

Chapter Four – Lucy

Lucy leaned against the back wall of the elevator, breathing in deeply as she went up. Being seen going to a precinct wasn't going to help with gaining the Coyote's trust, but given that she was the last person to see Aaron alive, it was a necessity. She just hoped that this wouldn't take too long. Her stomach churned and she felt lightheaded. Unsurprising given what happened, but she really didn't have the stamina to put up with Captain Smith for long.

"Gerritsen," the captain barked as soon as she walked through his doors. "What are you doing here? You're supposed to be undercover."

"I was called in to give a statement about the explosion. I was there when it happened, sir."

Smith narrowed his eyes. "I see. You established contact with the undercover operative before he was killed."

Lucy thought it was odd that he didn't call the detective by name, but kept silent. She had also thought it was strange that she was keeping her own name while working undercover, and Smith had yelled at her for three hours because she had questioned him. He demanded she tells him what experience she had with undercover work and threatening to transfer her to traffic. She hated letting him bully her, but she could handle it.

"And what sort of work have you done yourself?" Smith asked, his usual scowl drawn even harsher today.

"I've established contact with Levi Bennet, the Beta of the Coyotes." Even if she wasn't going to take it any further, she had to tell Smith something.

Smith grunted. "What sort of contact are we talking about, Gerritsen?"

Lucy hesitated. There was no way she was going to tell him that the 'contact' she was referring to was *sleeping* with Levi. As least not if she wanted to keep her job. She swallowed as Smith continued to stare at her.

"He asked me out," she said. Close enough to the truth.

To her surprise, Smith began chuckling. He slapped his knee, the chuckle turning to roaring laughter. Lucy scowled but didn't comment. Let him laugh his head off, it didn't make any difference to her.

"Did you accept?"

Lucy shook her head. "We exchanged numbers, but it would be unprofes—"

"Go on that date with him," Smith ordered. "Hell, go to bed with him if that'll help you get deeper into their circle."

"Sir!"

"Don't be a prude. You're in a prime position to get insider information, Gerritsen. Go out with the Coyote and squeeze him for information. Everybody knows shifters don't know how to control themselves around women they think are pretty. So, you're going to do this – for the safety of the city. Drugs ruin lives."

Lucy's hands clenched. Her nostrils flared. It was bad enough sleeping with Levi when she knew she was going to investigate him, but being ordered to use his feelings for her against him was even worse.

No. She wasn't going to do it. She wasn't going to go out with a man, date him, and get close to him just so she could stab him in the back. That kind of behavior was unethical. She couldn't do it.

"Sir, I'm not going to date a man just to investigate him."

Smith's face turned grave. "You what?"

"There are plenty of other avenues—"

"Don't tell me you're feeling guilty."

So what if she was? Lucy clenched her fists, not responding.

Smith stood. "I always thought women were too weak for this kind of work. Fine. If you don't want to do your job and investigate Levi Bennet, then you can just turn in your resignation. Otherwise, I will make your life a living hell. Do you understand me?"

He'd do it, too. Lucy fought against the swell of anger that rose in her. It seemed that she didn't have a choice.

"Fine," she muttered. "I'll do it."

"Good." Smith shook his head, still chuckling. "Don't blow it. Now get out of my office."

Lucy obeyed, seething internally. She fought to keep herself calm as she went to the detectives investigating Knox's death to give her statement. But she couldn't

shake the heavy ball in her stomach. Using Levi... It was the last thing she wanted to do.

If he's a criminal, it will be worth it in the end.

And if he wasn't? How would she justify it to herself in the end? Her mother said this job would cost her her soul. What if she was right?

Lucy tugged at the hem of her hot red halter top dress. It only fell mid-thigh, which was higher than almost anything else she owned. With the backless cut and the *very* deep V, she felt a little bit slutty. Scratch that. She felt a *lot* slutty.

She had hesitated about wearing this dress, but it was the only date-quality thing she owned. She didn't want Levi thinking that she was a slut – but he probably already thought that about her, given the way she had acted during their first meeting. He would probably think this dress was an invitation to go back to her apartment again.

That was completely out of the question. She may have lost her head with him once, but she knew what to expect this time. And she wasn't going to use him any more than she absolutely had to. Even criminals deserved better than that.

"You look like the biblical forbidden fruit," Levi told her as soon as she stepped into the restaurant where they had agreed to meet. His gaze ran over her greedily. "I didn't think you were going to call me. It's been two weeks."

"I've been busy," she said, not meeting his gaze. Busy trying to think up a way to do as Smith ordered without actually abusing Levi's feelings for her. "Anyway, want to sit down?"

Levi tucked her arm into his and led her to a corner booth. It was relatively shielded from the rest of the restaurant, which was a relief. Already people were giving the two of them knowing glances, and she knew what they were thinking. Looking at Levi, though, she could tell he was thinking something very similar and she felt her body flushing.

"So, how have you been? Found a place for your bakery yet?"

"Um, yeah, I have." It was only just sinking in how long she was expected to stay here, undercover. And she didn't know the first thing about running a bakery. Why had Smith given her this as her cover? "It's this great little place. I can't wait until it's up and running."

"I'll be your first customer. Which reminds me. We're having a community clean-up here soon, and it'd be great if you could come help out. I think it would be good for you to get your business name out, too," Levi added. He pulled a crumpled paper from his pocket. "Here's all the info you need."

"It looks great. I'll be there." She tucked the flyer into her pocket. "So, is this something you've organized?"

Levi beamed. "Yeah. At first I thought it was stupid, but Steven's promised to let me do more pack-related stuff if I do a good job on this, so I'm going to make it work. I'm tired of being the Beta that doesn't do anything. Steven thinks I'm not responsible enough, but he's never given me a chance... but that's not first date talk. Or is this a second date?"

He grinned at her and waggled his brows, making everything tighten and heat inside of her. Lucy gulped down some water.

"So... I found out that that realtor that I was seeing to help me with my bakery wasn't a realtor at all," she blurted. "Turns out he was actually an undercover cop. I saw it in the newspaper."

Levi's grin faded. He turned slightly and nodded. "I know. It's hard to imagine. But if you think *that's* a shock, I found out that my brother knew he was undercover the whole time."

Lucy jolted. Her eyes widened before she could stop herself. She stared in shock at Levi. Did the Alpha have Knox killed because of his investigation? The server came for their orders, but Lucy sent her away, telling her she needed a few more minutes to decide what to eat. Her throat dried and she felt sick. But she had to know more.

"Your brother knew he was an undercover cop?"

"Yeah. Cops, they're always assuming that we're crooks."

Lucy flinched. She hoped Levi hadn't noticed.

"We're a pack, but they act like we're a gang. You don't see people treating Wolves this way... but I guess since Wolves tend to live out in the country, keeping to themselves, instead of occupying their own territory even after humans built skyscrapers on it... Well, whatever." Levi shrugged. "We're not Wolves, and it's useless comparing us to them. But anyway, apparently there's this one cop that Knox and Steven were investigating together. Someone who is pushing drugs into pack territory."

If the news that the Alpha knew Knox was an undercover cop was shocking, this was even more so. Lucy's heart hammered. "How do you know?" she stuttered.

"Steven told me. After I wanted to egg the investigating detective's car... Well, I thought I'd driven out all the drug dealers. I harassed them enough that they stopped hanging around, but it seems I wasn't as successful as I thought." His eyes burned. "I want to go after this guy, make him stop. But Steven wants me to lay low. He thinks Knox was killed by the dirty cop."

Was this the truth, or was her cover blown? Lucy shuddered. "I hate to think that the police would do something like that. They're supposed to be the ones protecting us. Are you sure that's what's going on? It wasn't a gas leak or anything?"

Levi shrugged. "Steven doesn't think so. But that's enough of that dreary topic. What looks good?"

He focused on his menu, but Lucy couldn't take her eyes off him. If they knew she was a detective, then telling her about a supposed dirty cop that Steven and Knox were looking into together was a red herring. But if her cover was intact... Well, that was another thing she would keep looking into, along with the drugs.

And if her cover was intact, she would have no problem believing what Levi had just told her, about the fact that he fought against the drug dealers that tried to sell on his territory. If that was true, then he had done more for the people around her than the cops... and yet, she was investigating him.

A sudden burst of nausea had her choking back bile. She clapped a hand to her mouth, gripping the tabletop. Her stomach clenched. She bolted from the booth to the bathroom. She didn't even have time to close the door behind herself before everything was coming out of her mouth. The missile just barely made it to the toilet. Lucy bent over. Sweat beaded her forehead as her body heaved.

"Lucy?" Levi followed her into the bathroom.

His hands laid on her shoulders, and Lucy was about to swat them away when he gathered her hair up out of her way. Just in time for another missile of vomit. Holding her hair with one hand, he closed the door with the other. Lucy collapsed to her knees, and Levi rubbed her back soothingly.

This was not the way most guys acted on a first date. Tears burned her eyes. He was exactly the kind of guy she always wanted. And when he found out about her lies, he'd never forgive her.

By the time she had stopped vomiting, Lucy was pale and clammy. She stayed on the floor, the world spinning around her. Eventually, she glanced up at Levi and smiled weakly. "Guess I ate something bad."

"Uh... Maybe." Levi winced. "Remember when I said chances of you being pregnant were slim?"

Lucy stared back at him. Something curled in her stomach, and for a moment she thought she was going to be sick again. "Are you suggesting that I'm pregnant? Pregnancy sickness doesn't do *this*. This is food poisoning or fever or something. Not pregnancy."

"You smell pregnant." Levi ran some cool water over a paper towel and passed it to her. "I'm... not sure what to do now."

"I'm not pregnant."

"You are." Levi's eyes were wide, his expression shell-shocked. The same as Lucy felt. This could not be happening. The shifter knelt beside her. "Look, how about we make sure? We'll go to the drugstore for a pregnancy test and then back to my apartment. Because *if* you're pregnant, there are certain things you need to know about human-Coyote pregnancies."

Lucy shook her head, wanting to reject everything he was saying. But she had to know for certain, and going to his apartment would help with her investigation, so she closed her eyes and nodded. "We can do that. Let's go."

Pregnant.

Lucy sat in the clean but small bathroom in Levi's apartment, her eyes closed. The used pregnancy test was in the garbage beside the toilet. She wasn't sure what was worse, the fact that she was pregnant after a one-night stand (*is it a one-night stand if there is another date?*) or that she was pregnant with a suspect's baby.

She had always wanted kids. Before she decided to be a cop, her greatest dream was to be a stay-at-home mom with half a dozen children running around. But she had always thought it would happen in a certain order. Love, marriage, etc. Not like this.

Levi knocked at the door. "Lucy? Are you okay in there?"

"Fine," she called back. Her voice caught.

Even if this was completely unplanned, she could have been happy. Ecstatic. She had a good amount of money saved, and even moving to a new division in the precinct wouldn't be so bad as long as she had a reason for wanting it. A baby was that reason. And she'd already made up her mind that she was keeping the baby.

But what would she tell her child when they asked who their father was?

Lucy stared at the supplies she had found under the bathroom sink. Levi had all the components to create mercury fulminate. And mercury fulminate was a common component to many bombs. As of that moment, he wasn't just a suspect in a pack-run drug ring.

He was also the prime suspect for the murder of Aaron Knox.