

The Pack's Nemesis

- Chapter 51 - 55

The Pack's Nemesis (Quirin's Story)

"I thought you said you'd been attacking them weekly?" I bark at Jasper as I wash my hands again. What the fuck froes Quéris have on his pack lands?

"We have been. You and I just attacked them last week. And I didn't know her whole fucking family was going to be deme. I thought it would just be Henry and Connor. I wasn't expecting Warren, the second son and Harold"

"I swear if you're yanking my chain about this money." I growl, although it's not just about the money now. I saw het. Kennedy. She's even more ripe than I remember.

The other thing I realized is that, unlike most of her family, she's not a fighter. The guard had waned fighting and the and her mother stood back and watched. Any fighter would have jumped in and helped him fight. That just means it will be easier for me to get her and keep her once I have my hands on her.

"Look, he's loaded, okay. The only reason they seemed so strong was because there were five Alphas fighting well. technically six, but my Beta took out the young girl. Then, Henry had to jump in and kill him Jasper growls.

"Took her out?" I ask. Why the fuck would a Beta go after a young girl, even if she is an Alpha? It sounds like he was a coward to me. I'd have kicked my Beta's ass if he'd wasted his talent fighting against a pup. That must have been the same guy who was fucking the human woman. Sounds like he lacked confidence and needed to boost his ego by dominating humans and pups. Why wouldn't he have left her for a warrior or just ignored her altogether. Even if Alpha Warren is her father, de second daughter can't be older than fifteen. Good riddance as far as I'm concerned. That Beta was a waste.

"Yeah, sliced her good. He was about to kill her when Henry jumped him."

"I'm guessing this means that you won't be able to attack his pack again any time soon?" I ask, disappointed. I've sent scouts to watch and see when Kennedy's family leaves. Once they do, I'll be ready to attack again. I can't wait to sink my teeth that ripe little peach.

"Actually, I may be getting some inside intel soon," he says, his tone taunting. He loves feeling like he's in charge.

"Oh?" I ask, keeping my tone light.

"Yeah. Well, I did find out that Alpha Quirin put his Luna on the bank account, so she'll either help us get the moory or have to die. But it seems that not everyone is happy that Quirin allowed his Luna's family to come to their pack. Looks like this person is looking for a change in leadership and since I'm willing to assist," he says, letting the rest of the sentence hang in the air.

"When will you know if you get real intel?" I ask him. Knowing that Kennedy is on the bank account just changed everything for me. If I get her, I don't need Jasper. I get the peach and the money.

"Should be later this week," he says.

"Let me know what you find out," I say and hang up.

If Quirin has a traitor, that will help us get into the pack lands. If this person is willing to take out their Alpha, even better. Once Quirin is gone, I'll kill Jasper, then Kennedy and the money are all mine.

Quirin POV

I've been fuming ever since I found out that Kennedy wasn't in a safe room. What the hell was she thinking?

I'd been fighting Jasper and Raif had taken a swipe from his claws. I knew without needing Kennedy to tell me that I had

silver in the wound. Raif confirmed it when he said he couldn't heal the wound. Raif was rolling back to his feet when we'd seen Henry, shifted and holding Wendy in his arms, about to get attacked.

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I'd seen red, nearly the same color of red that I'd seen when I found out Kennedy wasn't in the safe room. Before Henry could move, I leaped over him, taking out the attacker. Then I'd turned, wondering what was wrong with Wendy

My heart had stuttered when I realized that she was bleeding. The only reason that her wolf wouldn't heal her is if she had silver in her wounds. I had a moment of pure terror when I realized that this could easily be my mate

When Henry had taken off with Wendy towards the pack hospital, I'd resumed fighting, but I couldn't get the image of Kennedy lying on the ground and bleeding out because Echo couldn't heal her out of my head.

As soon as I hear the howls of retreat, I order Kier to make sure they get off our pack lands and I race to the hospital. I have to see her. I have to know that she's okay.

I smell the blood before I get to the hospital, and I hear Luna Yara before I get inside.

"WENDY!" Luna Yara's voice is panicked.

I walk inside and see Deborah putting something over Wendy's mouth, Luna Yara's hands and forearms are covered in her daughter's blood as she presses something against her wounds. I've never seen Luna Yara like this. She's always the epitome of calm and collected. This time, it's my mate who remains calm.

"Mom. Mom, look at me!" she says sharply.

When Luna Yara does, Kennedy holds her gaze with quiet confidence. "What's the rule in our hospital?"

"No one dies," Luna Yara says, grasping onto the words like they are a lifeline. "That's right. I need you to trust me, Mom. Let me take care of her. I won't let her die."

I'm surprised when Luna Yara nods, stepping back.

"Get yourself together, Mom. There are warriors here who need assistance. You focus on them, I'll focus on Wendy. If I need you, I'll call you."

Luna Yara nods again and I watch my mate wheel her sister down the hall to the room she treated Lane in.

Her eyes find mine and she looks over my body quickly.

'Have my mom take a look at you,' she says in the mind link, her voice somber as she steps into the room.

I stare for a moment longer after the door closes, then step up to Luna Yara. "Luna, why don't you sit down for a moment. Kennedy will look after Wendy."

She doesn't respond, still staring at the door where one daughter is trying to save the life of the other. I wrap my arm around her shoulders, ready to lead her to a chair when Alpha Warren and Alpha Connor race into the hospital.

"Warren," she says, losing the battle with her tears. In an instant, she's in his arm and he's holding her tightly.

"What happened?" Connor asks me.

I look around and see Henry looking shell-shocked, his body covered in blood. He's staring down the hall where Kennedy wheeled Wendy. I walk over, crouching in front of where's he's sitting.

"What happened, Henry?" I ask him gently.

"We got attacked on the way to the hospital. I didn't have a choice. I had set her down and fight. The whole time I could smell her bleeding out. Oh goddess, Quirin, she's just a pup," he says.

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"Look at me. Look at me, Henry." I wait until he turns his tormented gaze to me

"You did what you needed to do. She's here and alive because of your."

His eyes shift up and behind me: "I'm so sorry, Connor."

97%

"Quirin's right. She's alive because of you. She shouldn't have been on that battlefield to begin with and when she's healthy enough, I'm going to kick her ass," Connor says.

"You'll have to get in line," Warren growls. He's still holding his mate, but she's pulling herself together and wiping her eyes.

"Okay, Kennedy left me in charge out here, so I'm going to make her proud by taking care of your wounds while she's working on Wendy. Quirin, you have some gashes on you."

"Take care of my pack first, please, Luna." I say to her, standing up from where I was crouching in front of Henry. "And maybe Henry. I'm not sure how much of this is Wendy's and how much is his."

"I'm okay, Luna," he says, his grief at nearly losing Wendy still obvious in his voice.

She steps forward and takes his face in her hands. "Thank you for saving my daughter's life."

"I hope I did," he says, his voice getting thick.

"I needed the reminder myself, but my daughter's right. No one dies in our hospitals."

AD

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The Pack's Nemesis (Quirin's Story)

Kier POV

+13)

"You're injured again," Arianna says, looking me over. Her hands are gently skirting over my body as if she's using her fingers to check what her eyes are seeing. Since my body is starting to respond, even with the pain that I'm in, I grab her hands and pull them to my chest.

"Rowd says he can't heal some of these wounds, so I need to go see Kennedy," I say, expecting her to step aside, or maybe to encourage me to go. Instead, she stands there, her eyes focused on my chest.

"Arianna? What's going on in that head of yours?"

She doesn't answer and when I smell the salt of tears, I tilt her head up to look at me. "What is it?" I ask gently.

"I'm so afraid," she says, her voice shaking with her attempt to control her emotions.

"Afraid of what, baby?" I ask and gently swipe the tear that begins to fall down her cheek.

"Of losing you in one of these attacks," she whispers.

"Hey. Hey," I say, pulling her against me. I know I'm naked and dirty from the battle, but I don't like her crying.

She wraps her arms around me, holding me tightly. "What if I wake up one day and you're not here and I wasted all this time?" she asks.

I feel like my heart stutters. What is she saying.

"I don't think I could forgive myself. You've been nothing but kind and patient with me. I know you're a good man and I'm letting my fear of my past keep me from finding happiness with you."

I can't tell if she's trying to tell me that she's going to reject me or if she's going to say she's ready to move forward with our relationship. I hold my breath as she pulls back, looking up at me.

"Maybe... maybe we could spend some time together once Luna's family is gone and it's quieter on your floor," she says. I feel the tension inside me easing.

"I would like that," I say.

"Yeah?"

"I would like it a lot," I tell her, leaning down to gently press my lips against hers. I feel her body tense, then relax as she leans against me. I deepen the kiss, slowly enjoying her scent and her taste. I don't kiss her as long as I'd like, partly because I'm filthy and injured and partly because I don't want to scare her. She's agreed to spend more time with me and I want her to continue to feel comfortable doing that. I won't push her past her own comfort zone. I don't know everything that happened to her, but I know it wasn't good.

"You need to get to the hospital, Beta. Did you need me to assist you," she asks, smiling up at me. She hasn't pulled away from me, and I count that as a win.

"I definitely could use your assistance," I say, tucking her against my side and heading out of the packhouse toward the hospital.

Kennedy POV

I'm not sure how many times I've reminded my sister that no one dies in my hospital. She's testing every bit of medical knowledge I have, which isn't nearly as much as my mother's, but I knew her panic would only cause things to spiral out of control. One of the very first things I learned in my mother's hospital was to remain calm. If you aren't calm, you make mistakes and my mother would never have forgiven herself if Wendy died because of something she did or didn't do.

67%

I'd sent Deborah out to get blood from my family. Wendy didn't have enough after bleeding out and since I couldn't stop the bleeding until I got the silver out, her blood levels became dangerously low.

I'd shown Deborah how to start the blood transfusion when she returned. My sister's heart rate had dropped dangerously low, low enough that Echo could barely hear it. By then, I had two of the four gashes cleaned out. Because I needed to hurry, I used steri-strips to hold the gashes together while I kept working.

As the blood began making its way into her body, the wounds started bleeding again but her heartbeat became strong enough that we could hear it. Once I had the last gash cleaned, I began stitching up her deep wounds. The wolf's claws had gone deep enough to crack three ribs, slice her spleen, and nick her stomach, which means her recovery will be difficult until her wolf, Dasha, recovers and can heal her.

I carefully stitched her stomach, then her spleen before closing the last two gashes. The ribs will have to heal on their own since there's no good way to set those bones or if there is, I'm not that advanced in my medical knowledge. I'll talk to my mother about that and make sure there isn't anything more than I can do.

When I'm done, I have Deborah help me to wrap Wendy's chest and abdomen, securing the ribs and holding the stitched wounds together to help them heal.

When I finally step back, monitoring her vital signs, my entire body aches. I'm exhausted. I've never been the one to save a life like this. My mother was always there, and she did the brunt of the work, her or Beta Noelle.

I tell Deborah to go get some sleep then I look at my sister's pale face. I brush the hair away from her head and kiss her forehead before leaning down to her ear.

"You fight hard to survive. You hear me? Don't you dare become the only person we lose in a hospital. I'm going to let Mom and Dad come in. I'm sure they'll stay overnight. You won't be alone, Wendy, so you and Dasha focus on getting your strength back. I love you, sis," I say before standing up and after checking her once more, I pull off my gloves and the blood soaked surgical gown that I'm wearing as I walk out of the room.

The moment the door opens, everyone in the waiting room stands - my parents, all my siblings, Madison, Alpha Henry, Alpha Harold, Luna Farrah, and when my eyes meet Quirin's, my lips begin to tremble.

"She's stable."

My father takes a step forward, but when Quirin opens his arms, I walk into them. I love my father, but it's my mate that I want right now.

"You are in so much trouble, Little Pup," he whispers into my ear as he wraps his arms around me. I nod, unable to care that he's upset with me right now. I let his scent calm me but before the fatigue settles into my bones and I collapse, I turn to my mother, giving her the medical version of what I did with Wendy. Quirin wraps his arms around me from behind, holding me steady when I start to sway.

She asks specific questions before nodding. "Go get some rest, Kennedy. You did very well."

I nod and turn, ready to walk back but Quirin scoops me up into his arms.

"You're dead on your feet, Little Pup," he murmurs.

"Did mom clean out your wounds?" I ask, leaning my head against his chest.

"She took care of the rest of the pack, including me. Everyone had some silver on them, whether it was on their hands and feet or in their wounds. She was great," he says chuckling.

"What's funny?" I ask.

"Does your mother always talk to herself?" he asks.

"Yes."

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"She's apparently not happy with the lack of supplies in our hospital"

"I tried to tell her that no one comes to the hospital," I murmur.

"Well, they're coming now, so you'd better make sure you have what we need, Jasper and Progan attacked upon, probably thinking we were weak from the silver. They got quite a surprise when they realized we're all at full strength again, thanks to you."

I feel the change in air when we walk into the packhouse which is unusually quiet. My eyes are closed and I don't have the energy to open them.

"What time is it?" I ask.

"It's about two in the morning. You were in surgery for hours."

I nod. "I almost lost her several times," I say, tears beginning to leak past my eyelids.

"But you didn't. Your father is right about one thing. You are your mother's daughter," he says, pressing his lips to my head.

"And that's a good thing, since you don't like my father," I mumble, my brain unwilling to stay awake.

"Go to sleep. I'm going to bathe you and put you to bed, Little Pup"

I heard him turn on the water, but I never even feel him put me in the tub.

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AD

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The Pack's Nemesis (Quirin's Story)

Quirin

84%

I knew Wendy must have been badly injured for Henry to be so distraught and for Luna Yara to have lost her carefully maintained control. But I had no idea that my mate would be able to save her. I was sure she would try, but I didn't know that she would be in surgery for eight fucking hours and somehow manage to save her sister's life.

I've once again managed to underestimate my mate. I don't know how I keep doing it, but here I am. Again.

As I carefully strip off her clothes, I think about what she said, that I don't like her father. Alpha Warren and Alpha Connor didn't hesitate to answer the call of attack. Alpha Warren landed on the first floor immediately after I did. Yorick and Kier had leaped at the same time I did and I'd had to twist mid-air to avoid colliding with them. Their family didn't hesitate to enter the fight, even though this isn't their battle, and they nearly lost their daughter because of it. I'm not sure how to feel about them protecting my pack as if it were there own.

+13

I'd stood aside in the hospital, watching as Luna Yara took care of my pack members. Alpha Warren had consoled his pups, the twins and Yana, while my mate worked on her sister and Connor sat with Madison. When Harold and Farrah arrived, they sat on either side of Henry, trying to console him and let him know that he did everything possible to protect and save Wendy.

Yana eventually began helping her mother, while Warren held his youngest daughter who couldn't seem to stop crying. Both twins eventually fell asleep, exhausted.

I'd distracted myself by listening to Luna Yara's murmurings about ridiculous Alphas who are too stupid and cowardly to fight their own battles and have to use silver to try and

weaken another pack. She went on to say how my pack is utterly ridiculous not to use one of the best up and coming doctors that she's ever had the pleasure of meeting, just because they're stubborn and used to be rogues. Then she talked about the lack of supplies in our hospital and how we need to stock this hospital properly. Finally, she mumbled about how smart her daughter is to have found the silver, and how she needs to remember to tell Kennedy how proud she is of her, especially knowing how hard she's working to save Wendy.

The entire time she was mumbling, my pack members kept frowning at her and looking at me. I'd just shake my head, telling them to leave it. It was obvious that she wasn't talking to anyone other than herself.

I'd watched Arianna help Kier walk in and then watched him charm Luna Yara while she treated him.

Finally, when the last of my pack members, Luna Yara's family, Harold, Henry, and Farrah had been treated, she looked at

1. me.

"You're up next, Alpha."

After she asked Raif if he was healthy and if he thought he couldn't heal me because of silver powder, I'd listened to her murmuring about me. She talked about what she considers my lack of confidence in myself, always chasing the ghost of my father and trying to fill his shoes when I don't need to because I'm my own person and doing a much better job than my father ever did. I don't know why it's easy to listen to her, easier to hear what she's saying than it is to hear others. Maybe because she doesn't realize she's saying it out loud or maybe because everything she says comes from a place of kindness. Her words impacted me, made me feel vulnerable. I AM trying to live up to my father's expectations and since I don't truly know what those expectations are, I feel like I never quite meet them.

Somewhere during all of this, Deborah had come out saying she needed blood. Luna Yara had immediately pinpointed which of her children and her mate had Wendy's blood type. Henry asked if he was a match and was told that he was, but that he needed the silver out of his body before giving blood. As soon as she cleared him, he went to Deborah and put out his arm. I'm pretty sure he'd have let her drain him dry if it meant saving Wendy.

I was not a blood donor match for Wendy, but Luna Yara told me that I'm a match for Kennedy if I never needed to know

that.

After that, it had been a waiting game.

I finish bathing Kennedy, noticing the dark circles under her eyes. She's been through so much since she came to my packs wrap a towel around her and carefully pick her up. I don't often have time to just hold my mate unless we're in bed and minutes away from falling asleep. And as exhausted as I am, I know that I should get some deep. Bant instead, I just wand there, holding her and looking at my mate's sweet face.

I smile as she snuggles closer to me, pressing her face into my chest and breathing in my scent. Voen in her sleep, the wants to be close to me. I have no idea what I did to deserve a woman like Kennedy, but I'm so glad that I did,

1 press a kiss to her forehead and take her back to our bedroom. I pull one of my shirts over her head and settle her in bed before stripping down and climbing in behind her. I'm thankful now that the hospital has showers, but I noticed that was not part of the hospital that Kennedy upgraded. I'll talk to Kier and have him order shampoo and shower gel containers for the showers as well as getting our guys in there to retile the place. If we're going to need medical attention every time paper attacks, my warriors will want to shower while they wait to be treated.

I crawl into bed behind my mate and pull her against me, burying, my face in her hair. "I love you, Kennedy, I say, before joining her in a deep, exhausted sleep. Henry POV

I can't sleep. I keep seeing Wendy in my arms, bleeding out. I can smell the scent of her blood while I was fighting against that warrior. It shouldn't have taken me so long to kill him, but I was standing over her body, trying to protect her in case someone snuck up behind us while I was fighting. Her skin had become so pale when I was finally able to pick her up and race to the hospital that I was sure that she was dead.

The moment Luna Yara saw her and lost her calm demeanor, I knew it was as bad as I thought.

I'd sat in that waiting room, feeling helpless, waiting for Kennedy to come out and say that Wendy hadn't made it. I'd been relieved when Kennedy said she was stable and I thought I could finally get some sleep, but I can't get those images out of my head. I can't stop thinking about her pale, much-too-cool skin against my body.

I finally give up and get dressed. I have to see her. I have to know that she's still alive and fighting to survive. I'm pretty sure I'd have heard the mournful howls of Alpha Warren and Luna Yara if she'd passed away overnight, but I won't be able to rest until I see her with my own eyes and know for sure that she's safe.

I make my way back to the hospital. There are very few people around. Nearly everyone fought after a long night of celebration and the entire pack is exhausted and healing from their wounds.

When I get to Wendy's room, both Alpha Warren and Luna Yara have their heads on the bed. They are on opposite sides of Wendy, each holding one of her hands. When the door opens, Alpha Warren's head snaps up.

"Henry, is everything okay?"

"I just came to check on her," I say, as Luna Yara sleepily looks up at me.

"Oh, Henry. That's so kind of you. She hasn't woken up but she's remained stable all night," Luna Yara says.

"If you want to go get some breakfast, shower, change, whatever, I'll stay with her," I say.

"Are you sure, Henry? Yara and I can take turns going to shower," Warren says. "I'm sure, Alpha. I'd be happy to do it," I say.

They both lean in to kiss Wendy's head, telling her they'll be back soon, before heading out. I take the closest seat, the one Luna Yara was sitting in and take Wendy's hand in mine.

I pull her hand to my cheek and take a deep breath, finally feeling like I can relax. She's alive. She's still fighting.

I kiss the back of her hand and carefully lay it back down, keeping her hand in mine as I do.

"I don't know if you can hear me, Wendy, but I'm right here"

I lay my head down beside her hand and I've just started to fall asleep when I feel her body work and move

My head snaps up and I watch her eyes flutter open, I stand up, gently pushing her away from her

"Wendy! Oh my goddess, Wendy. You had me so scared!"

"Henry?" she says softly, her voice cracking.

"I'm right here," I say, looking around. "Here, let me get you some water"

"I feel awful," she says, her eyes filling with tears as I grab the water. There's a wobble in it and I pause for a moment

"Do you remember what happened, I ask as she sips.

She nods. "You saved me," she says as she releases the straw,

"I was terrified that I was going to lose you," I whisper,

"You're too strong for that. You would never let me die" she smiles, but it fades

quickly as pain return Werture.

"I'll go get your mother," I say, only getting one step away before she stops me

"Don't leave me, Henry, Please don't leave me," she pleads, her voice becoming, panicked,

I turn back and take her hand again, leaning over her to look in her eyes, "Okay, I won't go anywhere?

She breaths out a sigh of relief. "Thank you"

I mind link my Dad, letting him know that I need Luna Yara back at the hospital. Once he tells me that he'll find her and send her over, I lean against the bed,

"Why can't I hear Dasha?" she asks, her lips trembling.

"Shhh, I'll tell you what I know. But you almost died. I wasn't kidding when I said you scared me to death. Until your mom gets here and can give you something for the pain, just relax. Dasha has to heal too. But you're a strong Alpha female. I'm sure she'll be back before you know it."

The Pack's Nemesis (Quirin's Story)

Kennedy

I slept until late in the morning the next day. Surprisingly, so did Quirin. Or at least,

he was still in bed when I woke up. The moment I stirred, I felt his lips press

against the top of my head. "Did you sleep well, Little Pup?"

I shift. My body is still sore as the memory of last night returns to me.

"Wendy..." I say, starting to get out of bed.

"She's awake. Kier told me that Henry went to stay with her while your parents came to get some food and before they'd finished eating, Alpha Harold came to get your mom, letting her know that Wendy was awake."

I feel him press his lips to my head again. It's so unusual for my active mate to just lie here in bed with me that I assume we're about to have the 'talk' of me not going to the safe room.

"You scared the shit out of me yesterday," he says softly. "When I realized that you weren't in a safe room, that you were exposed to the fighting, I struggled to focus on the fight. And then, I saw Wendy in Henry's arms. She was awake but had already been slashed across her chest and abdomen."

He stops and I wait for him to continue.

45

"She looks enough like you that I had a terrible moment of absolute fear. And then, I couldn't stop fighting to make sure you were safe. But the thought of losing you, Kennedy... it terrified me. I know I'm not perfect. I know you deserve better than a mate like me, but I can't lose you, Kennedy. I can't," he says, his voice getting tight.

I turn over in his arms to face him. "I'm right here, Quirin. I'm not going anywhere."

He looks down at me, his teeth clenched tightly, and I can see the war in his eyes. "I know you're going to tell me that you have to be in the hospital during battles, aren't you?"

"You saw why I have to be there, Quirin. If my mother and I had been in a safe room, Wendy would have died."

"While I don't agree that a pup her age should have been in the fight to begin with, I also know that our pack is suffering with this silver powder, so I know it's

important for you to be there. I don't want our pack members dying, Kennedy. But,

I can't lose you. So I'm going to give you a short list of warriors that I trust to

protect you and you'll pick the one you're most comfortable having as your guard."

I look down at his chest, trying to collect my thoughts.

"Kennedy," he growls, reaching up to tilt my chin to look at him. "This is not negotiable."

"I don't have a problem having a guard, Quirin. But... well, do you think anyone would really want that job?"

"What are you talking about?"

"It's a shit job, Quirin."

"I dare you to say that to Bradley," he says, his Quirin crooked smile coming out. I gently smack his chest.

"I don't mean because it's not a worthy job. It's just..." I shrug. "Connor's pack loves my mother. Our pack... doesn't love me the same way."

He looks at me thoughtfully for a moment. "In any pack, the Luna guard is an honored position, whether she's a warrior or not. She's too important, YOU'RE too important, to leave unprotected. Even Farrah has a guard when Harold isn't around. And while I know that not every person in this pack has learned to respect you and you may have had a tough start to your

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time here, you're winning over the pack quickly."

"You think so?" I ask. I hope he means it.

"Kennedy, I know you were busy during your Luna ceremony party, dancing with your friends and family, but the pack had a great time. They were dancing, talking with your family, and enjoying themselves in a way that I'm not used to seeing. The pack is changing because of you. They are getting stronger, because of you. They are learning what it means to have a Luna who heals them, in more ways than one."

That makes me smile. I hope he's right. "Who's on your short-list?"

"Lane, Leo, Terrance, and Randall." They're all warriors who stayed for my Luna ceremony and all warriors who I've healed.

"Can I think about it?" I ask.

"Don't take too long to think about it. I have no intention of feeling fear like I felt yesterday ever again, Kennedy."

"Okay."

"Now, there's one more thing. Your mother said our hospital isn't stocked well. I'm not sure why you didn't order what you thought we needed, but put in the request to Kier. I'll make sure he puts it through."

I frown again. "Quirin, I need a budget. Some of these items that I'd like to upgrade are expensive."

He looks at me. "How expensive?"

"Well, the x-ray machine that my mother said looked older than her, would cost us at least \$30,000. I could get one that's cheaper, but it wouldn't be commercial grade which is what we should have considering the training and battles that we have as werewolves."

He looks at me like I'm crazy. "Little Pup, you realize that our pack has money, right?"

"Well, obviously. I mean, we never run out of food or have to worry about water or electricity, or things like that. But I don't want to bankrupt the pack to get an x-ray machine. The one that's here works and when we can afford it, I'll get a new one. And, if we can't ever afford it, I'll make do or I'll get a cheaper one."

He throws off the covers and stands. "Come on."

"What? Where are we going?" I ask.

"I don't even know how you didn't know this about our pack. I mean, how is that even possible? Everyone knows," he says. I think he's talking to me, but since I'm used to my mother talking to herself, it sounds more like that.

Suddenly, he stops and looks at me. "Why do you think Jasper is attacking our pack?"

I shrug. "To take over the land and accumulate our warriors making his pack stronger."

He stares at me a moment, then shakes his head.

"Get dressed, Kennedy."

I do and then Quirin leads me downstairs. We run into Kier and Arianna on the stairs. Based on her blush, I'd say they were kissing a moment ago. I wink at her. "This looks serious," Kier says, watching us.

"I just found out that Kennedy didn't purchase what we needed for the hospital because she's afraid of bankrupting the pack."

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"Seriously?" he asks

"Why is me being fiscally responsible and not bankrupting the pack such a surprise?" I ask as we get to the first floor.

"You're going to bankrupt the pack? How?" Terrance asks.

"No, I'm not? That's what I'm saying. That's why I haven't purchased the equipment for the hospital," I insist, getting irritated.

"Is that why your mother was complaining about us not having everything a hospital needs while she was fixing us up last night?" Lane asks, walking up.

"I'll talk to her. She knows you don't use the hospital here like they do in her pack." I say as Quirin continues to lead me toward his office.

"Alpha Terrance asks.

"I'm handling it." Quirin says.

"Handling what? There's nothing to handle Quirin. If I can't order more supplies right now, I won't. I just need you to give me a budget." I say as we walk into his office.

He walks to his chair and pulls me into his lap, his arms wrapping on either side of me to hold me steady while he pulls his laptop over and begins typing.

"Our pack has investments in multiple things, Kennedy. My father started some of these investments before I was born and he diversified until his death," he says as he pulls up some elaborate spreadsheet.

Then he leans forward, resting his chin on my shoulder. "Do you see this number right here?" he asks.

"Yes."

That's how much money this pack is worth, Kennedy. Your \$30,000 x-ray machine won't even make a dent in this."

I stare at the number on the screen.

"That's a lot of zeros."

I feel him chuckle behind me.

"Yes, it is."

"Wait. THAT'S why Jasper is after our pack?"

"This pack is extremely wealthy, Kennedy. We are, by far, the wealthiest pack in the region, possibly the country. We could live off the interest that this money makes every month and never even touch the principal, and most months I have extra to reinvest."

I'm still gaping at all those zeros when he turns his head and looks at me. "You really didn't know?"

I shake my head. "How would I know?"

"I thought maybe your father would have told you."

I shake my head. "Connor might know, but I was never involved in the finances of our pack. I just knew that Mom's school brought money into the pack, and we never had to worry about feeding our pack members."

He wraps his arms around me, holding me tightly and pressing another kiss to my head.

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A5

The Pack's Nemesis (Quirin's Story)

Quirin

I need to be inside my mate. I know her family is here, I know that this might be a little more than she expects, but knowing that she had no idea how wealthy this pack is, hearing her say that she would have wanted me even if I was poor, the fear of losing her that I experienced yesterday, it's all combining into an uncontrollable, desperate need for her.

I stand, setting her on her feet then I go to the door and lock it before turning around to look at her.

"Quirin?"

"I need you, Kennedy. I need you right now," I say and even I can hear the desperation in my voice.

She looks around. "Where?"

growl, happiness bubbling up inside me. I can already feel the darkness inside me quivering in expectation of her light. She doesn't care that I'm desperate for her, she's just naïve as to where and how I'll take her in my office.

I watch her grey-green eyes darken as I prowl toward her. Instead of telling her, I walk to her, turning her in front of me then pushing her forward.

"Hands on my desk," I say softly. I can already smell the scent of her arousal. Thankfully when we hurriedly got dressed, she pulled a dress on. I can feel her nervousness as I take my hands and slide them up her thighs, pushing her dress up to her waist. I pull the panties down, helping her to step out of them and giving myself a perfect view of her glistening lips.

"Do you think you can be quiet, Kennedy," I ask, my voice still soft.

She shakes her head. "No."

I pull my shirt over my head and hand it to her. "Use this to muffle your screams."

She takes my shirt and presses it to her face.

"Arch your back. Give me the access I want," I say.

She doesn't hesitate. She arches and I moan at the sight of how wet she is, how good she smells and when I lick my tongue over her sweet pussy, I tug her hips back, desperate to taste more of her sweetness.

She yips in surprise, then presses my shirt against her mouth as I use my tongue to tease her. Fuck she tastes good. I growl against her clit, feeling a wave of possessiveness. I could have lost her yesterday. I could have lost this taste, this scent, this feeling of bliss that is already starting to fill me. There is only one person who has ever made me feel like this and I could have lost her.

in," she whimpers against my shirt.

When her body explodes, I lap up her sweet arousal as it drips onto my tongue.

When I stand behind her, I quickly pull my pants down. "Don't ever put yourself in danger again, Kennedy," I growl, grabbing her hips and bottoming out inside her in one thrust.

"I need you in my life. Do you understand?" I continue growling as I begin thrusting at the hard, rough pace I always use when I've lost control.

"Yes. YES!" she pants.

I reach down and wrap my hand around her throat, pulling her up while holding her hip with my other hand as I continue my punishing pace.

"Do you understand how important you are to me, Kennedy? Do you understand that if anything ever happened to you, I would lose my mind. I would burn this world and everyone in it to the ground if I ever lost you. Do you understand?" I growl against her ear.

"Yes. Yes," she whimpers, and I feel her inner walls fluttering around me.

I keep my hand around her throat, my thumb rubbing against her jaw and neck.

Her head is back against my shoulder, lifting her throat and giving me her

submission. I'm not sure if she knows that I need it, or if it's because she's perfect for me, but it's exactly what I need.

"I love you so fucking much, Kennedy. So fucking much," biting down on her throat.

She reaches out blindly, grabbing my shirt off the desk and pressing it against her mouth.

"You like it when I tell you I love you?" I ask, my voice deep and possessive.

"Yes."

"Then you'd better come when I tell you that I fucking love you," I say, her body clamping down on me as I continue thrusting into her. She presses the shirt tightly against her mouth as she screams.

"Every part of me loves every part of you, Kennedy," I say, biting her earlobe as her body continues contracting around me.

"And I fucking love being inside you. You feel so fucking good," I say as I feel the light spreading through me. "So fucking good," I growl as my own orgasm rips through me.

I bite down on her neck, my own roar of pleasure muffled against her throat as our bodies jerk together, her sweet pussy drawing me deeper as her light explodes inside me, pushing away the darkness of yesterday's battle.

When reality finally comes flooding back into me, I pull my teeth out of her neck.

"Did I hurt you?" I ask her. I'm always too rough with her. I try not to be, but I lose myself when I'm inside her.

"No," she says as I lick the wounds of my bite mark closed. I rub my nose over her neck, wrapping the hand that was around her throat around her waist.

"I really do love, with everything in me," I say to her.

"I love you too, Quirin," she says, turning to smile at me.

When I pull out of her, I go to the bathroom and get a washcloth washing myself off, then rinsing it in warm water before going out to where she's standing. I kneel down in front of her, putting her hand on my shoulder to help her steady herself as I lift her leg and clean between her thighs.

I look up at her and smile. "Do you want to hear something interesting?"

She raises her eyebrow at me, smiling. "You want to taste me again?"

"I definitely do, and if your family wasn't here and probably looking for you, I would. But no, it's not that."

"What do you want to tell me?"

"If anything ever happens to me, all that money goes to you."

I watch as the smile drops off her face and something close to fear replaces it. "What? Why? Quirin, I wouldn't begin to know what to do with all that money." "Kier would help you. So would your father and Connor, I'm sure. You'd be responsible for taking care of the pack, Kennedy,

so I made you the beneficiary of everything."

"Quirin..."

"Kennedy," I say, pulling her to me as I stay kneeling. I press my lips to her stomach, looking up at her. "Even if you weren't my mate and Luna, you'd be the perfect person to leave that money to, BECAUSE you don't want it. It means you won't squander the money and leave the pack destitute."

She slides her fingers into my hair, sending shivers through my body. "How about, nothing happens to you, and you keep doing whatever you do with that money. That way, I can stick to what I know, which is the hospital, and you can stick to what you know, which is managing this pack."

"Deal," I say. "Now, Kier's been trying to get my attention, so I'm guessing someone in your family is looking for you. Let's get dressed and go find them."

I help her step into her panties, pulling them up as I stand, then I take another moment to kiss her.

"You're going to order what we need for the hospital now?" I ask her.

She chuckles. "Yes,"

"Good," I say, grabbing my shirt and pulling it over my head. It's wrinkled and damp where Kennedy was screaming into it, but it smells like her and I love that. When we step out of the office, we nearly run into Alpha Warren and Luna Yara.

"Oh, there you are," Luna Yara says.

Alpha Warren just raises an eyebrow at his daughter before looking at me. While I can feel Kennedy's embarrassment at her parents catching us just after having been together, I feel no such embarrassment. She's my mate, I'm her lover, and they should both understand that.

"Did you need something?" she squeaks.

"Wendy

Wants to speak with you. She's doing very well and I'm sure you want to check in with her."

"Yes. Yes, I do. I'll see you later, Quirin," she says, stepping away from me quickly. Her cheeks are a beautiful shade of pink.

"Count on it. And don't forget what we talked about."

She turns and looks at me over her shoulder and nods.

I look at Alpha Warren. "We'd like to stay another day and let Wendy heal a bit more, if that's okay," he says.

"I already told the pack members who went to stay at Henry's not to return until I spoke to them. You can stay as long as Wendy needs to."

"Thank you," he says, turning to leave.

"Alpha Warren." He stops and turns to look at me.

"I'll speak with Alpha Connor, but I wanted to thank you personally for helping with the battle yesterday. Having so many Alphas on our side made things much easier and, well, I know it came at great personal expense to you and your family. I appreciate you helping to protect our pack, even if it was for Kennedy's sake."

He turns all the way around to face me. "You're welcome and it wasn't solely for Kennedy's sake. You've never agreed to having an alliance, but I've never considered you my enemy either. If you ever need assistance, all you have to do is ask, Alpha."

I nod and watch as he turns and walks away to catch up with his mate and daughter. I wonder if he knows that I've always considered him my enemy.