

His Hunt for Redemption

Chapter 2

THEO

I zipped up my duffle bag, grabbed my suit, and headed towards the door. It was still too early in the morning without my coffee. It would be my lifeline to get through the day.

Sleep eluded me for the longest time last night because I could not get her out of my head. Our pack was celebrating, but my I spent a lot of the night covertly watching her.

Brynn Fullilove was gorgeous, confident, and intelligent. Sure, she was a bit younger than me, but that did not matter one damn bit.

The outfit she wore highlighted her curves perfectly, and she knew how to dance. Her body flexed and rolled with the beat in hypnotizing fashion. All I could think about as I watched her dance with a dude was how much I wanted to be where he was, and I was jealous as fuck that he was the one with his arms around her.

I wanted to ask Brynn to dance, but I did not want to make a spectacle of it. If I were to approach her then I wanted it to be a private affair where nosy assholes would not be able to involve themselves.

“Figured you could use some coffee,” Jackson said as he passed it over.

“This is why you’re my favorite brother.” I took a big drink of it because it was liquid bliss.

I got smacked upside the head by Dillon, my other brother who was only sixteen. I had two brothers and a younger sister who just had her first shift last week.

“You’re lucky that my coffee didn’t spill,” I told him.

Everyone knew better than to get in between coffee and me. I would go to war over it, and I would not feel an ounce of remorse for it at all. Everyone had a vice in life, and mine just happened to be the deliciousness that was coffee.

My family was very close and supportive. Dillion was accompanying us to the games for the very first time. The selection process was rigorous for our pack. Everyone had to fight for their slot, and they fought hard. We had ninety-seven members going this time around.

‘This year will be the best yet,’ my wolf Zen said.

I hummed my agreement because this year they were throwing an entirely new curveball at us. All groups of shifting age would also have their wolves fighting. Wolves were a lot more

aggressive when they fought, so this would certainly be an entertaining addition to the competition.

Zen was a beast. He was a large chocolate brown wolf with dark silver eyes. He was trained by my father's wolf who was a ruthless Alpha wolf during battle. He helped make Zen just as strong of a fighter. The only wolf who ever won against him was my father's wolf.

Everyone was heading out the door when Veronica stopped me. We had known each other most of our lives and got super close in high school. There were times when we occasionally hooked up, but it was just about the release on both of our parts. We were better friends than anything else, so we both agreed to never rock the boat.

"Good luck to you and Zen. You're going to be amazing," she said.

"Thanks. Try not to get up to too much trouble while we're gone. See you when we get back," I said, winking at her before I left to load up the car.

Jackson and I were driving together. It was only a few hours away, but we wanted to get there early so that we could settle in. Part of the Alpha Games was creating connections between packs, so it helped to be social in order to get to know which packs we could deal with and which we should avoid entirely.

I hopped into the passenger's seat of Jackson's Ferrari since he never let anyone else drive it. It was a sweet ride though, so I definitely did not mind being a passenger.

The morning was nice, so we had the windows rolled down. This was a great time of year. It was what my grandmother would call Goldilocks weather with it being not too hot nor too cold. Virginia was a great place to live, and I was glad that this was where our pack resided. We were backed by a lush forest that teemed with wildlife. Zen loved hunting, so there was never a lack of opportunity.

"Nightshade is the top contender because they've placed first the last eight years. I'm confident in our people though," I told Jackson.

Nightshade fighters were fucking intense. They showed everyone the truth. They were threats if anyone was stupid enough to try anything against them. That was a great part of these games. It helped reaffirm which ones were the stronger packs on top of building bridges between packs.

Alpha Kade of Nightshade was an honorable Alpha that my father held in high regard. He was just a year older than me if I remembered correctly. I figured that I would introduce myself this year. What was the worst that could happen?

"We worked our asses off. Whatever happens will happen, but I'm positive that things are changing this year," Jackson said while thumping my chest.

A strong scent wafted in from the open window, snagging my attention entirely, and I inhaled deeply. Zen growled in my head as he took in the honey vanilla scent as well. It was the most intoxicating and mouthwatering thing I had ever smelled before. It invaded my senses and body, invigorating it in an entirely new way.

My eyes looked everywhere for the source and saw her nearing Bessie's Diner.

That would explain why I could never get her out of my head. Brynn Fullilove was my mate. Fucking hell. We did not have time for me to go break the great news to her, and I would hate to break the news then have to run off for the week.

The mateship would be great for me, but I was not certain if it would be for her. Would she want me as a mate? She was stunning and fucking amazing. Sure, I was an Alpha, but she never struck me as the type who cared about status.

Luna Brynn. Zen growled appreciatively in my head with how that would sound. He was trying to remember if he ever saw her wolf but could not say that he had.

I dialed Khalid's number since I knew that he had stayed behind. He was the only person there that I would entrust with this task because I knew how talented he would be at finding the information that I needed while also keeping it under the radar.

"Miss me already?" he asked when answered the call.

"You know me so well," I deadpanned. "Look. I need you to do something, and you can't let anyone at all know. Okay?"

Jackson looked at me strangely, but I ignored him. He would find out in just a minute. Why the hell did this have to happen right now when I could not do anything about it? It was ridiculous.

I ducked out of the party before midnight. Had I just stayed there then this might not have been an issue if she had been there. She must have just literally turned eighteen.

"My lips and fingers will be sealed," he said seriously.

"I need you to find out all the information that you can on Brynn Fullilove."

There was silence on the other end of the line, and Jackson looked at me sharply. I met his emerald eyes that were exact replicas of mine. There was curiosity brimming within their depths.

"Can I ask why this has to be confidential?"

I scrubbed my hand over my face and sighed. I had to tell him something, but I hated that other people would know before she did. It made me feel like I was betraying her trust even though that was not my intention at all.

“She just turned eighteen today, and I caught her scent as we were leaving. Nobody besides you can know that she’s my mate before she does. She didn’t notice me as we drove by.”

Jackson clasped my shoulder. He was happy for me as a brother but also as an Alpha. Alphas were strongest with their Lunas by their side. Mates were created as a balance for one another. I would admit that I was a stubborn asshole at times, so I would need a Luna who was not afraid to yank me back into the realm of reality.

“Your wish is my command. Congratulations, Alpha,” he said.

“I knew that I could count on you. Keep me updated,” I told him before cutting the call.

Jackson looked at me closely before fixing his eyes back on the road.

“Why does it sound like you don’t really know anything about her?” he asked curiously.

That was a question that I was not expecting. There were dozens of other ones that he could have asked, but he chose that one.

“She was in a grade below me in school. We never hung out in the same groups,” I told him, and it sounded lame even to my ears.

He nodded and said that it made sense before dropping the conversation. I knew that he would not get back onto the topic unless he wanted to, so I just let it go as well.

Up until now, I had been waiting for this week to come because attending the Alpha Games was exhilarating and a great experience. Now, I could not wait to get this week over with and head home to claim my mate.

It all made sense why I watched her from the sidelines over the years. She was in a grade below us in high school, but she was five years younger than me. That just went to show how incredibly intelligent she was.

I had no doubt that Brynn would make a good Luna. I did not know much about her personally, which was what Jackson picked up on somehow, but she always treated everyone kindly from what I noticed. It was a learning opportunity as well. My father taught me how to be a good Alpha. My mother could teach Brynn how to be a good Luna.

Before I knew it, we were pulling up in front of our cabins.

“Here’s to an epic week filled with bloodshed and forced submissions,” Jackson said excitedly.

I just laughed because I felt the same way. Our kind were physical beings who enjoyed proving our strength and ability. What better place to do that than amongst a fuckton of other packs? I could not wait to go up against my opponents.

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Night had fallen as our pack made our way over to where the bonfire would be at. It was a great way to start the week off.

The massive clearing was filled with bodies of all ages. There were actually quite a few younger pups too who were probably competing as well. Damn. Best of luck to them. There were two who looked no older than five or six. I kind of wanted to see them fight because there would be no way that an Alpha worth his salt would allow pups to compete if they could not handle it.

“Attention,” a man standing in front of the bonfire called out through a megaphone. “Welcome to the XXII Alpha Games. This year, we have sixty-three packs participating. Our tournaments begin at 7:00 A.M. sharp, so let’s spend tonight having some fun.”

Everyone erupted in celebratory cheers. It was easy to get swept away in the excitement surging through the crowd.

Part of me regretted not stopping and asking Brynn to accompany us just to spend the week with her. I did not know if she knew how to fight at all, but I would certainly teach her if she did not. I knew that her father was a warrior, but that did not necessarily mean that she did.

The other part of me could not wait for next year because she would be standing right beside me.

I was broken out of my reverie when I heard an angry voice. My eyes saw a man grabbing a woman’s arm and tried to slide his hand up her dress. I went to intervene, but I watched as she threw him to the ground with very little effort.

Nightshade apparently had a Luna this year, and she was a fucking badass and definitely not one of those meek and docile Lunas. Alpha Kade approached them and was rather calm about the entire scenario, but his aura rushed out around him. Holy shit it was a strong aura.

Part of me wanted to fight against her because I could tell that it would certainly be a challenge. The other part did not want to fight against her, because I could already tell that she would be a top contender this year.

“Wow. That was impressive,” Jackson said.

“Mhm. I certainly agree with you.”

“Hopefully, you get her instead of her mate. I want to film your destruction,” he added with a deep chuckle at the end.

He was not amusing at all, so I turned around and went to find someone else to talk to. Danica, one of our warriors, handed me a fresh beer which I eagerly accepted and thanked her.

‘Luna Elle’s wolf is hilarious. She noticed that you were about to intervene and wanted me to relay her appreciation,’ Zen told me.

That was very kind of her. An individual’s personality was seen through the small acts when nobody was looking. It was easy to act in a certain way in front of others, putting on a pretense and show. It was manipulation at its finest. However, when the spectators disbursed and limelight passed, that was when you saw who the person really was.

That lesson was one of many that I learned from my father. He instilled it in me when I was young because he understood the strain and pressure one felt underneath the Alpha mantle. It saved my ass all throughout school and especially when I took over as Alpha. People saw my title and not me. It was sometimes hard to differentiate between who wanted to be around Theo and who wanted to be around Alpha Theo.

Sheila, another one of our warriors, walked up to me with a smile. We hooked up once in the past, but that was before she became my warrior. Once I took over, I vowed to never go near those who worked directly for me because that would definitely be a conflict of interest that we did not need.

“Would you like to dance, Alpha?” she asked.

I would have probably said yes if it had been yesterday, but things changed once I caught Brynn’s delicious scent. It made me imagine how much better it would be straight from the source.

“I actually needed to borrow him for a security debrief, Sheila,” Jackson said, coming to my rescue since he knew about Brynn.

“Thanks for asking though,” I told her.

She nodded and took her leave. There were plenty of people who would jump at the chance of dancing with her. She was very attractive and a badass warrior. It was a complete package for some.

Sadly, my package was not beside me unfortunately. I downed the beer that Danica had given me. This would be the longest week of my fucking life.

‘Happy birthday, Brynn.’

I knew she could not hear me, but it was the thought that counted I supposed.

The night sky was beautiful out tonight. One of my favorite spots was from the top of the packhouse. It was one place that was solely mine because nobody went there but me. I had never told anyone about it because I needed something that was just mine. Perhaps Brynn would like it too. There would be nothing of mine that was off-limits to her.

I sounded like one of those love-sick pup mates even though I had not even held a recent conversation with her in the past couple of years. I just stuck to stalking from the shadows of crowded schools and packhouse meals.

‘You’re really fucking creepy sometimes,’ Zen said, snorting.

‘Like you’re any better. Tell me that you haven’t been thinking of her wolf all day long,’ I countered.

He huffed, and I knew I had him there.

‘We’ve never seen her wolf. How is that even possible? She’s been able to shift for five years,’ Zen pointed out.

That was definitely a good point indeed. Wolf training was part of training. Come to think of it, I did not remember ever seeing Brynn in training either. The only way that she would be excused from it was by an Alpha order. It was not me, so my father must have approved. Why would he do that though?

My mate was a mystery that I would solve one way or another. There had to be a reason, and I would hear it from her instead of from my father.