

## Chapter 2

Ellie and June's comments stuck with me for the rest of the afternoon. I haven't completely ruled out ending my mate and therefore I had no business being in a relationship with anyone. It felt worse because I liked Dominic. He was a good friend but an ever better lover, if I wasn't a werewolf I would have happily been his girlfriend.

I am ashamed to admit that I thought about cancelling our date via text message. In the end I decided that I was just being a coward because I didn't want the confrontation. It wasn't right to have this conversation over text. Although I am not convinced that meeting someone just to tell them you don't want to see them is much nicer. Ugh, I am so bad at this kind of thing.

I had just finished my last lesson of the day and I was waiting outside of the main science building for Dominic to arrive. It was probably obvious to anyone who even so much as glanced in my direction how nervous I was. I had been pacing over the same spot for the last half an hour going over and over the conversation in my head. I just couldn't seem to get it right in my head, everything I thought of sounded cold and heartless.

"Are you ok?" It was Dominic's voice but I had been so preoccupied that I hadn't even heard or seen him approaching.

"I am not sure this is a good idea." I replied without missing a beat or even turning around to face him. I may as well jump right into it, delaying it will only make it hurt more.

"What do you mean? What isn't a good idea?" Dominic said. I turned around to face him. He looked hurt. He was standing a few paces away from me, he looked as though he had frozen in place mid stride.

"We weren't meant to get attached to each other but I don't think either of us is keeping to that very well do you?" I said.

"Well no but I fail to see why that is a bad thing." He replied. He had closed the remaining gap between us now. He was standing so close to me that we were almost touching.

"It's just not a good idea to get too involved with someone like me." I said.

I didn't mean it to sound so cryptic but what was I meant to say? He had no clue how jealous werewolves could get when it came to their mates.

"I know you have been hurt in the past but I am not going to hurt you." He said.

"I didn't think that you would." I said defensively.

"I have known all along that being with you would take patience. You're not ready to be my girlfriend but one day you might be and I happen to think that is worth waiting around for." He said. He wrapped his arms around my waist and pulled me towards him, I didn't resist.

"I am not sure that I will ever be ready." I replied, leaned my head against his shoulder.

"Then I will just have to enjoy having you in my life while I can." He said.

"I don't know. It feels wrong to be with you if I am not as invested as you and I am not sure if we even have a future." I said.

"I think you should stop worrying about that. Besides we are only going on a date, it isn't like I asked you to marry me." He said. He started laughing and moments later I was laughing too. Maybe I had blown this whole thing way out of proportion, I was the master of overthinking everything after all.

"Ok, but if you get down on one knee then I am going to escape out of the back door and you will never see me again." I said, only half joking.

"You think I haven't planned for this and made sure I have all the exits covered." He said. He let go of my waist and made an exaggerated expression of fake surprise.

"Yeah, yeah. Like you could stop me anyway." I teased.

Without waiting for a reply I turned around and started walking away in the direction of the cinema. A few moments later Dominic caught up with me and put his arm around my shoulders. I leaned into him slightly as we walked together.

We arrived at the cinema with half an hour to spare so I headed straight for the concessions stand. I ordered a large popcorn (half salted and half sweet), a large zzy drink and a chocolate bar. I collected my food and drink before heading over to where Dominic was standing waiting for me with his small drink and popcorn.

"You do realise we are going for food after this, right?" He asked.

"Yep." I replied.

"How do you manage to eat so much? If I ate half as much as you I would be as big as a house." He complained.

"I guess it must be my superpower." I said.

Dominic laughed as I nibbled some popcorn from the top of the bucket I was holding.

"Dominic, fancy seeing you here." I looked in the direction of the voice and saw a couple, neither of whom I recognised. They were two men. One with slicked back bleached blond hair who was dressed in dark jeans and a dark t-shirt covered by a leather jacket. He looked as though he was trying to emulate Spike although he was doing a poor job of it. The other one (the one who had spoken) was taller, had short brown hair and was dressed in a blue shirt and black trousers.

"Sh.t." Dominic muttered under his breath.

"I didn't tell you because I am on a date." Dominic said to the man who was now standing opposite us with a huge smile on his face. Dominic sounded frustrated with whoever this guy was although I had no idea why, I had never seen him act like this before.

"Same here. What are you here to see?" The guy with brown hair said.

Dominic handed him our tickets without saying a word. His jaw was clenched. This person seemed to be a friend of his so why was he so annoyed about seeing him? The brown haired guy looked at the tickets, smiled and then handed them back to Dominic.

"It seems like we both had the same idea. We should make this a double date." He said. His happiness was contagious, I couldn't stop myself from smiling at him.

He turned his attention to me.

"My name is Justin and this is my boyfriend William." He said pointing to the guy who was dressed like Spike. I had to bite the inside of my cheek to stop myself from laughing, that was totally not his real name.

"It's nice to meet you both." I said, giving them a welcoming smile.

We spoke for a few minutes longer. Just the standard getting to know each other small talk that you do when you first meet someone new, before we took our seats in the cinema. I sat down on the seat closest to the aisle, with Dominic next to me and his friends next to him.

By the time that the film was over and we had walked to the nearby diner I was no longer mildly curious about what was going on. I was consumed by it. Dominic was normally so happy and easy to get along with but ever since his friends showed up he has been quiet and sullen.

He held me close to him the whole time but there was nothing warm in his embrace, it almost felt as though he was afraid of letting me go. I also noticed that every time the conversation went anywhere near the dormitory that Dominic and Justin shared, which made me curious. What was it that Dominic was trying to hide from me? It was time for me to ask some questions.

"So how did you guys meet?" I asked once the waiter had taken our orders.

"Well, he is in the room next door to mine so I guess it was just a matter of time. It might have taken longer if it wasn't for....." Justin said before he was interrupted.

"You know, you are not a great neighbour either with all that loud music you like to play." Dominic said.

"Hey, don't knock my music, I have great taste." Justin said. William and Dominic both burst out laughing.

"Ok, ok. I admit it, my taste is a bit different but it isn't as bad as what you are making out." Justin said.

"So how long have you been seeing each other?" William asked.

"Erm, not long a couple of months but we have been friends a lot longer." I replied.

I wasn't really sure how to classify the start of our relationship. I decided that I would go with the date when we started to act more like a couple and less like friends with benefits. Dominic smiled for the first time in hours so he must have liked something about my answer.

"Wait a minute, that doesn't make sense because last week...." William started.

"I was thinking maybe you could delay going back home for the summer by a week and you could spend the time with me instead." Dominic said, interrupting William.

My gaze lingered on William for a moment. I wanted to know what he was going to say before he was interrupted. It could just be that he was sleeping with other women and he didn't want me to know but I had a feeling that there was more to it than that.

"I am not sure, I will have to check with my family." I replied as the waiter delivered our meals.

"Planning a romantic week together, must be pretty serious." Justin said. I took a large mouthful of my burger, I was interested to see how Dominic would answer that one.

"You could say that." He replied.

It was a non committal answer, he was clearly better at lying than I had given him credit for. His heart rate didn't even increase. We continued to eat in silence for a few minutes. Then an idea came into my head, one that I might regret later.

"I was hurt really badly by my ex boyfriend before I came here. He lied to me and manipulated me. It took a lot for me to trust someone again." I said.

I placed my hand on top of Dominic's as I spoke but I paid close attention to Justin and William. They both cringed when I mentioned being betrayed. They were definitely keeping something from me. I ate the last few chips on my plate and gathered up my belongings.

"I need to get going." I said as I stood up.

"I thought you were coming to mine tonight." Dominic said. He looked disappointed.

"I'm sorry, June needed some help on her programming coursework and as we are busy tomorrow night I said I would help tonight. I hope you don't mind but we will have plenty more nights together." I said. I was wailing. I knew I was wailing but I just couldn't seem to stop myself from talking. He stood up.

"I guess I will see you tomorrow then." He said.

He wrapped his arms around my waist and kissed me passionately on the lips. Right there in front of his friends and the whole diner. I just knew that I was blushing by the time he let go of me. I said my goodbyes and I walked out of the diner without looking back.

I arrived back at my dorm a few minutes later. June was sitting on her bed with her laptop in front of her. I threw my bag on my bed in frustration. I was frustrated with myself for trusting Dominic and I was frustrated with myself for letting myself get attached to him in the first place.

"Are you ok? What are you doing back so early? I thought you were staying over at Dominic's." June said.

"That was the plan until we met his friends." I laughed humorlessly.

"Didn't you get along with his friends?" June asked. She closed the lid on her laptop and looked at me, she was confused and I couldn't blame her for that.

"They are not but Dominic started acting strange. It was clear that he was trying to hide something from me but I don't know what." I said.

"What makes you think that?" June asked.

"There are a few things. Like how he kept interrupting them and changing the subject and the way they looked at me when I said I had been betrayed by my ex." I said.

"You don't have an ex." June said.

"That's not the point." I replied.

"Well maybe he has been sleeping with other women and he doesn't want you to know about it." She suggested.

"I thought about that but I don't see why he would try that hard to hide it. We aren't dating and I never said we were exclusive." I replied.

"No but I think he wants to be and he probably doesn't want to ruin it by you ending out about something he did in the past." She said.

"Maybe I could understand that but I don't think it is as in the past as you are suggesting. One of his friends mentioned last week." I said.

"That is odd." June said, thoughtfully.

"Maybe we just read it wrong. Maybe he just isn't that into me." I suggested.

"No. I don't think that is it but there is definitely something odd going on." She replied.

She stood up and started pacing up and down our small dorm room. I watched her with interest. I could tell she was formulating a plan, I just hoped that she managed to work it all out before she got too dizzy.

"Maybe we can go over to his dorm next week and ask some questions." June said. She was still pacing, I was starting to feel dizzy just watching her.

"We would have to make sure that he wasn't around at the time." I said.

"Monday morning. He has lessons all morning but we have a break from 10am till 11am" June replied.

"Great, it sounds like we have a plan then." I said. I felt relieved. At least I would know what was going on, even if it wasn't going to be something I would enjoy ending out.