

His Hunt for Redemption

Chapter 5

THEO

I hated to admit that I was distracted this year, but I could not help it. Knowing that my mate was hours away from me split my focus because anything could happen. Our pack was very safe, but even that did not have the desired calming effect.

Nightshade was kicking everyone's asses this year more than they ever had before. Those little pups were theirs, and I watched the little girl easily win against someone older and larger than her. Hell, I watched Luna Elle snap an Alpha's leg and dislocate his shoulders without ever being touched.

Our pack was holding its own, but there was no way in fuck that we could beat Nightshade overall. I doubted many of these packs could. They were wracking up points left and right at a very impressive rate. I could not help but admire their ability.

I was not the type of Alpha who grumbled at another pack being more successful than ours at something. It just pushed me to find ways to improve our pack. This was no different.

Khalid calling my phone had me retreating to my room where I could have privacy.

"Hey. What's up?" I asked him.

"I got some information for you. It's not much unfortunately, but it's all I could really find. Her pack file is locked, and only your father has the password for it. I didn't even attempt to hack it because I didn't feel like getting bitched out by him. What I found was that she graduated high school at the age of fourteen with a 4.0. She also holds a two-year degree in Psychology."

I knew she was intelligent but fucking hell. I doubt I would ever meet someone else who not only graduated high school at fourteen but also held a college degree before she even turned eighteen. Not all shifters went to college because they took up positions in the pack. I wondered what she used her degree for.

It was interesting that my father locked her pack file. Add that to the fact that he allowed her to skip the mandatory pack training and even more puzzle pieces were tossed onto the board for me to put together.

"Thanks. This means a lot, Khalid," I told him.

"You're welcome, Alpha. I'm sorry that I couldn't find much information on your mate. One Miss Brynn Fullilove is definitely a mystery, but I'm certain that the Goddess paired you together for a reason."

I smiled at that because I believed that as well. I could not wait to get to know all about this mystery mate of mine.

"I agree. Keep me updated if you find anything else out."

He said that he would and ended the call. I scrubbed my hand over my face before relaxing into the chair in my room.

Jackson stood at the doorway with one brow raised. He was sporting a black eye and busted lip. Whomever he fought definitely went all out. The bruises on his skin were already fading, and the cuts also healed up. We would all be fucked if it was not for shifter healing.

"What did Khalid have to say?" he asked curiously.

"Her pack file is locked down, so he couldn't find much. She graduated with a 4.0 at fourteen and also holds a college degree."

My body itched to be near her, every cell in my body pined for the other half of my soul. Jackson did not seem surprised with that information. Why did he seem to know more about her than I did? Ridiculous jealousy slid throughout my body with the fact that someone knew my mate better than I did. It was irrational and ludicrous to feel that way, but I could not help it. “We were in the same grade and had nearly identical schedules. She began the degree the following fall and went straight through. It takes a special kind of person to have a college degree before they’re seventeen. You’re lucky to have been gifted a mate that could accomplish that because she’ll help this pack to flourish more than anyone else ever could,” he told me before he turned to leave the room.

That explained how he knew so much about her. His words were meant to be comforting, but there was an undertone that I could not quite place. A meaning just beneath the surface. Of course, she would help our pack flourish. Not all mates were good for one another because humans were filled with flaws that could hurt the mate-bond. However, I doubted that would be an issue for us. I had no doubt that we would have a trial-and-error phase as we learned about one another – our likes, dislikes, preferences, and every little thing that made us tick. We would be a brand-new mateship that we would need to fortify to withstand the pressures of life. I had always admired my parent’s mateship because it was strong and filled with so much love and memories, experiences, and testaments, that I longed for the same with my own mate. Was Jackson insinuating that I would ever take a chosen mate? No way in hell. I would never have taken a chosen mate because marking a chosen mate meant that the person would lose their ability to sense a fated mate if they ever came across them. I could never do that to myself or Zen because a shifter was only truly complete with their fated mate, the other half of their soul and true completion.

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The week dragged on so fucking slowly. I could not have been any prouder of our pack. We truly gave our all.

I won two Alpha rounds, and Zen won once. His second match was against Coverstone Alpha’s wolf which unfortunately ended with Coverstone’s win. Zen almost had the upper hand for most of the match until his opponent gained the advantage and pinned him. It sucked, but I was proud of Zen’s fight.

“Alpha Theo,” I heard from behind me. I turned around and saw Luna Elle and Alpha Kade.

“Alpha Kade, Luna Elle, it’s nice to officially meet you. My father speaks highly of you, Alpha Kade,” I said, shaking both of their hands.

Luna Elle gestured for us to take a seat at one of the empty tables near us.

“It’s good to meet you too. Alpha Dominic is a great Alpha and man. I haven’t seen him in a few years, but please send him my regards,” Alpha Kade said.

I nodded and told him that my father would be pleased to hear that.

This was a great opportunity to talk with them. I had been hoping to at some point this week, so I was glad that it worked out.

“I wanted to thank you in person for the fact that you would’ve intervened at the bonfire. That Alpha has had issues with me for years, but that’s neither here nor there. I just wanted you to know that I appreciated the gesture,” she said sincerely.

“You’re welcome. Anyone would’ve stepped in, but you seem like you were far more capable of handling it yourself,” I said, chuckling at a few memories of watching her destroy her opponents left and right this year.

She just winked at me, and her mate smirked as he placed a loving kiss to her temple. It was an incredibly sweet gesture which made my body yearn for Brynn.

“You’d be surprised with how many people wouldn’t have stepped up. I’ve learned over the years that not everyone has a moral compass that guides them as it should. Alpha Kade found me in a less than ideal pack. We learned the hard way that not everyone we trusted deserved that trust. For example, we found traitors that were hiding out in important positions within our pack. They tried to destroy what we held dear and the future that we wanted for ourselves as well as our pack,” she explained.

I could not imagine being in the middle of that fiasco. Not being able to trust those around you like that must have been a rough experience.

“I’m sorry to hear that. I can’t imagine how hard that must’ve been to deal with.”

I could see the guilt in Alpha Kade’s expression even if it was otherwise schooled. It would be how I felt as well. An Alpha’s duty was to protect, lead, and help their pack prosper. Any Alpha would feel that as a failure on their part.

“It was hard. It forced us to take matters in our own hands in order to find the truth about who we could trust. Even the most venomous snakes are beautiful creatures to behold. Luckily, we have a Goddess who watches over us and places those we need the most in our lives at the right time. Sometimes it gets fucked up, but hope is never lost as long as we don’t give up.”

Her words weighed on me for some reason that I could not fathom. It did not simply feel like random advice. There was a unique authority about her as if she could sense things that I could not.

“Anyways, we won’t take up any more of your time. Take our card in case you or your pack ever need anything. It’s clear to see that you take after your father, but you stand on your own merits. From one Alpha to another, I’m proud of what I’ve heard about and seen from your pack this year. Nightshade would be happy to develop a personal relationship with Dark Moon. Talk to you later,” Alpha Kade said before they both shook my hand and left.

My fingers twirled Nightshade’s card as I tried to make sense of what just happened.

‘Did you feel the sense of peace that came from being near them?’ Zen asked me after a few moments with awe in his voice.

‘That and nervousness with her words.’

‘How about we put it on the backburner for now and focus on our pack for now,’ Zen suggested. It was solid advice, so I took it. There was no use in overanalyzing something that had no context to decipher it with.

My mother always said that everything came to light eventually. I would just have to focus on here and now until that time came.

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I felt antsy during the entire Awards Ceremony. Our pack did not place third, but our points landed us solidly in fourth place. It was still fantastic work given that there were sixty-three packs here this year. Nightshade’s five-year-old pups got honorable mentions. That was remarkable. They also ended in first place with well over a thousand-point lead over the Coverstone pack who landed in second place.

Jackson kept eyeing me curiously because I was not a fidgeter at all. I had always prided myself on being calm and composed, everything that an Alpha needed to be. I was anything but right now, and I had no idea why.

“Want to head home tonight instead of tomorrow?” Jackson asked once the ceremony ended.

Part of me wanted to say no because we should be celebrating with our pack for working their asses off. They spent all year improving their skills, and it showed. I was incredibly proud of each team member that participated this year.

The other part of me that immediately said yes won out. Perhaps I just needed to finally see her, talk to her, and let the bond fully snap into place on both sides.

“Do you mind?” I asked him.

“Not at all. It’ll be good to get home and sleep in my own bed. These beds were not the most comfortable ones to be on all week. Let’s tell everyone then we can pack and head home.”

He swung his arm around my shoulder and walked us towards the ballroom where loud music was blasting from.

I groaned internally as I remembered what Brynn looked like when she was dancing at our pack bonfire. I could not wait to get back, claim her, and finally be able to approach her in public and dance with her if I wanted to dance with her.

My hands could caress her body and find out how soft those curves actually were. I could find out if her body tasted as sweet as her scent smelled.

I discreetly adjusted myself. Those thoughts needed to pause for the moment because this was not the ideal place to walk around with a raging hard-on.

We just told everyone that we were getting a head start home, but they should stay and enjoy themselves. Luna Elle gave me a wave as we walked out the door.

It was a little after 11:00 P.M. when we started heading back home. The ride was smooth as we listened to music. That all changed when I got a call when we were halfway home.

“Hey, Khalid. What’s up?” I asked as I answered the call..

My stomach dropped, trying to figure out why he would be calling me in the middle of the night.

“Alpha, I wanted to give you a heads up. It’s about Veronica. She was brought to the pack hospital after being attacked. We don’t know what happened because she said she’ll only talk to you.”