

Scars by Jessica Bailey Chapter 61

Chapter 61

Gideon

~Crack~ This is the sound I hear as I slam my fist down on my desk. “Nothing! We have nothing! Just bits and pieces of theories, no evidence, no witnesses!” I yell out as I throw my laptop across my office.

“You know what we need?” Ulv breaks my tirade.

“What! Not your bullshit, that’s for sure.” I snarl at my wolf. I am in no mood.

“To kick someone’s ass! Let’s go to the training grounds and spare a bit.” I can feel his excitement and mine melding together. “Maybe a run as well, and if we still have some tension left, maybe our beautiful Luna will soothe us.” Ulv’s idea sounds like the perfect way to relieve my stress and tension.

“My friend, those are all excellent ideas.” The scowl on my face is replaced with a devilish grin as I leave my office and head down to the training grounds. I can’t help but think about what has pushed me into this horrible mood.

It’s been two weeks since Amelie’s Luna Ceremony, and we have nothing new. I still haven’t heard from Alpha Flynn Kory or his Beta Frank Newman, Lacy Newman’s father. Lacy did not attend the ceremony gathering, and Alpha Nox Jericho’s only response was that she was not feeling well. Which doesn’t make sense because werewolves don’t just get sick, and if she were pregnant, he would have announced it. Something’s not right as we already suspect.

I am also waiting to hear from Flynn on the state of the investment club that Nox was involved in. The list of investments is odd and counterintuitive to werewolf culture and lifestyle. The silver switchblade that Bane Nichols carried from the Red Star Pack and Halston Payne of the Dark Wood Pack that attacked the boys seem to be the ring leaders and connected. The other boys were manipulated to join the ambush. Alpha Dale Nichols, Bane’s father, said the knife was picked up after a rouge attack in his territory, but the attack was never reported. As shaky as it sounds, they might be related to rouge attacks. That’s the other problem. Not only do we have no evidence, but we have no idea why or how. What’s really going on? Who are all the parties involved? When will they make a mistake? Where are they hiding Tate and Karen, and why?

I get down to the training grounds and grab a pair of shorts from the locker room. We have extras for after a shift. I’m not going to need a shirt or shoes. I was going to go for a run right after, so I’m letting loose. I step out of the locker room and find the two Delta Elite forces training together. Benjamin is the captain of force one, and Matt is the captain of force 2.

“OK, elite forces, let’s put you to the test. Two from each team, a total of four verse me!” I give them my best welcoming smile, but I know it’s dripping with mischief. They would not dare to defy their Alpha, but they also don’t want to get their asses ultimately handed to them. Either way, it was going to hurt.

Four warriors are selected and surround me. Two come at me at the same time, one from behind the other from the front. The one in the front is slightly faster, I wait till he reaches me, and I turn slightly, tripping him and throwing him off balance, then I use the rest of his momentum to flip him into the attacker from behind right before he reaches me. They are down, and a third attack is launched from my right. He’s brilliant doesn’t go for a head shot but low for a body shot and a leg sweep. I block him, but he rolls out of my counter before I can get him. I like this guy. Then the fourth guy attacks, going for my shoulder. Tring to immobilize me so the others can get the upper hand. Soon all four were back on their feet and attacking. I fought them off and countered each of their attacks. They were getting more and more desperate to land a blow or attempt a submission. This is what I needed to blow off some steam. They keep come again, and again I can feel Ulv pressing to the surface. Soon enough, the four were sprawled on the ground, exhausted and beaten.

“Well, I guess that’s enough for today.” I chuckle and start heading to the tree line.

“Alpha, wait. Your phone is ringing” Benjamin starts running toward me with my phone in his hand.

“Damn it,” I say with a sigh and take the phone.

I look, and the caller ID says Alpha Flynn Kory.

“Alpha Flynn, it’s good to hear from you,” I say as I answer the call.

“Alpha Gideon, thank you for taking my call. I wanted to talk to you about that investment opportunity we discussed during Amelie’s Luna Ceremony.” He’s coding his message making sure to throw off any eavesdroppers.

“I think that’s an excellent idea. When do you have the time available?” I continue speaking vaguely. His phone might have been cloned. The precaution was necessary.

“I hope we can have that conversation in person.” I was not expecting Flynn to request I come to New York City.

“How soon do we need to have this conversation?” I hope it’s sooner rather than later. I need a solid lead.

“As soon as possible. My Beta and I have a lot to discuss with you. Let me know when you will be arriving. I hope to see you soon.” Beta Newman wants to talk to. He might have information about Lacy.

“You will be seeing me very soon.” I hang up after that.

I stand there for a moment. I am thinking over the brief conversation and my next move when Ulv interrupts my train of thought. “Are we going to stand around all day or are we going to get moving. We have a hunt to continue.”

“It’s an investigation.” I turn around and start heading to my office.

“Don’t care what you call it. I want blood.” Ulv snarls. I couldn’t agree with my wolf more. We both wanted blood for coming after Amelie and this odd plot to take over packs.

I mind-link my team. “Meet me in my office in 10 minutes.” I quickly head back to the locker room and change back into my everyday jeans and shirt. When I get to my office, Tyson and Marcus are already waiting.

“Alpha, Matt, and Benjamin will be here shortly,” Marcus tells me. I nod and sit behind my desk in my chair. About a minute later, Matt and Benjamin knock on the door.

“Come in,” I yell. They quickly come in and take a seat.

“Alpha Flynn called, and it seems I will be traveling to New York tonight. Marcus and Benjamin, you and your team, will come with me. Tyson, you will stay here and cover my duties, Matt. You and your team will guard Luna Amelie. I already know there is no canceling her calendar. She does not leave this house without you, do you understand!” I push my Alpha Aura.

“Yes, Alpha. We will guard the Luna and future Alphas with our lives.” Matt bows his head in submission.

“Good. We will need to pack professionally for this trip. We will go to Alpha Flynn Kory’s Pack, The Hudson Bay Pack, and his investment firm’s headquarters. Tyson, who is our most trusted forensic accountant?”

“That would be Magen Peppers Alpha,” Tyson replies.

“What is her birth pack?” I know we have a mole. I need to be careful who outside of this group we bring along.

Tyson quickly accesses the pack files on his laptop. “Cuyahoga Valley Pack in Ohio, Alpha Bowers sir. She was the head warrior’s daughter.”

“Perfect, let her know she will be joining our trip and be ready to head to the airport in two hours. We will take the Council’s jet.” Alpha Bowers was one of Amelie’s relatives or a branch of the Ashwood family. I was confident Magen was loyal. “You are all dismissed. I’ll meet you out front in two hours.”

I get up and walk over to my broken laptop on the floor from earlier. “Marcus, can you get the guys to transfer my files to a new laptop and have it ready before we leave.”

Marcus looks down at my smashed laptop and picks it up, “I’ll have our tech team do it right away.” He steps toward the door but turns around to look at me. “Alpha, we are going to get to the bottom of this. I know we will.” He quickly turns around and walks out.

I let out a deep sigh. I wish I could be that confident. If we are leaving in two hours, I need to pack and say goodbye to my girls. I hate to leave Amelie at all while she’s pregnant, but I don’t feel confident parading her around, being that she’s ten weeks along. Also, after the poisoning and the goddess’s possession, I don’t want her to leave the house, let alone our room. The threat is so real, but I feel powerless to stop it. It’s the most frustrating part of this whole thing, the vulnerable feeling all the time. When Mandy died, I felt helpless because there was nothing I could do. I couldn’t fight death for her. Now we have this looming threat that I can’t do anything about, and I feel powerless just grasping at any bit of information, trying to make it more than it is just to have something. Desperation and powerlessness are not feelings I’m comfortable with or know how to deal with. This feeling that at any moment, all that I love and care about could be ripped away. I don’t know how I could move on. I don’t think I could. I would go crazy with grief.

I pull myself out of the hole I was spiraling down and bond-link Amelie, “Am, baby. I have to go to New York tonight. Do you want to meet me in our room so I can pack?”

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Chapter 62

Amelie

“Am, baby. I have to go to New York tonight. Do you want to meet me in our room so I can pack?” Gideon bond-linked me. If he was going to New York, that means he’s going to meet with my cousin Alpha Kory.

“OK, I’m coming with you. I’ll meet you in our room. I’m in the playroom right now.” I stand up.

“Am, you need to stay here where it’s the safest.” Gideon is nicely trying to give me orders, not happening.

“I’ll meet you in our room. I’m not discussing this over bond-link.” I cut the connection.

“Shay, Jorden, can you watch the girls for a bit. I need to meet up with Gideon.” I’m sure Tyson and Marcus will tell them what’s going on. I need to handle my own mate right now. I walk out the door and head down the hall to our bedroom. I, of course, beat

Gideon to our room. While I wait for him, I pull out both of our suitcases and start sorting through my clothes. So much doesn't fit already.

Werewolf pregnancy is six months long, but also having twins, my baby bump and ten weeks is more prominent than expected. Very minimal morning sickness, more like my sense of smell, is on hyperdrive 24/7 and anything foul turns my stomach. So as long as I stay away from gross smells, I'm fine. I've also been craving eggs with every meal on everything. About 5 minutes later, Gideon enters the room.

He gently pulls me into his arms. "Amelie, babe, you need to stay here. It's safer."

"says who? Someone attempted to poison me in our pack! How am I safer away from you? What if Tate shows up?" I push him away.

"Matt and the Delta Elite force two will be with you at all times. New York has more opportunities for failure points than home. We don't know if they have also recruited humans as well. You have almost died from silver before. There's no way I can risk you walking around a bunch of silver-toting humans! If Tate shows up, my men will catch him!" Gideon is starting to raise his voice.

My heart starts to race, and I feel my anxiety rise. I feel caged, like Gideon's trying to control me as Tate did. "No one tells me what a can and cannot do! No one!" I'm screaming, and I can feel a panic attack bubbling to the surface.

"Amelie, breath." Gideon's tone quickly shifts, and he's gentle. He takes a step toward me, but I slap his hand away.

"DON'T TOUCH ME!" I scream. I'm sobbing, my panic has surfaced, and it has taken control. I can feel Inari trying to push through it and get to me, but it feels like I am in a bottomless pit and can't crawl out. I can deal with complex pack issues and all the politics at my ceremony, but as soon as I feel my mate control me and tells me it's for my own good, I lose it. It's all the emotions and feelings I had for ten years. I'm sobbing, shaking, and can't breathe. I know it's irrational, but I can't control it anymore once the fear takes over.

"Amelie, look at me, baby. Please look at me." I'm hyperventilating. I look up at Gideon. "You need to focus on your breathing. Just focus on taking steady breaths. Can you do that?" I nod my head. I focus on taking a breath in and letting it out slowly. In and out over and over. My panic subsides, and once I'm calm, Gideon pulls me into a firm embrace. "Amelie, I will never hurt you. Please talk to me."

"When you were telling me what I could and couldn't do, I started panicking like I did when Tate would control me and tell me it was for my own good. That he what was best. I know you didn't mean it that way, but it just triggered all these feelings, and I couldn't stop them. It was like I was in a deep pit, and I couldn't get out." I push deeper into his embrace.

"It's PTSD. It doesn't matter how small the stressor is when triggered. It's hard to stop. Your emotions took over, and your logical side and your wolf were cut off. It's OK. It takes time to heal." He kisses the top of my head and just holds me for a few minutes.

"Thank you for calming me down." I look up at my mate, and I can see all the worry and stress from the past few months in his eyes. He's not trying to control me. He's scared I'm going to disappear. He has his own trauma he's dealing with.

"I need you to be safe where yes, I know the environment can be controlled. Not because I want to control you but to keep you and both sets of twins safe. I can't live without you." I can feel the sadness in his voice.

"I understand. We haven't been away from each other since the day you walked into my family packhouse. I only feel safe with you nearby." I let out a sigh at the end of my statement.

"You will be safe. Matt will be guarding you, plus Tyson, Shay, Jordan, and Becky will be with you. I would love for you to stay in the packhouse, but I know you have construction site meetings scheduled for the new schools and hospital. It's important to the pack that they see their Luna." Gideon digs his face into my neck. It's almost as if he doesn't want his words to be valid. His logic and emotions are not seeing eye to eye.

"When do you leave for the airport?" I ask.

"We are leaving at 4:00 PM. We will take the Council's plan as it's the fastest direct route. I should only be gone a few days. I'm hopeful the information Alpha Flynn has will be fruitful." Gideon pulls away, realizing he doesn't have much time to pack and says goodbye to the girls.

"OK, let's get you packed quickly then. Why don't you get your toiletries from the bathroom, and I'll start packing your clothes." I pull away reluctantly so we can pack quickly and spend some time together.

Since he's only going to be gone for a few days packing is done quickly. Once we are done, we walk hand in hand to the playroom to spend the last 45 minutes as a family.

"Daisy, Rose, daddy has to go on a business trip, so I need you to be good for mommy, OK." Gideon bends down and picks up both girls.

"Daddy, we will be good," Daisy says with an eye roll.

"Daddy, mommy will be a good wuna too." Rose nods, confident in her statement.

Gideon chuckles. "I know mommy is the best, Luna."

"Yeah, she will help the sad puppies," Daisy shouts, throwing her hands in the air in victory.

"Who's sad, baby?" I ask Daisy.

"We don't know them, but they are sad and hurt, and you will help them because you are the best wuna," Rose says shyly.

I look at Gideon, confused I bond-link him. "Do you know what they are talking about?"

"No idea. But they have been around you and the ranked females as you all are working, so they might be starting to understand what a Luna does. You are the heart of the pack, and you make the pack happy." Gideon smiles at the girls and kisses them on the cheek.

"True. I learned young what a Luna did, so I guess they are too." I smile at the girls. I'm so proud of them and how quickly they are learning at such a young age. I don't know any three-year-old as advanced as them. I hope their brothers will be half as bright.

Gideon carries the girls to our room. He puts them down and grabs his suitcase. I take the girls' hands, and we all walk down to the front door, where the rest of Gideon's travel companions are loading up the SUVs. One of the guards comes and takes Gideon's bag and loads it for him.

He bends down, and the girls melt into him, and he showers them with kisses and tickles. They are squealing and laughing. I love seeing them together. It reminds me what kind of man Gideon is. He stands up and pulls me into a hug.

"Bond-link me every hour, so I know you are safe." I pull away and looking at him with a raised eyebrow.

"Don't you think that's a bit extreme," I know he's worried, but every hour.

"Every half hour?" He gives me a cheeky grin. I slap his arm, and he acts hurt.

I stand on my tiptoes and wrap my arms around his neck and pull him into a kiss. "Be safe, and I will keep the link open at all times. I love you." I whisper. The bond-link was strong enough to be felt thousands of miles away, which is stronger than mind-link.

"I love you too, and thank you. I don't want to leave you, but this is important." I nod and let him go so he can get into the SUV.

"Bye, daddy! We wove you!" Daisy and Rose say and wave.

Soon the caravan of black SUVs is no longer visible down the drive. I know I'm safe, and this is my home, but it feels so foreign in that moment without him here. I feel two

little hands reach up and take mine, and I'm reminded I have more responsibilities now, and these two tiny flowers need their mommy, and I'm so blessed that I get to be just that, their mom.

"How about I make dinner for just the three of us? Well, five, I guess your brothers are getting hungry."

"We want maxes and thees!" The girls start jumping up and down.

I laugh, "OK, mommy can make mac and cheese."

We turn to go inside, but I get a feeling of being watched. I turn my head to look around but don't see anyone. I quickly get the girls in the house and lock the door behind us. I hope it's just my imagination playing tricks on me.

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Chapter 63

Gideon

We land at Teterboro Airport at 8:00 PM, our time, but it's 6:00 PM here in New York. It's only two hours but added with stress, and it can feel like jet lag. We arrange for a car service to pick us up and take us to The James New York NoMad on east 29th and Madison. The rest of the world doesn't know that this is a Packhouse in the middle of New York City. All those urban legends about wolves in New York City parks are kind of true. They are just werewolves. That's why they don't get caught. We pull up to The James, and we quickly unload. Alpha Flynn is waiting to meet us.

"Gideon, it's great to see you again." He shakes my hand. With this many humans around, we drop titles, but we are naturally larger and more robust. So, seeing a group of prominent men and women all together can be somewhat intimidating.

"Flynn, it's good to see you so soon as well. I hope to see Frank Newman on this trip. We all have so much to discuss." I pat him on the shoulder. I can see the tension in his eyes. He's found something.

"In due time. Let's get you all checked in." Flynn turns to address the she-wolf behind the counter, "Danelle, please make she Gideon and Marcus get the VIP rooms I reserved."

"Yes, Mr. Kory." With that, we get our room keys. Marcus and I are on a different floor than the rest of our men.

I mind-link Benjamin, "Marcus and I are two floors above you. I think he put us on the Alpha floor. I need you all to keep an eye out for anything odd. With how vague Alpha

Flynn has been talking to me, I'm sure he's found a spy in his pack. They might panic with us here and expose themselves."

"Yes, Alpha. I am pairing Megan up with Nora in the room right next to mine. I think they might target her since she's not a warrior." Benjamin is already on guard and making plans. This is why he and Matt are captives.

"Good call. Always keep the link open while we are here. That goes for everyone." I turn to go up the elevator. While I'm in the elevator, I reach out to my mate to bond-link with Amelie. From this distance, we can't talk but we can feel each other. It's better than a text. I can feel that she is safe. That's more than I can ask for. I feel her push back, and my heart is at ease. The elevator reaches my floor, and Marcus and I get off. We can tell right away this is the Alpha and Beta Floor. It feels more like a home than a hotel. Our rooms are right next to each other. When I open my door, I find a note on the entry table.

It reads. "Alpha Gideon Alios. Thank you for coming on such short notice. My Beta and I need to be cautious as we have found a rat in our wolves' den. Meet my Beta and I in Madison Square Park at 11:00 PM at the Eternal Light Flagstaff. F.K."

I mind-link Marcus right away. "Marcus, did you get a note in your room?"

"Yes, all it says is there's a rat in the wolves' den. I'm assuming they found they had a spy." Marcus is unaffected by the revelation. We had suspected spies even in our own pack.

"They want to meet us in Madison Square Park at 11:00 PM. Do you think it's a setup?"

"It's hard to say, but if the Alpha put us on his highly controlled floor, the spy must not be someone close to him. If they are close, I think he would have already let you know somehow." Marcus' logic was sound.

"OK, I want every one of our men paired up, and no one goes out in groups larger than four. I want our men safe but not drawing too much attention. I want them to act like it's a casual trip, but they need to be gathering intel the whole time. If Alpha Flynn doesn't know who the spy is but knows he has one, our presents will most likely flush them out. Time to catch a rat in a trap." If we can catch the spy, we will have our first real lead to this group.

"Operation 'Rat Trap' in order." I sigh at Marcus.

"Marcus, calling it that sounds like a cartoon." I shake my head and continue to walk into my room.

"It's the best I could come up with, and it's memorable." Now I'm laughing.

“Fine Operation Rat Trap. I’m going to FaceTime Amelie and the girls, then we will go out for some dinner before our 11:00 PM meet-up.” I hang up my garment bag.

“Sounds good. I’ll call Jordan and Ryan as well.” We end our link.

I sit on the bed and pull out my phone to face time Amelie. She picks up right away.

“Hey, my storm,” I smile as soon as I see her.

She giggles, “Hello, fire.” I laugh. I will never forget our first night together. I still say fire won.

“Girls, say hi to daddy.” Amelie turns the phone, and I see the girls are in our bed with Miss. Hopps and Mr. Whiskers.

“Hi, daddy.” They both say

Daisy crawls to the phone, putting her face way too close to the camera, and yells, “Daddy, we had maxs and thees with bacon for dinner!”

“Oh, did mommy make that for you?” I hear Amelie in the background, trying to get Daisy to pull her face away from the phone.

“Daisy sit on this side of mommy so was can all talk to daddy.” I hear Amelie cokes, Daisy, back once everything is settled again. I see Amelie has the girls on either side of her as they are all cuddled up in our bed. It’s making me homesick already. Looking at this little screen, I see my whole world, the only things that truly matter to me.

“What’s the plan for the rest of the night?” Amelie asks as she pulls Rose closer to her.

“Marcus and I are going to go grab a bite to eat, then have a meeting with Alpha Flynn and his Beta. After that bed.” I wish it were in my own bed.

“We miss you.” Amelie’s hand moves to rub her baby bump as she’s talking to me.

“Girls, while daddy’s away, you have to protect mommy and your brothers. Can you do that?”

“Yes, daddy.” They both say. Roses lay her head on Amelie’s baby bump.

“They say they miss you too, daddy,” Rose says with her ear to Amelie’s bump. She’s my sweet girl.

“Daddy, what are you going to bring us back? Last buzzness trip, you brought us back a mommy!” Daisy says, bouncing up and down. Amelie and I both laugh.

“How about a t-shirt and a toy. I don’t think you need another mommy this time.” Amelie gives me a raised eyebrow.

“Yeah, we want a toy!” Daisy is jumping on the bed next to Amelie, now yelling.

“Well, we are going to let you go so I can get them to settle down and sleep. They are going to the new pack pre-school tomorrow with Easton and Ryan.” Daisy stops and looks over at Rose with bulging eyes.

“We’re going to school.” She screams before belly-flopping on the bed—this kid, what am I going to do with her.

“OK. You girls be good for your teachers tomorrow and be nice to the other kids. You are the Alpha’s daughters. Everyone will want to be your friend, so be nice.”

“Daddy, will it be scawee?” Rose asks. She is so shy, but I know this will be good for her to meet kids her age.

“No, baby. You will have fun and learn lots of things. You will meet so many new friends too.” She nods her head and snuggles in next to Amelie.

“We love you. I’ll let you know how it goes with the school building group.” Amelie is working on pack improvements. After packhouse improvement, she’s moved on to the kids—new schools and programs. The pre-school was opened in the main Packhouse building. Now we needed to build new schools for the older kids.

“I love you all too. Talk to you tomorrow. Rest well, my loves.” I hang up the phone. The conversation made me homesick, but I also resolved to stop this crazy plot, whatever it is. I had to protect who I love.

I take a deep breath and clear my mind. Once I felt my resolve strengthen me, I mind-linked Marcus. “Are you ready? Let’s grab a bite, then scope out our meeting place. Who knows, we might catch a New York rat tonight.”

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Chapter 64

Gideon

“Are you ready? Let’s grab a bite, then scope out our meeting place. Who knows, we might catch a New York rat tonight.” I growl at the end of my sentence out.

“Oh, I am ready! Hey, can we get pizza? I hear New York rats like pizza.” Marcus chuckles.

“Are you really bringing up pizza rat right now?” He killed my murderous mood.

“Sorry, you left the door right open. I could help it. I’ll be right over.” We end the mind-link, and I meet Marcus in the hallway.

“Let’s go get you pizza.” I laugh and slap him on the back. We are silent as we leave the hotel. We are observing our surroundings as we go, looking for any odd behavior.

“Anything jumps out at you?” I ask as we head down the street.

“Nothing. You?” He asks.

“No,” I say but continue to look around.

We find a local pizzeria, and we each order a large pizza. We eat a lot, and New York-style pizza is thin. As we sit down with our pizza, I notice a guy in a dark blue hoodie out of the corner of my eye. I saw him earlier as we were walking around. I mind-link Marcus.

“At your 6 o’clock dark blue hoodie. I’ll create a distraction so you can turn and look.” Marcus nods.

I stand up and go over to the counter to order another pizza. Honesty, Marcus and I can split this one, and we will be full. As I stand up hoodie guy is watching me. “Marcus, look now.” I mind-link him. He turns and looks.

“I’m pretty sure I saw him outside the packhouse when we left.” He links back.

“Act like your phone is ringing and go outside to pick up the call.” I link Marcus as I’m still ordering our third pizza.

Marcus picks up his phone, “Hey Gideon, I’m going to take this.” Pointing to his phone. I nod, and Marcus goes outside to take his fake call. As soon as Marcus is outside, our friend in the dark blue hoodie pulls his hood down more and turns and walks down the street. As he was pulling his hoodie down, I saw a jagged scar on the back of his hand, very distinctive.

“Marcus, did you see his right hand?” I mind-link him, still not trying to draw attention to ourselves.

“Yeah, I saw it. That must have hurt like hell.” He walks back inside. We sit back down and wait for our pizza.

“Do you catch his sent when you went outside?” still using mind-link.

“Not too many humans and other smells are getting in the way. Tyson has the better nose of the three of us.” He sighs. Tyson is the best tracker I have ever seen. As the Beta, he stays typically behind to carry on my duties. If anything happens to me, the pack can still run with him at the helm. Marcus and one of the Delta captives usually travel with me.

“We still have a few hours before the meet-up. Let’s head over to the Flat Iron building and see if Hoodie Guy pops up again. Flat Iron is across from the park, so it will only look like we are doing the normal tourist thing without giving ourselves away.” I link back. Hoodie guy might be dumb enough to try and follow us again.

Our pizza comes, and we stick to our plan. We act like we are a couple of tourists out looking around. We get over to the Flat Iron building around 9:45 PM. It’s dark out, but the street is brightly lit. We look around to see if we see Hoodie Guy, but we don’t. We make our way over to Madison Square Park to scope out our meeting point Eternal Light Flagstaff. We don’t notice anyone acting strangely or following us. We only smell humans also. We walk the perimeter of the park and then take a seat near the fountain while we wait for 11:00 PM, which is only 15 minutes away.

“Anything jumping out at you?” I link Marcus again.

“Yeah, the fact that nothing is. I don’t know if it’s good or bad.” He links back.

“Agreed. All we can do is be alert.” I stand up from my bench and walk over to the flagstaff. I stand in the shadows as much as I can. I catch the scent of a wolf coming my way. I look in the direction the breeze is coming from, and I see Alpha Flynn. There is another wolf with him. Around the same age mid-forties around 6ft 3inches, broad build with jet black hair and dark ebony skin. As they approach, Marcus comes and stands near me.

“Gideon, fancy seeing you here.” He holds out his hand to shake mine. It seems odd, but I take his hand. When I do, I feel a small plastic object being handed to me.

“Flynn, how odd to bump into you. Marcus and I were just out sightseeing.” I slip the plastic object into my pocket.

“Oh, have I introduced you to Frank Newman?” He turns, and the man I now know is his Beta steps forward to shake my hand. Again, a small plastic object is passed off to me.

“Hello Frank, it’s great to meet you finally. I’ve heard so much about you.” I slip the object into my pocket.

“Gideon, it’s an honor to meet you. You have quite the reputation. They say you have a talent for untangling difficult puzzles and finding missing things.” He’s asking me to help get his daughter back. That even though they know where she is, she’s missing.

“They do say that about me. I do enjoy solving a mystery. Well, it’s late, and we are a bit jet-lagged. We will see you both tomorrow at our scheduled time.” I nod at each of them, and Marcus and I turn and head back to the packhouse. It’s best not to walk around with the Alpha and Beta. We don’t want to raise any red flags for our prey yet.

I reach into my pocket and feel what I was handed. They are flash drives. The Alpha and Beta must have pulled data spreatly to lessen suspicion. “Come to my room when we get back to the packhouse. They handed me two flash drives. We need to look at what they gave us.

We get back to my room as quickly as possible, and I insert one of the flash drives. There are a few files. There is a word doc that says read first. I open it, and it reads.

Alpha Gideon,

This is Beta Newman, and I ask your help to free my daughter Lacy for Nox Jericho. I believe he murdered her mate and is now keeping her locked up and trying to force her to be his chosen mate. Lacy loved Zeki, her mate, and I know she would not have moved on only a few months after his death. My mate and I have attempted to visit her at the Blue Crescent pack, and we are turned away. Lacy calls us once a month, but every time it feels forced and scripted. Before she became Nox’s mate, I received a voice mail from my daughter in the middle of the night. I have included that voice mail for you. Whatever happens, I know my Lacy is a victim, and I just want her back safe at home. Father to father will you help me rescues my daughter.

Beta Frank Newman

The letter is heartbreaking. I couldn’t imagine what Beta Newman and his mate are going through. This also sounds so eerily familiar to Amelie’s case. I go to open the audio file. I hit play, and we hear Lacy’s voice.

“Daddy. I don’t know when I will see you again. I love you and miss you. Please give mom a hug and a kiss from me. I wish I could tell you more, but I don’t have the time. Please, daddy, know I love you no matter what.”

“She sounded frantic and rushed like she knew someone was coming, and she might get overheard,” Marcus says before hitting play again.

“Let’s get this file over to Tyson. Let’s see if our team and isolate anything in the background.” I say before picking up my phone and call Tyson. I pull out the other flash drive and hand it to Marcus while I’m talking to Tyson.

“Alpha!” Marcus interrupts my call. “We have more than four packs to look into. More like ten, and I think they are calling themselves the New Moon Alliance at least that’s what they are calling their investment club.” Marcus turns the laptop toward me.

“Fuck.” Is all I can say as I look over the list of Packs involved. This just got bigger and more complicated.

Scars by Jessica Bailey Chapter 65

Chapter 65

Amelie

“NO! STOP! HELP THEM, MOMMY!”

I wake with a jolt to find the twins screaming and thrashing in their sleep. I quickly try to soothe them. “Hey, it’s OK. Mommy’s here.” I caress their little cheeks, and they both wake up from their shared nightmare. I read about this sometimes identical twins can share dreams or experience each other’s pain.

They are both sobbing and clinging to me. I wrap my arms around them and pull them into my lap, stroking their hair. “It’s OK. You are safe. It was only a bad dream. Mommy’s here now. Shhhhhh, it’s OK.”

Daisy looks up at me with tears in her bright green eyes. “Mommy, you have to help them.” She starts sobbing uncontrollably as soon as she speaks.

“Who does mommy need to help. You know mommy is the Luna, so she helps people right.” Daisy digs her face deeper into my chest, looking for warmth and comfort.

Something feels off, and I don’t know how to describe it. It feels like I need to know what the girls’ dream was about. “Inari, do you feel off somehow?”

“Yeah, I do. It’s like it wasn’t just a dream to them. Like it’s important somehow.” She feels it the same as me.

“Daisy, Rose, can you tell mommy what your dream was about? Mommy wants to help.” I wipe their tears away with my thumb.

Daisy looks up at me and takes a deep breath. The bravery and determination of this little pup is impressive. “Mommy, the bad blue people hurt the people and their puppies. The blue people are bad. They hurt people.”

This sounds like a child’s nightmare, but I can’t help this feeling. “Girls, what do the blue people look like?”

Rose lifts her head from my chest, “They look like people, but they are very bad.”

“You call them blue people. Are they blue?” I need to figure out what they saw.

“No, the pack is blue.” Daisy answers.

My eyes go wide. They are talking about a wolf pack that has blue in the name. That’s why they call them blue people. It’s a long shot, but I have to find out. “Are they called the Blue Crescent Pack?”

“Yes!” they both answer.

I sit for a moment. The girls knew that they would get two brothers, and they told Gideon that they would get a new mommy. They also told Gideon about the blue people before when we were still at the Ashwood Pack.

“Am, I think the twins are blessed with sight. Sight is more prevalent with female identical twins. It’s rare enough being identical twins but also of Alpha bloodline they are beyond special.” Inari is right. I’m not even shocked. After everything that’s been going on, I wouldn’t be surprised if Dorothy fell from the sky with Toto.

My mind is racing. I’m quickly pulled back to the moment with the girls sobbing in my arms. They are still pups and don’t fully understand what they are seeing, so it sounds like the rambling of children. I cannot panic or act any different now that I realize they have the gift of sight. They are still my daughters, and I need to help them understand what they saw. They saw it for a reason. I would need to be patient and ask questions. “Girls who did the blue pack people hurt. Mommy wants to help them.”

Daisy looks me straight in the eye, and for a second, I’m caught off guard by the ferocity in her eyes. “Pups. Mommy, they took them and hurt them and make them do bad things.” Her sobbing starts again stronger this time.

“Mommy, they are not bad, but the bad people make them do bad things. You have to save them!” Rose is pulling on my shirt collar, pleading for me to save people I don’t even know who or where they are.

“I promise I will help them. Where are they?” I need to know how much they have seen.

“They are in lots of places.” Rose snuggles back in after answering.

“What do the bad blue pack make them do?” I need more details.

“They make them do bad things. They make them go to people’s homes and hurt them. They don’t want to do it. Mommy, they need help.” Rose tells me as she takes her sister’s hand to help calm her down.

“Inari, what do you think this means?” I know it’s something, but I cannot figure it out.

“I don’t know. I wish I could see what they saw or have their wolf explain it to me. They are so young the things they are seeing must be traumatizing. Their wolves are still

dormant." Inari is right; they are too young to understand what they are truly seeing and why they are seeing it.

"I don't think we are going to get any more information from them. I think the images they saw are too complex for them to decipher. We should help calm them with our Luna aura." I tell Inari. The Luna is the pack's mother and can give comfort to anyone in her pack using the Mother Luna aura.

We tap into the Mother Luna aura and start rocking the girls and humming. "Mommy is here. You are safe. It's OK, go back to sleep." As I am rocking and humming them, their crying quiets to a whimper. They rub their eyes, and slowly they start to close them. In just a few minutes, they are both asleep again. I carefully lay them next to me and cover them back up. I lay down, but I can't sleep neither can Inari.

I can feel her stir in my mind. "What are your thoughts?" I ask.

"I am trying to think like a pup. Then maybe I can figure out what they are trying to tell us." It's an idea.

"OK, so we know it's clear that it's the Blue Crescent Pack. We know they are doing something to pups and making them do harm. The problem is we don't know who the pups are, who is being harmed, or where they are at." I'm trying to contain my anger. I know if I let my emotions take over, my Luna aura will wake the girls. It's beyond me how anyone could harm a child. I don't have solid evidence that this is happening, but I believe the girls.

"Am. I think we should try asking them more questions tomorrow once they are calm. I don't want to make them relive their nightmare, but if they are gifted with sight, we need to listen." Inari is just as frustrated.

"How are we going to convince our mate that the twins are gifted." I sigh.

"Mate is in denial. He knows he just doesn't want to admit it." Inari sighs as well.

"There's nothing more we can do tonight. Let's try and sleep. We have a packed schedule tomorrow." I tell my wolf, and we both clear our mind and try and rest.

Scars by Jessica Bailey Chapter 66

Chapter 66

Amelie

"Come on, girls, we need to go. You are starting school today." The twins are not as energetic as they usually are in the morning. I think the vision they had, took more out of them than I realized.

“Mommy, can we stay with you?” Daisy clings to my leg. This is odd behavior for her. She is the brave one, always charging ahead. For her to stick to me must mean she really does not want to go to school, this is out of character.

“Mommy, please let us stay with you! We will go to school tomorrow, we promise.” Rose’s eyes are pleading with me.

“I think they should stay with us too.” Inari chimes in.

“We need to show that the Alpha family supports the new school changes them going to pre-school is important in many ways.” I need to stick to the plan.

“This once don’t use logic and feel. They need to stay with us.” Inari’s tone was surprising. It was consequential and direct. I close my eyes and let my instincts tell me what to do.

“OK, I trust you. They will stay with us.” I let out a big breath in defeat.

“Girls, you can stay with mommy today, but you need to go to school tomorrow. Agree?” I pat their heads.

“Thank you, mommy.” They both say.

I mind-link Shay, Jorden, Matt, and Tyson. “Slight change of plans. The twins are coming with us today. Matt, I want a guard assigned to each of the girls.” Becky is staying back as she has her hands full with the packhouse staff.

Matt replies, “Yes, Luna.”

“We are going to drop the boys off at pre-school, then meet you out front of the packhouse.” Jorden mind-links me back. Honestly, I didn’t mind if they brought the boys with us, but I understand if Ryan and Easten wanted to go to pre-school.

We all meet at the front of the main packhouse and get into the SUVs. The new school we are constructing is on the edge of the pack town. It’s not a lively town like most pack towns. That’s what I am trying to improve. Druit Guard has always focused on the work they do and never the lives of the pack. I want to change that. We have a lot of satellite packs that people don’t know are associated with us. Those small packs need overhauling too. I must remember one step at a time. I have so much to do with such a big pack. It’s more like an organization than a pack. The only thing that feels the same as other packs is we have an Alpha and Luna; otherwise, it’s very businesslike. Packs tend to feel like a giant family. Druit Guard did not. I wanted it to feel warm and inviting for everyone. It was a big task, but I think I can do it.

We pull up to the site and get out. We are standing in a field with bright pink flags outlining where buildings and other features will go. The architect and the construction

foreman are waiting for us. They start to walk us through the project, showing us where the different buildings will go, even walking through the main building with blueprints. The guards are all close by, and the girls have not let go of my hands. The wind shifts, and I smell something odd.

Out of nowhere, at the edge of the field, we see six wolves. They look like rouges, but they don't smell like rouges. They are snarling and foaming at the mouth. Quickly the guards take action the pick up the twins and start ushering me back to the SUV. Shay and Jordon surround me, blocking any attack.

"Mommy! Help them! They need Help!" Daisy is screaming as the guard is running her to the SUV.

"Don't let them get hurt, mommy! Please!" Rose is screaming and reaching for me while the guard is holding her tight and running with her.

This is what they were talking about. I turn around and shake off Matt, who was ushering me to the SUV. "Luna, you need to get in the car now!" I don't turn; I start running toward the edge of the field to the fight that has formed.

Matt grabs my arm, "Luna, please get in the car!"

I turn and look at him, "I am the Luna, and I give the orders." I shake free from his grip, and all he can do is follow me. It's chaos; I need to take control.

The guards and mystery wolves are fighting. Everyone has shifted and attacking each other. The rouges' attacks are erratic and uncontrolled. It's like they don't know what they are doing. Our Elite Deltas quickly overpower them. One of the guards is about to kill one of the rouges.

"We have to stop them. They are not rouges!" I frantically tell Inari.

"Let me take control" I give Inari control as much as she can come to the surface.

"STOP!" Inari commands. "SHIFT!" No one moves, and I can see both our guards and the mystery wolves are fighting Inari's command. "SHIFT NOW!" She screams, and we push all our Luna aura out, forcing all the wolves to submit. Gideon said I was the strongest Luna he's ever met.

What I see when the mystery wolves shift proves to me the twins have the gift of sight. It also breaks my heart. Once they shift, they don't smell like rouges. They smell like children. When a rouge denounces its pack, they smell of riot. Before a pup is accepted into a pack, but after their first shift, they smell sweet. These six smell like pups not accepted into a pack or non-affiliated wolves. They all had their heads shaved, even the females, and they were covered in scars and bruises. They were shaking in fear; their eyes are distant and cloudy. They looked so young, too late teens at best.

I feel Matt come up behind me, and he stops. I look over at him, and he's staring at one she-wolf. "Mate!" comes out of his mouth, and in an instant, he's trying to hold onto one of the she-wolves. She's screaming and confused, and she starts to cling to him. I can see the look in her eyes begin to clear. The mate-bond is helping clear her mind. I take a few steps toward them, and to my surprise, Matt growls at me. "Mine." This damn bond is making Matt possessive of his frightened mate. The person his mate fears is me. Oh boy. This is not going to be easy.

"Inari, I'm taking over. We will need our Mother Luna aura." I take over from Inari.

"Matt," I try and get his attention while using my Mother Luna aura. "Matt, look at me." He turns to look at me. I can see him, and his wolf are conflicted and confused. His instincts are in overdrive.

On the one hand, he protects his scared mate because he doesn't want her harmed. He knows what happens to rouges. On the other, I am his Luna, and he must submit to my command. I'm going to need to calm him.

"Matt, I would never hurt your mate. Look at her. She's scared and hurt. I want to help her and her friends. Will you let me help her?" I reach out my hand and slowly put it on Matt's shoulder. I push my Mother Luna aura to him, and I can feel his tension ease under my hand.

"Yes, Luna." He nods and looks down at the poor naked, frightened she-wolf. I nod and sit on my knees, so I am at eye level with the poor thing. She's terrified, and I couldn't blame her. She was forced to shift, found her mate, and doesn't seem to know what is going on. The others that were with her were still shaking on the ground and mumbling. They are still out of it.

"Hello, dear. I am Luna Amelie of the Druid Guard." When I say Druid Guard, she looks up at me, and her eyes get wide. She quickly looks down again. "No one will hurt you. What is your name." I want to start simple.

I hear the faintest whisper, "Bailey Rhea."

"Bailey, Matt, here is your mate. Do you know what that means?" I watch as she nods her head.

"Bailey, you know Matt won't hurt you or let anyone hurt you, right." She looks up at me with the saddest blue eyes I've ever seen. She nods slightly.

"Can you help us take you and your friends to the hospital?" She nods her head again.

"Good, thank you, Bailey. Once you are feeling better, will you talk to me?" She looks at Matt then back to me.

“Luna, don’t send us back. We don’t want to go back.” The shakiest voice falls from her lips. Bailey breaks down in tears. I lean over to drape my cardigan around her, and she clings to me like how the twins did the night before, like a child needing comfort from her mother. This poor girl is so broken. I look over, and I see the other wolves are coming too. They are terrified. I push out my Mother Luna aura in a comforting way. I want them to know they are safe. It works; they calm down and crawl over to where I’m now sitting on the ground holding Bailey. The guards take a step near me. I shake my head.

Through mind-link, I tell them, “They will not hurt me. I don’t know why they attacked us, but I don’t think they wanted to. Matt, you need to get them to the hospital. No one questions them without me, and Matt doesn’t leave them. He is in charge of them till I get to the hospital. Call for two more cars. Jordan, Shay, and I will take the twins home and meet you there shortly with Tyson. No one tells the Alpha about this but me. Am I clear?”

“Yes, Luna.” I hear in unison. I sit on the ground with the mystery wolves. Shay and Jordan come over and join me, comforting and calming them.

Jordan mind-links me, “It’s like they are children, but they have to be at least 17.”

“I know. I need to know what happened to them, but I know it’s going to break my heart.” I link back.

The additional cars pull up, and we wrap them up in blankets and get them on the road to the hospital. I turn around, and Shay and Jordan are standing there.

Shay breaks the silence first, “You know Tyson already called the Alpha, right?”

I sighed, “I figured he did as soon as rouges were reported. I wanted to be the one to tell him. My phone’s in the car. Let’s get the twins to the packhouse. I’ll call him on the way.”

We get in the car, and before I can even look for my phone, I see Daisy and Rose are already talking to Gideon on FaceTime. I get in, sitting next to them, and Gideon sees me on camera.

“Amelie, what happened!” He was calmly talking to the twins, but now I hear the panic in his voice.

“I’m not really sure. We were attacked, but the wolves who attacked were non-affiliated wolves, not rouges. The whole situation is odd.” I furrow my brow thinking through all the events as fast as it all happened.

“I’m heading back right now,” Gideon demands.

“Have you gotten everything you need for the Kory Pack?” I ask.

“No, we have some things, but I was scheduled to meet Alpha Flynn in a few hours.” He huffs.

“Gideon, I think whoever planned this doesn’t want you to stay in New York. They wanted you to rush back. You need to stay and get all the evidence you can. That’s the only way we can stop this. If you come home, you are giving them what they want. They will be controlling us with fear.” I want him home, but I want my family’s future to be safe.

He dropped his head and let out a breath, “I know you are right, but all I want is to be there with you.”

“I want you here too, but we need this to stop more. I love you. We are safe. Please trust me to handle the situation.” I plead.

“I trust you. I love you too. Please call me as soon as you can, and once I’m done here, we are heading home! I don’t care if it’s the middle of the night!” I giggle. I miss him.

“I promise. I love you.” We hang up the phone, and the SUV stops in front of the packhouse.

The girls are not fighting me about going to pre-school now. I drop them off, and we jump back into the SUV to head to the hospital. Tyson and Becky jump into the SUV with us, and we drive over in silence. No one knowing what to say, and we all had so many questions. Nothing can be answered until we get to the hospital.

Scars by Jessica Bailey Chapter 67

Chapter 67

Gideon

“I trust you. I love you too. Please call me as soon as you can, and once I’m done here, we are heading home! I don’t care if it’s the middle of the night!” I say in defeat over the phone to Amelie.

She giggles and gives me a slight smile. “I promise. I love you.” We hang up, and I have never been more conflicted in my life. Do I stay and finish what I need to here, or do I pack up and go home now?

“Mate is right. We need to continue our work.” Ulv’s conviction is surprising. When we first heard we had a rouge attack, He wanted to try and run back. Now, after it’s over, he is thinking clearly, but I’m not.

Marcus interrupts my train of thought. "Alpha, the report I am getting for Matt's team, and Jordan is baffling. How did six non-affiliated wolves attack us? Plus, their attitude and mannerisms along with how they look do NOT sound like any rouge I've ever seen."

"I can't agree with you more. It's just odd and a little eerie." I stand and look out the window. We are meeting with Alpha Flynn in two hours, and with the leads he gave us on the flash drive, I hope I have enough to start making some arrests.

"Alpha, look at this picture." Marcus shows me a picture sent from one of the Delta guards taking the non-affiliated wolves to the hospital. It's a picture of one of their ankles. It's a tattoo of two letters and six numbers.

"I've seen this tattoo on dead rouges." I look at Marcus with confusion written all over my face.

"Alpha, I have a new theory to add, but I know you are not going to like it," Marcus says to me while pulling something up on his laptop. He turns in around to show me. It's a Missing Person report of a little girl from 10 years ago named Bailey Rhea.

"OK, I'm not following." I tilt my head to the side and look at Marcus.

"The she-wolf that ended up being Matt's mate is this missing girl, and this is a picture of her ankle tattoo. Look at the date on the missing person's report." Marcus directs my attention to the date on the screen.

I looked at the report; the date she went missing was 09/12/11. I look at the picture of the tattoo, and it says BR091211. "What!" is all I can get out.

"I don't think they are rouges. They are kidnap victims. That's also why they don't smell like rouges. I don't know how or why, but things are not as they appear. Hopefully, the Luna can get more information after talking to them." Marcus turns his laptop back toward himself and starts searching our records for more.

"This has to end. Not just for the sake of my family but all the families unknowingly affected by this. That poor girl has been mistreated for ten years." I slump down on the bed. I think of my girls and what I, as a parent, would do if it was one of mine.

I run my hand down my face and pick up my phone. It's picked up on the second ring. "Tyson."

"Hello, Alpha." He responds.

"Tyson, when you get to the hospital, get all the non-affiliated wolves' names, birthday, and birth pack if they know it. After that, check our missing persons' database for matches. We already found Matt's mate Bailey. She went missing ten years ago from a

pack in Oregon.” I pinch the bridge of my nose. This is just getting more and more complex.

He sighs, “Yes, Alpha, I’m going to the hospital with Luna Amelie as soon as she drops off the twins at the packhouse.” He pauses. “I’m sorry I let this happen.”

“Tyson, you have nothing to be sorry for. Shay was there too. She could have been harmed too. This was not in your control, but we will find out who planned it, and I will have their head.” I snarl out the last part.

“I’ll give you an update as soon as I can.”

“Keep me in the loop.” We hang up.

“Marcus, let’s head over to Kory Investments and get the rest of what we need.” I stand up and grab my suit jacket and sling it over my shoulder.

“I’m right behind you.” He closes his laptop and slides it into his briefcase. We are out the door and down into the lobby in no time.

Benjamin walks up to us. “Mr. Gideon, we have the cars waiting.” I nod, and Marcus and I follow. The rest of our men are already in the cars waiting to go.

I mind-link the team when we get in the car. “I know you are all aware we had a rouge attack. After looking into it more, this is a false report. As we move about today, we may encounter someone that knows about the attack or is surprised to see us. That is your target.”

“Yes, Alpha.” I hear.

We pull up in front of Kory Investments and file out of the cars. The passerby’s on the sidewalk quickly get out of our way as we step inside. Beta Newman is waiting to greet us.

“Mr. Gideon, please right this way.” He gestures to an elevator.

We step into the elevator. I turn my head toward Beta Newman. “You don’t have to ask. I’m already looking into it.” I’m vague. We are not alone, and I don’t know who we can trust.

Newman smiles. “Mr. Gideon has my thanks in advance.”

We step out onto the floor, and it’s lined with cubicles, and all I hear is phones ringing and typing. I can smell a mix of humans and wolves. We follow Beta Newman. “Your men can wait for you here.” I nod my head for my men to enter the conference room. Marcus and I continue following Beta Newman.

I mind-link Benjamin, “Slowly send our men out to sniff out the rat. The more uncomfortable they feel, the bigger mistake they will make.”

I turn and see a snarl come from Benjamin, “Yes, Alpha. We will find them!” He’s typically stoned-faced, but Benjamin is beyond pissed. Becky was supposed to have been with Amelie today. All my raked males are raging mad. They attacked our pack, our Luna, and our mates. We all wanted them to pay. Don’t mess with a wolf’s mate.

We get to a large corner office, and Beta Newman opens the door. Alpha Flynn stands up from behind his desk. “Alpha Gideon and Gamma Marcus, please have a seat.” No humans are within earshot, so we use titles out of respect.

“Alpha Flynn, thank you for your hospitality.” We sit across from him on one of the sofas.

“Thank you for the information. We are still going through it. It looks like the investment club has expanded from four packs to 10. Are you positive no others are hiding in the margins?” I ask Alpha Flynn.

“As much as I dug and tried to make connections, we only found the ten that were financial connect. Calling their investment club, the New Moon Alliance. Disgusting, right?” Flynn shakes his head.

“I only wish I knew what they were after. I asked my mother if she remembered anything as well.” Marilyn Ashwood John’s aunt and the object of obsession of former Alpha Brian Jericho.

“Did she remember anything?” I asked, leaning back into the sofa.

“Yes, she did.” He pauses, taking in a long breath. “She said at the time Brian Jericho would stop at nothing to have her, but she was an Ashwood and knew she would only accept her destined mate. This pissed him off, and he told her one day she would regret not choosing him. He would find a way to have Ashwood under his thumb.” Flynn gets up and pours himself a drink. “It sounds like the ramblings of an obsessed ex-lover, but my mother never did more than dance with him at a ball. He was obsessed with her Ashwood name and what it would bring to his pack to have an Ashwood as his Luna. Jericho tried to kidnap my mother, but her brother Jackson caught him and beat the crap out of him. Jericho tried to kill Jackson after that, but he failed as well. After that, your father stepped in, and Brian stopped. So, we thought.” He takes a sip of his scotch. “The investment club was started by Brian Jericho and Alpha Silvester Payne of the Dark Wood pack. They passed it down to their sons, who have added more members. My guess is this started with Brian Jericho and is now a family obsessed with obtaining power. They are in it for the long game. They don’t want the Council or Druid guard interfering, so everything is in the shadows. What is going on in the shadows, I don’t know. What I do know is they are well funded.” Flynn takes a long drink of his scotch.

I run my hand down my face. “So, we are dealing with a group that’s been sneaking around building power in the dark for over 50 years.”

“That’s correct. This new batch of Alphas is not as patient as their fathers and grandfathers. They are sloppy and are making mistakes. They had three different investment clubs that I would have never linked together if they didn’t combine the portfolios. They tried to poison Amelie in public at her Luna Ceremony. They openly attacked my son and your brothers-in-law. They think they are untouchable. This also means they have members on the Council.” Flynn clenches his jaw. He set down his glass hard on the table.

“That they do. Looking at the list you gave me, we have three Elder Council members and two on the Alpha Council. I don’t know how they were able to turn them or if the Elders are, but I will find out.” I say as I sit up straighter. I am growling out my words.

“Five total, that’s it. After 50 years, you would think they would have more.” Flynn scoffs.

“Five is enough to cause trouble, and the Council is not an easy group to infiltrate. I guess the five they have on their side had been having money issues or rouge problems and might have even been coursed to join. I’ll find out.” I have a way of getting information out of someone. I just need to find that someone.

There’s a knock on the door. “Come in,” Flynn yells. The door opens, and from the smell, the person is a wolf in the Kory pack. “Oh, Theo, I wasn’t expecting you. This is Alpha Gideon of the Druit Guard.” I stand to greet the wolf properly. Theo looks like a deer caught in headlights. I look past him in the hallway, and I see Benjamin. His eye darts to Theo, and he nods at me.

Theo reaches his hand out to shake mine. His palm is sweaty and cold. I get a devilish grin and shake his hand. “My, what an interesting scar on your hand. I would love to hear the story.” I squeeze tighter.

Theo’s eyes get wide. We caught our rat.

Scars by Jessica Bailey Chapter 68

Chapter 68

Amelie

The SUV stops in front of the pack hospital. We’re silent the whole way over, just reviewing what happened over and over in our heads. As we were about to step out of the SUV, Tyson spoke.

“Luna, before we go in, I think I need to inform you of what the Alpha and Gamma found.” I nod for him to continue. “One of the elite guards sent a picture of one non-

affiliated wolf's ankle tattoo, along with her name. They found a missing person's report for Bailey Rhea from 10 years ago. She was only eight at the time. Her tattoo was her initials and the date she went missing. The tattoo we believe is a tag or identifier to their captors." Tyson is steel faced as he tells us, but his eyes show more emotion, sadness, regret, and anger.

"So, you are telling me they were branded like cattle. I can only imagine the horrors they have been through." I close my eyes, drop my head shaking it. I look up at Tyson, who is clenching his jaw. "How many rouge reports do we have to match what happened here? How many dead rouges have we found with the tattoo?" I ask Tyson.

"We don't know yet. We have a team working through the archives. We will hopefully have a clearer picture by tomorrow." Tyson looks over at his mate Shay. I know he was scared that something might have happened to her.

Shay reaches for his hand, "Ty, I'm right here. I'm OK. It's going to take more than this to take me away from you and Easten." I can see Tyson relax a little from Shay's touch. It makes me miss Gideon even more.

I know I told him to trust me and let me handle this, but it's hard not to get emotional. I don't see how he and his men do this. We are still in front of the hospital in the SUV. I say one last thing before we get out. "We all are aware they are victims. We don't know how long they were in captivity or what happened to them. I don't want any of them to leave our pack territory without their families. We have a rare opportunity to reunite families and start the healing process. Please be gentle, and if they don't want to tell us something they don't have to, we can wait. This is not an interrogation. It's just some questions. I don't want to stress them out, so each of us will talk to one of them. I will take the extra. Please get their name, birthday, birth-pack, and the date they were abducted. If they are willing and able to give you more, that's great; if not, we may have to wait." I let out a sigh and pushed the door open. "Let's go." We all pile out of the SUV and make our way to the third floor. I put them on the third floor because it was quiet. I wanted them to have calm.

Doctor Michaels is waiting by the elevator of us. "Luna, they are all stable, and we have them two to a room. We are running blood, saliva, and urine samples on them all now. I hope to have the results in a few hours."

"Thank you, Doctor Michaels, is there anything we should know before we talk to them?" I ask.

"I can tell you they are all lucid now. Just from the physical exam, they have been through hell. I've never seen that many scars on a wolf. I'm pretty sure they are all malnourished as well. They all appear to be young. I think one of the males mentioned he was only 17. With proper care, their bodies should bounce back. The physical is going to be easier to treat than the mental and emotional." I see Dr. Michaels blink back tears.

I reach out and squeeze her hand. "Thank you for taking care of them. Becky will personally assist with the nutrition. I know from experience she's a pro." I turn and give Becky a small smile.

"It would be my honor." Becky nods in response.

We split up Tyson and Shay together in one room. Becky and Jordan in another. I take the room that Bailey is in. I know Matt is also there as well.

I mind-link Matt, "I'm coming in, OK?"

"Please come in, Luna." He response back. I can tell his wolf has calmed down and understands I am not going to harm Bailey. I walk in slowly. I see Bailey sitting up talking to Matt. The other wolf is asleep in the other bed. I guess I'll have to wait to speak to her later. There are two females and four males.

I walk over to Matt and Bailey. I make sure to use my Mother Luna aura to keep them both calm as I get closer. "Hello, Bailey. How are you feeling?"

She looks at me with tears in her eyes, "Thank you, Luna, for saving us." Matt wraps an arm around her shoulder.

"Bailey. I want to talk to you, but you don't have to tell me anything you are not comfortable talking about, OK?" I look at her, and she nods. I look up to Matt, and he looks at me worried. I can tell that the mate-bond is already having a substantial effect on them. I hope it helps her heal.

"Bailey. We found a missing person report about you from 10 years ago when you were eight. I know the tattoo on your ankle came from your captors. We want to stop them and save anyone else that they are holding. What can you tell me about the people that abducted you?" I take her other hand gently in my own.

She closes her eyes, and a tear rolls down her cheek. She opens her big soft brown eyes and looks at me dead in the eyes. "There are hundreds of us." My heart is racing, hundreds!

I stay calm. I need more information. "What can you tell me about where you were held."

Bailey looks down, "There isn't one place but a lot of places. They moved us around a lot in simi-trucks." She lifted her hand that I was holding, exposing her wrist. I could see the scaring from being confined. "They kept us cuffed with silver, and we only got one meal a day along with a vitamin." She pauses for a moment. "When they bring you in as a pup, they make you fight before you get your wolf. Every day for months, you fought so you could eat, could live one more day. Half the pups don't make it. Sometimes I wish I didn't." Tears are streaming down Bailey's face, and I can see Matt's eyes

darken. His wolf is pushing forward. My heart is breaking just hearing about it, but I have to stay calm.

I mind-link him, "Matt, you have to keep your wolf calm. I promise you will get the chance to protect our mate." I see his eyes change back to their warm brown from black. His wolf has calmed.

"Bailey. I'm so glad you survived. Now you have found your mate, and I know he will never let anyone harm you again, and neither will I." I gently squeeze her hand. Bailey gives me a slight smile, but it doesn't reach her eyes. There's too much pain and sadness in them. "I am going to ask you something, and I need an answer. How did you come to our pack, and why did you attack us?"

Bailey looks down, then looks up at Matt like she was asking for forgiveness. Matt coos, "it's OK. You can tell us we know you didn't want to."

Bailey nods and then looks at me, "whenever they wanted us to attack, we would be led to a border through the woods, and one of the handlers would take off our restraints, then an Alpha or Beta would force us to shift and stay." I'm in shock. Alpha and Beta are directly involved in the attacks.

Bailey continues, "Then another one would inject us with what they called 'rage potion.' When they inject you, your wolf fully takes over, but they are out of their minds. You have no control, and your wolf goes into a rage. They are primal. The only one who can control them is an Alpha or Beta, and they direct them to attack and return." She starts crying again. "Our wolves might have been in a rage, but you still see and feel everything. So many of us killed innocents and were killed by warriors."

I rub Bailey's back to soothe her. "You safe now. We will free the others, I promise." I look up at Matt. He doesn't say a word, but his eye tells me everything. They say thank you.

Bailey looks back up at me, "Luna, we didn't know a Luna could control our wolves. We are all so thankful you saved us. We don't have to go back."

"It's OK now. I have another question. Have you been accepted into a pack?" Bailey shakes her head at my question.

"We were all taken before we could be accepted into a pack. We were not treated like wolves in a pack but like disposable soldiers. They shaved our heads, called us by our tag, never our names. They beat us, starved us, and...." She trailed off and started sobbing uncontrollably. I think I knew what she was going to say.

"Bailey, you can just nod your head." I took a deep breath. "Did the handlers abuse the she-wolves?" Bailey nods her head, and her sobbing becomes stronger. I'm not going to dig anymore on this topic; I don't want her to relive it.

I look up to Matt, and I can see so many emotions are running through Matt's eyes. I mind-link him. "Matt, the goddess made you Bailey's mate for a reason. You know better than anyone what probably happened to her. You will need to be patient. She will need you."

"Luna, I don't know what to do." He looks at me with the saddest eyes.

"You will. For now, just comfort her and make her feel safe." He nods and holds Bailey while she cries.

"Bailey, I'm going to let you rest and come see you tomorrow. Matt's going to stay here. He will protect you." She nods her head.

"Thank you, Luna." She squeaks out as her sobbing lessens.

I walk out of the room and take a moment to steady my heart. I blink back the tears that are threatening to fall. These wolves have been through hell and lived to talk about it. I got some information but no actual practical details like the names of the captors or locations. Hopefully, over the next few days, they can give us more. We have to stop these bastards.

Scars by Jessica Bailey Chapter 69

Chapter 69

Gideon

Click Benjamin locks the door as he enters behind Theo. He stands and blocks the door.

Theo jumps when he hears the door lock. I am still shaking his hand; I start to squeeze. "Alpha Flynn, is this room soundproof?" I turn my head and ask.

An amused look comes across Flynn's face, "Yes, it is but, getting him out of here without the humans notices his injuries might be difficult."

"Marcus, call Spencer at the Sloatsburg Delta Force facility and have him bring a single transport box." I turn back to Theo, who is desperately trying to break from my grasp.

"Theo, you should stop fighting to get away and just tell us everything. I already know you are involved." I squeeze harder, and Theo drops to his knees, screaming in pain.

"Please, I don't know what you are talking about! Please, Alpha Flynn, make him stop." Theo keeps trying to pull away and fight my grasp. I compress harder, and I feel cracking and popping. Theo screams again.

“Theo, your name was all over the New Moon Alliance file. You did a poor job of hiding it, son. Now just tell Alpha Gideon what he wants. I can forceable release you from the pack, which will make the pain even more intense, or you can talk.” Flynn bends down and lifts Theo’s chin with an extended claw drawing a few drops of blood.

“Alpha Gideon, Spencer is on his way. He said it should take him about an hour.” Marcus updates.

“Perfect amount of time. Theo, let me tell you about the transport boxes. They were my father’s ideas, and I improved on them. My father used steamer trunks lined with silver to transport criminals. When I became Alpha, I had them replaced with steel boxes line with silver spikes. So, every turn, bump, and corner is its own torture.” I release Theo’s hand. It’s broken at this point.

He falls to his ass and is crying. “I had to!” He’s stammering between his tears. “They didn’t give me a choice.”

I bend down in front of Theo. “Who didn’t give you a choice about what? Be clear, or I’ll break your other hand.” I snarl.

He’s a hysterical mess now. “They took him. They took my son Owen. I had to do what they said, or they would kill him. He’s all I have after his mother died. He’s only six.”

Alpha Flynn kneels next to Theo, “Why didn’t you come to me?”

“I couldn’t if they found out you knew they would hurt or kill him. When I took too long to combine one of the portfolios to the New Moon Alliance investment clubs, they sent me his pinky toe. I get a weekly picture of him holding a newspaper for proof of life.” He’s sobbing, but I feel for him. I would do anything to keep my daughters safe.

“Theo, let me help you. If you tell me everything you know, I will save your son.” I look him straight in the eye.

He shakes his head. “They will kill him if they know I talked.”

“Theo, we already know which packs to start looking into because of the investment club. I’m sure they have another spy, even if that person doesn’t realize they are. So, tell us everything you know so I can save your son, and I will tell the Council that you were forced.” I place my hand on his shoulder. “Theo, look around the room. This New Moon alliance has attacked everyone in here in some way.”

Theo looks around at everyone, then back to me confused, “They attacked Harlow Koray with a silver blade at my mate’s Luna Ceremony. They killed Frank’s daughter’s mate and forced her to mate to an Alpha. They sent their fake rouges to my territory and attacked my mate, daughters, and ranked females. They also tried to poison my mate to miscarry my twins. You are not alone. We will stop them, but we need your help.”

“You can save him. You can bring my Owen back?” Theo looks at me with pleading eyes. They look like a desperate parent.

I nod. “Theo, I’m going to be very honest with you. Once you are no longer useful to them, they will kill your son. If you help us, you are saving his life.”

“I’ll tell you everything I know, but you have to save Owen. Please! Please, Alpha Flynn, Alpha Gideon, please save my boy.” He breaks down into a sobbing heap on the floor.

I stand and try to think through a plan. If they are tipped off in any way, they will kill Owen and dispose of any evidence they can.

“Theo, I need you to listen to me.” I bend down again and put my hand on Theo’s shoulder and shake him a little. I need his complete attention. “I want you to contact your handlers and tell them you are going to go underground for a while, that our visit spooked you. I want you to insist on a proof of life photo and give them the address to the safe house we will set you up in. You will go with Spencer, and he will keep you safe and get all the details you know back to me. Can you do this to save Owen Theo?” Our safe house was an older home. We keep it as a safe house because it used to be used by bootleggers. We can have guards come and go without tipping off Theo’s handlers.

He nods, “It’s the only way to save my son.”

I stand up again and turn to Alpha Flynn, “The best way to save Owen and Lacy right now is not to let them know we are on to them. Theo going into hiding won’t trigger them because they know how scared he is. They would think it odd if he didn’t. We are going to need to put on a show.”

“What are you thinking?” Flynn looks at me inquisitively.

“My men and I will storm out of here. If they have another spy, they will report we had a conflict and be none the wiser. This will give Theo cover to go with Spencer to the safe house.” I hold out my hand to Alpha Flynn to shake again.

Flynn takes my hand, “they’re never going to see you coming.” He grins and turns to Beta Frank Newman. “Frank, we’re going to get Lacy back, I promise, my friend.”

“Thank you, Alpha. Theo, I’ll sneak you out of the service elevator once the Druit Guard has left.” Frank helps Theo to his feet.

“Benjamin, let the men know to meet us at the elevator and have the SUVs and jet ready we are leaving now. We are going straight to the airport.” Benjamin nods and mind-links the team. “Marcus, I’m going to need you to hold me back, my friend.” I chuckle.

“Oh boy, I get to manhandle the Alpha.” He chuckles and shakes his head.

I head to the door and throw it open, "DAMN YOU FLYNN! I WILL NEVER DO BUSINESS WITH YOU AGAIN, YOU FUCKING THIEF!"

Marcus quickly jumps into character, grabbing me under the shoulders and pulling me to the elevators. "Gideon, it's not worth it. Let's get out of here."

"NO! THIS ASSHOLE IS GOING TO PAY FOR RIPPING ME OFF."

Alpha Flynn and Beta Newman jump into our impromptu play, "Frank, call security and have them removed for the building! NOW!"

"Yes, Mr. Flynn, right away" Frank holds up a radio to his mouth. "Security needed to the CEO's office to remove unwanted guests."

"I can leave on my own! But hear me, Flynn Kory! This isn't the last you will see of me." I shake Marcus off me and straighten my jacket, and head for the elevator.

We quickly make our way to the SUVs waiting outside. As soon as I am in the car, I pull out my phone and make a call. It rings twice before being answered.

"Alpha John, I have the invitation list for the Aruna Banquet. You won't believe who's on our new guest list." The ends of my mouth curl up.

Ulv breaks into my thoughts, "The hunt will finally begin."

Scars by Jessica Bailey Chapter 70

Chapter 70

Amelie

"Mommy?" Daisy looks up at me. Snapping me out of my thoughts.

"Yes, Daisy Girl?" I look down at her.

"Did you save the hurt puppies?" Everyone sees the Daisy that goes 100 miles an hour or is exceptionally stubborn. They don't get to see the sweet, kindhearted side like Gideon and I do.

"I didn't save them. You and Rose saved them. Mommy just helped." I bend down to my knees and pull them both into a hug. They wrap their tiny arms around my neck. "I'm so proud of you girls. You are so brave."

"Mommy, it was scarwee." Rose squeezes my neck a little tighter.

"I know. Mommy was scared too." I give them both a kiss on the cheek and stand up.

We are heading back to our wing of the packhouse after my hospital visit. It's a few hours until dinner, and Gideon will be home late tonight. I can't wait for him to be home. I know I need to make my presents known to the pack after the fake rouge attack, but all I want to do is stay in our wing with the girls. I know we have a spy, maybe even a few, and they win if I don't show my face. I can't let them see I'm rattled. I still have so much to do before dinner.

I mind-link Tyson and the ranked females, "Let's meet in the playroom. We can go over what we found out today before dinner."

"Yes, Luna." I ended the link.

After the hospital visit, we all came back at different times. I wanted to compile all our information for Gideon before he came back tonight. We head straight for the playroom, and everyone meets us there within five minutes. The kids start to play in the tents, and we sit around our desks.

"OK, so I'll start," I say as I rub my temple. "I was only able to talk with Bailey as the other she-wolf was asleep. From what she said, there are hundreds of captives wolves. They are being taken before the age of ten and being forced to fight for survival. When they are sent to attack a pack, they are directed by an Alpha or a Beta and drugged. Did anyone get details?"

Jordan speaks up, "Luna, I think I got something. Tony, the 17-year-old male birth pack, is Death Valley Pack said he was not abducted like the others, but his parents gave him willingly to their Alpha. It sounds like they were told their children would be part of an elite training program, and anyone who sent their children would be rewarded. Since that day, he hasn't seen his parents, but he has seen Alpha Sibley and the pack Beta Bryant. Beta Bryant was the one who led them to our territory."

I'm in shock, "Death Valley has a seat on the Alpha Council! You're telling me a sitting council member is actively involved!"

Jorden nods her head, "Yes Luna. I couldn't believe it myself. Death Valley is my birth pack. I grew up with Alpha Lars Sibley. My father was the Beta at the time, but being an only child, Alpha Lars chose his next Beta when he took over. By that time, I was already mated to Marcus. My father allegedly died in a rogue attack, but it never felt right. I believe Alpha Lars Sibley killed my father, the former Beta of the Death Valley pack, to keep this awful secret." Tears are rolling down her cheeks, but she looks me dead in the eyes. I know her anger is more profound than her sadness. Jorden wants revenge. She always seems so soft and delicate, like a beautifully crafted porcelain doll. The she-wolf standing in front of me now was anything but. She looked like she could rip the head of anyone who stood in her way of justice. "My pack is a part of this. They destroyed the lives of their own children of their own pack. What kind of Alpha does that? He is the pack protector, not their warden."

My feet move without my mindfully understanding where we are going, and before I know it, I'm pulling Jordan in for a hug. Shay and Becky come over, and we all hug Jordan together. "We will get them. We won't let them hurt anyone else ever again." I loosen my hug and lean back and look at Jordan. She nods, and I take a step back.

"OK. Tyson, please add Beta Camron Stock's murder to our list of offenses for these assholes." I still hadn't gotten all the details from Gideon on what he found at the Koray Pack, but I knew our list of offenses would keep growing. "Also, Tyson, until we find out which packs are involved or which might have spies, we need to keep the non-affiliated wolves secret. We will need to find a way to hind them in plain sight. I wanted to reunite them as quickly as possible, but it's too dangerous for them and us."

"I agree, Luna. After finding out they are targeting their own, we can't trust many." Tyson pulls out a folded piece of paper from his pocket. "Luna, the wolf I spoke with drew this." He hands me the paper. It's a moon cycle chart with the full moon in the center silhouetted by a wolf howling.

"What's the significance?" I give him a raised brow.

"The wolf Faris I spoke with said he saw this as a tattoo on their handlers and the Alpha and Betas. I think this is their way of identifying each other. From what this sounds, this is bigger than we thought, so they have to have a way to recognize actual members over pawns. I think this is how." Tyson hangs his arm around Shay. He's looking at his mate like he's wanting her to praise him for doing good. Shay grins a sweet smile and kisses him softly on the lips.

"Good work, babe." She puts her arm around his waist.

Tyson gets a big goofy grin of satisfaction. "Oh yeah, one more detail. The tattoo is always in blue ink on the arm, I guess."

The twins come bursting out of the play tent, "Mommy!" They are yelling and running to me.

"What is it, girls?" I bend down, worried something is wrong. Rose grabs the paper with the drawing out of my hands. The twins look at each other, then look at me.

Rose leans up to my ear and whispers, "That is what the blue people have on them. They have blue on their arm." Rose points to her forearm.

In a low, hushed tone, I ask, "Where on their arm is the blue mark?" Daisy points right below the crook of her elbow. "Are the blue people here in our pack?"

They look at each other and nod their heads. I look around the room Easten and Ryan have come out of the tent and are with their mothers. I trust everyone in here, but I'm

starting to question everything I know. I pull the twins close and whisper. "Are the blue people in this room?"

"No, mommy. This is famawee," Daisy shakes her head. My body instantly relaxes. I stand up.

"I think we need to start figuring out who in our pack is part of this group and how many. Tyson, I know you have been running training while Marcus is away, but I think Shay should come and assists. This way, with the two of you, we can get a better count. Jordan, I want you to start making your rounds to the investigative and cyber units. I'll have Matt's elite guard accompany you. Becky, you will need to find out if any packhouse staff are part of this group. Benjamin will be back tonight. I know he will assign you a few of his men to help. I'll continue to talk with the non-affiliated wolves and see what else I can figure out. I'm sure Gideon will expand on this plan. They get back late tonight. Plan to meet in our wing when they do. We are not going to get much sleep tonight." I rub my temple and let out a breath.

"You truly are the perfect Luna for the Druid Guard," Tyson says with that big toothy grin on his face.

"Thanks... I think." We all chuckle a little. A break in tension was needed.

Becky chimes in, dinner is starting in five minutes. We should go down together. Show them, whoever they are, we don't back down!" Her fire is contagious as always.

"You're right. Let's go." I take the twins' hands in mine, and before you know it, we are at the entrance of the dining room.

I stand tall, and my small frame will allow me to walk straight to the head table. As I enter, everyone stands and bows, giving me the same respect, they give Gideon because I am the Alpha-female. No one can deny it.

Tyson and Shay are right behind me, followed by Jordan than Becky. We get to our table, and I situate the twins. I look out over the dining room, scanning searching. I find it!

I found the first tattoo. It's as long as a ballpoint pen with the full moon center the size of a quarter. I'm not surprised to realize the owner. Von Jericho.