

Scars by Jessica Bailey Chapter 6

Chapter 6

Amelie

My heart sank. Six missed calls and ten texts. Damn it; I didn't have time to appease my mate at this moment. I was busy, and I was also in front of a room of people. I read the last text, "You were warned there would be consequences." That is all it said. I quickly texted back, hoping to calm him again and find a way out of whatever torment he was planning.

"Hey! I am soooo sorry I missed your calls and texts again. You know how things get around here when events happen, lol. We are about to head down to the ceremony. I'll call you tonight before bed. Love you." With that, I hoped he might understand, and I could avert disaster. I toss my phone into my bag and hand it to one of the ladies putting Hope and my things back in our rooms. I need to focus on the task at hand and support my brother. This was one of the biggest days of his life, and I would not miss it for the world!

Celeste heads down the corridor, first than me than Hope. It's proper etiquette to travel in order of age. We were flanked by guards wearing black suits. We headed outside to the stage that had been set up. Dad's Beta Lucas announced our arrival. Lucas was also my uncle; he was my mother's brother. As we passed, he gave me a wink, and I winked back with a slight smile. The ceremony was now starting.

We took our seats on stage; to the right of us was a basin of rainwater. There were sprigs of sage, thyme, and St. John's Wart on the stand next to it. Next, my current Alpha, Alpha Mason, was announced and stood to the left of our sets on stage. Next, Alpha Gideon from the Druit Guard was announced. As he stepped out, I felt the same pull I had earlier in the day. I could catch the slightest scent of eucalyptus; it was so comforting. I wondered why. As Alpha Gideon came up onto the stage, our eyes met. He had the brightest green eyes I had ever seen. They reminded me of the foliage of morning glories at dawn. I quickly snapped out of it as he turned and took his place next to Alpha Mason. Both men wore a simple wrap around their waist and were shirtless. It was hard not to gawk at Gideon's awe-inspiring physic. His sandy blond hair pulled half up in a ponytail—his marks on full display.

I saw a White Rose and a Daisy on his chest; "he must have two daughters," I thought. On his left shoulder blade, his Alpha mark is shown proudly. His pack mark of an oak tree on his shoulder, representing they were the guardians for the moon goddess. One thing Alphas and Lunas had besides their rulers' marks was a connecting pattern. Gideon's was swirls of clouds and leaves that looked like his moon symbol would be covered in an overcast in any second. I followed the swirling clouds and leaves to where his Mate Mark should have been, but all that was there was a faded scar. "It looks like his mate passed," Inari said with a sad tone.

"I guess so. It looks like he's a single dad too." I felt like I should get up and hug him and tell him it would be ok. I didn't know why. I had never felt like this before. I shifted my focus back to the ceremony.

Finally, Lucas announced my Father and Brother. They also wore the simple wrap with their marks proudly on display for all to see. I could see the pride in my Father's face as he walked to the stage and the nervousness of James. Once on stage, my Father took over the ceremony proceedings.

"Thank you all for coming today. Please be seated. We will start with the Moon Goddess blessing." He turned to us ladies. We were the first to take part. Celest steps forward.

"I Luna Celest, the mother of the Ashwood Pack, represent the Moon Goddess and bless you with the wisdom of the ages. May you lead your Pack wisely and justly." With that, she took the springs of sage and placed them in the basin of water.

I stood next. "I Amelie Ashwood, sister of the Ashwood Pack, represent the Moon Goddess, and I bless you with the strength of a thousand wolves. May you lead your Pack with a strong will." I placed the thyme in the water basin.

Now it was Hope's turn. "I Hope Ashwood, sister of the Ashwood Pack, represents the Moon Goddess, and I bless you with focus as clear as a summer day. May you lead your Pack with clarity." She places the St. John's wort in the basin.

James steps over to the basin and bows his head as the three of us sprinkle the blessed water on his head. Then, he steps back, and Father again takes over. "The goddess has blessed you with wisdom, strength, and focus. How do you receive these blessings?"

James responds clear and proudly, "I receive these blessings with an open heart and an open mind."

"Step forward, my son." With that, James turns to the side and steps in front of the three Alphas. At that moment, I say how small my little brother still was but was so proud of how much he had grown.

Our Father took a gold blade, cut his right palm, took his left pointer finger, and dipped it into his blood. He made a line across my brother's chest. "Never forget your duty to your family and Pack; you are their father and provider." Father handed the blade to Alpha Mason next.

Alpha Mason made the same cut on his right hand and drew a line with his blood right under our fathers. "Never forget your allies and friends. As Packs, we are stronger together as allies; we are invincible." He handed the knife to Alpha Gideon.

Alpha Gideon followed the same steps placing his blood-line under Alpha Manson's. "Never forget you are a warrior. You fight so your Pack can survive." With that, Gideon handed the knife to James, who cut his right palm.

"I, James Ashwood, accept the blessings of the goddess and my fellow Alphas. Please teach me and guide me so I can mold myself in your image." With that, he shook each Alpha's hand-cut palm to cut palm, starting with Gideon, then Mason, and lastly, our Father. Once he was done, he stood with his back to the crowd as his heir mark came into view. A lunar eclipse that would one day turn into a full moon. His pack mark changed from dark forest green to a deep purple and started to connect to his heir mark with growing branches. I could see his blue eyes turn dark as his wolf was coming to the surface, feeling the surge of power. Once the mark was complete, the four men stepped off the stage and shifted. They would do a perimeter run to let the energy settle in James's wolf. Everyone cheered as the four wolves ran off into the night. We would see them soon at the party.

"Thank you, everyone, for attending this joyous occasion! Please proceed to the ballroom for food and beverage to celebrate." Celest announced with great pride. Then, she turned to Hope and me, and a little sadness was there.

"What's wrong, Luna?" I put my arms around her trying to figure out what could make her sad on such an occasion.

She looked at me with a slight smile. "All my babies are growing up. I just want you all to stay my little babies forever." She pulls Hope and me into a big hug.

"Mom, you're squishing me." Hope wiggled her way out. "Let's go to the party before all the good food is gone." Hope took both our hands and led us into the ballroom. It was a grand affair. Celest and Hope headed straight to our family table. I was heading to the kitchen to check on the team.

"Roth, how are we doing? Any more issues after I left?" Roth popped his head up from his station.

"No, Miss Amelie, everything is going smoothly. I don't know if we would have been able to make the adjustments without you." He smiled and nodded.

I was overjoyed. I think we would have enough to feed an army and we kind of were. The Druid Guard brought their elite unit as a sign of respect to my Father. They were a small unit with a big appetite. "Perfect. You know where I will be if any issues arise. Please DO NOT disturb the Luna tonight. I will be in charge of all issues the rest of the evening."

"You got it, Miss Amelie." With that, I went to my seat.

As soon as I got back, James, our Father, and the two Alphas entered. All wearing black suits, dad and James were wearing deep purple button-ups with black ties. Alpha Mason was wearing a dark red button-up with the top buttons undone. Gideon's suit looked like it was going to burst at the seams any moment. He wore a forest green button-up with his jacket slung over his shoulder and his sleeves rolled up to his elbows. Top buttons left undone. I felt my heart flutter for just a second. I quickly looked away and tried to hide my face as not to make eye contact. I felt someone standing in front of me when I looked up; it was Gideon.

With a big smile, he held out his hand. "Amelie, right? Would you care to dance?"