

The Alpha's Guardian Chapter 56

The guard's body slumps to the floor with a wet thud. I step back to regain my composure, opening my eyes only to find a stunned Liam. Ali stirs, and I rush over to her, lifting her with ease. Without a word, I start down the hallway, Liam hot on my heels.

"Have to admit, I didn't think you had it in ya." Liam whistles.

I ignore him and walk on until we hit the door leading outside. Liam heads out first, peeking around to ensure the coast is clear. I steal a glance down at Ali while we wait, and I regret it. Anger floods back over me and the desire to go make sure all the guards are dead makes its way to the forefront of my mind. Liam pops his head back in, breaking through my burning fury.

"We are clear. Let's move."

I nod, and as quickly as my leg will let me, I run across the opening with Ali. Sweat drips down my face from the pain and I'm grateful the guardian oath was broken. It would kill me knowing she was getting my injuries while she is already in so much pain.

We find Simon waiting for us on the edge of the woods, sitting nonchalantly on a tree stump, talking with Francis. The moment he sees Ali, he goes rigid and stands, moving over to us with speed.

"I was expecting someone who could walk." He breathed. "Shit, they did a number on her."

"She seems to be healing pretty well," Francis observes, sliding me a glance.

"Mason?"

"Ada and Isaac ran him to the healer. Robin can't know yet. We need her to spot Simon on their way out."

"She must be good," Simon remarks.

"Her eyesight is the best I've ever seen. I swear she is part Hawk." Francis responds.

Francis looks at my neck and sighs. I'm afraid to look down. My adrenaline is still pumping, so I know my pain levels will skyrocket the moment I get back to my room. Francis reaches out with both hands and I lean back slightly.

"She is healing fast because you are her mate and her body knows it. But she will heal faster if the bond is acknowledged, something her subconscious can pick up on."

Confused, I look down at my chest as Francis reaches around my neck and unclips the amulet I had put on before coming to rescue her. My heart pumps with excitement as he removes it from me and places it in his pocket. I look at Ali expectantly and frown when there is no change in movement.

“You two are mates?” Simon asks.

“Yeah,”

Liam growls angrily, but I ignore his displeasure at my declaration. The moment Ali recognizes me as her mate, he will know and have to back off. Then maybe we can understand why he thinks he is her mate. Because there is no way I’m sharing her.

“We have to get to the border,”

“Right behind you,”

I switch Ali to the other side, placing most of her weight on my uninjured side and amble after Simon through the woods. I can hear the snarls of wolves fighting against each other as we run deeper into the cover of trees, the howling of the injured, dying out in its dense cover. It shouldn’t take us too long to make it to the border unless we get intercepted.

-Francis, I need you to keep me posted on when they realize Ali is gone-

-Yes Alpha-

The moment Samuel realizes she is gone, he will want to verify it himself. And then he will storm after me and Liam. I know that I’ve been playing his game, but he isn’t as dimwitted as I would have hoped. In fact, he is calculating and a manipulative genius. Which is why I don’t trust a thing he says.

I know he has seen in my eyes how much she means to me. I will be the first person he expects to be getting her out. This is why I have to pick up the pace. I need to get back and shower the blood of his warriors off my face and bandage my wound.

Ali squirms in my arms, but I have no time to slow down. I can feel her arms move up and wrap around my neck, clinging to me for dear life. I steal a quick glance and see her eyes are still closed tight. Perhaps she feels me as her mate and that’s why she is clinging to me. I attempt to step with more purpose and better footing, to not jostle her.

Simon slows before me as we reach the small decaying wooden fence that signals the end of our pack land. He carefully steps over it and turns to face me.

“Wait here for a moment. I need to grab a warrior who can carry her.”

I grumble at the thought of her being in someone else’s arms.

“Alpha Wade, you have a pack that needs you more than your mate. She is safe with us. I assure you, her uncle cares for her very much.”

I nod, unable to form words without risking sounding like an angry, petulant child throwing a fit he won’t win. When we are alone, I look down at her and slowly lower myself to a boulder by the fence, her still gripped in my arms as I groan in pain at the bending of my leg.

“Ali?” I say feebly. When I get no response, I sigh in defeat.

“You weren’t supposed to get caught, you silly woman. It was the only order I gave you. And you disobeyed. Ridiculous.”

I laugh to myself at the absurdity of me talking to an unconscious woman and chastising her. But I can’t help it. I want to chastise and be angry that they caught her, even though it wasn’t her fault. She is hurt and I can’t help but feel like I should have just gone with her. But then, where would my pack be? In the hands of Samuel. And as an Alpha, I won’t ever let that happen.

Gently, I reach out and slowly remove the hair from her face. Her black locks are uneven and choppy, and I can only assume that it happened during the fighting. I loved her long hair, and how it looked when she would just toss it up haphazardly without a care for how it looked. But I could get used to it being short as well. Hell, she could be bald and still be fiercely stunning.

A smile forms on my lips as I scan her once swollen face and I am pleased that she is healing much faster than she ever has before. Her bruising is still prominent and deep, but her swelling is diminishing and her cuts are slowly scabbing over.

I reach down and gently pull aside her jacket and glance at her chest, surveying her collar bone burns and I’m relieved when I see the menacing pus-filled bubbles are decreasing in size. I hate how much torture they inflicted on her. A tear falls down my cheek as I look away from her and search for Simon, who should come back any minute. A cold slim finger caresses my cheek and I close my eyes, letting the tingles explode across my face as my tear is wiped away.

My eyes snap open in surprise, and I look down into her gorgeous eyes.

“Tears for me?” she asks hoarsely.

I sob out a chuckle as relief floods me and all my fears fade away. She is awake. She is safe. And now I have to leave her. I gently lower my forehead to hers and she gasps at the electric shock from the mate bond. Her eyes widen as she looks deep into mine.

“M-mate?” she asks in excitement, tripping over her own words. I nod to her with the biggest grin.

“I am yours, Aliauna Fletcher.”

I can barely get the words out before Francis links me.

-The rogues are retreating. Samuel is planning to check the dungeon the moment he can get away. You need to get back now-

I bite my lip in anger and look up to see Simon sprinting in our direction with a large warrior. I stand carefully and move to the fence, Ali still clinging to me.

“Ali, I have to send you with Simon.”

She pulls back from me and looks at me with concern.

“Be careful with Samuel. I don’t know what he is planning,”

The warrior reaches out for her, and hesitantly I raise her to him. She spins and shifts her weight so she is into my chest again and she grabs my face, bringing her lips to mine.

Everything fades to the background as we finally fully acknowledge the bond between us. The world swirls around us and I feel weightless like all my problems mean nothing and are nothing so long as I have her with me.

When we pull apart, she leans out and is pulled from my arms. I watch her for a moment before stepping back and turning on my heels and sprinting back to the packhouse. My duties are ahead of me and my heart behind me.

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Ali POV

Every bit of me ached from the hair on the top of my head down to the toenails on my feet. There is only so much torture a single person can take. They had trained me for torture and in the art of keeping my pain at bay. But when the person who trains you is your tormentor, they get creative.

I can honestly say I am surprised by Samuel’s betrayal. He had been so kind and attentive when I was younger. But perhaps that had more to do with my abilities to fight than his desire to treat me like I was his own.

The moment they caught me, I knew Samuel wouldn’t allow Wade to know I was still on his pack lands. I was trying to formulate my way out, but my body was so exhausted from trying to speed its healing process that I couldn’t stay awake. It wasn’t until I noticed I was in someone’s arms that something inside of me awoke. Every pain and ache

blossomed into a beautiful tingling, acting as a salve to my burns and ebbing away my suffering.

Wade is my mate.

I smile into the back of the warrior who is carrying me. I look over my shoulder, hoping to catch a glimpse of him, knowing it will disappoint me when I don't see him. But it was worth the pain in the neck for even the thought of seeing him. All I want to do is hop down and race for him. But that would be suicide for his pack. I smirk again. Our pack. If we are able to be reunited again, I will be his Luna. and the pack that has grown on me will be my home.

This is the best day ever. Well, for my romantic life, that is. On second thought, this is a shitty day. I found my mate and I'm torn from him. This plain sucks.?I groan in pain when the warrior stops abruptly and lowers me to the ground. I'm unsteady on my feet and Simon reaches out, helping to keep me upright.

"We have a car coming in a minute. Then we can get you looked at. Your uncle will meet us at the healers." he assures me.

I nod in understanding and look around, noticing only now that we are in a makeshift campsite. Rogues slowly trickle in, looking worse for the wear. A few of them seem to have fared decently, though the majority are covered in blood.

"You guys launched an attack?" I ask, bewildered.

"Not on our own," Simon says, helping me to a chair. "Your Alpha reached out amid us planning and said he would help in any manner possible. He seems to have known you were his mate."

"He figures things out before others somehow." I blush at hearing someone else say it out loud.

His mate.

"The mighty guardian blushes?" Simon jibs. I laugh at his remark. I'm not sure when my reputation as a guardian robbed me of my humanistic qualities in others' eyes, but apparently, it did.

"I do many things, Simon. Including blush. I'm not ashamed of it."

"And you shouldn't be." he smiles softly. "It's a gift."

There is a glint in his eyes, a memory, and a sadness that sits just out of reach. It's strange to be on this side of the fight. To be saved by the people I have been fighting. It's much harder to take a life when you know it has value, a story that hasn't been told or one

that hasn't been lived. Being here is giving me the human side of the nasty rogues who are full of bloodlust. I'm thinking they aren't full of blood lust, but heartbreak and a desire for vengeance.

A large black SUV pulls up and Simon pops up quickly, turning to aid me. He stumbles slightly under my weight as I lean on him. After a few moments of struggling to get up and into the car, I am finally settled and finding myself winded. Simon crawls beside me as a few other injured warriors follow suit. The car ride is tense and uncomfortable as every wolf in the car groans or grunts in pain as we bounce down the bumpy road.

I can't help the audible sigh that escapes me when we finally stop in front of our destination. A gurney greets me as I'm whisked away into the building, two healers bustling around me as they try to assess the extent of my injuries. They whisper to each other as they examine my collarbone, arms, and ribs. My face is still a mangled mess, but from what I can feel, nothing up there is screaming out that it's broken. My ribs, however, are feeling mighty painful, and it feels like my left lung is being poked with every breath.

"What's the issue?" A familiar voice asks from the doorway. I turn my head to see Uncle Corbin.

"We don't understand..."

"How I heal so fast in certain areas?" I ask.

"Well, yeah,"

"My mate carried me out and held onto me until the very last minute."

"Well, that explains some of it."

"Some of it?"

"Ma'am. You are an omega werewolf. Which means you should heal at the same speed as a human. Yes, your mate can help heal you with their presence. But you are healing exponentially faster than any omega, even with your mate not here." The male healer explains.

"She is only partially omega." Uncle Corbin answers.

"I'm sorry, what?" The female healer asks in shock.

"I was born with a wolf, and they took it from me when I was a child."

Both healers grow pale.

“For you to survive, they had to do a lesser dose, which led to you keeping some of your wolf qualities without having your actual wolf.” The male healer finishes connecting the dots.

“Healing is one quality I retained partially. So I typically heal four times faster than humans but twice as long as the typical werewolf.”

The female healer looks at Corbin with sadness in her eyes.

“I remember you.” She murmurs. “I defected from the pack that day, a lot of us did.”

Silence falls over us.

“Uh, so what’s the damage?” I ask, trying to break the awkward tension.

“Right. I’m sorry. Um. You have four broken ribs on your right side and two on your left. The lower rib on your left is close to your lung, but since you are already healing, I don’t think surgery will be required. Your burns were infected, but even as I look at them, I can see the fluid is turning clear. Your bruising on your face is looking better by the minute and I don’t see any actual breaks in your nose or orbital bones. You will need at least a week to recover. Two weeks to get back to normal.”

“OK,” Corbin sighs heavily. “Ali, get some rest and see me in the morning, ok?”

“Sure,” I respond and he turns and leaves the room.

“I’m going to give you some sleep medication. It’s important you get as much rest as possible.”

“I don’t need-”

“Ma’am, with all due respect, I get you are an incredible warrior, but you just underwent torture. Your physical health is important to us, but so is your mental health. You will have a hard time without these pills. When you are healing better, we can assess your psychological injuries. But for now, I’m not asking.” The female healer says,

“Thank you,” I say, taking the pills from her and tossing them back. I know when to give in to a battle. And for the sake of healing faster, I can back down this time.

I open my eyes to see the sun peeking through the curtains with a blinding fury. My head is throbbing and my eyes hurt but after a quick body check, I’m relieved to find that my extremities all seem to be in working order, more or less. I stretch my arms over my head and regret it immediately as my sides ache menacingly.

“Ali-Bee.” Uncle Corbin says from the doorway. “You’re awake, I was starting to worry.”

“How long did I sleep?” I ask gently easing myself up on the bed.

“Oh, roughly 32 hours.”

My eyes widen in shock.

“I’m sorry it sounded like you said 32 hours.”

“Indeed I did,” he smirks at me and walks into the room towards my bed.

“How are your injuries?” I ask him looking at his face that looks mostly healed.

“I fear you fared far worse than me.” he frowns. “But you’re safe now, and that’s what is important.” He shifts uncomfortably from one foot to the other. and clears his throat.

“Ali, I think it’s time we finish our conversation.”

“About who killed my parents?” I ask

“That is part of it, yes, but we have much bigger issues-“

“Do you have a name?” I ask, cutting him off.

He looks away momentarily.

“Uncle Corbin, do you have the name of the man who shot my parents?”

He nods and sighs heavily.

“It was Samuel.”

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I know Samuel isn’t who I thought he was. He is clearly a seasoned manipulator and his soul is as black as they come. Yet, a part of me struggles to believe Uncle Corbin. I mean, this all happened because of him and his mate. But he didn’t pull the trigger. He didn’t deliver the sentence or beg for mercy for my father, which led to all of us being stripped of our wolves. No, those were all individual reactions to what had happened.

Taking a deep breath in, I look over at Corbin. I’m not sure what I’m hoping to find in his eyes. Perhaps I was looking for a trace of mistruths. Anything that would help lead me to believe that my hardships weren’t based on the lies of other men. That all my suffering and loss was actually about me doing something wrong instead of just being caught up in someone else’s misfires.

Instead, I saw the truth. Uncle Corbin had loved his mate, loved my parents, and still loves me. He can't make amends for the things that followed her death because what followed wasn't his fault. The fault of jealous and homicidal anger falls squarely on one man's shoulders. Samuel. The man who raised me made me who I am. In so many more ways than I could have ever understood.

"Samuel," I repeat.

"Yes."

"I need more than just his name. I don't understand how he is tied up in any of this. It doesn't make sense."

Corbin sighs heavily and sits next to my bedside. He looks so drained. He takes a minute to reach out and squeeze my hand gently. Before removing it and leaning back in his seat.

"There is so much that you don't know or remember. I don't know where to begin."

"How do you know Samuel?"

"I don't actually know him, per se. Uh. He was the beta's son from the other pack. The one who was supposed to be mated with Gail. The day of the ceremony was the day she and I were running away. But as I stated before when I found her, she was already.... well she was gone." He stops for a moment, clearing his throat.

"The day your parents got shot, you all were supposed to meet me. Your Dad found me and said he wanted to defect from the pack. I was waiting by the riverbed and you guys never came. When it got dark, I went searching. I came across a group of guys camping in the woods. They had guns, which was extremely strange since they smelled like wolves."

He is right, wolves having guns is very unorthodox, but it happens from time to time. I had always assumed they just didn't want to look at their beloved beta as they killed him for the crime of only wanting a better life for his family. Cowards like to have a barrier between them and the life they are taking. It acts as a buffer for their emotions. You can disconnect yourself from the crime if you don't have blood on your hands.

"How does any of this point to Samuel?" I ask, trying to make sense of his jumbled explanations.

"His name wasn't Samuel back then, his name was Silas, and he was known for his vibrant green eyes and hair so blonde you would almost think it was white. His hair was practically glowing in the fire's light. He had the rifle in his hand and was cleaning it. Your parents were shot from long range. A rifle."

"So when you saw Samuel in the meeting, you knew he was Silas?"

“I recognized him but his name change threw me off.” he shrugged. “It wasn’t until I realized he was the one who found you in the woods that it all came together. He killed your parents and hunted you for days before taking you in.”

My stomach churns at the thought. What kind of sick as*shole kills an innocent man and woman and steals their daughter. Was I some sick trophy for him to carry around? Does the committee know? Does Wade know the extent of the danger he is in?

“We have to warn Wade,” I say firmly. “I don’t know what Samuel wants with him, but all the other people the committee was looking at are missing. He has to be a part of it somehow. He is the one tasked to find them.”

“Calm yourself. You aren’t healed enough to do anything,” He insists.

“Bullsh!t!” I say, swinging my legs to the side of the bed. “Pain isn’t a stranger to me.”

“Ali-”

“No! Don’t Ali me. That is my pack that is in danger. My mate!” I stand gingerly on my feet, pleased to feel that I have more authority over my legs than I did when I got here.

“Tell me, what injury would keep you from saving Gail if you had the chance?” I ask.

“There is more happening than you know,” he says, growing agitated.

“Then enlighten me! I’m not the child you left behind. I am a grown-a-ss woman, and a fvcking warrior,”

“There are rumors that the packs whose Alphas went missing think it was Wade who took their Alphas.”

“What?!” I ask in disbelief.

“They declared war on the Moon Shadow Pack.”

“If they declared war, then it’s not a rumor!” I say angrily, searching for my gear.

There is no way there will be a war on my pack and Wade. I will fight every single wolf alone if I have to, to keep them safe. Corbin groans angrily.

“You need to rest Ali!” He yells.

“You want to leave them to fend for themselves? They have people coming to annihilate them from the outside, all the while the enemy is living within their borders! No one will survive.”

“It’s not our fight,” he says, rubbing his eyes.

“Ah, there is the uncle I know and remember so well. The coward who runs and leaves others to die!” I throw my words at him.

He takes a step back from me, my words hitting him as hard as I had wanted.

“I have my own pack to protect,” he whispers. I chuckle at him.

“And who do you think they will come for next? You once said you thought you would be a good fit for uniting the werewolf community. Leaders lead!”

“When the time is right for them to lead, yes, but I will not lead them all to their death. Not everything has to be a fight to the death, Ali. We are trying to communicate with them! I am not sitting idly by waiting for you to experience the one pain that could break you.”

“Let me go to them. Let me be the courier.” I demand.

“No,” he shakes his head adamantly. “No, they would assume you are still just following your guardian duty,”

“Alpha Nick,” I say, suddenly remembering that he is an alpha that Wade trusts. “Let me try to meet with him, to give him proof! I tell him he has to deliver it to Francis or Wade personally.”

“Alpha Nick of the Blood Star pack?”

“I believe so. Look, he is the only chance I have at warning Alpha Wade without me running in there trying to fight everyone in my way,”

Corbin paces the room for a moment before giving in.

“You have to take someone with you,” he says, giving in.

“Fine, anyone. Just, we need to leave immediately.”

“I’ll have Jacob meet you out front in 30 minutes. Get cleaned up. I will have someone leave you clean clothes and bring you some weapons that suit you.”

He walks to the door, pausing for a moment.

“Ali, please be careful. I know I’ve been the root of all your misfortune, but I love you little Ali-bee.” and he walks out the door.

I want to tell him I love him too, that I don't blame him and I can forgive him. But I can't bring myself to lie. Do I love my uncle? I love who he was before he fled, the man who played with me and babysat and got me ice cream. But that little girl died the same day that uncle did. We both were replaced with callous, colder versions. Versions who didn't have the luxury of unconditional love for a long time.

It's not that I blame him for the things that have happened. He more or less just seems to be the common denominator in all my sorrows without being the perpetrator. Forgiveness seems much easier than it once had. It seems more plausible than loving him through these complicated feelings. When I get to the root of the problem, the issue that remains is, I'm afraid to love him because my family tends to disappear.

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My leg bounces anxiously while Jacob drives at what seems like the slowest pace possible. I slide a glance towards Jacob; the rogue selected to come with me and I can't help but get the feeling that I know him from somewhere. He looks over and makes a face.

"Why are you staring at me?" he asks

"You look so familiar."

"You just left the Moon Shadow pack, right?"

"Yeah..."

"I look like my younger siblings." He says wistfully. "They are twins."

"Mason and Robin?" I ask, my eyes going wide.

"You know them?" He asks, shocked.

"They were some of the first people I met. You-you're THEIR Jacob? The one that disappeared and was best friends with Frank?"

"Sheesh. So you know them, and I didn't disappear. I left them a letter."

"I don't think they ever got it. They are convinced you are dead. Well, Mason is."

"My dad must not have given it to them." He clears his throat and looks forward.

"As far as I knew, they are being raised by your grandma Ethel. I've not heard anything about their dad or mom."

Jacob stiffens and I realize that what I'm saying is probably hard to hear. I'm basically telling him I think his parents are dead beats or just plain dead.

"Oh." is all he says and silence overcomes us.

After what I'm sure is an eternity in silence, we arrive at the back border of the Blood Star pack. A wall of warriors greets us in the road and looks us over. In my injured state, and now knowing that Jacob must also be an omega based on his parentage, I'm feeling a little concerned about our odds if things go sideways.

"We come in peace," Jacob says and I slide him a dumbfounded look.

"Jeez, way to make it sound like we are talking to aliens," I mutter to him, taking a step forward.

"My name is Ali, I have a meeting with Alpha Nick."

A shorter muscular man steps forward, looking me over.

"It looks like you had a rough go recently, Ali," he smirks, a gold tooth shining in the direct sun.

"Nothing I won't heal from." I smile back at him.

"Alpha Wade told me you might reach out and that you were to be trusted. From the intel I've gathered, he is in quite the nefarious position, it seems?"

"I'd love to sit down and have a chat if you can spare the time," I respond.

"Come along then," he sighs.

His office is much more lavish and ornate than Wades. Where Wade's is modern and minimalistic, Alpha Nicks is deep and rich with collector's items and fancy little statues. The walls are a deep burgundy with dark wood trimming and the room smells of cigars and leather. This is definitely a more typical Alpha males office.

"Come, come, have a seat." He says sweetly, walking over to his own chair.

I had expected him to be grand, taller, and, well, a little more menacing than the shorter, older man sitting in front of me. He shoots me a smirk, pulling me from my assessment in my mind.

"I am accustomed to people severely underestimating me, Guardian."

"I am aware of your strengths, Alpha Nick. Alpha Wade only keeps the best kind of company."

“Until of late.” he sighs.

I tilt my head in confusion. Could he possibly already know about Samuel and the things happening within the pack? I assume that Wade already has a new guardian by now and is being watched like a hawk.

“What would you like to speak about?”

“I am sure you are aware by now of the committee’s favor for Alpha Wade and a few select other alphas?”

“Yes, and that all but Alpha Wade have disappeared.”

“The rogues have come across some intel that Alpha Wade is being blamed for the disappearance of the others, for his own selfish ambition.”

Alpha Nick throws his head back in a loud barky laugh.

“Alpha Wade and selfish ambition in the same sentence is strange to hear,” he says trying to calm his laugh. “I’m sorry, continue.”

“Those Alphas’ pack have been convinced that he is holding their alpha’s captive.”

His eyes widen in shock.

“And they have declared war.” he finishes for me.

“Yes.”

“This is bad. All the packs?”

“I’m not sure, at the very least, three,” I say, shrugging.

“And you want me to pass this information on to Alpha Wade?”

“Yes, and no. I want to know that Alpha Wade can rely on you for aid.”

“Why do you care? He is not your charge anymore.”

“He is my mate. And Shadow Moon is my pack. I will die defending him and it.” I say without hesitation.

“Hmm. I know the Beta and acting alpha for one pack. I may be able to dissuade him and perhaps he can talk a few other packs down. But I have to tell them something, give them someone.”

“Samuel.”

“Samuel?”

“Yes, the committee member. I am sure he has a hand in it.”

“But he is in your pack grounds now, is he not?” He asks, concern etched in his brow.

“He is.”

“Sh!t. Then if they come for him, your pack will be caught in the crossfire.”

“You worry just about reaching out to the acting alpha you know and Alpha Wade to make sure he knows what is going on. I will work from my end with the rogues.”

“I have to admit, I’m not too keen on working with the rogues,” he says, sighing.

“From what I have seen, most of them are decent people who were left with no other option but to defect. I agree not all of them are good. But for now, our only option is hoping we have enough to help fight if it comes to it.”

“I suppose you are right, doesn’t mean I have to like it. I will call a few bordering alphas as well. Alpha Wade seems like a small pack, but he has many loyal friends, and by our extension, he has a lot of backing. He has always kept his word if it was within his power.” He says, trying to reassure me.

“This may be out of place but...”

“Why didn’t he have help earlier when he was attacked by rogues?” he finishes my thought. “Alpha Wade was out of sorts for a few years. He really thought he could handle everything on his own, so we often never knew of the attacks until they had passed. When I finally called him out on it, he told me his wolf was fighting for control. I mentioned to him he should take a mate to help calm his wolf.”

“The pack was poisoned,” I say simply.

“Really?” He says looking shocked.

“For a few years.”

“Well, I’ll be damned. No wonder he was weird and short-tempered. Did he find out who was behind it?”

“I have my suspicions, but as far as I know, no. They haven’t figured it out yet.”

“That is very interesting indeed,” he says softly as though in deep thought.

I have a feeling that Alpha Nick might have some insight into the whole poisoning issue, but that's not why I am here. And I am sure if he has information, he will share it with Wade. He seems to be a genuine friend and a real ally, and I'm grateful that Wade could snag such loyalty from such a smart man.

The Alpha's Guardian Chapter 60

Wade POV

I'm not accustomed to feeling like a prisoner in my home. Samuel continually banishes me to the confines of my packhouse. Not that it does much. I still walk around pack grounds, greeting my pack members. Even if he gets angry about it. I am not the type of person who cowers in a tower waiting for the bad guys to go away.

Samuel, of course, isn't happy about my resistance and begs me to respect his orders. Respect is a mutual thing and I can tell he thinks I am beneath him. He talks politely enough but his side remarks and whisperings with his men and tries to act nonchalant when called out on it.

I know Ali's escaping bothers him. She bested him while being unconscious after all. That kind of blow does something to a man's ego, especially a man whose ego is bigger than it should be. I think what worries him most, though, is knowing she is out there and that she now knows he is no longer the good guy. Someone is on to him, and it's someone he fears.

"Alpha," Francis whispers at the window.

I rush over and unlock it, allowing him to enter my room. He looks at me and smiles devilishly.

"Oh Romeo, my Romeo," He jokes.

"Hah! Real funny. You a*s." I laugh.

"I really can't believe he has you locked away up here like some fairytale. I really took you more for prince charming than a princess in distress."

"Francis, you are my best friend and my Beta. I would really hate to murder you in my own room." I scowl, but the smile on his face can't be wiped away.

"Nothing can bring me down, Alpha Wade. Not even your violent threats."

"Oh yeah? And why is that?"

"Sammy had another appointment. The wolf has successfully become a part of the baby."

“And Sammy?”

“She is an omega now, but she is alive and to me, that’s more than enough.”

“Sammy is an amazing mother.”

“I knew she would be,” Francis says.

His eyes are a mixture of emotions. Pride and admiration are at the forefront, but I can still see a hint of sadness there. I reach out and pull my best friend in for a rough hug.

“I am glad they are both ok, Francis, but it’s ok to be sad about Sammy losing her wolf too.”

He just nods before turning and wiping his face. He clears his throat and turns back around to face me.

“I have news from Alpha Nick since you can’t seem to get a moment alone to discuss things with him.”

“It’s like having an extra shadow. My room is my only sanctuary.” I mutter in annoyance.

“Well, Ali met with Alpha Nick three days ago.”

My heart thumps wildly at her name and even though I was paying attention before, it feels like the whole of my body is waiting in anticipation for more about our mate.

“How is she?”

“He said she looked pretty messed up. He said her face was pretty bruised and cut up, but there was no swelling. Considering what she looked like when she escaped, I would say that him saying she wasn’t swollen is a good thing.”

“You’re probably right. What else did Alpha Nick have to say?”

Francis grows pale.

“Oh, that good, huh?” I say in jest.

“Alpha, several packs have declared war on us.”

“I see,” I say, trying to keep calm. “Did he give you a reason they might want to declare war on us and who they are?”

“According to him, it’s the packs with missing alphas all on the same list as you. They seem to have some information that states you are holding their alpha’s captive.”

“Fantastic,” I say, sarcastically.

“Alpha Nick says we need to be prepared for their attacks at any moment. He has no idea when they will arrive or how many packs are involved.”

“I would assume seven.”

“Well, he said he was able to dissuade three packs.”

“We need to evacuate the weak for the time being,” I say, determined.

“How? It’s impossible without Samuel knowing.”

“It’s time to call my sister and her husband’s pack and ask that they take our omegas and the sick.”

“That’s an international flight.”

“I am well aware. It will be a pack expense.”

“I will make sure it gets done by tomorrow,” Francis says, walking back to the window.

“Francis, make sure Mason and Robin are on the flight too.”

“Alpha,” Francis says about to protest

“Francis, I know they picked up on training quickly and that they are excellent, especially Robin, but they are still minors.”

“I’ll do my best,” Francis sighs

“Francis, did we get a time frame?”

“No, but I would assume any day now.”

“Sh!t,” I murmur.

I turn my back away from Francis, trying to think, figure this out. When I turn back again, he is already gone. Nothing feels worse than waiting in the dark for death to come knocking. Though with the way I’m being forced to live, death sounds inviting. Francis could have come through the front door, but then I would have been forced to meet him in my office with one of Samuel’s goons present.

Samuel is obsessed with separating me from my pack. Maybe he is hoping they will turn on me. Perhaps he is convinced if he keeps me hidden away for long enough, my pack members will believe I have abandoned them. There even seems to be some type of

disturbance that prevents me from mind linking my pack members. Oddly enough, when I leave the packhouse, it seems to work just fine.

My stomach growls in protest of me skipping a meal once again. I move to the door and find myself in the kitchen, staring into the open fridge in shock. It's completely empty. I turn and see a basket of fruit and notice only one apple remains. Smiling as it reminds me of Ali, I grab it and take a bite.

The room lights up in luminescent orange and white and I'm lifted from my feet and thrown over the kitchen island. A loud bang finally hits my ears as dust and dirt fall around me. The world echoes and a few small fires crackle around the now blown apart wall. I blink through the smoke and confusion as I lift myself into a standing position. I can see figures moving around frantically. They are trying to come to help me, put out the fire. I squint to look closer.

I'm wrong. I look out and see Samuel's guys chatting happily with a group of warriors I have never seen. The moment they see me standing in the rubble that was once my kitchen, their eyes turn dark and they stalk towards me. Wolves step in front of them, growling fiercely, and I recognize Francis and Ada. I run towards the opening and jump out, landing right behind my pack members who have run to protect me.

I guess now is as good a time as any to go to war.