

Chapter 3 - FAFO

Miles POV

Bachelor Party

I'm sitting here at a supernatural bar with my buddies, feeling no pain. I really shouldn't have let them talk me into this. No good ever comes from becoming intoxicated. Human liquor doesn't affect a wolf, our metabolism is too high, but here, they serve alcohol with certain additives that cause intoxication.

We are all gathered around a table. The evening is going fine. They are telling stories about our high jinxes with females when Roger brings up Marissa. "...then Marissa walks in and Mr. Cool here turns into a puddle." A roar shoots around the table. The laughter is infectious. "Never saw a wolf back down so fast."

I feel a little melancholy, as I recall the time he is talking about. Not a day has gone by that I don't miss her. She was part of my life for over ten years. Always so strong and loving when she was around. If she could have settled down, she would have made a good Beta's wife.

"She couldn't settle down. She never loved you, not really. You don't love someone she treated the way she treated usMy wolf, Nyko, snarls. " You should not even be thinking about Marissa. We have a loving mate waiting at home for us. Let's go to her."

"You're right, Nyko. I love our little mate. She is a precious treasure." drain my glass and stand. "Think I'm going home, dudes. Missing my girl."

"You can't go home yet, Miles." Roger slurs. "You don't get to see Miss Priss until your bonding ceremony tomorrow night anyway." He laughs, wiggling his eyebrows. "Besides, I got a little bachelor party gift coming for you." He roars with laughter. The others just look confused.

I feel a little miffed at the derogatory name he calls her. She's not prissy, just very shy and composed. I open my mouth to call him out on it, but then I hear her voice."Miles." Breathily and coaxing. It's the voice she always uses on me to persuade me not to be angry with her. It makes my heart ache. I can't look at her. I feel a hand caressing my arm. "Miles. Why won't you look at me?"

That comment runs through me. "Why won't I look at you?" I sneer without turning. "You ran out on me a year ago. What are you doing here now?" I turn, and I stare into her jewel green eyes, and I am lost once again. I get that old familiar ache in my stomach and lose my breath. She always did that to me. It has always been her, my first love. The one that has always been just out of reach. Like a star in the sky. The one that got away.

"I'm back." She flips her long blonde hair over her shoulder. "And, I am not going anywhere ever again." She's never said that before. Does she mean it? Wrapping her long arms around my neck, she pulls my lips to hers, and I feel like I have come home. I missed this. I missed her. I ache.

"We have a sweet little faithful mate who is waiting on us at home." Nyko rumbles. I attempt to pull away.

Marissa feels the rumble in my chest and tightens her arms, keeping me close. She giggles. "I have missed you too, sugar."

I finally extricate myself. "I am going home."

"I'll walk you out." Marissa beams as she latches onto my arm. So as not to make a big fuss, I allow her to walk me outside.

The boys are hooting as we walk to the door. Roger, the loudest of them all, shouts, "I knew it! Go, Miles!" He does a vulgar gesture with his hips that I ignore. I notice Alpha doesn't appear to be celebrating. He is giving me a stern look. I turn away.

Once outside, I take a deep breath of the cool night air. Marissa is still clinging to my side, pressing herself against me. I feel so confused. "Marissa, I found my mate."

She begins walking up the street, pulling me with her. "I know. Roger told me. Miles, We've been together for over ten years."

"Together?" I sco . "I've not seen you in a year since you walked out on me. Where do you get on this? Wait? When did you find out about my mate?"

"I ran into Roger at a bar last night, and he told me."

"So, you were just fine until you found out someone else wanted me. Is that it?"

"I've never been fine. I missed you. I have been a fool, Miles." She opens the front door to the motel next to the bar. "My whole life, I have loved you. I've just been scared." Leading me down the hall, she stops at a room and pulls out a keycard. Unlocking the door, she enters, pulling me by my hand. I resist and pull back.

"Don't you think you owe it to me to have a private discussion?"

"I don't owe you anything, Marissa. You leave me a year ago."

"We had a ten year relationship. Can I please get some closure?" She begs, her lips mere inches from mine. Marissa has always been a master manipulator, and she knows how to ring all my bells. I give in.

She pulls me into the room, and I go willingly. I know there will be no talking. She has played this act out too many times. I am always putty in her hands. She shoves me back to the bed, and I let her. Crawling on top of me, she begins kissing me again. My heart aches for her. A tear slides down my temple. I am hopelessly in love with Marissa and no thoughts of anyone else cross my mind. It's me and Marissa, back where we belong.

Much later, after several rounds of passion, the room is quiet, but for Marissa's snores. She is laid across my chest, her hair splayed so ly around. I caress her tresses so ly, and it reminds me of Paisley. I feel a raw pang of guilt. So , sweet Paisley. It hits me at this moment, that I love two very different females at the same time. Paisley is so , vulnerable, caring, generous, and so much more. She appeals to me as someone I need to protect. Marissa is passionate, with a gusto for life. She wants something, she goes for it. Not at all in need of protection. Vibrant, independent. I sigh. This was wrong, being with Marissa, while mated to Paisley. But, I am so confused. I can't go through with the bonding ceremony right now. I need to clear my thoughts. Work out what I want. Paisley deserves to hear this from me.

I ease myself out from under Marissa and get up from the bed. I grab my clothes and sneak into the bathroom. Once dressed, I leave the motel room and head to the pack house. I dread this conversation. Guilt eats at me, but not enough to stop and think about the consequences.

I arrive at the pack house about an hour later. It is eerily quiet. The remnants of the bachelorette party remain. Ripped streamers hang from the ceiling. Garbage, cans, and bottles litter the tables. I quietly ascend the stairs to the third floor, where Paisley and I reside.

Opening the door, I see nothing out of place in our living room/kitchen area. Paisley keeps the place immaculate. Opening the bedroom door, the bed is undisturbed. Her side table drawer is laying beside the bed with its contents strewn across the floor. Weird. Her clothes are in the closet. I check the bathroom, and it is empty. She is nowhere to be found.

I head out into the hallway and over to Alpha's office. I knock and hear a muffled growl. "Come in."

I plop down in the chair and meet Alpha's stern gaze with a sigh. He doesn't speak a word. He just seems to take my measure with his unflinching glare. "I'm calling off the bonding ceremony."

"You already did."

My eyes snap up to him. I nod. "Fair."

"Do you have anything else you want to say to me?"

"I'm going to tell Paisley myself. She deserves that." I say.

Alpha nods. "I think she already knows, but I agree that a talk with her is warranted when you see her again. She is worthy of that and more." He eyes me angrily. "Like faithfulness. Don't seek her out. Let her come to you."

I lower my eyes. They told her already.

"Anything else?"

I shake my bowed head. "No."

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Alpha Blake

Meeting with Beta Miles

"Anything else?" I ask

Beta Miles shakes his bowed head. "No."

"Then, I will let you know that I have never been more ashamed to call you our pack Beta." I grit out. "Your choices of late have given me doubt about your ability to make sound decisions."

"That is unfair. This is about my personal life, not my professional life." Miles protests angrily.

"I have discussed the matter with the Alpha Commander this morning. We have agreed to place you on a 90-day probation period, where, at the end, I will assess whether you have the ability to continue as my Beta."

"You've got to be kidding me, Stone! You know me. We've been friends for years." Miles bellowed.

"Alpha Commander is sending a candidate to either be a co-beta or replace you at the end of the 90 days." I ignore him. "His name is Knight Pierce. He'll be here tomorrow."

"W-what?" He gapes.

"Alpha Commander would come himself, but he has his hands full in the city." I growl. "Now gather your composure. I have more important things than your damned love life on my mind."

He sits taller in my seat and appears to pull himself together. But I am not done with him yet.

"We had a medical emergency last night that I can't speak any further about. The patient requested closed records. I can tell you they were life flighted to a major hospital and nearly died from their injuries. I will be checking on their well-being on the way to the scheduled tech conference in Stone Mountain City on Monday. You do recall that, I assume?"

"Yes, Alpha."

"I don't know how long I will be gone, but I expect you and Beta Pierce to work together seamlessly in my absence. Understood?" I order.

"Yes, Alpha!"

"I will leave when Beta Pierce gets here."

"Yes, Alpha!"

There is a tentative knock at the door. Greyson North sticks his head around the corner. He is our Chopper One Lead as well as our Lead Enforcer. "Alpha, we have a...visitor or returning member here to see you and Beta Miles."

He looks at my Beta like he could kill him. I bet he feels like it. It's understandable. North worked with Paisley last night as she was clinging to life being flown out to Stone City Hospital. Her records are sealed, but as the Alpha, I am informed of everything that involves this pack.

North leans back, and Marissa trots in the room, like a runway model. She is gorgeous, tall, and willowy. I grind my teeth so hard that I could spit sand. She flounces up and wraps her arms around Miles as she flops in his lap.

"Come in here, North." North slams the door and stands close. I know his aggression isn't directed toward me, but at the idiots here in my office. It only serves to stoke the fire of my anger toward them as I seethe. "Marissa, you will conduct yourself properly in my office and not act like a tart." I roar. She is shocked by my tone and immediately stands, gaping. I am so sick of her shenanigans. She is manipulative, and it is time she is taught a lesson, especially since she has helped cause hurt and damage to a good member of our pack. "Your actions last night have been atrocious. In case you are not aware, mate bond interference is illegal in this territory, and you have committed a crime." Her mouth drops open and begins working like a fish out of water.

"North," I continue. "I want Marissa taken into custody and charged with mate bond interference. Get her in a cell. Now!"

"Yes, sir!" North beams as he seizes Marissa by her arms from behind and slaps handcuffs on her. Grinning, he pushes Marissa out the door.

Miles jumps up, protesting. "Wait! W-what?"

I point to him. "Your 90 days started five minutes ago. Professional or personal? It's time for you to decide what is most important! Yes, you have the freedom to choose, but that that female doesn't have a right to interfere with a mate bond. It's against the law. We will let Alpha Commander take it up. Choose now!"

He sits back down and rakes his hand through his hair.

"Frig Around and Find Out, Miles." I sneer.