

The Alpha's Guardian Chapter 74

After eating the best steak and potatoes I have ever had the privilege of putting in my mouth, Wade drags me out of the packhouse and down the front steps. His hands are entwined with mine firmly as he looks back and smiles like an eager child trying to show their mom a new trick. The moment we are near the woods he slows down and grins at me.

"Dinner was amazing," I say truthfully.

"Yeah, it didn't turn out too bad."

"How are you feeling?" I ask as I point to his stomach.

"Honestly, not too bad. It feels weird though, I've never healed this fast before so it kind of feels like my skin is constantly moving. Almost like it's itchy."

"When do you need the dressing changed?"

"Probably when we get back. I was hoping for a shower of some sort once it's at least not an open wound."

"I'll help you with the dressing when we get back to our room."

"So," he says, clearing his throat. "James needs me to head back with him in a week."

"Ok."

"And I was wondering if maybe you would want to do the mating ceremony after I get back."

"When will you get back?" I ask.

"I'm not sure. They didn't give me a time frame of when we will be back."

"We?"

"I am not going without you, Ali."

"But the pack..."

"Everyone is here in Alpha Nick's pack for the time being or with my sister's pack. Plus if we both go we can pull the 'We need to get back to our pack' card and get out of there faster." he shrugs.

“Will that give your family time to get here?” I ask.

Wade stops walking and smiles happily.

“You want my family there?”

“Wade, it’s our ceremony. Of course, I want your family there.”

“Then they will be there.” He smiles happily. “So that means you will come with me?”

“I’ll think about it...”

We walk along in comfortable silence. It’s nice to finally be able to just relax and enjoy being with him. The occasional pack member will walk by and wave or nod in acknowledgment but they all give us our space to just be with each other. This is what it feels like to just be an ordinary person, living an ordinary life with their extraordinary mate.

I can’t help but feel like all my trials, and tragedies have led me to this moment. Not that my parent’s death is what led me to Wade, but that the circumstances surrounding us made us the people we needed to be to finally find each other. I try to imagine what my life would be like if my parents were still here. Would they have been taken from me in some other way? Where would I be right now? Would I still be holding this amazing man’s hand?

The more I think about it the more my mind wanders to Liam. He was my first mate and my first love. Or what I thought was love. It’s hard to have an idea of what love is when I had spent the entirety of my young adulthood seeking approval and acceptance. Liam had taught me a lot, about what I can handle, about who I was, but most importantly he helped me decide who I wanted to be. I didn’t want to be like him. Fighting for the thrill of the fight, but that doesn’t mean I didn’t care for him for a very long time after leaving his side.

In a way, I think Liam will always have a hold on me. It’s not in the classical sense of him holding a piece of my heart but more of he helped shape me and without him, I wouldn’t be standing here next to Wade. My tie to Liam is one of gratitude for the knowledge and growth I got when I was with him. How can I just brush aside some of the biggest lessons that made me who I am today?

Wade drapes his arm over my shoulder as we walk further until we come across a small little building. He steers me towards it and opens the door for me, the little bell dinging to let the owner know of our presence. The sweet smell of pastries and cream overwhelms my senses and my mouth waters. We step up to the quaint display. Cookies, cakes, donuts, and assorted pastries stare me down begging to be given the chance to prove their worthiness. As I scan the glass my eyes settle on the most perfect slice of cheesecake.

A small squeak of glee somehow escapes my lips as I bring my head closer, fully examining it. Its moist texture calls to me and the fresh berries on top glisten with their sugary coat. I see a shadow descend for it and the case opens and a small aged hand reaches in and takes the last slice placing it on a plate, and then walks away. I stand and follow it with my eyes and find Wade standing at the counter smirking at me, holding two forks and the plate of beloved goodness.

“For me?” I ask grinning and walking over to him. He turns slightly pulling the plate close to his chest, in feign shock.

“For us. But only IF you agree to go with me.”

“For that”, I say pointing to the cheesecake “I will follow you anywhere.”

“Oh good to know.” he says chuckling, “Let’s go grab a table outside.”

“There were tables?”

“On the other side there are” he chuckles, handing me the forks. Clearly, he doesn’t trust me alone with the cheesecake.

I follow him around the corner and find a few wrought iron chairs and tables. Wade makes his way to the one closest to the woods and we take a seat. I immediately dig in before the cheesecake plate hits the table and Wade laughs at me, reaching for a fork which I hold captive.

“Oh, you want some too?” I ask teasing him

“I mean if you’re willing to share, yeah.”

“I’ll fight you for it,” I smirk, remembering back to the days not so long ago when I first arrived.

“I’m injured.”

“You were injured then too.” I remind him.

“That is true. But you wanted to hit me then, do you still want to hit me now?”

“That depends on how much cheesecake you plan to eat,” I say, narrowing my eyes at him.

He puts his hands up in defeat and leans back in his chair. I stab another bite of cheesecake and a little nervously I lean forward and offer him a bite, feeding him like his arms are broken. His eyes darken slightly and he gives me a sexy smirk as he opens his mouth and takes a bite.

“That’s pretty good,” he says, nodding at me. “Maybe I can have my own fork? Not that I mind you feeding me, but maybe we should save that for another night” he says his voice dropping lowly and butterflies dance around my stomach at the insinuation.

I clear my throat, feeling much warmer than I was, and shyly hand him over a fork. How does he have so much power with just the timbre of his voice? I watch him as he eats and my eyes fly to his soft lips as they smack together. His tongue darts out to swipe in a lingering piece of sweets and a lump forms in my throat. I watch as his lips slowly lift into a sexy crooked smile and I know I’ve been caught. Hesitantly I bring my eyes up to meet his, and I’m surprised that instead of lust and s****I frustration I find admiration and amusement.

“The bond is really pushing the limits huh?” he asks sounding almost sad.

I smile brightly at him.

“No, this isn’t the bond. This is just me loving you.” I respond. He smiles and reaches out, clearing a crumb from the corner of my mouth.

“I know I have said it a thousand times, Wade but...I really do love you”

“I can promise you, I will never get sick of hearing those words come out of your mouth.” He smiles and I can feel the sincerity the words carry.

“Let’s not wait.” I blurt out.

“I’m sorry what?” he says. His eyes bulging in shock.

“For the ceremony, let’s do the ceremony before we go.”

He just stares at me in utter shock. His mouth opens and closes like a fish and I laugh at catching him off guard.

“Do you think we could get it planned in four or five days?” I ask.

“Yes,” he says standing and pulling me up into his chest. “I will make sure everything gets set. Just tell me the details you have your heart set on and I will make it all happen.”

“We need to ask Nick if he is ok with-”

“He will be! I should go talk to him now though so we have time, let’s go.”

“I think I will stay here and finish this,” I say eying the cheesecake again.

“Right. Well, I will wait,” he says quickly and I chuckle at his enthusiasm

“No, you are too excited. I will catch up with you in a little bit. I’ll meet you in our room and change your gauze...sound ok?”

He thinks for a moment and then hesitantly nods his head in agreement. He swoops down for a deep k!ss and leaves me standing as I watch him practically skip away.

“Ali” A deep distressed voice calls out softly from the woods, once Wade has disappeared from sight. I turn and look closely trying to find the person. And then a large figure steps forward just enough for me to see and my breath catches.

“Liam...”