

Chapter 19: Something I need to do

-Josh-

Alpha's Academy is the kind of place I thought it would be. a bunch of cocky young Alphas measuring sizes as often as they could in front of Alpha's daughters. Competition is part of their nature. Not mine, though. I avoid it as much as I can, yet sometimes is inevitable.

Here we have access to so much information, luxury, and things that other wolves can only dream of. Every door opens for us, and every whim is fulfilled, we are pampered to no extent as precious leaders of our respective packs.

However, even here as the pack's rank system messes up the mind of werewolves, the rankings here applies as well. I might a famous lazy ass Alpha but since my pack still holds the number one in that freaking ranking, everyone wanted to become friends with me, or become my Luna.

Being here made me miss even more my time with Clara. I will forever remember the way she looked at me saying I could be my own kind of Alpha, that was quite a special day for me. Well most of the days I spent with here meant something for me.

Even after a year of being here, her face never left my mind, and her scent is engraved in my nostrils. I even carry a picture of her on my phone.

When my dad told me that Mason was her mate and all the crap he did to her, I wanted to beat him up into a pulp. If he were near me, I could have killed him in one blow. Alastair had to take us to the gym to release our anger and all our frustration. If you knew me, you would know how much I hate physical exercise. This was completely out of my character, though I needed it.

"That is why you do not cast pearls to the swine". Told me Alastair. The old saying holds a big truth, indeed. Mason was the biggest fool in wolf history, but I should be grateful of the grand favor he did to me. I might get my chance with Clara; she can accept me as her chosen mate. Although, it is hard for me to believe that she was not mine from the start.

On my last day at Mason's pack, I hugged her. I took my chance and I just did it. She was startled by my sudden action and I know she did not hug me back, but I felt an electrical current run through me. She was a few days away from her eighteenth birthday, and if she were my mate, it would have explained the strong attraction I felt as well as her impossibility to feel our bond. Her wolf was not mature yet.

I am still thinking about how that is even possible, when I talked to my mom, she told me that you feel sparks when touching your mate and other things, very strong emotions from possessiveness to lust. And, I had all the symptoms!

However, I must admit that I noticed that Mason seemed to be suffering the same, engaged or not. His eyes would constantly look around and I knew he was looking for her. He tried to dissimulate his interest, but I am no fool. At kitchen incident with that Gloria chef, Alastair told me that Jax was restless. It was not about my aura out of control, it was about me being close to Clara there. I was not happy about him closer to her either.

I felt some peace of mind thinking he would mate and mark Marissa. And with my mom's invitation, I was sure Clara would come to my pack, then mother would make sure to keep her safe until I would return. Mason driven by this his worst side, made her run-away. She is vanished in thin air, and I need to nd her as soon as possible.

I am aware that high rank wolves would discriminate Clara for being omega, but her rank or physical strength has nothing to do with the kindness of her aura. How she makes others feel comfortable and welcomed, how smart she is, how beautiful and without even trying or even realizing herself.

Omega or not, Clara was by far the most suited showoff to be an Alpha's Luna. No Alpha's daughter I met here compares to her. Don't get me wrong, there are nice ones. Yet, Clara is something else. How could Mason miss it?

Regardless, someone's trash is some else's treasure, and my cousin ruined his chance with her. I am almost sure. That is why I need to nish school sooner than later. I have already wasted enough time here, I want to nd her and woo her, win her over.

"What's up man?" Asked Shawn Pert, my roommate.

"Nothing special, just checking I got all my assignment right." He took the paper out of my hands.

"Are you sure?" He said me after looking the classes I registered in this semester.

Business management, Advance Finance, Leadership II, Advance Calculus, Interspecies Law II, Strategy and planning for business, Military Strategy, Battle strategy and Combat one-on-one in wolf form, I passed combat in human form with passable grades. I do not enjoy getting physical, but it is necessary for safety reasons. Therefore, ten courses in one semester.

"Absolutely!" I smirked at him. Shawn is brilliant and we are in constant competition regarding Finance and Strategy and planning, on the other courses we are head-to-head. Yet, he enjoys combats, while I do not.

In summary, we are considered the geeks in this school and neither of us looks like a werewolf as the other young Alphas. Yet, I was forced to cut my hair as part of my uniformized look according to the rules of the Alpha's Academy, as complain I let my bear to grow. I read they have no rules against those.

"I cannot keep up with you then. I give up this healthy competition we have... I might accompany you on some, but for the others you are all alone, pal!"

"That is ne, man. To be honest... I just want to get out of here sooner." I wave at the matter as if it is nothing, I prefer to leave open answers so I do lie neither reveal a lot.

"Sure, like six months earlier, but what for? I know you do not want to take over your father, so... what is it?" I have not told him about my plans, or my reasons for this decision.

"Let's just say... I have my reasons..." I have some problems with trust, in general, it is not about Shawn.

When I went back at home, there was another attempt of seduction. This time with a love potion. I am very careful with my food and I hate almonds, so I disregarded the drink.

"Is it about this Clara girl, right?" How does he know? My face got red, I felt it.

"Dude, you talk on your sleep... and sometimes you mumble her name. Specially the days when we have chocolate in any dessert." Oh s**t! I cannot believe it. Also, my blond genetics play its part in this conversation and got really red to the rim of my ears. Alastair just evaluates the situation without offering me a clever answer, at least a joke!

"Look, I do not want to be noisy... but rumor has it that your cousin was rejected not only by Marissa Malone, but also by Clara omega... is it...? Is she...?" Indeed, my cousin become laugh stock and pitiful in the whole kingdom after Marissa dumped him at the altar running away with her true mate, and fully supported by her pack and allies.

I am not sure if I should tell something to Shawn. I would like to trust him but like I said, trust is something I hardly do, now more than ever. "Just do it" Alastair encouraged me.

"Yes, but there is a long story there." There is always a story behind a gossip or rumor, there is always more beneath the surface.

"It is ne. You do not have to tell me..." Then, an idea came to my head. Even if I am out of here, still I have no idea where Clara is or how to nd her. I would like to know or would want to share any clue he might have. The only one hint I have is her relationship with Angel Simmons and her parents.

Shawn is a good fellow; his pack might not be in the rank due to the size of his territory, which I think it is a ridiculous factor, but they do so many good things over there that I would rank them as the best place for living. If Clara were to hide, she might go to small packs, not ranked, also not interested in ranking like Shawn's. Maybe, just maybe, he can help me to search for her discretely. After all, I have no right to even search for her.

"Man, she was your cousin's mate. What makes you think she will accept to be your chosen mate?" After telling him, I assumed he would ask that. But I just know, and Alastair agrees.

"There was something between us when I met her... A real connection." It is hard to explain, but I am sure she is meant to be mine. I can almost feel it in my bones.

"Besides, she is the one who rejected Mason, not the other way around." She is kind but also very stubborn and has some pride to hold. She would have never accepted me if she knew her mate was still out there, but he is out of the picture. I can earn my chance.

"Your cousin might gain her forgiveness, you never know..."

"I might have spent only a couple of weeks with her... but let me tell you this Shawn, there is no way Clara would take Mason back... She endured the pain of breaking their bond and even resign the pack she lived all her life to walk away with dignity from there so Mason did not get the chance to humiliate her any further. And she did not let them to judge her, she decided all for herself. I admire her even more after it." I am just worried how she would be now after all she had to go thru.

"Damn! The almighty Mason Van Ryan once promising werewolf of the year became the Rejected Alpha! Not only an omega rejected him risking her own life, but even his chosen mate on his mating celebration day. Such a bad luck."

"I know he is my cousin and all, but I cannot feel bad about what happened to him with Marissa. He brought it to himself. Just like any other werewolf, he has to face the consequences of his actions."

"I agree with you on that. A mate is a mate. I would not care either if my mate is omega, or worst... human!" That is a bit extreme. Humans mated to wolves are a different story, I do not see it happening any time soon. It is like one case every hundred years, I guess..

"What if he finds a way to reach her heart?" Mason ruined thing big time between them. It is beyond repair.

"After what he did to her, I do not think so. Clara would never take back her rejection... My fear is not about Mason winning her over, but another fellow to jump on her while being vulnerable..." There are a lot of thirsty wolves out in the world.

"You want to be that guy?" Shawn laughed out loud. He might call me obsessed, but I am werewolf after all, I cannot deny what is part of my nature. To claim and mark what I consider mine. I know she is not mine yet. But I will do everything I can do to win Clara's heart. As cheesy as it sounds.

"She is really something especial, let me tell you." I do not want to keep talking to him, I do not think he would understand.

Yes, I want to be the guy she relies on, but no... I do not want to take advantage of the situation. It would be the same as forcing her, and I would like her to choose me as I choose her. I do not want to explain myself to Shawn or anyone, I doubt someone would understand me.

"If Clara decides something different, I will accept her decision... Although, I prefer not to think about that option and just focus on get out of here."

"You are definitely head over heels for her, don't you?" I am not interested in anyone else but Clara. I nodded affirmative at him.

"Look, if you agree I can ask father if there is someone new named Clara Black in our pack? I know your intentions are clean... well, as clean as an assessed Alpha can be... but your intentions are pure enough for me..." That was the offer I was looking for, still I will pass on him the details of how I want this investigation to progress with discretion.

"I will appreciate it man. I do not have the right to look for her or make a petition, but if you can do that for me, I will be owe you!"

"Sure. Anything for a friend. You do not need to take an oath about this. Chill!" Shawn offering can smooth the way for me. Now I wish I have more friends to ask them the same thing.

The sooner I can graduate from her, the sooner I can be out and nd her. I will nd a way to her.

There is someone knocking our door, we sensed it was Renata and her friend, Paige, and they come in, leaving the door open. I have remarked that I do not want gossips. I care a lot about my reputation regarding females. As for other things, I can be called Lazy Alpha if that is what they want. I do not care much about it.

"Are you guys ready for today's event?" Renata is a tall red head with freckles spread over her pointy nose. While Paige is shorter with dirty blond hair.

"Yes, we are wearing our best uniforms as you can see." Shawn said that while looking smitten towards Renata.

"Your shirt is wrinkled..." asked Renata touching his collar bond. She just tries to get closer to Shawn. They are thing uncocially, not mates tough, besides, Renata's parents would not allow her to accept him as her chosen mate. Not due to our religious believes like wait for your fated mate but because his pack is not in the top-ten ranking. Sunlight Pack is not even in the top-twenty.

"The King is your relative, right?" Paige asks timidly. I am as clueless as they are about the King's current visit.

"Not really. My mother's last name is not related to his." He is a distant relative of my mother, so I do not think the relationship is close enough to even call him uncle.

"Well, it is getting late. We better go ahead, don't you think?" Said Renata grabbing Shawn's arm to walk out of our room. Paige looked to me, hopeful that I would offer mine following the example of those two.

"I am sorry, I do not want any misunderstanding." That was all that came out of my mouth to her on our way walking towards the auditorium. She looked down, Paige should have known better. I do not hang out with girls that way, I do not want any rumor that might get to Clara's ears.

The King Steffen decided to come personally to our Alpha's Academy to run a test. We had no idea what the test was about, we just were ordered to show up at 9:00 o'clock on this day at the auditorium.

The King was not present, but the teachers moved frantically handing us over pages of an exam with a pencil and an eraser, we had just two hours to solve it. Talking about challenges I enjoy taking.

Each page had a case where you assumed a role in a conict where your actions determined a result. Sometimes wanted, sometimes not wanted. The challenge was to nd a line of actions that would lead you to a better result in each case.

At rst, I thought we were supposed to analyze and respond case by case, but then I noticed that the cases were linked. The ve situations were happening simultaneously and impacting one with another. Therefore, I assumed this test was about seeing the bigger picture and nd the right actions to get the wanted result as whole, so the bigger picture would be...

I nished just on time. The teacher grabbed my test from my hands and told us to leave to our regular classes.

Renata and Shawn keep talking of each case, Paige is usually quite but had some interesting points of view regarding some cases. But none of them saw what I saw from the cases. Am I wrong in my assumptions? We will see the results later, I guess. It was entertaining, tough.

After our rst break, the Principal send someone to take me to his ooe before I could go to my classes. Only, Shawn saw me leaving.

Biggest was my surprise to nd the King himself sat on the Principal's ooe. He has quite impressive aura. King of Werewolves after all, I was not sure about the right way to greet him, and luckily, he was the one who started our conversation without a formal greeting.

"I am impressed Joshua... it is the rst time after three years that someone understood what the real task were." He had a deep voice and as crazy as it might sound, while looking at him this closely I would swear he looks tired. There are bags under his eyes, and there is like a hollow expression above all. He does not irradiate any emotion despite of his smile.

"Thank you, sir... I mean, my King." I bow a reverence as any subject would. He is the bigger predator in this room and my King.

"I have seen your le. You seem to enjoy Finance a lot, right?"

"Yes, my King."

"Regardless, do you have any particular interest in something else? For example, history? You no longer have any pending course of that, but would you like to read more about the history of our specie?" I wonder where he is going.

"I like reading in general, and history is interesting, but I must admit that I found more in the textbooks here than back at my own school at my pack." He smirked again, and I am not sure about where to look.

"You can relax... I can see Maggie should be proud of his son. Alpha Richard was indeed blessed. Pass my greeting when you see them." I breathe in deeply. But I cannot relax yet.

"Thank you, my King. My will inform my parents about your greetings when I meet them."

"You will meet them sooner, Young Alpha. If you pass this interview." Is this for real?

"Do not look so astonished... You still have to study, but you will be able to dot it from home. However, there is a catch... Do you want to take this interview and assume the consequences of it?"

"I apologize if I sound disrespectful but without enough information, how can I make a decision?" If the catch is the life of my family, or something that might hurt Clara... I need to know before taking a decision. If something is too good to be true, probably it is not.

"Indeed smart. I like you Josh. And I like to work with smart fellows regardless of rank or species...the catch is that you will have to work for me undercover, without the knowledge of your parents, your friends, your pack, even your mate... for at least a year."

"Why would you need me sir? I am just a Young Alpha, a nineteen-year-old guy without accomplishments and with the reputation of lazy despite my high rank pack."

"Let's say, I need help to solve a puzzle, and all you have said about you works ne for my plans... So, I explained my motivations enough. Are you willing to take the exam?"

"I am sorry again for asking but what can I get besides of an early graduation?" He smiled truthfully, but the smile was sad.

"Save lives... help others, my gratitude... I guess the last one is what most werewolf would like to have." Wow, a King's gratitude is like the equivalent of ask you want and he would not deny it. Well, unless you ask to be king, then it does not work. But, wait...

"Save lives? Like werewolf lives?"

"You will get more information if you pass the test, if you do not..." With that long pause I thought he was going to say something like "I will get you killed."

"I will get you to forget we ever meet." I imagine he was his ways. King after all.

"I agree Sir." I guess saving lives should be more important, but a King's gratefulness, it something I cannot help but desire. It would help me to nd Clara sooner, he is the King and he can nd her for me.

"Do you remember that Fleur-de-Lis was disbanded by King Klaus, the First, after attempting against the life of his Queen."

"Yes. It happened more than three hundred years ago."

Fleur-de-Lis was a vicious pack that fought for the werewolves and lycan supremacy, as children of Moon Goddess, during the War of Species. Although, they were fanatics or rankings, power and some twisted way to see Moon Goddess blessing on our wolves. They believed that were omegas were meant to be slaves for the higher ranks, while they favored inbreeding to strengthen high rank werewolves' bloodlines, while males were the epitome of our evolution and females supported their greatness.

"It is said a lot about King Klaus I, as a ruthless beast... yet he was the one who ended the War and lead the way for peace. Why would he disband a whole pack of hundreds of members for the attack just a group attempted?"

Yes, now that I think about it... why would not just kill the culprits but also disband a whole pack. Besides, why would he look for a peace treaty if he were a ruthless beast... it does not match.

The Interspecies Alliance Act was signed as result of the World Concilium that brought peace to the world. It is an historical event since not only ended the War of Species but recognized equal rights for all species and ranks to live, work and mate. Quite advance by the time, despite we have not reach social equality despite the time has passed.

If he were a beast... eager for blood and war, to then change... and look for peace, equal rights... for all species... all ranks... to live... work... mate! Mate! He got a mate!

"A mate is sacred, and a Luna Queen is the center for the balance of our kingdom... I am guessing his mate was not a werewolf or she was not of a high rank?" The King smiled at me, encouraging me to go on... On my Goddess! A Luna Queen was not a werewolf? Or she was not of a high rank?

"In rage, he could have killed the culprits of the attempt... I know I would, any Alpha would... But to disband a whole pack... he must have thought that the center was rotten... beyond repair... then, the attempt was ordered by the Alpha of the pack... I am guessing sir."

"Complete your idea." I began to sweat... think Josh, think... why disband them, why not just kill the Alpha and Luna, and instate another...

"Because... that way..." I need more time... Okay... Breathe Josh, breathe..."

"I think I need a little bit more of information... I keep thinking that he made a mistake because by disbanding them, a lot become rouges... vicious ones, by been hunted and killed by all packs, there are still some fanatics who get tattooed with their symbol and do something stupid."

"Yes, and they were responsible for the almost annihilation of Moonlight Pack... it is not a rumor. That is why something was a symbol of purity become the symbol of terrorists, extremist." So, it is not a rumor, but a fact.

"Still, he could them, but they would run and hidden under the wing of their allies... Oh, so the King wanted to nd those allies to kill them as well!"

"Yes, Joshua Duncan. You understood and pass this exam." I breath in relieve.

"He was playing a very dangerous game to keep his mate safe and change the world to a better place for his werewolves, as he promised her..." he continued still with an empty expression.

"Now, young Alpha you will help me to nd those rats and stop them. They are alive, they are hidden under my nose and they took something from me. I will not stop until I kill each and every one of them." He stood up from his sit and approached me offering me his hand and I shook it like an automat. His gaze did not leave room for argument, he was burning in fury.

I am sure now I had no idea where I got myself into or if I would be able to nd my way to Clara, but looks like this is something I need to do.