

Change of Heart Pt. 1

Chase was startled awake by Lexi screaming for her mother. I tried to wake her, but whatever sort of ashback she was in; it was holding her tight. I stiffened listening to her words. She'd seen her mother's dead body. My heart broke for my mate. I can't imagine how hard that had to be for her to witness, or how devastating it must have been. She was whimpering, but no matter what I did she wouldn't wake up. I spoke to her in soothing tones gently running my fingertips up and down her arm. When she did wake up, she sat straight up gasping for breath. She was shaking so I put my arms around her. Glad I could finally comfort her. I hated seeing her like this. She was clearly in pain from the echoes in her past. I told her to talk to me. I knew talking sometimes helped our young warriors from their first attack on rogues or their first kills. She was saying it was just a dream. I disagreed. That definitely seemed more like an ashback than a dream. Or a combination of the two. I was shocked when she'd told me she tripped over her father's dead body. That she'd found her mother's throat slit. Who the hell murders a family while their child sleeps upstairs? I thanked the moon goddess whoever it was had left her alone though. I stiffened when she said she thought the man she saw on their porch that night killed her parents. Could that be the man following her? I linked Kincade and Kevin, "That man that's following Lexi. DO NOT let him EVER get near her. He could be the man who murdered her parents. IF you see him CATCH him and bring him to me. Immediately." Kincade replied, "Yes, Alpha."

I told Lexi it was possible the man she saw didn't murder her parents. Lexi put together that I'd heard her and her brother. I was glad she didn't seem scared I knew he was the Hood. I would never betray her trust that way. She asked what I knew about her. I kept it to the highlights. I knew one day she would be my wife, the mother of my pups, and the amazing Luna of our pack. I didn't want to mention marriage just yet thought because Sophia and her former Gamma Wyatt. I was going to have to find a way to kill that piece of s**t. I linked Derrick, "I need you to work on how to get to your former counterpart out of Sophia's dungeons and into ours." Derrick linked, "Uhh... Seriously?" I linked back, "He's the reason I can't bring Lexi home. He's the reason I had to stay away from her. HE is someone I can make pay." Derrick said, "OHHH boy. I'm on it Alpha. Does Matt know about this plan?" I linked, "Not yet. We will talk about it tomorrow. I'll tell him then." Derrick said, "Alrighty then. I'll just be thinking of ways to steal a prisoner from your wife." I told Lexi I would get guards for Sally because it was obvious Lexi was worried about her. Her brother was the leader of the hood, but Lexi was the heart of the hood. She was who their people came to with their problems. Sally had obviously come to her, and she was trying to help her. I would support her in any move to protect our people one day, and I could do this for her. It was small. I had enough men, and it would make me feel like less of a s**t mate to her. Sally worked in my territory. My surrounding allies wouldn't mind if my men or women crossed into their territories. After I sent out the word, I was guarding her. They would assume it was for Ted.

Lexi's eyes filled with tears. She was stunned I would help her friends. It was literally the least I could do. This was my area, and Noah would not be welcome here. Lexi seemed to find it funny that I was planning to kill Noah. One day I'd know where the shroud was, and I could plan how to kill him better. Matt might actually know since he visited Ted's family. Once I knew where it was, I could plan better. I knew Heath would kill him for what he did to Lexi because I'd kill anyone who did a fraction of what Noah did to Susie. Lexi argued their friendship deepened because of their parents' death. It wouldn't matter. I knew it wouldn't matter to Heath. I saw how he looked at Lexi when they met. He truly loved her. Lexi didn't seem surprised that Matt told me what Noah had done. He was my Beta; he did not often keep secrets from me. If anyone kept a secret about my mate from me, they would NOT like the consequences. At least not anyone in my pack. I'm sure her and Ted had their secrets. Ted could be my exception, but I'm pretty sure he'd gab eventually. I just had to be patient. I could be an incredibly patient man. Lexi told me she could protect herself, but she appreciated my warriors having her back. Because of them and I she'd walked away unscathed where she might not have otherwise. Bolt and I were both enraged that she'd been shot before. We both preened that she thanked us for taking the tranquilizer for her. Bolt linked me, "Mate is so gracious. She will be an amazing Luna." I linked back, "Yes, she will."

Bolt took over when she said a lot had happened to her. Lexi smiled at him and spoke to him. Bolt was in heaven. Once they'd had a second, I came back. I told her I'd always protect her. She was mine, and she was the most precious thing in my world. I laughed when she asked for my last name, and mentally promised to always treasure her heart. I knew she'd been burned in the past. I'd do my best to keep her clear of everything Sophia until it was handled. I changed the subject wanting to know if I could get Kevin and Kincade closer to her than outside the hotel. They could protect her better if they were inside with her. I smiled when she said she had the ocean across from her. She really was tactical. That made sense because she is the sister of a leader. I was glad Heath taught her how to anticipate. Her only request of my men was to make it look like she wasn't being guarded. That was simple enough. She'd been guarded this whole time and she didn't know about it. I told her who knew she was my mate. She put two and two together about Cameron and Reagan's pack party. She asked me if Reagan knew about her. I laughed Cameron had told me Reagan berated him when he came home. He wouldn't confirm if Lexi was my mate, but Reagan said she didn't need him to. She said I had to be someone's mate, and she'd heard my growl outside. She said it HAD to be me. We still hadn't told her, but it seemed like a moot point.

Lexi brought up that she'd broken someone's hands for touching her at the club. I'd hated that he'd gotten close enough to her in a space she was supposed to be safe. I told her I killed the guy. I still needed to deal with that situation, someone needed to be informed. Lexi seemed surprised that I'd killed the guy. So, I compared it to her killing the two pack members I'd banished. Lexi surmised Ted had blabbed. I smiled. The man really did have a gift of gab. I needed to have myself a chat with TeleTed. I wanted to plan the perfect date for Lexi. TeleTed was my in. I asked if she had a moniker. I was unprepared for her answer. I was shocked to find out she did. That wasn't how things were usually done. There was usually one moniker per family in the hood. My palms broke out into a sweat thinking of her on a mission. She didn't just gather intelligence. She would go somewhere to kill someone. She could get hurt. I knew she couldn't tell me. I was surprised she needed her brother's permission to tell me who she was. Lexi admitted she was thinking about telling her brother about me but not the hood. I had to laugh. Susie had come to me as a sister before. She needed her brother, not the Alpha. My brother and my dad had done that as well. So I completely understood what she was saying.

My curiosity got the best of me. She already knew that I'd overheard her speaking to her brother. I wanted to know what had happened to elicit the promise that she would never lie to her brother again. Cameron and I just had an unspoken rule. We didn't lie to each other. I wanted to know why Heath felt the need to make her promise him. Lexi looked away. I could see shame in her features. I frowned. I didn't want her to feel that way. When she told me she'd developed a drug problem I was shocked. That was not what I was expecting at all. I was so proud of her for staying away from drugs. Even something as simple as taking Tylenol for a headache. That was very self-aware of her. She told me her brother made her promise not to lie to him because she'd been telling him she was on while popping pills. He'd actually caught her and stopped her. Then he got her help. All of that confirmed in my mind if Heath knew about Noah.... he'd do something. I might have to find a way to slip the Hood some information. Lexi didn't think she was strong in those times, but she was. Detoxing and staying away from drugs is hard. Many can't manage because drugs are addicting. Lexi said her brother had been her rock through it all. I encouraged her to tell him. I wanted the siblings to get back to that place with each other. Even if I had to step in and leak information about Noah. I'd do it for her because it bothered her that Heath felt they had walls between them. She asked about me, so I told her the highlights of my life.

I believed with every fiber of my being my dad would've found a way to die once I took over the pack if he didn't have Nadine. I knew some children had problems with their parents needing a second chance mate; but Cameron and I prayed every night for our mom and the moon goddess to give him another chance. We both knew our mother wouldn't want him to kill himself. The moon goddess loves her children and wouldn't want to see that. Cameron and I couldn't lose our dad too. One day when he was old and grey and lived a full life, I'd accept his death. I couldn't accept losing another parent in a violent way. Lexi's voice was understanding and full of warmth as she talked about my mom and Nadine. I knew why her people went to her. She was the perfect Luna. Between Ted and Lexi our people would have someone to comfort them and be there for them. I knew Lexi would fight beside me in any way no matter my argument, but Ted could keep the pups and non-fighters calm and together. He could get them to safety. Bolt said, "Mate would be there if she was pregnant." I stiffened. Thinking of her carrying my pup got me so damn hard. I willed my hardon away as we continued to talk more about ourselves. Lexi looked at the clock and sighed. I did too. Time had become my enemy. I needed to see Susie off on her first day of school. This was a big moment for her, and I wanted us all to be there. I linked Cameron, "Are you coming for Susie's first day of school?" Cameron snorted, "Does a duck poop in a pond?" I didn't bother to answer because Lexi had mounted me. I let her take control. She said she wanted to give me something to remember for the day.

I waited on the bed while she got in the shower. Once she stepped inside, I shot up after her. It was my turn. When we left the shower, she got dressed in the sexiest business outfit I'd ever seen. Bolt said, "Everything made wears is sexy." I had to agree because that was the most accurate thing Bolt had ever said to me. I had no idea how I was going to get anything done today thinking about her in this outfit. I was going to have to take multiple cold showers. I could tell that for the foreseeable future I'd be needing a lot of cold ass showers... Lexi laughed pointing out I was naked, and that would make it harder for her to focus in her day. I linked Kevin, "Bring some shorts to the barrier. I want to introduce you two to Lexi." Kevin said, "We met her while you were passed out yesterday. Our future Luna is strong and gracious. She carried you all by herself." I was surprised, "I thought you guys carried me and she dragged me inside." Kevin said, "No, she picked you up off the ground and ran to her house with you. She still beat us back to her place too." I smiled. She was amazing. She told me to bring some clothes with me tonight then slammed her mouth shut and turned beet red. I was going to kill Noah for making her think that I wouldn't want that. I assured her I'd be here all the time now that I could get in. Hell, at least this way I could sleep on the bed or the couch. I was content to sleep outside in wolf form. I just needed to be near her. Lexi told me she wasn't always here. I had to close my eyes. I didn't want to think of her doing anything dangerous. I knew it was a part of her, but damned if it didn't scare me down to the depths of my very soul. I was not familiar with this emotion. I told her I'd be here even if she wasn't. Her smell would be my source of comfort. I smiled when Lexi offered to cook me dinner. Sometime I'd cook for her too. I accepted and we picked a time.

She asked for my number and I couldn't help but kiss her. She was everything I'd ever wanted. I was also excited I got both her cell numbers. She admitted it was because if she was sent somewhere, she kept this phone with her. While half of me was excited she still wanted to talk to me if she was on a mission; the other half was terrified of not knowing where she was or what she was doing or if she was safe. I asked if her brother would let her stay home. She was going to tell him about me, maybe he'd let us have some time. She said she was off until Halloween. That was not nearly enough time for me. That was in two weeks. I wanted her home for a few months at least. I sighed. I wanted to ask her to go with me to Beta Dylan and Lacy's wedding, but I couldn't. I was surprised but I shouldn't have been when she knew what wedding I was attending. She was in that girl gang thing of Haley's. She must have met Lexi and hit it off. I wished we could go together, but Sophia would be there. Even if Lacy hadn't had something, I couldn't have asked her to be my date. I would've had to make excuses for why I wouldn't attend. I wouldn't put Lexi in that spot, but I would want her to go for her friends. I'd stay back because this was my issue to handle not hers. It wouldn't go over great, but it would be fine.

I asked Lexi if she would take Kincade and Kevin with her on her mission at Halloween. They could hang back, and only step in if they felt she was in danger. This way I'd know she was safe. She didn't disagree, but she didn't agree either. F**k! She really was the perfect Luna. She wasn't going to say no if the mission was ok for my men to know about. I was so glad she was willing to work on me with this. I'd hoped the mission she had didn't have anything to do with her moniker. I knew she wouldn't let them go if it did, but I could make a case for their presence if she was just gathering intelligence. I had to laugh when we headed outside. Kevin and Kincade looked silly standing outside the barrier. They whipped their heads when they heard us. They were both in agreement it was weird to hear us, but not see us. Having been on the other side. I knew it was really f**king weird. I stepped out and quickly put on shorts. My dad linked me, "Susie wants to know where you are. I don't know what to tell her." I linked back, "Tell her I'll be right there." I kissed Lexi and took off. I ended up shredding my shorts and hitting Bolt. I grabbed some shorts and ran inside to see Susie. She had on a white hat with a brown bow. She had on a white sweater with a cat face on it. Which followed up with a leopard print skirt. Complete with a clear backpack with different colored leopard spots with two cute little leopard cubs on them. I smiled, "You look beautiful Susie. When did our little sister grow up. Cameron?" My dad muttered, "Around the time you started sleeping somewhere else." I rolled my eyes at the other. Cameron said, "I don't know Chase. I swear she was just learning how to walk the other day."

Reagan smiled, "You ready to walk to school Susie?" Susie grabbed my dad and Nadine's hands. "YES!" She squealed and walked out the front door skipping. I dad and we all followed her out. Many whispers were going around the pack, "Is that Susie?" "She's real!" "Isn't she the cutest little thing!" I linked the pack, "Yes, this is my sister Susie. Let's not make her feel awkward on her first day of school." Everyone stopped whispering but continued watching our family with open interest. Susie didn't care though. She let go of my dad and Nadine's hand. She spun around giggling. She shouted, "I'M GOING TO SCHOOL! I'M OUTSIDE!" Cameron smiled at her and Reagan wiped a tear from her eyes. Nadine took my dad's hand, and we all walked into the school. Many of the pups were clamoring to be the first person to meet her. A little girl ran up, "Hi! I'm Wendy! You're in my class. Come on! I'll show you the way. Everyone move along!" I laughed as this little girl ordered everyone about. A warrior came up to me, "Sorry about my daughter, Wendy. She's a dominant little thing." I laughed, "Don't worry about it. I'm sure they will be best friends by the end of the day." Susie went down to her classroom and we followed behind her and Wendy. I nodded to my warriors that were guarding the class. Nadine called Susie back over to our group. She bent down to hug her, "Your dad and I will be here to pick you up after school. Alright?" Susie nodded, "Okay Mommy." My dad bent down with tears in his eyes, "Have so much fun Susie." Susie giggled again and threw her arms around him. "Thank you, daddy!" She hugged Reagan and Cameron leaving me last. She threw her arms around me, "Thank you for convincing daddy to do this Chase. I'm really like a real kid." Tears pricked my eyes, "You have fun, Ok? Listen to Miss Jenna." Susie nodded seriously and ran off to join her friends.

It took both Cameron and I to get dad out of the school. I cleared my throat, "Your young warriors are waiting for their training lessons dad." My dad glared at me, "Don't think I don't know what that's about. You're trying to distract me from Susie and you." I said, "I'm also giving our young warriors their best trainers. Oh look its Isaac. Hi Isaac." Isaac smiled, "Alpha Chase. Good morning. Come on Frank. Our trainees await." My dad looked from me to Isaac, "You are having us both train them?" I said, "Yes. Like I said, they are learning from the best. There are forty-five warriors in the class dad. That's too much for one person. I had Matt ask if Isaac would be interested, and what do you know.... He is. Enjoy you two." Isaac laughed, "Let's go. You have no one to blame but yourself Frank. You did teach him how to handle people like this. Isabella practically threw me out of the house this morning saying this would be great for me. I'm slightly offended my mate seemed to want me to be gone." I laughed, "Enjoy your run home Cameron and Reagan." Reagan said, "You and me.... We are GOING to have a chat later." I smiled, "I'm surprised we haven't had one yet." Reagan snorted, "You haven't been easy to track down. I'll put a meeting on your books with Matt if I can't get to you Chase. Don't think I won't." I laughed, "I'd expect nothing less, Reagan." Cameron smiled at me and they both shifted running back to their pack.

I walked back into the ocean where Isabella was waiting. She kissed my cheek, "Bless you Alpha Chase. I love that man to pieces, but GODDESS did he need something to do. He was driving me crazy. He had a schedule of my day down and would comment when I deviated from it. I know it's his Beta brain, but I don't have a set schedule." I laughed, "Glad to be of service Isabella." She smiled, "I'll leave you be." She left and Matt said, "We have.... A moderate problem." I said, "What is the moderate problem?" Matt sighed, "You killed the brother of a Gamma at the club." I was from a pack in Nashville." I said, "And?" Matt said, "I don't think he will be happy." He said, "Then he should've kept his brother at home. Possibly taught him not to manhandle women. I'm just spit balling ideas here." Matt said, "You can't say it was your mate he manhandled." I said, "I will say it was Cameron's." He sighed and handed me the Alpha's number. It was the Black Path Pack. I dialed. "Alpha Davis." I said, "Which one?" The Alpha laughed, "I haven't handed my title over to my son yet Alpha Chase." I said, "Alpha Thomas Davis then. As you know, this is Alpha Chase." Alpha Davis said, "Yes, can I help you with something?" I said, "A member of your pack attacked my brother's mate in the club I own. He was warned by the woman herself to back off, but he didn't." Alpha Davis sighed, "I assume this member is no more." I answered, "He's not. I killed him." Alpha Davis said, "Who?" I looked at the paper Matt handed to me, "Travis McCann." The Alpha choked on something. "You... killed my Gamma's youngest brother?" I said, "I treated him as I would anyone who did what he did. His rank didn't factor into the equation."

Sally was quiet, "I don't think his brother will take that kindly. He'd hoped to hand his title over to his brother's son one day. His brother hadn't met his mate yet though. My Gamma and his mate have been unable to have a child of their own." Matt slid a paper over, "His sister has a child." Alpha Davis sighed, "She does. A boy. His last name is even McCann." I said, "Could help? He could step in as Gamma while his son is trained." Alpha Davis said, "Her mate died after he marked her. She was around other werewolves when she went into heat. The man died recently so I suppose her child is a suitable candidate. My Gamma is not a forgiving man, Alpha Chase." I said, "Then he should learn to teach his pack members how to behave in others territory. I hear the threat you're implying. If your Gamma comes for me or mine, he will join his brother in the ground. I will NOT take retaliation lying down." Alpha Davis sounded tired when he said, "Very well Alpha Chase. Hopefully next time we speak it will be on better terms." I hung up the phone. I opened my email and smiled as the first thing there was Isabella's list of candidates for guards. I told Matt, "I was thinking next we talk about two guards for Ted." Matt nodded, "Agreed." I said, "What about Mark and Joanie." Matt thought about it, "Joanie and Mark are strong warriors. I agree." I said, "Link them to come to my ocean. Now for Sally..." Derrick went straight as a board. "Derrick?" Derrick looked at me, "I don't know Alpha. My wolf is restless for some reason." I said, "Alright...." I looked at Matt who just shrugged. Matt started laughing, "Ted is asking me if Lexi gave you the best s*x of your life, so you decided to have her guarded." I snorted, "Not completely wrong, but it's not why she's being guarded. For Sally I was thinking Hector and Alto." Derrick growled, "No!" Both Matt and I looked at him stunned. His eyes were pitch black. His wolf said, "Willow and Opal." He closed his eyes and they turned back to blue.