

# The Pack's Nemesis

## – Chapter 86 – 90

### The Pack's Nemesis (Quirin's Story)

Quirin

I come awake feeling disoriented. Something is wrong, or ... not wrong, just off? Unexpected? What the fuck? I'm never this disoriented. And why is my bed so fucking hard? And where is my mate? I can smell her. She's nearby.

I force my eyes to open and immediately wince as the light above me shines in my eyes. Why is there a light above me? Where the fuck am I?

"There he is." I hear Luna Yara say and a moment later she's beside me. I know this positioning. I'm in a hospital. Am I still recovering from the bear attack? No, that can't be right. I didn't just dream my life, did I?

"Where's Kennedy?" I ask, more harshly than is necessary.

"Bathroom. She'll be right back. How are you feeling?" she asks me.

I feel fine, just disoriented.

"Why am I in the hospital?" I ask, realizing that I don't feel like I have any injuries, and I'm completely dressed except for my shoes.

"What do you remember, Quirin?" she asks me in her gentle way.

"Hey," I hear my mate's sweet voice. In a quick motion, I'm up and turning to the sound of her voice. I get off the bed and look her over quickly before pulling her into my arms.

"What's wrong? Why are we here? Why am I in a hospital bed? I'm not injured." She takes my face in her hands and holds my gaze. "Breathe for me, Quirin."

I keep my arms around her waist and take a deep breath of her citrus and mint scent, letting it calm the turmoil inside me. What is wrong with me?

"You passed out, Quirin," she says softly.

"I ... what? I never pass out."

"You were a bit ... shocked and maybe overwrought?" she says, watching me.

Overwrought? I don't get worked up about anything. The only thing that ever makes me nervous or anxious is Kennedy and how she feels about me. I frown at her. Did we have a fight? No, we wouldn't be in the hospital if we did. I blink at her while she holds my gaze.

And then it hits me like a fucking tsunami. I look down at her stomach. "Oh shit."

"Easy, Quirin. Do I need to call Warren back in here?" Yara asks, coming to put her hand on my shoulder.

'Get your fucking shit together! Our mate is pregnant with our pups, pups that we filled her with, and you're passing out on her!' Raif growls in my mind.

I take a deep breath, watching my mate as worry flickers across her face. That, more than anything, makes me calm myself.

"Four?"

She nods.

"Do we know if they're boys or girls?" Stupid question. It doesn't fucking matter. Four mouths to feed is two more than my mate can nurse at any one time.

"Mom says in about a week we should be able to tell. She thinks I'm three to four weeks along."

"Three to four, but then..." Holy fucking shit! I got her pregnant with four pups on her birthday?

'It might have been after you finally stopped holding back on her. We were pretty pent up by then,' Raif smirks.

She smiles at me, probably seeing Raif in my eyes.

"What does Raif say?" she asks.

"Raif's pretty proud of the prolific bastard he is," I say and she bursts out laughing.

"Are you going to be okay?" she asks me. I pull her into my arms, holding her to me, careful not to squeeze her too tightly.

"First, I should be asking you that. Second, as long as I have you, I'll be perfect. But you know I'm going to need a LOT of help with this. One was exciting but still scary. But, four? Kennedy, what the fuck are we going to do with four?" I ask her.

"Probably not sleep much. Mom and I were talking while you were unconscious, and we had an idea."

"How long was I out?" I ask.

"About an hour," she says.

I kiss the top of her head. "How do you feel about all of this?"

"Terrified, excited. Mostly I was worried about how you would respond. I know it's

a lot and you said you never expected to have pups, and now, you're going to have an entire family in about four months."

"What about Echo? What about you? Are you physically able to carry this many pups, Kennedy? Do I need to worry about losing you? Losing them? The idea of losing my pups, pups. only just learned I have, already makes me feel nauseous. I may be terrified of them, but I want them. I want all four of them. And the thought of losing my mate...

I turn, looking for Luna Yara, but I realize she stepped out to give us some privacy.

I scoop Kennedy up and put her on the bed before rushing to the door. Luna Yara

is right outside, talking to Warren.

"Can we talk to you?"

"Of course, Quirin. I was just giving you a few moments alone," she says, walking toward me. I look at Warren.

"Thank you for being here for me."

"That's what family is for, Quirin. And when everything else finally hits you, don't worry. Yara and I will be around to help you. You don't have to figure this out on your own."

I don't know what he's talking about, but I nod and step back into the room, focusing on Yara.

"What about Echo? Is Kennedy in danger of losing our pups? Is she able to carry our pups to term while Echo is silent?" I ask her.

"So, I believe, and Annika agrees, that poor Echo is working herself too hard trying to protect four pups while she's still healing herself. I do believe that she'll get strong enough to return and I've talked to Kennedy about what I think you and Raif can do to help her come forward."

I reach out and take Kennedy's hand. "We'll do whatever we need to do to make sure Kennedy and our pups are safe."

"I know you will. You're a wonderful mate. And obviously a very passionate one,"

she says. I frown as her lips twitch like I missed some sort of joke. When I look at Kennedy, she's shaking her head at her mother.

"It's a good thing that I'll be here for a while. I intend to put Kennedy on bedrest soon, especially if Echo doesn't come back at full strength. While believe that Echo is probably using her strength to protect the pups, I don't want to risk Kennedy getting injured and being unable to heal. You're a tall woman, Kennedy, and an Alpha female, but four pups is a lot. Two was a lot for me. Four will be even harder, especially since it's your first time giving birth. I want to set up a special delivery room just for Kennedy, but we may have to do a Cesarian section if your pups aren't in a good alignment to deliver. We can talk more about that as the pregnancy progresses, but I want you to be aware of some of the

things that I'm thinking about and

will be monitoring for in the future."

"Whatever you need, no matter the cost, do it. I want my mate and my pups safe and healthy," I say.

"Okay. I'll keep you informed and I'll want to see Kennedy at least once a week. For now, you can go. Warren's been listening to your pack. He thinks they've moved to northwest quadrant of your pack lands, so it should be fine for you to return to the packhouse safely."

I'd forgotten about Slater. He's nothing, not even worth the pack's time or energy. Kennedy is everything. I lean forward and kiss her, pouring all of my love for her, all of my passion as Yara put it, behind the kiss. I don't pull away until she whimpering and clinging to me.

"I want to tell the pack. And we need to get more guards for you. And we need to talk about your thoughts on how we can manage four pups. And we need ... oh, holy mother Moon Goddess. We need EVERYTHING!"

"Dad said he'll help. And he will. I think he's pretty excited. Plus, I know Yana and Yvonne will want to help babysit, maybe Wendy too. But my idea was more permanent."

I stroke her cheeks, thinking about how wonderful my life is, how much it has changed in such a short amount of time and how much it will continue to change in the future. All for the better.

"What's your idea?"

Since I need to touch her, I lean forward, rubbing my face against hers as Raif pushes forward.

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"What do you think of making Christy our full-time nanny? It would give her a strong place in the pack and an important role. I thought it might help her to gain some confidence and maybe help heal. She'll spend her days on the Alpha floor in the beginning, giving her a sense of safety when she

her to

returns to the pack. We can even make up a room for her at the end of the hall if she wants it temporarily."

Of course my mate has the perfect solution, not only to help us with our pups, but also to help our pack member.

"Have I mentioned how perfect you are? How much I love you? How much I want you?" I growl, making her giggle.

"I'm pretty sure the pack is going to realize just how much you want me when we tell them I'm having quadruplets."

"You know, I've heard that when your mate is pregnant with a girl, her scent gets even stronger. I fucking hope at least one of these pups is a girl and if so, you'd better be prepared for your greedy mate who can't get enough of you."

I smile as her scent spikes, and she wraps her legs around me. I lift her off the table, still rubbing my face against hers.

"Are you ready to tell the pack? Because after that, we're going to fucking celebrate. If you thought I was passionate before, you haven't seen anything yet."

"I am definitely ready to celebrate," she says, nipping at my chin.

I reach out in the mind link to Kier.

'Alpha, is everything okay?'

'What's going on with Slater?'

'I'm not sure if the pack was just really angry and venting their frustration on him, or if he was weaker than I thought, but he's not going to last much longer.'

'Good, tell the pack I have an important announcement. Finish him off and have them wash up. Meet us in the packhouse in thirty minutes.'

It quiet a moment and then he's back. 'Do you mind if we toss him off the overhang? It was the warriors' idea. A bit of justice since that's where Jasper got Luna.'

'Fine by me. Thirty minutes.'

'See you then,' he says.

I take my mate's mouth again, knowing I have a few extra minutes before heading to the packhouse.

Off in the distance, I hear the scream of terror as Slater goes flying over the overhang, but I ignore it. Everything that is important in my life is right here.

## The Pack's Nemesis (Quirin's Story)

Kennedy

As Quirin carries me back to the packhouse, I open my mind to him and Raif, and also to Echo.

'Echo, if you can hear me, we love you. We know you're taking care of our babies and being the excellent mother that you are. But Raif is here, Quirin is here. They will help protect our babies. You need to get strong, my wolf. I miss you,' I tell her.

Raif begins purring in both our mind and out loud. I can feel Echo fluttering in my mind, responding to the gentle call of her mate. This is what Mom told me to try. Echo will want

to please her mate, to be with him again, so having Raif in my mind and helping Echo connect to him may help to strengthen her.

'I'm willing to take as much time as my mate needs to help her gain her strength again,' Raif says. "I already knew she'd be the perfect mother to my pups, and she hasn't disappointed me. But you need your strength, my love. I want to feel you in my mind too," he says to her.

I can almost feel Echo laying down in my mind, her own soft purr feels like hummingbird wings fluttering against my consciousness. In my mind, I watch as Raif gets as close to her as he can, then he too lays down, watching over his mate like a sentinel.

When we step inside the packhouse, it looks like the entire pack is waiting for us.

"Welcome home, Luna."

"It's good to have you back, Luna."

"We love you, Luna."

I smile, feeling the happiness and positive energy in the pack. "Thank you. It's good to be home."

Kier steps up with Arianna right behind him.

"Slater?" Quirin asks him.

"I sent warriors to make sure he's dead and to dispose of the body."

"Good," he says, turning to address the pack.

"Thank you all for getting here on short notice. And thank you to those of you who were dealing with the Slater garbage for ending things quicker than you were expecting. I ..." he begins looking down at me. "We have some very important and exciting news for you. As all of you have undoubtedly noticed, the feeling of the pack is changing. We have our Luna to thank for that. She is turning this pack into what it should have always been - a family," he says, watching me as he speaks. I can feel his pride and love for me flowing through our bond.

"And now, our family is growing," he says, and I hear the gasps around the room. The she-wolves in the room already know what Quirin is about to say, or at least part of it. He sets me on my feet in front of him, wrapping his hands protectively over my stomach.

"Our Luna is pregnant," he says and the pack responds instantly, cheering and howling excitedly.

Quirin raises a hand, waiting for everyone to get quiet.

"Pregnant with quadruplets," he says and it's like the air just got sucked out of the room. Their shock at his statement is like a wave rolling around the room. "We believe this is why Echo is still silent, although Raif and I have been able to feel her consciousness very softly in Kennedy's mind.

"Oh please, please can I be the one to tell Alpha Henry?" Kier asks, looking practically giddy.

I don't have to see him to know that Quirin gives him a dirty look before turning back to the pack.

"You all need to be aware that Kennedy will most likely have to go on bedrest at some point and I will become overbearing in my protectiveness of her."

I tilt my head to look up at my mate. "When were you ever underbearing, my love?"

He gives me a playful growl as the pack snickers around us.

"Lane," he says, looking up.

"Right here, Alpha," he says, stepping forward.

"I need your top three names for Luna Guard by tomorrow morning. From now on,

I want two guards on Kennedy at all times."

It's excessive, but I don't bother arguing. It will help Quirin feel more comfortable and eventually, the guards will just be sitting outside my bedroom trying not to die of boredom.

"Luna and I already started talking about that, Alpha. I'll have my list ready for you."

"Good. Now, I intend to celebrate my upcoming family with my mate tonight, but if the pack would like to celebrate this fantastic news, start planning a party. Work with Betas Arianna and Kier," he says, scooping me back into his arms.

He turns and carries me upstairs, not saying much until we get to the Alpha floor.

"Tomorrow, I need you to talk to David for me. He's been waiting in the cells for your verdict on him. I won't expose you and our pups to that environment, but I'd like to deal with that last open end of Arto's betrayal. I want to start our life with a clean slate. I want everything in life that you're willing to give me, Kennedy. I want all the happiness, all the sunshine, all the love and light that you bring to me and I don't want anything to get in the way of that."

I reach up and stroke his cheek. "You mentioned something about giving me everything that you have to give, of not holding back?"

"Do you think you can take it?" he asks softly.

"I was made for you, Quirin. I can anything and everything you have to give me, just as you can take everything that I have to give you."

We step into our room and he lays me on the bed. "Thank the goddess I can't get you anymore pregnant than you already are," he says, then jerks back. "I can't, right?" he asks, looking terrified.

I laugh. "No, you can't."

"Then yes, love of my life, I'm going to give you everything that I have, everything that I am."

Our first time is very much like  
always, with Quirin making me come

and then losing control when he's

inside me. 'This time, however, our

minds are linked. I can sense the way he feels like I blast his darkness

out of him, leaving him with the

feeling of exquisite happiness that he's only ever felt with me.

However, he doesn't stop there. Maybe it's because we're mentally bonded but even after his powerful orgasm, he stays hard. And this time, he takes his time.

His kiss, while still passionate, is slow and deep. His movements inside me remain controlled, slow and steady, driving me to the brink of bliss before pushing me over. The happiness inside of both of us, the pleasure that we're giving each other swirls around us and it's the most

intense feeling I've ever felt in my

life.

I feel tears streaming down my face as I hold onto Quirin, needing an anchor. His

own arms wrap tightly around me, but he doesn't stop. The pleasure, the happiness, the intensity of our love wraps around us just as our bodies are wrapped around each other.

'I love you, Kennedy. I've always loved you. You are my everything. My life. My love. My future. My family.'

His words send a fresh wave of tears streaming down my cheeks and all I can do send wave after wave of love through the bond as I shatter in his arms. Much, much later, we finally pull apart, separating our bodies but keeping our minds wrapped around each other. He lays beside me, pulling me against him and wrapping his arms around me.

"I will never, ever get enough of basking in your love, Kennedy," he says. It's the calmest I've ever heard my mate. There's no edge to his voice, no intensity, just relaxed happiness.

"That's good, Quirin, because I intend to love you for the rest of my life."

I feel his smile as he presses a kiss to my shoulder, and we fall into a deep sleep together.

In the morning, I wake, still feeling emotionally exhausted after last night, but somehow also feeling energized. Quirin's love has that effect on me.

'Good morning, my human,' a very weak sounding Echo says in my head.

'You're back!'

'Yes. Quirin and Raif's love strengthened me enough to bring me back.'

I add that to the long list of reasons of why I love my mate.

## The Pack's Nemesis (Quirin's Story)

Quirin

I meant what I said to Kennedy. I could live forever in her beautiful mind,

surrounded by her love and light. Opening myself to her has made the tightness that has always constricted my heart snap. I feel free, light, and oh so happy. It's an unfamiliar feeling, but one that I want to feel forever.

Waking up with her warm, soft body tucked against mine, her sleepy consciousness in my head is the best way to wake up. That is, until Raif and I hear Echo's weak voice. If I'd been standing up, I think Raif would have tossed me to the ground in his excitement to get to his mate. But as rough as he was with me, he's nothing but gentle with her. In our

shared mind space, he carefully walks to his mate and lays beside her, curling himself around her protectively. She licks his face briefly before laying her head back down. Raif begins purring at her and she sighs contentedly.

"She's back," Kennedy whispers and I can hear the teary happiness in her voice.

"Yes, she is. She's a strong wolf," I say, just holding her. "Four. I still can't believe it."

"We have a lot to do before they arrive. But I know Mom and Dad will help, and so will the others," she says.

"I'm sure the pack will too, once they get over their shock," I say, smiling. I'm glad I wasn't the only one rendered speechless with the news.

"So, tell me about David," she says. I get up, carrying her to the shower as I tell her about my conversation with David, how he knew about Arlo's obsession with Christy, and how I told him that I would leave his fate in her hands.

"No pressure," she says sarcastically, staring up at me.

"If it were up to me, he'd be dead," I tell her honestly. "This, your meeting with him, is his only chance to survive. I'm doing this for you, not him. If you don't want to meet with him, he'll be dead before breakfast is over."

"I thought we decided stress wasn't a good thing for me right now," she says, looking nervous.

I cup her face in my hands and tilt her head to look at me. "All I need to know is if you believe him. If you do, if you trust that he can live in the same pack as Christy and our other vulnerable omegas, he lives. If you don't, then I'm the one who decides his fate. All I need to know from you is if you believe him."

I know my mate isn't a warrior. She's a healer. Killing or being responsible for death is hard for her, which makes her a perfect balance for me. I don't care about killing. She's become the conscience of my actions.

"Okay. I'll meet with him," she says, just like I knew she would.

"Good, then after breakfast, I'm finally going to walk the pack lands with your father and then we need to start thinking of how to structure our floor for babies and speak to Christy about being our nanny."

"I can do that. I think Mom released her last night, so she should be around this morning."

"Do you need to eat something or do you want to talk to David first?" I ask, watching her. I've noticed that while we were showering and getting dressed, the feeling inside her was changing, turning towards nausea.

"Maybe just some crackers and club soda or ginger ale."

"Okay, we'll stop by the kitchen. I'd prefer to meet with him outside. I'm guessing he hasn't showered in a while and I don't want his scent making you any more nauseous or stinking up our packhouse," I say, scooping her into my arms. I'm careful not to move too quickly, but I have to hold still when her hand goes to her mouth. She swallows hard a couple of times before nodding.

I carefully carry her downstairs and straight to the kitchen.

"Luna!" Susie starts, then stops. "Crackers!" she says, rushing to the pantry. She grabs a sleeve of crackers and opens them, handing them to Kennedy.

"Do we have club soda or ginger ale?" I ask.

"We have both. Which do you prefer, Luna?"

"The soda is good," she says.

"I'll have some sent up to your room too, Luna. It's better to eat first thing in the morning. It helps."

"Thanks, Susie. Is Christy here this morning?" Kennedy asks.

"She is, Luna. She's in the back. She asked to stay in the kitchen today and Beta Arianna put her on stocking duty," she says, looking behind her. "She made sure it was easy duty, but it gives her something to do," she whispers.

"Will you let her know I'd like to speak with her after breakfast?" Kennedy asks.

"I will Luna. It's so good to have you back," Susie says, squeezing Kennedy's free hand before getting back to breakfast preparation.

'Kier, bring David to the back patio,' I say in the mind link.

'Yes, Alpha.'

"Susie, can we get a blanket as well? Kennedy is going to be outside for a few minutes and I don't want her getting cold," I say.

"I'm fine, Quirin," she says, looking up at me as she nibbles on her crackers.

"And you'll be better with a blanket," I say, kissing her nose.

She shakes her head as we walk outside. Rather than putting her in a chair like I'd intended, I sit and get her settled in my lap just as Susie brings out the blanket. I tuck it around her and have just gotten her settled when Kier brings David out.

"Luna, I'm so glad you're okay," he says. "I swear I didn't know anything about Slater working with Alpha Jasper and Alpha Brogan to kidnap you," he says immediately.

"Well, that's good to know," she says, watching him. "But you did know about Arlo, didn't you?"

He looks down. "I knew he was had a thing for Christy, yes Luna. I didn't know he'd attacked her, I swear."

"And what if you had, David? Would you have done anything?" she asks him. Through her, I feel Echo paying attention. She's not strong enough to push forward, but she's listening in, making her own judgements about David.

He looks down at his clasped hands. "I've had a long time to think about that, Luna'don't know if I would have said anything at first, but do know wouldn't have let her bleed out overnight. I wouldn't have let her die or nearly die like that." When he looks up, his eyes look truthful and distraught with his part of this deception.

"And now? What would you do now, if that situation presented itself to you, David? What would you do if another warrior, another friend, took an interest in an

omega or another warrior who did not want his or her attention?"

"I would let Beta Kier or Alpha Quirin know right away," he says.

"Would you protect them? Would you stand up to a friend who was harassing a packmate?"

"Yes, Luna. I intend to do a better job of choosing my friends in the future. But if the choice came to siding with a friend who was hurting a pack member or protecting that pack member, I would choose to protect our pack member. I've felt the difference in the pack, even down in the cells. It's a good change; one I

want to be a part of. I just want a chance to prove that I can do better," he says.

Kennedy stares at him for a long moment, deciding if she believes him or not.

Then she turns to me.

'Can we demote him for a few months? Make him work to regain his warrior status?' she asks in the mind link.

I raise an eyebrow at her. 'You want to make him an omega?'

'Yes. I want him to see just how hard our omegas work and why they're worth the protection of our warriors,' she says.

I smile. I truly love this woman.

I turn to David, the smile falling away.

"Warrior David, your Luna has

decided to give you a chance to prove yourself," I say and watch as his relief makes him slump. "However, you will be demoted until such time as you have proven yourself as being worthy of the status of warrior in this pack," I say and watch Kier smile. He obviously approves.

"Demoted? You mean, I'll be an omega?" he asks, looking shocked.

"That's correct."

"I don't know how to be an omega," he says.

"Then I guess you'll learn. It's the only way you can work yourself back into

warrior status. Or, we can just end your life now and be done with it," I say, making my voice hard as steel.

His back goes ramrod straight. "No! No, I'll do it. I'll do whatever it takes to prove myself to you, Alpha."

"It's not me you have to prove yourself to, David. You have to prove yourself to your Luna and your pack. Now, go get showered. It's nearly time for breakfast and

I'm sure Beta Arianna needs more hands to wash dishes."

"Yes, Alpha. Thank you, Luna. I won't let you down."

"See that you don't, David," she says, watching him walk away.

When he's gone, I turn to Kennedy. "How's your stomach?"

"Settling," she says just as my phone rings. I pull it out of my back pocket and see

that it's Henry.

"Good morning, Henry," I say, smiling as Kennedy snuggles against me.

"I

guess it is a good morning. Four? Damn Q. Maybe try spending a few minutes

OUTSIDE of your bedroom," my brother taunts.

I'm going to kill Kier.

## The Pack's Nemesis (Quirin's Story)

Kennedy

"Hi Henry," I say, hearing Quirin growling low in his chest at Henry's teasing.

"Ah, shit. I'm not interrupting you two in bed, am I?" I hear him ask, although I'm pretty sure he snickered. He's obviously enjoying himself.

"Do you really think I would have answered the fucking phone if I was in bed with my mate?"

"You might have, if you were worried about me," he says.

"Did you call just to harass me?" Quirin asks.

"Well, mostly yes, but I did call to check on Kennedy," he says.

"My mate is perfectly fine. Her mother is here to make sure that her pregnancy

and delivery are going well and Echo made her reappearance again this morning," he says, smiling down at me.

"That's awesome, Kennedy. I'm so glad to hear that. But really, I was calling to make sure you have a safe word."

"A safe word?" I ask and Quirin starts growling, louder this time.

"Yeah, you know, in case Quirin keeps you locked to the bed because of his voracious need for you and you can't get away even to use the bathroom. We need a safe word so I know when to call in the calvary to come help you." I can tell Henry is having to work really hard to keep from laughing.

"Alpha Henry, maybe I like it when my mate ties me to bed and has his wicked way with me," I purr, making Quirin's eyes snap to me. "I mean, I'm proud to be carrying four of my mate's pups and thrilled that everyone knows just how much my mate wants me."

I watch Quirin's slow smile, the smile that is only for me.

"Damn Kennedy! I had no idea Quirin was going to rub off on you like this."

"I thought you understood how these things worked, Henry. I wouldn't be pregnant

if he hadn't rubbed off inside me," I say, watching my mate's grin get wider and wider.

"What the fuck is happening? I feel like I'm in some alternate universe where Quirin is all sweet and lovey and you, Kennedy are now the hardcore one."

"Love will do that to you Henry," I say, watching and feeling my mate's happiness. "Talk later, Henry. I need to go practice putting pups in my mate. I obviously am not up to par if I only gave her four," he says, growling possessively at me.

"You need to consider the safe word, Kennedy!" Henry yells through the phone as Quirin disconnects, making me laugh.

"Is family always that annoying?" he asks me, his eyes dark with possessive pride.

"Not always. Sometimes they're great and other times you want to kill them," I tell him.

"That describes my feelings toward Henry to a tee."

He leans in to kiss me and I'm sure that he would have carried me back upstairs if my father hadn't interrupted us with his throat clearing.

"Did you want to look over the pack lands, Quirin?"

Quirin growls, but pulls back. "We'll pick this up later," he says.

"I'm holding you to that, Alpha," I tell him.

"Let me know how it goes with Christy."

"I will," I say as he stands and sets me on my feet. He kisses me again before walking to where my father is waiting for him.

"Quirin," I call as they turn to walk off.

He turns back to me. "I love you."

His smile that is only for me returns. "And I love you."

I smile and then look at my father. "Love you too, Dad."

"Oh good, you did see me standing here," he says, winking at me. "Love you, Ken," he says before they walk off.

I turn and make my way inside, headed back to the kitchen.

When I arrive, I hear Arianna and Susie talking to Christy.

"It's okay, Christy. No one's going to hurt you. He's gone," Arianna says. I can smell the salty scent of tears as I walk in. The three of them are sitting at a small table at the edge of the kitchen that they use to take breaks or just get off their feet during the day. But right now, Arianna and Susie are focused on holding Christy's hands and talking to her.

"Hey, can I join this party?" I ask softly.

Christy's head snaps up and I can see the tears streaming down her cheeks.

"She just got a bit scared, Luna," Arianna says.

"I think that's understandable. You've been through a lot, Christy. It's going to take time to work through that. That's part of the reason I wanted to talk to you," I say, taking Susie's seat when she moves so I can get closer to Christy. I take the hand that Susie was holding as she pulls up another chair.

"I can work, Luna. I swear I can. Please don't take this away from me," she pleads.

"Shhh," I say, running my hand over her hair like I've seen my mother do with the omegas in our pack when they get upset. Then I cup her cheek and brush away her tears as she leans into my touch.

"I'm sorry I'm crying," she whispers.

"No apologies are needed, Christy. And I won't take this away from you, if you want it. But I have a proposition for you, one that I hope you will seriously think about."

She lifts her head out of my hand and looks at me.

"What's that Luna?"

"Well, I'm sure you've heard that I have quite a few babies growing in here," I say, rubbing my stomach.

She smiles. "I did hear. Congratulations."

"Thank you. Quirin and I are very

excited about it but also

overwhelmed with the idea of our family of two growing to a family of six very rapidly. At some point, my mother will have to put me on bedrest and I won't be able to do much to prepare for our little ones' arrival. And then, we'll have four little mouths to feed, four sets of diapers to change, and somehow Quirin will still have to run the pack and I'll still have to run the hospital."

Arianna looks from me to Christy and back again. "What are saying, Luna?" she asks.

"I need a nanny, Christy. And I want it to be you," I say, watching as her eyes go wide.

"Me?"

"Yes. I think you'd be very good with

young pups and, if you're feeling

unsafe in the pack, Quirin and I are

willing to move you to the Alpha

floor

you can be closer to the

nov

pups while you regain your confidence at being around pack members again. It will give you a sense of security and safety that you might not be feeling right now, and it would be a huge help to me and Quirin."

"Christy, you'd be perfect for that job," Susie says. "You're always so good with the pups."

Her lips tremble as she looks at me. "I would feel safe up there with you and Alpha."

"Well, I'm pretty sure that Quirin isn't

going to let me help with things like setting up the nursery, so, when you're ready, let me know. We can move you to the end of the hall so Quirin and I don't bother you. It will mean that Leo can't come see you any time he wants though. I don't know if that matters to you, but it's something to consider. You can always keep your room and then spend your days on the Alpha floor with me and then with me and the pups when they arrive. As I said, think about it. We can try it with you spending your days up there, and if that works, great. If not, we can move you to the Alpha floor," I tell her.

She looks at me a moment, then throws her arms around me.

"Thank you so much, Luna."

"You're welcome, Christy. We all love you here. There will always be a place for

you in this pack. I just want to make sure that you have the space and time to heal, both mentally and physically."

"I don't need to think about it, Luna. I'd be proud to be your nanny. I will think about whether or not I want to live on the Alpha floor though. That's a bit intimidating."

"It's completely up to you and there's no pressure either way," I tell her.

"When do I start?" she asks.

"How about tomorrow? I need to see my mother today and I'm still gaining my strength. But Echo is back, so hopefully by tomorrow, Quirin will agree to letting

me walk on my own," I say, making all three women laugh.

"He loves you, Luna," Arianna says.

"Yes, he does."

When I turn to leave, I see Lane standing at the edge of the kitchen waiting for me. Behind him are Terrance, Leo, and Randall.

"Luna, do you have a moment?" he asks me.

"Of course, Lane," I say and watch Leo wink at Christy.

We step out of the kitchen and I turn to Lane. "Luna, these are the men that I

would like to consider as your Luna Guard. Terrance is a strong fighter and after a rocky start, I believe that he's proven his loyalty to you."

I look at Terrance and nod. "How do you feel about being assigned to me and most likely four pups?" I ask him.

"I'd be honored, Luna."

"You know Leo and you know he's making changes that are in line with the way our pack is now run and will continue to run in the future," Lane says, presenting Leo next.

"Christy?" I call, turning to look at her.

She walks over, looking between me and the other warriors. "Yes, Luna."

"How would you feel about Leo becoming part of the Luna Guard?" I ask her. Her eyes go wide again.

"That's not my decision to make," she says.

"As my nanny, you will be spending nearly as much time with my Luna Guard as I am. I believe that you should have a say in who becomes part of my Guard," I tell her.

"Nanny? Oh, Christy! That's perfect for you," Leo gushes, making her blush.  
"Congratulations!"

"Yes, congratulations," the others say.

"Thank you," she says and looks down, clasping her hands in a nervous gesture.

"I would be okay with it," she says softly.

"Leo, you're in. Randall, why don't you tell me why you're interested in being part of the Luna Guard," I say, not waiting for Lane.

"I've made a lot of mistakes, trusted the wrong people in my life. But having you

as our Luna, having your family here, is changing things for the better and is helping me realize that what I thought was normal in a pack all those years ago,

isn't. I spent a lot of years hating your father. Now, I'd like to make amends for that hate by protecting his daughter and my Luna."

I don't take my eyes off of him. "What do you think, Christy?"

"Warrior Randall is a strong warrior, but he's never once been mean or cruel to any of the omegas. I think you can trust him."

"You're in, Randall. Now, I already sort of accepted Terrance. Any concerns there?" I ask her, turning my attention to Terrance. He raises an eyebrow, watching Christy, but doesn't say anything.

"No. He's very protective of his mate and his new pup, so I think that having him as a Luna Guard would be good. I think he'd protect your pups just like he protects his own."

"Good, you're still in, Terrance."

"Thank you, I think," he says.

"What about me?" Lane asks.

"You've already passed," I say smiling. "But just so we're all in agreement, any issues with Lane, Christy?"

"No, Luna, other than his mate is pregnant again, so I'm guessing he'll want some time off around the time your pups are delivered," she says and we all look at her.

"How did you know that? We haven't told anyone yet," Lane says. Christy smiles and shrugs. "Omegas know things." "Oh Christy, you and I are going to get along perfectly!" I say.

## The Pack's Nemesis (Quirin's Story)

Quirin

Alpha Warren and I had walked the pack lands, testing the soil, finding the spots where there is the heaviest concentration of silver and the areas that are most important to clean up. He and I came up with a plan based on the most heavily trafficked areas in the pack, the places where pups were likely to be, and then the heaviest concentration of silver.

He began working on it right away, and I've never been so happy to have Warren in my pack. With everything going on, I need to be focused on Kennedy and my pups, not worrying about Jasper's silver contamination.

However, Warren did tell me that he and Yara would like a house of their own. So we found a spot where the two of them wanted to build and added that the first part of clean up so we can break ground on their home. Until then, they are on our Gamma floor.

I can't say I'm getting used to the noise that constantly seems to come from that floor, but I will say that it feels like good practice for me.

Today, however, Kennedy and I are going to her ultrasound. I can't wait. I'm so excited to see my pups and find out how many boys I'm having. I'm excited about the girls too, of course, but I'm an older Alpha and I need an heir. Although, after seeing Warren's struggles, maybe I shouldn't rush retirement.

As I go to find Kennedy, I smile thinking of the possibility of having a couple of girls that look like her running around. We might even have some of our pups who prefer medicine over fighting. I've learned to be okay with that, as long as it's not my first-born son. And I realize quickly that I'd better keep that opinion to myself too. My mate will hand me my ass if she thinks that I'm not going to let our pups decide their own future.

I find Kennedy on our floor working with Christy painting the nursery. She's not on bedrest yet and as long as she's not on a ladder or step-stool, I'm perfectly fine with her painting. I notice that her guards today are Leo and Terrance and Leo is the one up on the ladder, painting up by the ceiling. Apparently he doesn't want his mate on a ladder or step-stool just yet either.

When I get there, my mate turns to me. 'You know I heard those thoughts, right?' she asks in the mind link, raising an eyebrow at me.

Since I keep my mind open to her all the time, I was more hoping that she was too busy to be paying attention.

'Don't you always pay attention to everything that's going on in my head, Quirin?' she asks, again in the mind link.

'That's different, your mind is a beautiful place.'

'And your mind is a very structured, very regimented place, but no less beautiful to me.'

I smile, walking over to her and opens her mind even more, letting her golden light flow through me. I lean down and take her in my arms as my mouth finds hers. Her arms go around me and as always, she gives herself to me freely.

I had been surprised the other night when we'd been having our marathon sex fest that seems to be a nightly thing now when she reversed our positions. She'd had a tentative look on her face, something I rarely see on Kennedy's face and never when it's just the two of us. Then, she'd leaned down, nuzzling my throat.

I'd gone nearly rigid, knowing what she was asking. I've never submitted to anyone since my father died, not even Alpha Harold. I accepted him as my Alpha, but I never submitted. However, I knew that if this is what Kennedy needs and wants in our relationship, it's what I'll give her. Nothing is more important than she is.

Raif and I had growled softly, but we'd done it, lifted our chin and submitted to our mate. Rather than feeling powerless, I'd felt her pride and love blasting into me. It was so unexpected that I'd come instantly, the orgasm shocking me with its strength as she'd gently nipped my throat, accepting my submission while my body jerked underneath her.

And something about that moment had pushed the darkness away completely. It hasn't been back, even when Kennedy isn't actively in my head. That's not to say that I don't get angry or frustrated, I do. But now it doesn't feel like a heavy, dark blanket covering my mind. It's an emotion that I manage, control, and deal with before moving on.

I hear several throats clearing around us, but I ignore them.

"Alpha this isn't your bedroom. We can leave if you need us to," I hear Leo saying, and I feel Kennedy's lips curve into a smile.

"We have important things to do Alpha. Maybe we can celebrate later," she says. "We are definitely celebrating later."

I smile, taking her hand in mine and leading her out of the room.

I asked Warren what I could do to thank him for his help and to thank Luna Yara

for saving my mate. At first he'd said there was no need to thank them, but when I pushed, he'd gotten a very mischievous smile on his face.

"You could fill your packhouse with flowers."

"Really?"

"Oh yeah, my mate LOVES flowers and whatever she doesn't put in our bedroom, you can give to the pack."

So, I ordered hundreds of flowers. The best part was that my mate loved them too, something I didn't know about her. The second best part was watching Luna Yara stomp up to her mate and blame him for the flowers. Even after he tried to pawn it off on me, she knew whose idea it was. She'd thanked me while still glaring at her mate who just smiled a big cheshire cat grin at her.

The pack ended up loving them too. I noticed several warriors snagging a rose here or a carnation there and giving them to the person they love or were trying to woo into bed.

As we walk through the forest of flowers and out the packhouse door, I let the feel of the pack flow through me. I can't get over how different, how much better, it feels here. I pull my mate's hand to my mouth and kiss it.

"It's not me, you know," Kennedy says.

"It is you. You made these changes," I tell her

"It starts at the top Quirin. You had to change for the pack to change."

"I changed because of you. I became a better man because of you. I wanted to be worthy of you as my mate and in doing so, I've become a better Alpha, too."

She stops, pulling me to a stop as well. She reaches up, cupping my cheek. "And you are going to be the most amazing father to our pups, even your daughters." "Yeah. If they look and act like you, I'm doomed. But who knows, maybe we'll end up with four boys," I say excitedly.

"Well, you know what happens then?" she says, beginning to walk again.

"What?"

She tilts her head, giving me a sly smile. "You have to give me another pup. I said I wanted one of each, so if we have four boys, you'll have to give me another one and hope it's a girl."

I swear I feel the blood drain from my face. Five? I'd have five pups.

"Let's make sure we have both then so we can be done," I say as we walk into the hospital.

Luna Yara is waiting for us. "Ready for your big day? I'm sure we'll be able to see at least a couple of your pups to determine if you're having boys or girls and we'll be able to determine if you have any identical twins in there."

"What's the difference?" I ask.

"Identical twin's come from one egg that splits. Fraternal twins are two separate eggs and have their own placenta. It's rare for an egg to split more than once, but that can happen too. So, we'll see what we can see," she says, as she leads us into what I'm now calling the Kennedy suite.

Luna Yara started getting this room ready for Kennedy the moment she told us we were having four pups. I'm sure there's more to do, but it's

already set up in a coby

with a chair for me. Yara delivering four pups will take a long time if Kennedy is able to deliver naturally and now that Echo is back, we're hoping she can. So, she wanted to make sure I have an

opportunity to sit if I feel a bit

lightheaded.

I help Kennedy get in her gown and onto the table as Yara prepares the ultrasound machine.

She gets us settled so we can all see the monitor and then turns it on. Almost immediately I see a heart beating.

"Well, that little pup likes to be seen," she says, as she begins moving the wand all around Kennedy's stomach. I look between Yara and Kennedy and I can see that both of them seem to understand what's on the screen, but I have no clue.

"What are we looking at?" I ask Kennedy.

"Right now, mom's looking to see how many placentas we have so we know if we're having identical twins," she says distractedly.

"Well, Warren will certainly be pleased to know that it wasn't a lack of passion that gave our daughter so many pups and me so few," Yara mumbles.

"Few? You have seven pups," I say, frowning at her. She turns and looks at us.

"Oh, did I say that out loud?" she asks chuckling. "Since I said that Kennedy's pups were a result of your level of passion, Warren has felt the need to remind me just how passionate of a man he is. I don't mind, but this will make him feel better."

"What will make him feel better?" I ask, not wanting to think about what Warren, Yara, and passion mean when said in the same sentence.

"Only two placentas, Mom?" Kennedy asks.

"That's all I see," she says and I look at Kennedy who smiles up at me.

"We're having two sets of twins. Two sets of identical twins."

"You fertilized two eggs, Quirin, and then those eggs split, giving you four instead of two, like me and Harper."

"Harper?" I ask.

"Oh, did you not know? Connor and Harper are pregnant as well. Noelle did the ultrasound on her yesterday. They're having twins."

"Oh, that's so exciting! Our pups will be the same age!" Kennedy says.

"Yeah, and because they're related, I won't have to worry if Connor has boys and I have any girls," I say, already wondering which of my pack members will be having boys that I'll have to watch out for.

Kennedy smiles up at me and squeezes my hand.

"Okay, so this will make things a bit

easier I hope. Since we know you're having two sets of identical twins, we only need to see the gender of two of them, one from each placenta sac. If one is a girl, they'll

both be girls and the same if one is a boy."

"Two of each would be perfect!" I say, feeling the excitement growing inside me.

"Let's start with this little one who seems happy to show him or herself off," Yara

says, moving the wand back to where she started. "A good heartbeat, already starting to develop well, and ... it's a girl."

I smile, looking at Kennedy. "We're having two girls!"

"Let's just see if we can see her twin," she says, moving the wand down

Kennedy's side and pushing against her belly that I swear has grown in the last week.

"Another steady heartbeat and this one also looks like she's developing well," she says.  
"Okay, let's look at your other set of twins."

She moves the wand around to the other side of Kennedy's stomach, checking her positioning and moving it more.

...

"Another good heartbeat, developing well, and oh, this one is shy. I can't get a good look, let's see if we can get to the other twin," she says, moving the wand again.

"Ahh, four strong heartbeats. Oh, and there we are, it's a ... oh goodness," she says looking up at Kennedy, then at me.

"What? What's goodness? What?" I ask in rapid fire succession, looking between Kennedy and Yara.

"It looks like you're going to have four girls, Quirin," Luna Yara says slowly.

Girls. Four girls. FOUR! GIRLS!

I think I hear Kennedy somewhere in the background, or maybe it's in my head,

I'm not sure. Four girls. I'm having four girls. Oh goddess!

I'm not exactly sure when I started swaying, but I feel something soft shoved under my head a moment before it hits the floor and I pass out again.