Sammy was just told to expect severe deformities, and that there is a high probability that the child will lose their wolf before they were even born. Which can be fatal to a newborn.

I know that breaking this bond hurts Frank. The losing of a mate is extremely painful, but rejection by who Trudy deems unworthy seems like the only type of torture that will leave a lasting impression without having to physically harm her.

I knew Ali wouldn't agree with me, that she would find it repulsive, find me repulsive. But this isn't about Ali or for Ali. This is a pack issue. And if I am damned to hell for allowing the break of a spiritual bond, then at least I burn knowing I did my best for my people.

Ali breaks free from my grip and makes it to Frank's side, and looks up at me with hatred burning in her eyes. I knew she would be upset. She respects the bond above all else and here I am demanding one of my omegas refuse the very thing that would make him whole. And though I feel bad for Frank, I feel nothing for Trudy.

"Frank." She says, bracing his face with her hands. "Frank, look at me. Hey. You are going to be ok."

Trudy is sobbing in her cell, calling for Frank who doesn't respond to her. After a minute of bone-chilling silence, he stands and straightens himself. Clearing his throat, he steps to the bars, looking down at Trudy.

"That pain you feel now is nothing compared to what you have made me feel for 2 years. Every time you touched another man, I felt it. Every time you felt pleasure I felt unimaginable pain." He seethes.

"Oh, well, I suppose now for you it's not so unimaginable. Outside of the bond, you are nothing to me. You are unworthy of me." He says, straightening his shoulders. He looks bigger, stronger.

"Frank," Trudy whispers

Frank looks at Trudy with no emotion. He watches her sob in pain at the emotional hole in her chest where his love should be.

"I wanted to love you, to give you everything. But you wouldn't let me. I begged you, Hell, I would have happily died for you." Frank says, his voice breaking. "Without the bond, I

see just how sad and pathetic you have always been. And how gross and desperate I was under it. Goodbye Trudy.” and he walks off.

Ali chases after him and I stay rooted in place. Is it truly that easy? To reject them and feel nothing?

“Wade. Please. Now we can be together.” She says through gritted teeth.

This is the reassurance I need to reaffirm I did the right thing. This woman holds nothing sacred other than her potential status in the pack. Convincing Frank that she was beyond saving had been the right thing to do as an alpha.

“Do you not care that your mate rejected you?” I ask, astonished.

“He didn’t deserve me,” she says sitting up.

“Wrong. You didn’t deserve him,” I seethe at her angrily. I turn to walk out of the room and find Ali in the hallway, looking at me strangely.

“She doesn’t even care.” She says, completely shocked. “I’ve seen evil men care more than she does.”

“Apparently even psychopaths get mates,” I say. “Still upset with me?”

“Of course I am. You interfered where you had no right,”

“I did what was best for my pack members,”

“No, you sacrificed a pack member’s happiness to get back at another.”

I stop her when we exit the building, spinning her to face me.

“This is more than a personal vendetta. She endangered this entire pack because of her selfish desires. And Frank is so much better off.” I try to defend myself.

“It is not your place to decide that for him!”

“Did I use my Alpha voice? Did I demand he rejects her?”

“You encouraged it.” She retorts as she turns to walk away.

“That is not the same as making him do it.” I holler after her, chasing her down.

“You laughed about it!” She turns her angry gaze to me. “How could you laugh at the tearing of two souls? I know you don’t value the bond very much, but I didn’t think you actively sought to break it for others.”

I knew my laughing would be misconstrued. I run a hand over my face in weariness. I couldn't help but laugh at her scrunched nose and surprised face. This damn bond is making me notice tiny things like that.

"I was laughing at you." I breathe. She stops in her tracks, and whips around, stalking towards me with fury on her face still.

"Oh, pray tell, what did I do to earn a maniacal laugh at such a heartbreaking moment?"

"You looked cute," I answer honestly, and she freezes. "You said it would take time to get used to this damn bond."

"You're going to blame the bond." She says, scoffing at me.

"I'm just telling you how it is, Ali. Whether it is the bond or not, I don't know. But there is an attraction to you I am fighting against. Hell, it's been there from the beginning."

"It's just the Pansy in combination with the bond." She explains.

"Are you sure about that? Because I don't think you are."

She swallows hard as I take a step towards her, closing the gap between us. I know for a fact she is struggling with this attraction as well. I can practically see her mind working, looking for any excuse so she can continue to deny the growing pull between us. After another moment of hesitation, I step again. She places her hand up, pushing slightly on my chest, stopping me.

"Alpha Wade. That is enough. I am here to protect you. Your physical being. I am not tasked with taking care of your heart. So do yourself a favor and keep your emotions in check. You are nothing to me but a mission. A stepping stone to finding my true mate. No longer will I tolerate your advances." She says firmly.

Her words are like bullets straight to my heart. I regain my composure and look into her eyes. She has gone stoic again. Gone is my chance to see any genuine emotion from her. She pushes me and I step back slightly, removing myself from her walking path.

Ali walks away without so much as a look over her shoulders to check on me. Is all of this really as one-sided as she claims it is, because if it is, I'm in for a pretty sh!tty couple of months with her here. Unless I can make her like me of her own accord...

## The Alpha's Guardian Chapter 25

Ali POV

"Alpha, I really think we need someone to come and train the warriors." Kane pleads.

Wade frowns at the paper in his hand and looks over at me thoughtfully. He looks like he might actually say something, but he thinks better of it and looks over the paper again. Francis and Sammy have left the pack for a vacation. An odd time to leave if you ask me, but it's not my place to question the Beta of the pack.

Since then Wade and Kane have taken to training the warriors of the pack. I provide input but my task is not to train. My task is to protect the alpha, so at almost every training I sit near him and I either watch or I train myself with my weapons. They have a few promising warriors, but the rest are awful. What they really need is a solid trainer.

"Ali," Wade says, looking at me once again.

"No." I shake my head, knowing what he is going to say. "No, I have a mission. Your safety. I can hardly keep you safe if I am focusing on training warriors while you leave pack lands looking to meet for allies."

"Then what can I do?" he asks, rubbing his hand over his face.

Now that he detoxed from the poison, his mind is functioning at full capacity. The pack is running more smoothly. The rogues haven't attacked us since the ceremony, which was over a week ago.

"You do what Kane suggested. You find someone willing to come and train your warriors while we try to track down the Rogue King."

"I don't like the idea of a stranger coming to train our warriors."

"We need someone who can do it. I am not a good trainer." Kane reassures him. "And you don't even know when Francis is coming back from his babymoon,"

Both men's eyes dart to me slightly bulged. I'm not sure why they think it is a big deal for me to know that Francis and Sammy are having a pup. I don't find the news upsetting for any reason.

"You need to call around," I say to them. Glossing over their misstep in the conversation, "Most warrior packs love to show off how amazing they are and willingly send their best warriors to train,"

"I have a few Alpha friends I can reach out to," Wade says giving in finally.

Frustration and embarrassment enter my mind as I look closer at Wade. He looks exhausted. His eyes are dark and I can feel his foggiess. His barriers are failing mentally.

"Kane, anything else you want to add?"

“Nope. As long as we are looking for someone else to take overtraining, I have nothing else to report.”

“You’re dismissed then,” Wade says, picking up his phone and scrolling through it.

“Link me if you need anything else, Alpha,” Kane says and leaves.

Once the door closes, I walk over and sit in the chair across the desk from him. I place my sword across my lap so I can sit more comfortably.

“Do you have any leads on who you might reach out to?”

“I have a few. I’m going to reach out now via text and then we will wait,” he says, scrolling through his phone.

“You should really try to get some rest while you wait for a response.”

“Nah, I’m fine,” he says waving me off.

“Alpha, I can feel your exhaustion. You need to get some rest.” I say sternly.

There is a moment of silence and then he puts his phone down, leaning back, and heaves a big sigh. He looks at me, his eyes looking lost and tired.

“Does it get any easier?” he whispers

“Does what get any easier?” I ask him, confused.

“The bond. The heaviness of the mental barrier.” he pushes away from his desk and stands slowly. His biceps flex, pulling at the confines of his blue button-up shirt. Following the line of his arm, I find myself drawn to his sculpted shoulders and the broad expanse of a chest where his buttons are begging for salvation from the terrible strain of holding the line. I look up and I can see his lips moving, but the words don’t register as I get lost in his facial expressions. He is animated and talking with sad eyes. This is something I should probably listen to. I pull myself back to reality, mentally slapping myself for allowing such distractions to draw my attention.

“-It just feels like it’s getting harder.” He finishes.

Wade looks at me for answers. I can feel him struggling with the barrier, and I understand it. It can be taxing to have a barrier up all the time. I breathe out heavily and walk over to him. Offering him an encouraging smile, I reach out and cup his cheeks in my hands. The tingles hit me like a live wire, and I have to force my face to stay stoic. He is right. The bond is only getting stronger, more addictive. Even for me.

“No.” He says.



His eyes find mine as he reaches up and clasps my hand in his. Slowly, removing them from his cheeks, and stepping closer. His chest is flush to mine. He closes his eyes and breathes deeply. I can see the disappointment in the lines of his weary face, but he says nothing.

“Alpha?” I question after a moment passes with no movement from either of us.

“I don’t need you to carry my weight for me, Ali.” He opens his eyes and I tilt my head, confused.

“I can take some of your exhaustion.”?I try to explain.

“No. I don’t need you to do that. I just need your presence. It calms my mind when you are this close.”

He releases one of my hands and turns my other one over. Palm facing up. He slowly teases his fingers along the creases of it gently. The slight pressure tickles as the sparks erupt and quickly trickle up to my chest. The past week has been filled with tedious work for him and an insane amount of tension for me. This moment, these sparks are a stark reminder of why.

I am still angry with him, but it’s hard to keep a distance when my only job is to be near him. Slowly, I extract my hand from his grasp, hating how quickly the tingles fade to nothing. I can see his disappointment at my retreat, but I have to keep reminding myself that this is just a job. HE is just a mission. He is the last hurdle keeping me from my true mate.

“I am always close, Alpha,” I say with assurance.

He clears his throat and takes a step back.

“Your touch. The sparks, bring a sense of calm over me. That’s all.” He says, schooling his face. He now looks as stoic as I’m pretending to be.

“You should go get some rest.”?I encourage him softly.

“Yeah, probably for the best. You can step out and wait by the door. I’ll make a few phone calls. Perhaps I can get faster responses that way. Hell, maybe I can get someone here tomorrow to start training.” He says, moving over to his desk and sitting back down. He doesn’t look up at me as I move around the front of his desk and head for the door. As I pull the door closed, I hear him greet someone on the phone.

“Alpha Jason,” he says with a low chuckle, that I will never admit does things to me.

I wait outside his door for the better part of an hour. I can feel his exhaustion more and more with each passing minute. His barriers are down and every now and then, I get a

wave of anger or frustration from him. The amount of time it's taking and the emotions he is emitting are telling me that things are not going well.

Reaching into my pocket, I pull out my phone and stare at it for a moment. Is it unprofessional to reach out to my boss and ask him to suggest some packs for aid? I've never asked for his help before. Would he think Alpha Wade is weak if I am the one asking for him? I dial Samuel's number and wait for his voice.

"Ali," he says, amused.

"Samuel, I have a favor to ask."

There is a pause.

"Oh, and what favor would you want from me?" I can hear how much he relishes this.

"I need a lead on Alphas who would train warriors in this pack. Preferably starting tomorrow."

"Ali, it's 8 pm. No one would travel through the night to be there tomorrow."

"Then as soon as possible," I say sternly.

"Is your Alpha not capable of finding his own replacement?"

"No, that's not what this is about. My Alpha is under duress and it's my job to ease it. This is me doing my job, Samuel. The job YOU sent me here to do." I say with force.

He sighs heavily into the line.

"Fine. I'll see what I can do." He sighs.

"Also, maybe make sure it doesn't seem like I did this?" I ask sweetly. Samuel chuckles lightly.

"You never make anything easy. Someone will be in touch with your Alpha soon."

Another 10 minutes go by and finally I sigh in relief when the Alpha's tension seems to lessen, and he exits the doors. He looks at me for a moment and silently ascends the stairs to our rooms. He stops at his door and looks back at me.

"Alpha Liam will be here tomorrow morning."

I freeze at the sound of his words, and my heart palpitates.

"A-alpha Liam? Of the Red Star Pack?" I try to keep my anxiety to myself.

Wade Nods and enters his room, shutting the door, leaving me staring at the void in the hallway. Alpha Liam. My Liam. My first mission, the one that broke my heart when I was forced to leave his side. Fvck. I never expected to see him again.