

Chapter 16 Cat & Mouse

Kelsey

I jolted into the tree line like a Disney princess escaping the ball before the clock strikes twelve. I knew I was in trouble the second that I could no longer control my own damn body flush against Alpha Blake's, grinding and pushing forwards hopeful that he would take me right there in the center of the training field. His warm breath against my neck making my heart begin to palpitate, my entire body starting to tremble under his. My wolf purred inside, ready to disobey me and take me down just to run back to Blake. I struggled to hold her back until we were deep in the forest although I could still hear the echoes of her whimper trailing inside of my head.

I yanked off my sports bra and black shorts, hooking them on a tree branch nearby. Bringing my wolf forward, I felt my bones snap in half and mend back together as I shifted into the shape of my silver wolf. She let out an unsettling growl, pissed that I ripped her away from her mate. It was no use denying the bond, the way he looked at me with those crystal blue eyes made me feel like there was a rock in my throat. I pressed forward, my paws viciously slamming against the forest floor, determined to run the entire pack territory if it would be what it would take just to gain the slightest bit of self control back.

My legs began to burn so profusely like someone had just taken a can of gasoline and poured it all over them before striking a match. Keep going... I told myself. I became obsessed with the idea that the more my body burned, the less I wanted my mate. My mind raced back to Eric, my human boyfriend who hadn't stopped calling my cellphone. I wish that I missed him as much as he did me but that was the unfortunate reality of being having your fated mate waved in your face like a bone to a dog.

An hour. It took my wolf a single hour to run the entire property line. I was sure it was a pack record, thankful that I had kept up with training at the condominium gym that Eric and I lived in. I quickly shifted when I reached the tree that I had decided to hang my clothes on, pulling my sports bra over my head and my shorts up my hips. My body pushed into the nearest tree trunk, feeling like it was about to collapse at any moment. My legs trembled under me, desperate to keep me upright as I huffed and puffed to catch my breath. I wiped a bead of sweat dripping down my forehead when my wolf perked up to the crunching of leaves nearby.

"What the hell happened to you?! One minute you were in eye sight and the next second you were gone," Asher huffed out as he gasped for air. He bent down placing his hands on his knees, evident that he may have been more exhausted than I was.

I giggled, taking triumph over the fact that the Beta couldn't keep up with me. I threw my head against the tree trunk that my body was leaned against. "Don't y'all train around here or something? I thought this was a werewolf pack?", I said sarcastically, raising my eyebrows in suspicion.

He stood tall, placing a hand beside my head on the tree trunk, trying to regain his stability.

"Holy shit. Seriously, when did you get so fast? I looked for you for hours and then finally saw your wolf leaping over the river. I took chase but then I couldn't even trace your scent," he continued, wiping the sweat off his forehead with his t-shirt.

I pushed myself off the tree trunk, looking up at Asher who was having difficulties dealing with his bruised ego. "Why were you even looking for me? I just needed to blow off some steam," I answer feeling frustrated that I can't even get a moment of peace around here.

I watched as Asher's eyes shot from side to side, evident that he was trying to come up with a plausible excuse and quick. He pressed his lips tightly together until he heaved a sigh, "you know... just making sure that prick didn't get to you. You know, old wounds and all."

No doubt my own curiosity got the best of me, Asher was one of my best friends but this was the first time I heard him openly bashing his own Alpha. "and here I was thinking you two were besties," I say with a chuckle as I start to walk ahead back to the pack house.

"Come on Arizona. You know he is but you are too. I see the way he's been pushing your buttons. I can see the mate bond is alive and well for whatever reason. Look if I didn't come find you, he was going to," he replied, his words all mumbled with each other. He quickened his pace as he jogged up beside me.

Ah, there comes the truth. I stop in my tracks, crossing my arms across my chest in agitation. "And why would he possibly give a shit? He has Malibu Barbie," I reply in a huff. The picture of her wrapped in his bed sheet sending fury to boil within my veins.

"And why would you give a shit? You have your human boyfriend," he shot back with a satisfied grin. Fair point, check mate Asher. Even if I wanted to lie to Asher, it was no use, he knew me better than I knew myself sometimes.

I stood there frozen, like my feet were stuck in a pool of crazy glue, unsure of how to convince Asher that I didn't care about Blake. "That's what I thought," he said with a hum. I was thankful when he changed the subject, apparently this week was big for the pack. Blake seems to be thriving in his new Alpha position, already aligning us with other packs for protection. I always knew he would be a good Alpha one day. Apparently there was a social bonfire tonight for all the shifters to enjoy before the week of vigorous battles.

When we got back to the pack house, Asher insisted that I come upstairs to get my bag from his room. Apparently Mia had picked it up from the field after warrior training. While I was happy that someone had cared to pick it up, it also annoyed me that my presence didn't go unnoticed. I just hoped that no one saw why, the last thing I wanted was people figuring out that I was still insanely attracted to Blake.

I picked my bag up, fishing for my cellphone buried at the bottom of the bag. I pulled it out only to see seventeen missed calls from Eric. I felt my heart sink into my stomach, I knew I needed to call him back eventually. It wasn't fair that I was ignoring basically all of his communication. I slipped the phone back into my bag and hurled it over my shoulder, exiting Asher's room as he walked me down the stairs to the door.

The moment we hit the top of the stairs, I feel stares piercing into me. My eyes immediately bolt to Blake. He's wearing a tight black v-neck t-shirt that makes my wolf want to do somersaults inside. It dips and curves along his perfectly toned muscles beneath the fabric, exposing the tip of the wolf tattoo he has on his arm. I still remember when he first got the tattoo, I was more nervous for him than he was. Clearly though, he's added to it since making it look more tribal now.

The living room is filled with seeping power, I had no doubt that all four men sitting on the couches sipping from their beer bottles were Alphas. I struggled to compose myself, it was no use being around so much dominance when one of the Alpha's called out to Asher, "My man Asher, looking good bro", he said in a low, husky voice. I felt Asher tense up next to me as we descended down the staircase, I could feel his protectiveness over me taking over.

My breath hitches when my eyes collide with Blake's. His piercing blue eyes sending me into a trance. I can feel wetness start to pool between my legs, my lady parts starting to throb with one simple look. I thought I was holding it together well until Alpha Tate shouted out, "welcome back Arizona," exposing my disappearance to the entire group. I wanted nothing more but to morph into the wall attached to the staircase.

The bulky man who called out to Asher stood up and approached us, first shaking Asher's hand then sticking it out to meet mine. He was undoubtedly handsome with his brown crew cut and sharp jawline. Hold it together Kelsey, I kept repeating in my head, feeling ridiculously uncomfortable with all eyes set on me intently like they were on the prowl for... something.

Desperate to find a quick escape, I tell them all politely it was nice to meet them and try to bolt. Asher calls out behind me, "Kels, bonfire. Don't make me drag you to it." I must have looked like an idiot but I couldn't dare to turn back, the heat getting hotter as I rush for the front door.

The second the front door closes behind me, I push my body against the brick wall, gasping for air. Holy shit, that was intense.