

The Pack's Alpha

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Chapter 1: Announcement

Yorick

“Happy Birthday!”

The crowd of family, pack members, and neighboring Alphas all wish me a happy birthday.

“You’ve got this,” Wendy, my sister, says in my ear before stepping away from me. I just told her my plans for the next year. I intend to announce it to my father and brother, Connor, the current Alpha, tonight.

“Yorick!” my youngest sister, Yvonne, part of the second set of twins that my parents had, says, running over. She’s thirteen but she launches herself into my arms, confident that I’ll catch her. As the youngest, she’s right. None of us have ever dropped her.

“Unh!” I grunt. “You’re getting a bit too old for that, Vonny,” I tell her.

“Quirin never complains,” she says, referencing my older sister’s mate. Now that he and Kennedy have found their way together, he’s quickly becoming the ‘favorite’ brother for my youngest brother and sister.

“Quirin has a pack of pups that are constantly crawling all over him, so what’s one more,” I say as I put her back on her feet.

“You used to be fun, Yorick,” she says, sticking her tongue out at me.

“I still love you, Big Bro,” Yana says, hugging me. “Happy birthday!”

I go around the room, saying hello to my family, my friends, Alpha Quirin, Alpha Henry, his father, Alpha Harold, and several others from his pack who originally came from ours.

I get quite a few offers from she-wolves on ways I can spend the rest of my birthday, all of which I politely decline.

When everyone is having a good time, Connor approaches me.

“So, have you finally decided to agree to my offer?” he asks me, handing me a drink as we look out over the partiers.

“Actually, I won’t be accepting your offer, Connor,” I say, pulling out my acceptance letter.

He frowns and his frown only deepens as he reads the letter.

“Dad! Did you know about this?” he asks, holding up my letter.

“What is it?” my father asks, carrying Kennedy’s daughters Kaylee and Kendra who are hanging on him. Those two will most likely end up at the Warrior Academy one day. They’re both very much like their father and even at two years old, these girls love nothing more than to spar and spar hard. Considering they’re half of Kennedy’s quads, you’d think all four were the same, but no. The other two are just like Kennedy; sweet, quiet, and studious.

Connor hands my father my acceptance letter as I harass my nieces, getting them to swat and punch at me while they hold on to my father.

“Yorick? When did you apply?” my father asks me.

“About six months ago.”

“And you never said anything?” Connor asks, looking hurt.

“Connor, you’ve always known your path. You always knew the pack would be yours. I’m an Alpha with no pack...”

“You have THIS pack! I need you,” he says.

“No, you don’t. You’ve made a space for me and maybe Wade will be happy to accept it when he’s older, but I’m too much like you and Dad. I need to make my way in this world, Connor. I don’t want a handout from you. I want to know that wherever I end up, I did it on my own merits, by proving myself.”

“You never had to prove yourself to me, Yorick. I know who you are. I trust you, I love you, and I want you to remain part of this pack,” Connor says sadly.

“And I love you for that, but I have to do this for me,” I tell him just as Quirin comes up and expertly swings his daughters off of my father’s back and onto his.

“What’s going on?” he asks.

My father hands Quirin the letter and looks at me.

“Are you sure about this son?”

“I’ve never been more sure of anything, Dad.”

I look at Quirin. “This is impressive, Yorick. It’s not easy to get into the Academy. I think they only accept like, what, twenty applicants every year?” He looks at my brother. “I’m sure Connor isn’t going to agree with me, but I get it. And I think everyone should be proud of you for doing this. Just being accepted at the Academy is an accomplishment. I never told anyone, but I applied when I was seventeen. I was turned down.”

“What? Are you serious?” I ask.

“I am,” he says. Quirin is one of the strongest Alphas I’ve ever met. Dad and Connor and even Henry are strong Alphas, but Quirin has had to scrape for everything he’s accomplished in his life, and it’s made him more ruthless than anyone in my family or Henry’s. It makes him a stronger fighter, in my opinion.

Connor looks at me a moment, then turns to the group. “Attention everyone! I have an announcement to make!”

The room goes quiet and he looks at me. “My brother has been accepted at the Warrior Academy!”

Everyone in the room begins to cheer. I see the shock on my mother’s face and several others as Connor waves for quiet.

“I won’t say that I’m not disappointed that he’s leaving us and I hope like hell that he’ll return when he’s done with school. But I couldn’t be more proud of my little brother,” he says, raising his glass. “To Yorick!”

“To Yorick!” everyone says.

I spend the rest of the evening talking to everyone about the Academy. I let Connor know that I only have a few weeks before I have to leave.

Over those weeks, I pack my bags, making sure that I don’t leave anything undone before I go.

When it’s finally time for me to leave, my entire family comes to say goodbye. I feel my throat tighten as I say goodbye to everyone one at a time, finally hugging my mother, who is teary-eyed but trying to hide it.

Last but not least, I say goodbye to Wendy.

“Remember your promise,” I say to her.

“You remember yours. I’ll keep my promise if you keep yours,” she says.

“Deal.”

Then I get in my car, honk my horn and drive off, excited to be heading to a new chapter of my life and possibly a completely different life than the one I’ve been leading up until now.