

## Chapter 24

### Alpha Micco

(Elders: 1. Councilman Marco Denton, 2. Jerry Morris, 3. Stone Bram, 4. Elder Freeman, 5. Elder Nunez. 6. Elder Hanley, 7. Elder Potts, 8. Elder Sherman, 9. Elder Longer, 10. Elder Adams. 11. Alpha Micco Denton, 12. Beta Ben Morris.) "Elders. I would like to begin the meeting with some excellent news. My Tess found her mate a few weeks ago. His name is James Johnson, but he goes by Cody. She had to accompany him to Vegas, then to Idaho to finish some business on his end. She returned home last night with him, his daughter, and a friend Holt Lancaster of the Rocky Mountain Ridge pack in Colorado.

"Your daughter's mate has a tot? That's very odd." Elder Freeman asks.

"Yes, Elder Freeman. Willow. She's five years old and she got her wolf just this week. She's a sweet little girl and has already taken to her Grampy."

"More like Grampy has taken to her." Elder Hanley comments and I don't correct him.

My father pats my back with a chuckle. "I can't wait to meet her."

"I don't believe it. You're making it up so your daughter has more time to screw around. Everyone knows she favors the Baldwin runt." Stone Bram argues.

Goddess I can't stand this guy. I don't know why he's always been so combative, but he has never been an easy one to deal with. His son actually challenged me as Alpha shortly after I took over from my dad stepping down. I beat him so easily; he looked like an absolute weakling. The shame was so great that he ran off leaving his mate and

son behind. "Well, it's as true as I'm standing here. You can doubt all you want, but it doesn't change the facts. Sorry, your spoiled grandson doesn't get to be Alpha after all."

"We'll see about that. Once he's released from his false imprisonment, he'll happily and easily take over the pack."

Laughter rings out of Jerry Morris. "It was hardly a false imprisonment. Besides You really think that grandson of yours can take Alpha Micco?"

Stone's face reddens and his mouth puckers. His beady little eyes look around the room. "I stand by my words. Griffin will become the next Alpha. And tell me this, Alpha, what did Griffin do to be thrown in the dungeon?" He gets a smug smirk on his face.

"He knows, Micco." My father links me.

"I know. All I can do now is stand by Tessie." I take a breath in annoyance. "Griffin did not dispute his charges. His interrogation was witnessed by both Beta Morris and Elder Morris. He's serving only a thirty-day sentence, although his crime is usually triple that."

"A cover-up if you ask me," Stone says almost under his breath "Well, no one is asking you." Ben says.

"See there lies the problem. You should be asking, isn't that right, Alpha." He says with a sneer.

"Oh, for the love of the Goddess." Elder Nunez says as he rubs his eyes. "You're obviously trying to make a point, Stone. Spit it out already." I clench my jaw and wait for the shoe to drop.

"My grandson was imprisoned for attacking a human." The Elders begin to murmur among themselves. Attacking a human is a serious offense, especially in wolf form. Stone holds up his hand. "That human was with Tess at the hunter's cabin. Griffin was only trying to protect her from the fiend. Griffin was concerned for her welfare since she missed training the tots and disappeared. When he smelled her on the human, Griffin

assumed Tess needed his help." "Since when does Tess need help fending for herself?" Jerry throws out.

"Regardless, you fail to see my point, Elder Morris. Tess was fraternizing with the human." Murmurs fill the room once more. Hanging out with humans is perfectly legal.

I hold up my hands and throw out some of my power to quiet the males. "We deal with humans daily. Tess especially at the resort. That's not anything worrisome." "Then why was her scent all over him, Alpha? Can you answer that?" Stone glares at me with his beady little eyes. I growl at the challenge and he quickly looks away.

"She wouldn't be the first werewolf to get her rocks off with a human." Elder Longer comments followed by growls from me, my father, Ben, and Jerry at the implication of labeling Tess a whore. Although his words are truthful, werewolves, especially males have been known to sleep with humans, but it's thought of as dirty, like picking up a prostitute.

"I'll have you know my daughter was a virgin until she mated only a short time ago. Anyone that knows her would've smelled it on her."

Elder Longer nods his head in acquiescence. "Forgive me, Alpha."

"Well, if she wasn't sleeping with the human, what was she doing with him? Please, Alpha, inform us." Stone smugly responds.

"Oh, for fuck's sake, Stone. Get to your damned point. We all know that there's something brewing in that small head of yours, there always is." Elder Nunez groans. He can't stand Stone and has no problem making it known. "Very well, Nunez. I'm saying that Tess mated the human." Stone lifts his chin as the room grows louder with everyone talking over each other. "And I think," He yells over the buzz that is slowly subsiding. "And I think she mated him just to throw it in our faces. She

somehow knew that we wanted her to choose among our single males and she's too stubborn to follow the advice of the elders."

I get to my feet and the room silences. "Tess's mate is not chosen. Tess and Cody are fated, and as I said, he and his werewolf daughter are already in our pack." I clear my throat. "But Elder Bram is correct. Cody is human." The elders begin talking over one another as this situation is unheard of, and possibly illegal as he is human. Cody is truly one of a kind. I take my seat and wait for the room to get quiet.

Jerry raises his hand to let everyone know he has something to say. "I want to discuss the situation; however, I would like to point out that Griffin's arrest is warranted. By your own admission Griffin did, in fact, attack a human while in wolf form and his punishment shall stand. All in favor."

There are more ayes than nays, so Griffin will remain in the cell. "Now, as Tess and the human Cody were fated by the moon Goddess herself, and are mated, is there really anything we can do about it?" Jerry asks. "Also, you must take into account that his daughter is also Were." No one responds as they think it through. There are so many laws regarding the sanctity of mates and tots.

"That will be up to the Council." My father comments and I close my eyes in reluctant resignation. "Did Tess tell the human of our kind?"

I subtly shake my head. "As far as I know, he only learned of our kind when his daughter shifted. That's when Tess informed him. The whole ordeal was witnessed by Willow's maternal grandparents Jared and Naomi Hudson." My father nods his head as he thinks about what I told him.

"What does this mean for the future of the pack?" Elder Adams speaks up for the first time in this meeting.

"It means we need to find a new Alpha when Alpha Micco steps down." Elder Sherman says. He's never been a pack-minded individual, he's always been self-serving. He goes along with what's best for him and him alone.

"I am still Alpha of this pack and I am entitled to choose my replacement. Tess has always been my heir. She agreed to settle for the role of Luna for the sake of misogyny, but she will still inherit the pack with her mate as Alpha." The elders go nuts arguing back and forth. It's loud and chaotic. I growl to get everyone's attention and shut them up. "I have met Cody. He was a soldier in the military where he met Holt Lancaster. He and Holt are brother-in-arms and Holt stands by Cody. Also, Cody fights MMA and with Tess for a mate, I see no reason he can't be the Alpha of our pack."

"He's human. That's reason enough." Stone yells, very rudely I might add.

I cock my brow at him. "He's worthy. Anyone that thinks otherwise is welcome to challenge him, however." I hold up my finger to emphasize the point I'm about to make. "Keep in mind that Tess is his mate, and that should anyone lose to him, a human, the humiliation would be great. Wouldn't you agree, Stone?"

Stone sets his jaw and growls menacingly. "You bastard."

"Stone. Watch yourself. I would hate for the past to repeat itself."

"And just how can a human stand up to a wolf?" Elder Adams asks.

I look at him pointedly. "Cody is a solid 6 foot 6. He's a fighter and has been training with wolves before he even knew we existed. He is also skilled with weaponry."

"So, you're saying our human Alpha will just shoot anyone that challenges him." Stone looks around the group of males trying to make a point.

"Of course not, Stone. Unlike some wolves in this room, Cody has honor." Stone looks like a tick about to pop as I point out exactly what I think of him. "Cody can use knives."

"What about healing? Say he does win a challenge; he could die from injury alone." Elder Hanley points out, ever practical and observant.

"Yes, Elder Hanley, that is a concern. When Tess and Cody mated, he continued to bleed. Tess, based on instinct, was able to heal him. I'm not sure how it worked, but by licking his wound, the bleeding stopped. It happened again when I marked him as one of our packs. Tess healed his wounds and stopped the bleeding."

"Mates heal each other, well, true mates do." Elder Potts, the eldest in our pack, responds. "Because we heal so quickly, many forget that, but our pack doctors know this to be true. Tess's saliva healed her mate. Her true mate. If he was chosen, he would not have healed." Relief washes over me as it's no longer just my word about them being true mates. "Alpha Micco, I would like to meet the young man."

I nod my head. "Of course."

"That's it? We don't even know if the Council will allow this!" Stone blasts and half the room groans.

"The Council has no say in who the Alpha is unless he's broken laws. That is up to the individual packs to decide. As of now, Cody is not the Alpha and he has broken no laws. The Council will have to meet with Cody to discuss the fact that he's human, but that really has no bearing on him. It's more Micco, Tess, Holt, and Willow's grandparents that require an inquiry. I'll make arrangements for the council to meet here in say two weeks?" I nod, agreeing to my father's words. We did keep this a secret. "Micco, why not bring the young man in to meet us."