

Chapter 28

The hospital is not what I expected. Justin said it would be different; he wasn't kidding. The building is more like a large doctor's office or clinic, but it has an operating room, labs, and imaging. The nurses are, of course, shocked to know I'm human, but they quickly get over it once they realized that Tess is my mate.

Most of our patients are adolescents who lost control during training. I've had to piece together four teenage boys and one teen girl. No stitches, just wrap it up and let it heal. Of course, they're all shocked that I'm human, but I'm marked and I'm told Tess's scent is all over me, so they don't say anything. I wonder if it's because Tess is Micco's daughter, or if Tess is known in her own right.

I actually feel accomplished in my new role. The only issue I have is one of the nurses I work with. Mavis is your typical home wrecker. She's attractive as far as females go, but she's not my mate. Her blouse barely holds back her breasts she purposely rubs on Justin and me while she combs her long bleached blond hair over her shoulder. You would think my being human would turn her off, but that doesn't seem to be the case.

I've been able to chat with Justin throughout the day. He's known Tess for quite some time and tells me some Tess/Indy anecdotes. The nurses are pretty nice and we've had short get-to-know-you conversations.

"So, you haven't found your mate yet?" I ask her while cleaning up from our last patient.

She gets a bitter look on her face. "I have. He was a nomad. The jerk rejected me and left. Whatever, the loser lost out. I couldn't be a nomad. I prefer this pack. There are a lot of hot males that enjoy my company." She says as she places her hand on my arm.

I quickly move out of her grasp. "Please don't touch me. I'm not one of those males. I'm happily mated."

She gets a look of disgust on her face. "I know. I can smell the bitch all over you, but you're human so your bond can't be that strong." A low growl escapes my chest and Mavis looks up at me, her eyes dilate and she presses out her chest. Her mouth ticks up into a sultry smirk.

"That's my mate you're talking about. Our bond is quite strong, actually." I don't have to defend our bond to the likes of her. Why am I getting so upset? Tess said I'm possessive, I've never been possessive before. I wonder if it's the fact that I have a bond with a werewolf, a sexy werewolf.

Mavis waves off my words. "Relax. I know your mate better than you do." I doubt that, but she continues to speak. "Tess and I were the best of friends until I became popular in high school and she couldn't stand it that her boyfriend chose me." I shake my head at the petty woman. I'm not one for drama and Tess is the opposite of this woman, which makes me smile to myself. "Why are you smiling like an idiot?"

I look up at her. "I was just thinking about my mate." She rolls her eyes and throws the bed paper away then leaves the room. I follow her out to the desk where the two other nurses sit with Justin who is going over his notes.

He looks up at my arrival. "Your shift is up, Cody. You can go ahead and go. Same time tomorrow."

"Thanks, Justin." I turn to leave then stop. "Hey, Justin. Is there a medic of some kind at the school?"

He shakes his head. "No, why?"

"Well, most of the injuries today were students. It would be more convenient to be there than making them come here. It's not a big deal, I'm only curious." I shrug my shoulder.

Justin hums. "That's a good idea. I'll talk to Alpha Micco. Go have fun with your mate and your daughter."

"Daughter? You have a daughter? Pretty soon we'll be overrun with humans." Mavis scoffs.

"Actually, my daughter is Were." Mavis's mouth drops open. "See you later." I leave her standing with her mouth gaping.

Tess and Willow are in the kitchen when I get home. Willow is propped up on her knees on top of a barstool at the island while Tess assembles sandwiches "...when you're older. You need to learn other things first." Tess tells Willow as she places a sandwich in front of her.

"But I want to be as good as you." Willow pouts. Tess places a handful of chips on their plates.

"I didn't start learning how to fight until I was nine. You'll learn. I promise I'll teach you, just not yet. You need to be patient, sweetie. Cody, I have a sandwich for you." She says while facing away from me.

I walk up to the island and give both of my girls a kiss then washes my hands before joining them for an afternoon snack. "How did you know I was here?"

"Many ways. I heard the door close; I could smell you, and I could feel your love. How was the hospital?" She asks as she places chips inside her sandwich, Willow following her example.

"Not bad. It was just injuries mostly. I'm not a fan of one of the nurses, though. Do you want a drink?" I ask on my way to the fridge.

She covers her mouth. "Yes, please. Let me guess, Mavis?"

"Mhmm. Willow, drink?"

"Yes, please." She says with food in her mouth.

"Finish chewing before you speak, please, sweetie," Tess tells her and I smile.

I set cans of soda out for everyone. "How did you guess?"

"Because she's a slu..." I clear my throat. Tess pulls her lips between her teeth and looks at Willow. "She's not a nice person and her morals are questionable."

"I gathered that. I mean, she's nice enough, but she's a little to touch freely for my tastes. She said you were friends when you were younger." Tess rolls her eyes and explains their true dealings while we continue to eat. "Tess, she said something that confused me, well two things actually. What's a nomad?"

"It's a Were that doesn't belong to a pack. Jared and Naomi are technically nomads, but they stay in touch with Naomi's family. Usually, nomad has a negative connotation because it means they were most likely kicked out of their pack for doing something bad. What's the other thing?"

"She said she was rejected. What does that mean?"

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"It means that her mate didn't want to accept her as his mate. He rejected her which broke their mate bond."

I wipe my mouth with my napkin as I think that over. "You could've rejected me?"

Tess shakes her head. "No way. I was head over heels for you the minute I smelled you. But technically yes and you could've rejected me." I take a minute to contemplate the situation. "Are you upset that I didn't reject you?"

"No! No, of course not. I'm ecstatic to be with you. I just... didn't know it was an option, not that I would change anything. So, what happens to someone that is rejected, are they single the rest of their lives?"

Tess shrugs her shoulder. "I'm not sure. Mavis is the only one I know that's been rejected. Griffin rejected his mate, but he's a selfish pri... jerk who values appearances."

"All done. Can I go play?"

"Of course, short stack."

"Daddy. Where is my dolly?"

"It's in my truck where you left it."

"We can go get your truck now if you would like." Tess offers.

"Yeah. Let me clean up and get out of these scrubs first." I tell her as I get to my feet. I grab the dishes and wash them really quick then head up to our room.

I'm sliding a t-shirt over my head when I hear Tess in Willow's room singing a song. "One little two little, three little werewolves, four little, five little, six little werewolves, seven little eight little nine little werewolves, ten little werewolf pups." She stops singing when she notices me. "Are you ready? I linked my dad to let him know where we're going."

"I'm ready. Willow, get your sandals on please." Tess helps Willow buckle her shoes then we all head out. Most of our things are still in the back of my truck, except for what was in the back of Holt's. We unloaded all that yesterday morning during the meeting. I did leave a few items at the cabin, specifically the two boxes that contain items that belonged to Audrey. Once we're unloaded and unpacked, we work together to make dinner. We finish just in time for Micco and Marco to join us.

"Grandpappy, are you staying here until the council meeting?" Tess asks.

"Yeah, I thought it best." He answers as he washes up for dinner.

A knock sounds at the door and Willow rushes to answer it. A man that looks to be just barely in his 20s walks in carrying a manila envelope.

"Donny." Micco greets and takes the folder.

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Donny notices me and holds his hand out, not at all shocked that I'm human. "You must be Cody. I'm Donny. I'll be your Beta once Alpha Micco steps down, which probably won't happen for another 20 years." He smiles at his own joke. "You're a lot bigger than I thought you would be."

I accept his hand. "Oh, Good to meet you. Tess has told me a bit about you. Congratulations on the baby."

"Thanks."

"A year." Micco says as he looks over the papers without raising his head. Donnie, Tess, Marco, and I all stop to look at him, mouths open and eyes wide.

"Excuse me, Micco, did you just say a year?" I ask. He answers with a generic mmm as he continues to read the papers. "Are you sure?"

"I'll train you of course. You'll be ready, provided the Council doesn't kill you first, which they're not likely to." Micco answers as he closes the folder then sits down at the table.

"I guess... I'll be your Beta in a year." Donny comments.

"I guess so. It doesn't bother you that I'm human?" I ask.

Donny shakes his head. "Nah. I've known Tess my whole life, she's like one of my sisters. I know she's meant to be our Luna. There's no one else I would support. Besides, Alpha Micco has faith in you. He wouldn't have your back if you couldn't do the job. I gotta run, new pup and all. It's nice to meet you, Cody." Donny nods to me then heads out.

Tess and I serve dinner and we all sit down as a family. "Cody, I like your idea of having someone at the school. I'm getting that set up then you'll be filling that position until I step down." Micco slides the folder to me. I curiously pick it up. Inside are detailed plans for making it happen.

"What's going on?" Tess asks as she peeks at the papers.

"Cody suggested having a medic at the school to deal with all the injuries instead of having to take the pups to the hospital. Justin and I both agree it's a better scenario and we got right on it. He thinks Cody would be a great fit, especially with the training he has. Avery is making space in one of the spare rooms at the school. Everything should be up and running in a few days."

Tess beams proudly at me. "That's brilliant. Plus, we'll be able to see each other during the day." She kisses my cheek then continues eating.

The rest of the evening is spent chatting and enjoying each other's company. Willow pulls out her cards and convinces the grandpas to play Go Fish while Tess and I laugh each time they lose. Pretty soon, Willow begins to yawn and we kiss her good night then Tess takes her upstairs for her bath. Once she's ready, Tess and I tuck her in then also turn in for the night.