

Owned by the Alphas |

The Answers

"That's impossible. I can't be pregnant. I'm not a werewolf."

"You have been unfaithful?" Derik frowned, and I glared at him.

"You can shove that question up your ass. You know that I haven't been," I snapped, then turned to Tabby again.

"It was a possible outcome of the link. One I saw but didn't believe," she explained.

"And you didn't think I should know that before giving me the link?" I asked, tears springing to my eyes.

I wanted to have their baby more than anything. I wanted to give them that, but Kai was branded. He was going to be mated with someone else.

What could that mean for us and a child? It would be heartache after heartache, and I wasn't ready for that yet.

"I'm not mating," Kai breathed, looking at me, tilting my chin to him. "You hold our baby inside you, Little Human. I will not leave your side, mate or not," he vowed, and the tears fell.

He kissed my lips softly and I pulled away, turning to Tabitha for more answers.

"The link is a mating brand. One that can be just as powerful as a true mating depending on who has it. It was shown to me that a child could be born from such a strong connection.

"I was under the impression having an alpha's child wouldn't be as upsetting for you," Tabitha said, then moved away to continue making her potion brew.

I shook my head and wiped my tears away, turning to Derik, who was frowning, looking down. Brax was staring at me, his eyes on my stomach.

I turned to Tabitha. “And carrying a werewolf made me sick?” I asked, needing to straighten out my thoughts.

“Oh, yes. You are human; your body is not made to carry werewolf magic inside you. If you weren’t winter born, you’d be dead. However, your shadows and Elias’s have kept you alive. Unfortunately it won’t be enough, even with this potion. That is where the wolves will need to help,” she explained, and handed the jar to Derik, who took it robotically.

“How can we help?” he asked, his voice quiet.

“With the magic from the child polluting her body, she will need help to keep it—and her—alive. The magic is usually absorbed by a werewolf female and pushed back into the fetus, but since she doesn’t have that ability, you will need to give her your werewolf toxin,” she explained.

I sat there, trying to take it all in, but I was still stuck on the idea that I could carry a werewolf baby without getting us both killed.

“The bite will kill her!” Brax snarled, but Tabitha shook her head.

“Not with that baby inside her. It will absorb the toxin. It needs it to grow and to develop. So, you will bite her every day, as well as getting her to drink the potion, and that will keep them both healthy. More than that, I assume.”

She smiled, sinking into her rocking chair like this was a casual discussion, when to me, it felt anything but casual.

My life was tipping on its axis, threatening to fold in on itself. I couldn’t get past the fact that I was going to have a baby. My alpha’s child. And Kai wouldn’t be a part of it. Not like Brax and Derik.

I pushed the pain away and tried to get back to the only answers I had. “You assume?”

“Well, prediction is not an exact science, but I daresay pushing alpha toxin through this child in utero will create a very strong child. An alpha so strong...one this age has not seen.” She smiled, and I swallowed hard.

“And you think with the bite and the potion, that I will be able to survive it?” I asked, and the slight hesitation had the tension tightening in the room.

“What aren’t you telling us?” Brax demanded, and Tabitha looked at Cain, who nodded.

“Tell them. They should know it’s a possibility. A high one,” he urged, and Tabitha nodded.

“Yes. Well,” she sighed, “first of all, you can’t use your shadows. Now that your child has formed enough, they need to stay in you to keep you and it alive.

“Secondly, from what I can see when I peek in on the little fella, he is already very developed. Not big, a tiny thing still, but fully formed as a baby.

“This means he has skipped the stages of human development, the werewolf magic helping it grow as a pup would in a werewolf, developing on its size and magic. Which means—”

“The child may shift into a wolf while in utero,” Derik said, his eyes going wide, his face paling.

I sucked in a breath as I thought about that little baby I had seen turning into a wolf. The claws, the teeth. It would tear through me. I shivered, and Kai grabbed my hand.

“It is only a possibility, and as long as she doesn’t get too worked up, no overt emotions like anger or sadness, then the wolf within the child shouldn’t feel the need to come forward,” Tabitha explained, but I was still terrified.

If Kai mated while I was pregnant, those emotions were an inevitability. And we all knew it.

“I’m staying with you, Little Human. I won’t mate,” he said again, but he had promised it over and over again. I still didn’t believe fate was going to be thwarted like that.

“And the toxin? That won’t help her survive or at least heal from something like that? It could make her turn, couldn’t it?” Brax asked, finally not hostile as he questioned her.

Tabitha looked at him sadly.

“Unfortunately, no. The child will take every drop of toxin that enters her bloodstream at the moment. It will need to. And it will grow using it. But that is where the good news comes in.” She smiled.

I looked at her, hopeful as anything, like the naive girl I had been when I first came to the wolves as a virgin.

“Good news for who?” I mumbled, and she smiled wider.

“All of you. Once the child has been born, Lorelai will turn. The residual toxins from carrying will pollute her blood and she will become one of you. It is a guarantee, her body will be used to the toxins by then and adapt. It will be an easy transition for her.”

“If I survive the pregnancy,” I muttered, and Tabitha’s face fell a little.

She nodded slightly. “Take that jar back with you. Cain will see you every day, and the wolves will give you their bite. It will help,” she said, trying to push the optimism around, but I wasn’t ready to feel it.

“Is there anything you can do about Kai’s mating brand?” I asked, and then all her hope disappeared with mine.

“No, Lorelai. Unfortunately, I don’t have the power to redirect what fate has chosen,” she whispered, and I nodded.

I stood up from the couch, thankful I could stand on my own legs without collapsing. Kai helped me anyway as Derik stood.

He took our cups to the wash bench, then whispered something to Cain that I couldn’t hear and didn’t come through the link, so I assumed it was werewolf business. Brax and Kai shadowed me to the door.

“Thanks for everything, Tabitha,” I murmured, then left, wishing I could be more grateful for the answers I had been given.

Kai lifted me over the shallow part of the pond and into the carriage. My alphas followed, and then we were heading back. Quiet. Tense.

“Lorelai?” Derik checked.

I turned to him, and I’m not sure what he saw in my face, but he winced.

"I know this is going to be hard on you, and probably us, but I want to reassure you. I am unbelievably happy that you carry our child.

"I don't know what we did to deserve such a miracle, maybe it was restoring balance through killing Elias, but this news? It's made everything worth it," he said, his feelings shining through the link.

I smiled at him, shuffling to him and cuddling into him. He held me tightly, kissing the top of my head.

"I want to be excited," I murmured.

"But this fucking brand is ruining everything?" Kai snapped as his claws came out.

He looked down at the brand, and I knew what he was going to do. I rushed over to him just as he pierced his skin with a claw.

"Don't!" I said, sinking into his lap, distracting him.

He huffed angrily before he found my lips, covering them with a desperate kiss that woke my core full force. It had been dull, almost dormant before, but with the link back and the potion working, I felt everything.

And it was a feeling I had missed.

Heat rose within me so fast as he claimed my mouth, and I moaned as his fingers dragged up my thigh. He pushed me down on the seat, his mouth never leaving mine.

"I will be a part of this," he growled, and I didn't answer, knowing if fate really wanted him mated, then he would be. There was nothing we could do.

But I could play ignorant and pretend it didn't exist until it happened. Then I could be happy with the child I had been given. Which meant I could be happy with my alphas in the moment.

Kai's mouth was demanding and hot as he kissed me. It wasn't until he was lifting my nightgown skirt and undoing the strings of his pants that I realized how much I had missed the connection with my alphas.

"You sure you're okay?" Brax asked, kissing my forehead, brushing my tendrils of hair back, watching with hungry eyes.

I nodded. "I will be soon. Once I've had all of you," I breathed, and Kai grinned, pushing his cock inside me.

I gripped his bicep, the muscles straining as he moved slow, spreading my legs wider, finally filling my body with the heat and pleasure it had been craving.

I reached up to kiss him again, rocking my hips into him as he growled.

"Can I go faster?" he strained out, and I nodded.

"Please," I begged.

And then he was fucking me like he used to, like an animal, wild and carnal with desire, claiming me as his, promising me so much more than his body and an orgasm.

I cried out as he fucked me, the intensity something more than it had ever been, and then his fangs dropped and he slowed.

"Are you going to bite me?" I breathed, not sure if I was ready.

Kai nodded. "It will feel good. I promise you, Little Human. It will feel so fucking good," he said.

And it did. It felt like heaven and bliss all rolled into one euphoric high when his fangs, dripping with toxin, buried in the side of my breast.

I could barely breathe as pleasure and fire took over the blood in my veins. I arched up to him, his cock filling me again and again as he grunted and groaned, the ecstasy hitting him too.

I had never felt so good or so high. I clutched him tight, his hair in my fist as his mouth stayed on my breast, sucking the spot he had his fangs in.

And then I was releasing the pressure in an orgasm that tore me apart. Everything but him dulled, and I was blind to the world that wasn't him.

"Kai!" I screamed, and he came hard, his hips bucking, his hot seed filling my pussy as his fangs dripped, stained from my flesh.

It was moments later when I could finally come down from the high. I was breathing hard, sweating out the last of the pleasure.

My blood tingled as he climbed off me and tucked himself in before helping me up. He leaned down and licked over the bite. I shivered at the embers it ignited in my core.

Kai kissed my lips, then let me go and leaned back against the seat with a sigh.

"I missed being inside you so fucking much," he breathed, and I grinned, feeling better than I had since killing Elias.

"I missed all of you," I said, before meeting Derik's gaze.

He was just as ready as I was to end our dry spell. I went to him, climbing on his lap as he shifted my nightgown to sit at my waist. He was already ready and waiting, so hard I could see the throbbing in the veins down his cock.

I sank down onto him, sighing as being filled by him set my body alight in flames from the embers Kai had left.

I gripped the leather behind his head and rode his dick hard, not wanting to take my time, just wanting to feel everything I could with him.

Something about the link being wide open and everything finally feeling normal inside me had the pleasure so much more intense, and I took full advantage of it.

I slammed down on him, my weakness not even existing anymore. I wanted more, harder, and he read me like a book, slamming himself into me with grunts and pushes until he grabbed me and kissed me.

I missed everything about the way he kissed. Derik's lips met mine, tugging and tender as we kept going, our hips meeting, my core burning.

"Derik," I whispered against his lips, the tension in me building higher.

He moved quicker, knowing I needed everything from him. And he gave it to me, burning through everything I had, replacing every emotion with pleasure and ecstasy until I couldn't handle it anymore, letting go, a wild storm suffocating my voice, heat flooding my veins.

My pussy tightened around his cock, milking it as he came, his thrusts going so deep inside me it hit the achy, can't-handle-your-dick spot that made my orgasm so much more intense.

He stilled as his cum filled me before slumping back, breathing hard, his eyes closing. I leaned against his chest, his heart thumping fast against his chest and my ear, before Brax's hands were lifting me.

I smiled and went into his hold, kissing him hard. He kissed back, then turned me around, bending me over the leather seat.

He ran his fingers down my spine, lifting my nightgown over my ass, sliding his tip along my soaking folds. He slipped beneath them, brushing my clit, and I shuddered, pressing back into him.

"I want to feel you, Brax," I prompted, and he leaned down to kiss my shoulder.

"Are you sure you're okay to keep going? I can wait until you've had a rest if you need it," he whispered against me, and as an answer, I reached behind us and spread my cheeks for him.

His tip sank in, and we both moaned. He slid the rest of the way in, and I sucked in a breath at the way he sank straight into my core, hitting the right spot on the first thrust.

And then he was moving, fucking me hard from behind, filling me over and over again, making up for all the time we had lost.

His grip on my hips stayed tight as I clutched the leather of the seat, my eyes clenched closed, trying to contain the pressure within my body.

But there was no point. It had been too long, and I had missed the feeling of his dick inside me too much. It barely took a minute before I was back at that pinnacle, waiting to fall off the edge with him.

He growled as his cock thickened within me, his strokes more desperate.

"Brax. Fuck," I panted, and then he was there with me, pushing us both off the edge with feral thrusts that had me clenching my pussy walls against his cock, crying out and sinking into oblivion with him.

He pulled out of me a few moments later, then fell back on the seat next to Kai, putting himself away but not bothering to do up the strings on his pants. Just like the other two.

I sat back on the seat next to Derik and looked over them, smiling. I just had to live in the now. For now, they were mine, and for now, we could be happy about the child we were having.

“We are happy,” Brax breathed, and I smiled wider.

So was I.

As long as I looked past the possibility of being ripped apart by that child.

Past the brand that Kai wore.

Past the fact that the only way I could survive was by taking a bite that was going to turn me, a choice I had now had taken from me.

My smile faltered, and the emotions filled me. Ones that had been temporarily pushed aside. But they were back, and it hit me that the only comfort I wanted wasn't one that I had been able to get to but desperately needed.

“Can you take me to see my mom?” I asked.

Derik nodded, none of them saying anything about my thoughts. “We'll take you there now,” he said.

“What are you going to tell her?” Brax asked.

“Everything. I want her to know everything,” I murmured. “Is that allowed?” I asked, and Kai grinned.

“Little Human. You carry our child. You will be this pack's luna once it is born. You can do whatever you want now.” He grinned, and that was the best silver lining I'd heard yet.

I fell asleep until we got to my village, and when I woke, Kai was carrying me toward my mother's hut in the dark.

I could feel Brax and Derik but couldn't see them.

“They’ve gone to check on your father. They’re concerned about the numbers he keeps lying about.”

Kai answered my unspoken question, and I snuggled into him, the brisk wind hitting through my nightgown.

“I can walk now, you know?”

He looked down at me and grinned. “I know. I like holding you,” he said, kissing me just as we got to my old home, putting me down before letting my lips go.

I knocked on the door. “You three should go home. I’m going to stay with Mom tonight,” I said, and Kai nodded.

“We’ll come back at noon tomorrow to collect you,” he said, stepping back.

I smiled, my heart warming at how understanding he was that I needed my mom.

Mom answered the door a few moments later with a candle lantern, her face brightening when she saw me. I ran into her, hugging her thin frame so tightly she stumbled back.

“Mom,” I whispered.

“Sweetheart, are you okay?” she asked. “You never came on the full moon.”

I leaned back with tears in my eyes and shook my head.

She held my face. “I’ll start the teapot.”

She smiled sympathetically, and it was exactly what I needed.

I sat with her, told her everything, cried in her arms about the pregnancy and the mating brand. She listened, soothed, comforted, and it was everything I had been missing.

I loved my wolves, I loved the life they gave me, but nothing was the same without Mom. I needed her too.

I fell asleep in her bed with her, cuddled into her like I used to do when I was a child, and it made everything seem okay, like it was all going to work out.

I should have known life wasn't going to let that happen.

I woke up later being jostled around, my shadows jarring inside me. I frowned, and my eyes flung open, expecting to see my mom, but it wasn't her. It was my father.

He yanked me out of bed, hauling me toward the door, my mom asleep or unconscious since she didn't budge on the bed, her eyes staying closed.

I screamed out, trying to yank my arm back, but he had my bicep in his tight grasp, the skin bruising.

"Let me go! What are you doing?! Dad!" I screamed, and he clamped his hand over my mouth.

"Shut up. I'm doing this for your own good," he hissed, dragging me out the front door into the dark night, where men dressed in army clothes grabbed me.

They gagged me, placed a bag over my head, roped my hands together. I screamed against the gag, tears prickling my eyes, falling quickly.

I stumbled as they tugged the rope and me forward. I had no choice but to go wherever they were taking me.

I screamed down the link and felt the wolves wake. They knew I was in trouble. They would come now, so I had to stall.

I dropped to the ground, refusing to move. They tugged the rope, but I yanked it back, planting my feet.

My father was by my ear then. "You will move, or I will shove a blade through your stomach and kill the parasite you carry," he warned.

My tears fell and I inched forward.

"Good girl," he said, then stepped away. "Now move quickly, she would've reached out to her wolves by now, and we need her underground before they get here. The wolfsbane and gardenia fields will cover her scent once we get there," my father said.

I sobbed against my gag. My shadows were so angry, desperate to help, but listened when I told them to stay where they were. If I used them, it could hurt the baby. I had no choice, I had to do what they said.

I was led to the men's village. I recognized the change in ground beneath my feet, the soggy mud squelching between my toes.

I was pushed inside somewhere with wooden floors and then down some stairs. I was shoved forward, and I fell to my knees, my heart racing as I tried to figure out where I was, but there was nothing to see.

I smelled dirt and dampness, but there was nothing defining enough. I spun to where I had come from, just as my father removed my blindfold and gag.

I rushed him, bashing on his chest.

"Let me out! You have to let me go!" I screamed at him, and he shoved me back.

I hit the concrete wall with a thud, the air rushing out of me. I cried as I faced him. I couldn't believe he was the one doing this to me.

And it was then that I knew.

It was his hatred that had darkened my brother, it was his will to take down the wolves. I could see it so clearly when he looked at me, his eyes full of disgust.

"You are not going back to them. Not after everything I heard you tell your mother. Not after what you did to your brother.

"That child you carry is an abomination, and I will not allow you back out there to ruin everything we have worked for years to accomplish," he snapped, and my heart broke at his words.

"What are you planning? What are you going to do?" I demanded through my tears.

He gave me one last look before backing out the door.

I chased after him. "Don't hurt them!" I screamed at him, just before he slammed it in my face.

He opened the wooden flap and looked down at me. "I don't want to hurt them, Lorelai, I want to kill them, and if you were still human then you would too. You can stay here until it's over."

He grinned and I shook my head.

"Please. Don't. You don't have to do this. Whatever the humans want, we can work it out. Don't! Dad!" I screamed as he walked away.

"You don't understand! I need them! You're going to kill me and your grandchild if you don't let me out!" I tried, fear pouring into me.

He didn't care. The flap slammed shut, and I backed up against the back wall, my heart racing, my chest heaving, panic taking me.

I had no access to the potion I needed, or the bite. I had no idea how long it was going to take the wolves to find me...if they could.

I stretched my mind out, hunting for the link, but it was gone, disappeared or smothered by whatever herbal properties they had used to hide my scent.

I sobbed against my hand. I was stuck, trapped with no way out, in some kind of cell and apparently underground. I had no idea if the wolves were going to be able to find me.

I couldn't sense them. I was completely alone.

"Let me out!" I screamed again, running at the door, bashing on it. I tested my shadows, but they were hesitant, a warning stirring in me that coming out would hurt my baby.

I couldn't risk it. I just had to survive. I knew it was going to hurt, I was going to go back to the pain I had been in before with only my shadows to keep me alive, but then again, I had survived on them before.

Years ago, when I was a baby, the humans had forced me into survival mode, leaving me in the snow to die, just like they were leaving me here now.

But I had survived. Because I wasn't just human. I was a fucking winter born.

And I was going to remind them exactly how strong that made me.

End of Book One

