

## Promises

Madison POV

"Maddie, wait." Nathan breathed out as he pulled her back to his chest.

"No, Nathan, let go. I have to nish packing." Madison whispered as tears streamed down her face, struggling to break free from Nathan's grip. She was no fool. She knew what this meant for them.

She had walked out of the meeting room, leaving behind Nathan and his mate, and had come straight back to the packhouse. She had walked up to their room in a daze. Wondering what would happen now. After a while, she snapped out of it and frantically started ripping her dresses from their hangers of their walk-in closet and stung them in a suitcase.

Why delay the inevitable? It was only a matter of time before Nathan would come to his senses and choose his fated mate over her. Especially since his father was refusing to let him reject her.

She had heard his panic-stricken footsteps half an hour later as he entered the room and came straight towards her.

"Shh, it's okay, Maddie. It's going to be okay." Nathan cooed as he turned her around slowly and pulled her into his chest.

Madison couldn't hold back any longer and started full-out sobbing. Her only comfort was the fact that she didn't smell her on him...yet. At least he had had the decency to wait until Madison was moved out.

"How, Nate? How is it going to be okay?" Madison asked between sobs.

"Because I'm going to reject her. I don't care what father says." Nathan spoke with determination.

"What did your father say?" Madison asked while looking up at him. Whatever Alpha Nyle had said, Nathan was bound to abide by it. But she was confused. Alpha Nyle hated fated mates. Like, really hated them. Why would he say something different now?

Nathan sighed heavily. "Don't worry about that. It doesn't matter" His eyes hardened.

"He wants you to accept her, doesn't he?" She asked in a small voice.

"It's... complicated." Nathan sighed again, "But don't worry. I'll x it. I won't give you up Madison. Now put your clothes back up. They belong here. I want you here. You're not going anywhere." He smiled at her while holding her face in his hands like she was the most precious thing in the world.

"Nothing is going to change, Maddie. I promise you that." Nathan reassured her as he wiped away her tears. Madison searched his eyes, trying to gure out if anything had changed between them.

"You are mine Madison, and I am yours," Nathan whispered as he placed his forehead against hers without breaking eye contact. "Nothing is going to change that."

Madison nodded with a small smile on her face. She believed him. Nathan and she were solid. They might not have been together that long, but they had fallen deeply in love.

"Now, start planning that mating ceremony, so we can show the pack and everyone else that we belong together." Nathan smiled at her before pulling her into him again.

"I'm going to show you who you belong to all night long." He growled in her ear before pulling her along towards the bed.

In the next few days, Madison was relieved to see Nathan keeping his promise.

Nothing had changed.

Everything was as it was before. Madison and Nathan would leave for work together every morning, and come back in the evening just in time for dinner. They shared the responsibilities of the pack and would train with the warriors on the weekends.

They both worked at Prescott IT & consulting. Nathan had taken the position of CEO after Alpha Nyle stepped down and Madison was a database administrator. One of the best, of course.

Madison had managed to combine two majors and had graduated summa c\*m laude.

One of those evenings, after dinner, Madison and Nathan both sat in the Alpha ooe, which they shared, both working at their own desks.

Madison was planning their mating ceremony. She was going over color samples for the tablecloths when Nathan's phone started ringing. Again.

Madison nally looked over at Nathan, who sighed while pressing the decline button. Again.

"Who are you ignoring?" Madison asked from her desk across the room with a chuckle.

"No one important." Nathan ran his hand through his hair in clear frustration. Feeling Madison's eyes on him, he quickly collected himself and managed a tight smile.

When the phone started ringing for the fourth time, Nathan slammed his hand on the desk before turning off his phone.

Something he never did. Ever.

"Nathan, what's wrong?" Madison asked, her brows furrowed together. This was so unlike Nathan. He was always calm and collected.

Nathan opened his mouth to respond, but before he got any words out, there was a knock on the oce door, before Alpha Nyle entered.

"Nathan, why are you ignoring her?" Alpha Nyle all but snarled.

"Father." Nathan warned, causing Madison to gasp. Nathan never took that kind of tone with his father. Alpha Nyle, though very strict, was the only parent Nathan had ever known after his mother had died in childbirth.

The gasp caused Nyle's eyes to snap to Madison, who sat at her desk in the corner of the room.

"Madison, I didn't see you there, dear." Alpha Nyle greeted her with a smile that didn't reach his eyes.

"Would you mind giving Nathan and me a minute?"

Madison nodded her head before standing up. She gave Nathan and Nyle one last uncertain glance before leaving the room, and closing the door behind her.

Not for the rst time, Madison cursed the soundproof rooms that packhouses usually had. Sure, they were great to drown out noises in moments of passion, but very inconvenient for one who was trying to eavesdrop.

She walked towards the exit, deciding that a walk around the pack would clear her head.

After about an hour of walking in the forest, Madison decided to turn back. She hadn't even made it halfway around the pack, but the walk wasn't keeping her mind from wandering to Nathan and Alpha Nyle.

It was dark when Madison excited the forest, but what she saw next, made her freeze in her tracks.

Nathan stormed out of the packhouse followed by a pissed-off-looking Alpha Nyle.

"Nathan!" His voice boomed, "You will do as I say!"

Nathan stopped walking and turned around. Madison had never seen him so full of anger.

"NO! What you're suggesting is absurd. I will never want her. Madison is all that matters."

"And I'm not saying you should give her up, son, but just give her a fair shot. See where it could go. Worst case, you could..." Madison was unable to hear the end of Alpha Nyle's sentence, but the snarl that ripped out of Nathan promised nothing good.

"You can go to hell!" He yelled before storming off.

"It's already done!" Alpha Nyle shouted at Nathan's retreating back.

Madison watched Alpha Nyle run a hand over his face as he sighed. He then proceeded to walk to his car, which was parked in front of the packhouse. He got in, started the ignition, and sped off, leaving the pack.

Madison wondered what that was all about, but felt a bad foreboding.

She forced her feet to move in the direction of the packhouse. She decided to look for Nathan, so she could get to the bottom of what she had just witnessed. But she knew it must be about her. About Lauren.

As she entered their suite, she found Nathan sitting on the bed with his elbows resting on his knees and his face buried in his hands.

"Nathan,..." Madison called in a small voice.

He looked up and gave her a small smile. He stood up and pulled Madison in his arms while burying his face in her neck, breathing in her scent.

"What's wrong?" Madison whispered.

"Madison," Nathan sighed, "please, believe me, I did everything I could to stop this from happening. But it's complicated."

"Stop what?" Madison asked.

"Please, don't freak out." Nathan cupped her cheeks in his large palms. "This will change nothing. It's just until I can reject her without causing a war."

Madison stared at Nathan as dread lled her.

"Lauren will be moving in with us."