

HE'S MY ALPHA

- PROLOGUE: Young Jake & Clair Novel by Cassandra M |

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Jake - 14 yrs old

Clair - 9 yrs old

JAKE

Her scent reached my nose even before I felt her presence. Twigs snapped as hurried little footsteps echoed around as she approached the place I was resting in.

I turned my head in the direction of the noise just in time to see Little Clair emerge from the bushes with a small plastic bag that she immediately placed behind her back as soon as she saw me. Her round eyes widened in surprise as she realized that she was not alone in this place.

"What are you doing here, princess? Hiding again from your mother?" I asked without taking my gaze away from her small, lovely face. A smirk formed on my lips as I waited for her response.

She let out a little huff and continued to walk towards the boulder I was sitting on before slumping her small frame onto the space beside me.

"How did you know that?" She raised her brow and tilted her head to look at me. "Did you follow me? And why are you here? This is my place. You're not allowed here." She continued to look at me, her gaze scrutinizing mine.

I suppressed a smile. While I found it annoying to be disturbed in my moment of silence, I won't deny that this 9-year-old girl with a feisty attitude has lightened my mood without her knowing it. "Hmmm... I didn't know I was supposed to ask permission from you before I could come here, princess."

I lifted my gaze away from her and threw the small rock that I had held in my hand for a while now, and watched as it bounced on the water in front of us. "Last time I checked, I owned this land. This is still part of my territory."

Her jaw dropped in disbelief at my words before huffing and puffing her chest out proudly, "I don't care, Jake. When I say it's my place, then it's mine!"

She smiled cockily before continuing, her finger pointing at a tree standing three meters to our left, just beside the stream. "See that name on the tree? Absaline Clair Montrell."

I shook my head, smiled at the satisfied smirk on her face, and kept my mouth from objecting. Making a girl cry was the least of my priorities right now.

"Okay, tell me then, what did you take this time?" I asked her without taking my eyes off of the beauty of the stream in front of us.

Clair may have declared this place her sanctuary, but it has also been my refuge, the only place I could sit and relax without anyone imposing responsibilities on my 14-year-old self.

It has been three months since I took over as the Alpha of the Black Shadow Pack. It was three months ago when my grandfather, the former Alpha of the pack, passed away. And although I'd been prepared for this moment since I was eleven, the responsibility of keeping the pack together without my grandfather's guidance has taken its toll on me and my sanity.

"Just cupcakes." Clair's reply came out weak but enough to get me out of my thoughts.

"And how many?" I felt her tense beside me. My question made her uncomfortable. I reached out and ruffled her hair before pulling her closer to my side for a brotherly hug. "Spill it out," I asked nicely this time.

"Just three." She answered without taking her eyes off her feet.

I snorted a laugh. "Lies."

She huffed again before telling her truth. "It's seven! I took a lot of them because it's my favorite. And I'm going to give you one, just one! So you can't tell Mommy, okay?"

She wiggled her eyebrows and raised a cupcake in my face, tempting me to agree with her.

I let out a full smile before taking the cupcake from her hand. The icing on the cupcake looked like it had gone on a battle itself from the way it was smashed with all the other cupcakes. It doesn't look appetizing, but I knew from experience that it was a good one.

I shoved half of it in my mouth before responding. "You know, she will still find out regardless and be hell-mad at you again. Now, she needs to do more for the pack meeting later."

She giggled while she chewed her cupcake. "That's why I took seven. Then it would be worth it when Mommy gets angry!" She gestured with an angry face and pretended to have her claws out. "Grrrr... angry like that!" She continued to giggle after that and proceeded to eat her cupcake.

I chuckled at her actions and picked up one more cupcake, waiting for her complaints, but she just glared at me and didn't say anything.

We continued to eat in silence until she broke it.

"Do I really, really need to call you Alpha now? Mommy keeps telling me to address you as Alpha, but it sounds stupid. You're not old. Alpha is for grandfathers." She rolled her eyes, and my lips pursed to suppress a laugh from coming out, and I let her continue with her retorts.

"Why did they make you an Alpha? Can't somebody older than you be an Alpha? I am scared for you, Jake. Maybe being an Alpha will make you older. You should have told them you don't want to be an Alpha." In the last sentence, she spoke in a low voice, as if to avoid anyone hearing us.

But then she smiled as she looked up at me. Her eyes glowed with admiration. "But you're doing okay. Mommy said you are strong and can protect the pack. So I think that's okay." I smiled back at her, ruffling her hair once more. She didn't even know, but her words warmed my heart.

"But don't grow too old like your grandfather. Silver hair is not cool!"

I chuckled before facing her, my hands cupping her little face. "Well, princess, thank you if you think I'm too cool to be an Alpha, but I wanted to be one and I

would do anything to keep this pack running. And if that means I will get silver hair, then so be it."

I told her my truth. She looked directly at my eyes and tried to gauge if I was joking before she shook her head and swatted my hands off her face.

"Will you be getting a Luna? Mommy said you should have one. We have never had a Luna for... forever. Mommy said that too." I clenched my hand into a fist with her last statement and let out a sigh. I wasn't expecting her question, although I already knew the answer even before I took the Alpha post.

No Luna.

I didn't need one. If my grandfather was able to survive without a Luna after my grandmother, his Chosen Luna passed away at a young age, then I could do it as well. The pack would still continue to thrive even without a Luna. They just needed me, an Alpha without any baggage.

"No, I don't need a Luna." There was a note of finality in my voice.