

Chapter 29

"Darlin', I need your help. It's an emergency!" "Avery, hold him still." The teenage boy by the name of Jude is grunting in pain. "I know it hurts, but stop moving. I need you to hold still for me, bud." I touch his shoulder and he growls out, snapping his teeth in my direction.

Tess rushes into the room. "What's going on?"

"I need you to help hold him still." Tess grabs his legs and pins him to the table. "Alright. I'm not going to sugarcoat this, it's going to hurt, but then you'll feel better." I get a firm grip on his arm. "1. 2." The kid sets his jaw. "3." I pull his arm straight out, resetting it into its socket. The kid screams, but it only lasts a few moments before he's breathing heavily as he calms down. I hate that I had to cause him more pain, but wolves heal fast and that could've crippled him if it wasn't set properly before the healing started. I help him sit up then wrap his arm with an ace bandage.

Avery is talking to him to make sure he's alright. She looks toward Tess. "Thanks, Tess. It looks like Cody has it under control. You can go back to your class." I give Tess a wink just before she leaves.

I've been at the school for a week and a half now. Avery is the faculty director and she's incredibly nice. She was excited about having a medic... until I showed up and her mouth dropped open in surprise. Once she got over her initial shock and Tess made the introductions, she was fine. Things have been great since then. Tess's classroom is only a few doors away, so she's my go to in case of an emergency, like today.

"Alright, Jude. Keep it wrapped for a few days. Meet up with Dr. Justin at the hospital. Your dad is on his way to pick you up."

"Thanks, Cody." He says as I pop an ice pack to rest on his shoulder.

I give him a nod then sit at my desk to fill out the paperwork. Word about the new school medic being a human spread like wildfire through the school. The students didn't know what to think, but seeing that I know what I'm doing has made them more comfortable. With at least two major injuries and several minor injuries a day, they don't bat an eye anymore. I haven't had too much trouble with the parents. I think it's only because of Tess. They know her and her abilities, no one would dare say anything about me to her.

After bandaging up a 7-year-old with a nasty scratch on her arm, the day finally comes to an end. I file the papers as Tess and Willow walk into the room. "Hey, big guy, you ready to go?" She asks and I lean in to give her a kiss. "Yeah, all set." I pick Willow up and blow a raspberry on her cheek, making her giggle. I take Tess's hand and we all head out. I'm pretty satisfied with our new life. Willow has been making friends left and right and she's doing well in her kindergarten class. She loves Tess, no question, and looks up to her. Seeing how well they're getting along helps me to know that I made the right choice coming here, this is where we need to be.

Except one thing has been weighing on our minds; the Council meeting. Most of the Council has already arrived and are holed up at the resort until tomorrow's meeting to avoid any conflict. I have yet to meet any of them. I know Tess is much more worried than I am, I can feel it. I wonder if it's because she grew up in this lifestyle and I didn't, that has her so nervous. I pull her to me and hold her with my head on hers. "I know, Darlin'," I tell her as we stand beside her still-open truck door.

Tess takes a deep breath then lets it out. Her hand squeezes my bicep as she lays her head against my chest. "I've never really been afraid of anything, but I'm so scared." Her emotions flow into me and I feel just how terrified she really is. My palms begin to sweat and my heart begins to palpitate. A drop of moisture hits the skin on my arm. "I can't lose you." Her voice cracks and a few more tears fall.

I hold her tighter, protecting her from the world. I try to focus on our love and our bond, hoping these emotion will trump her fears. "You won't lose me. No matter what, our bond is forever." I kiss her forehead and she begins to slightly relax. With Tess still in my arms, I start walking toward the house.

Living with the Alpha is actually really easy, he's gone most of the time or in his office taking care of pack matters. Plus, he loves that I can cook. Training is still important and Marco has taken over as my sparring partner. Tonight, we're off the hook as he has to prepare for tomorrow's meeting.

"Willow?" I call out once Tess and I enter the house.

"She's in here, Cody," Micco answers from his office. I peek through the door to find her on his knee drawing a picture at his desk. She loves her Grampy so much. I swear he's her favorite person, and he is wrapped around her little finger. He would spoil her every chance he got if Tess and I didn't stop him.

I shake my head with a smile. "Willow go wash up. Mommy has a snack in the kitchen for you."

"Yes, Daddy."

Micco kisses her cheek then sets her down so she can scamper off.

"Cody, I want to talk to you about the meeting tomorrow." He nods at the chair in front of his desk. "Have a seat." I sit down and Micco lets out a breath. "Tomorrow we'll all be in front of the Council. They might have you by yourself, but Stone and Griffin will also be there."

I grunt at the thought of those two. Griffin was released two days ago after finishing his sentence for attacking me. I have yet to meet him in his human form, but based on everyone I talk to, it can't be good news.

"Why are they going to be there?"

"Stone thinks he has sway. He doesn't want you to become the Alpha. He's going to interfere in any way he can. Listen, don't worry about him, he's all talk. Tomorrow, I want you to stay quiet unless they ask you a direct question, then answer as thoroughly and truthful as you can, just like you did at the Elders meeting. They're going to target Tess, so try not to lose it."

"What do you mean they're going to target Tess?" I'm getting frustrated and I'm not even at the meeting yet.

"Tess is your mate. She's the one that told you of our kind. I'm probably going to catch a shit show too, just because I went along with everything." "What about Jared and Naomi?" He's part of the council, is he in trouble?" I ask.

Micco lets out a breath. "He is going to be questioned and he has no say in the final decision. Also, my dad will have to recuse himself as he's too closely related to the situation. He'll be there, but more as a representative for your side of the issue. I was informed that one of the council is not able to attend as his mate is giving birth. That means that instead of the standard 15 members, there are only 12. If there's a split decision, the head of the council gets the final vote... That just so happens to be Uriah Lancaster."

Micco smirks and I puff out a laugh. "At least we have that. Is Holt here?"

"Yeah, he's at Ben's place. They arrived this afternoon. Leslie is cooking for all of us tonight. She volunteered to be with Willow during the meeting. Ben and Donny will also be there."

"Nice. It's comforting having their support. Is there anything else I need to be made aware of?" Micco shakes his head. "That's it."

With a nod and a better understanding of what's to be expected, I get to my feet. "I'm going to go whip up something for dessert," I tell him and

he nods. Tess is in the kitchen with Willow. I give them both a kiss then wash up to start working on making a blueberry cream cheese dump cake. Tess sneaks her arms around me from behind and rests her head on my back. "Hi, love."

"Hi." She quietly says. I hold her hands then turn to face her. She looks up, her eyes shining.

I stroke her cheek then kiss her mouth. "Try not to think about tomorrow. Let's enjoy our night together with our friends. Maybe you and I can go to the border again, or the cabin?"

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She hums. "That sounds good."

The Morris's are great people. I love their hospitality and their acceptance. Holt is the first to greet us as we arrive. Well, he goes straight for Willow and picks her up to blow a raspberry on her cheek. She giggles with her arms wrapped around his neck. "Uncle Holt are you in our pack now?"

"No, shortcake. I'm just visiting for the weekend. I'm here for an important meeting."

"Is it the one for Daddy, because he's not like us?" She asks.

"Yeah honey, it is. I'm going to try to help your daddy as much as I can." I know Willow is a smart little girl, but sometimes she can be too astute. I look at Tess and catch her worrying her lip. Indy grabs her attention and tries to ease the tension. She really is a great friend to Tess.

Leslie and Ben set out the dishes and we all eat. Willow is a little overzealous and begins to fill her plate with whatever Micco has. Tess stops her just in time, cutting everything down into kid sized portions. "Don't forget, Daddy made dessert. You wouldn't want to be so full you

can't have any." I snicker behind my hand. Regardless, Willow sidles up to Micco and he automatically starts cutting her meat for her.

"Micco, can you handle Willow for the night? I think Tess is too worked up. I need to help her calm down."

"No problem. Be at the meetinghouse by 9 am." I nod in thanks then dig into my plate.

We finish our dinner and merriment. I pull Tess away from Indy. "Sorry, but I'm stealing her away for the night."

"Ooh-la-la." Indy sings. "You kids have fun." She says with a wink. Tess rolls her eyes. We give Willow kisses and say our goodbyes.

I drive to the cabin for some alone time with my mate. It's been about two weeks since we've been alone together, so we are long overdue. I scoop her up. "Hey, Darlin'. I've missed having you all to myself."

She wraps her arms around my neck. "Me too, big guy." She kisses my lips and I take her inside. Since the minute I met her, I've wanted to take her over every surface of this cabin, so after eating my dessert on the coffee table, taking her on the sofa, and both armchairs, I take her into the bedroom to finally christen the bed as well. Tess falls asleep in my arms and I thank my lucky stars for every moment I have with her.