

An Unexpected Challenge Pt. 1

Chase carried Lexi back to her bed. I was seething thinking of all the way's Noah would suffer once I found him. For putting this look on her face alone he'd spend time in my dungeon before he died. I began to search Lexi's drawers for some underwear and a sports bra. The fact that she didn't ask what I was doing further fueled my anger. Noah had no idea who he was dealing with. I would be sure to let him know shortly. No one would do this to Lexi and live. Not while there was still breath in my lungs. I nally found what I was looking for. I handed them to Lexi. She had such a blank expression as she put them on. I grabbed my hoodie off the oor. I'd need to get her another one so she could rotate between them. For now, she could keep wearing this one. She put my hoodie on and slid down on the bed. Her broken cries about why Noah would do this to Anne were like a dagger to the heart. Matt linked me, "This Noah guy is so f****g dead Chase. Ted is just broken by how he saw his mom. HELL! I love his mother already. He literally smashed her brains in. Haley Conners is a powerful fairy Princess. Thank the moon goddess." I linked back, "I've been calling Noah the dead motherfucker for weeks now. You'll get no arguments from me. Thank god Haley likes me now, or I'd be sending her owers every damn day." Matt linked, "Ted's telling me about some mouse his mom tried to catch." I said, "I'm getting the same story." Matt said, "Anne is the sweetest lady. She reminds me of Ted. I'm going to crush Noah's skull with my bare hands." I said, "You'll have to get to him rst then because I have plans for the dead motherfucker." I cut off my link conversation to tell Lexi that Anne was ne. Thank the goddess Alpha Conners had met Haley when he did. I'd have to call him and thank her. The grief Ted and Lexi would've felt if she hadn't made it in time...Actually I didn't want to think about that.

Sympathy hit me so hard when Lexi said she'd wished she knew Haley when her own parents died. Unless a lot of events changed it wouldn't have mattered.... I couldn't tell Lexi her parents would've been dead even if Haley had tried to heal them when Lexi found them. They were already dead. Haley couldn't have done anything about that. I couldn't say anything, so I just held her as she cried. After what felt like hours of my heart breaking, she wiped her tears. She was worried about Ted. I told her that Matt had Ted, and he'd be ne. I linked Derrick, "How's everything going?" Derrick sighed, "Your dad is stalking around, and giving me a headache. I sent him to our border with Sophia." I said, "I'm sorry Derrick." Derrick snorted, "I'll be collecting in full on this debt you owe me when Sally comes back." He purred her name. I said, "We don't know if you are her mate yet. It's just a guess." Derrick said, "You don't know. My wolf and I are damn sure." I rolled my eyes. Lacy started crying again about me going to Beta Dylan's wedding by myself. I wanted to groan. She couldn't have come with me. I tried to tell her that and she started talking about the wedding being attacked, and how Matt and Derrick wouldn't be with me. I was trying not to laugh. I wasn't walking into a wedding with my enemies. I would be surrounded by my allies. Alpha Conners would be there. Lexi interrupted saying I should take Kincade and Kevin with me. f**k! That meant they couldn't go with her. She was so worried about me when I would be surrounded by people that could help me. She was going alone.

That's when I realized I had just the person to calm her down. I reminded her Haley would be there at Beta Dylan's wedding. I could see it on her face. My words had their desired effect. Lexi relaxed and stopped crying. She nally realized there would be someone looking out for me. Not that I thought Haley would let any of Eric's allies get hurt. It wasn't her style. I told her I was going to go cook food for both of us. Her hand immediately shot to mine. She pulled me back to her. I heard the shame in her voice when she admitted she couldn't be alone right now. I pulled back so I could see her eyes. It cost her to admit that to me. I needed to know if there were pills in the house. I was fairly certain I'd be able to sniff them out. All I could smell was the candy she'd picked up from her P.O Box. She must keep a secret stash of candy in the drawer of her bedside table. She told me there weren't any pills in the house. I searched her eyes for any hint of deceit and found none. She looked more ashamed than ever when she admitted she could run away and nd some drugs. I was proud of her. I didn't know how hard what she was doing was, but I could appreciate it. It's hard to ask for help. Or admit where you'd fail. She was so strong. I linked Kevin, "Order us pizza." Matt linked, "Ted wants to see Lexi." I said "I just had Kevin order pizza. Link him your order too." Matt said, "Ted's a wreck thinking about Lexi started popping pills again. I've had a whole history lesson. I've assured him you won't let her take pills, but he doesn't know if you know her past. He's so worried today would trigger her." I answered, "I do know the story. She was triggered, but I've got her. Lexi wants to come to you guys for dinner. Tell Kevin to link me when the pizza arrives."

I thought that would be the end of the conversation with Matt until dinner. Lexi told me Ted had admitted he understood why she did drugs in the rst place. She didn't have to tell me she was worried about him. I sighed and linked Matt again, "Lexi is worried Ted might try drugs." Matt said, "Yes, I heard about their conversation. He's not heading in that direction. If he tried, I'd smell them." I said, "I know." Matt said, "Good. Now that that's all good and settled. WOULD YOU KINDLY ASK YOUR MATE WHAT MALE WAS ALL OVER MY MATE?!" I linked back, "Excuse me?" Matt said, "HE REEKED of some OTHER MAN! No one I have met. I know he has ex's in the hood. Both he AND his mother told me. If one of them tried to take advantage of his grief and held him as he looked at the scene of his mother's attempted murder... I WILL KILL THEM." I said, "Off the cuff question for you. Did you ask Ted?" Matt growled, "HE HAS BEEN TRAUMATIZED!" I said, "And probably thoroughly fucked." Matt growled, "ASK HER!" I asked Lexi about it. I about fell off the bed when she said Haley said this would happen. Alpha Conners wouldn't let them taunt Matt this way without warning. I linked Derrick while asking Lexi to clarify. "Did Alpha Conners call?" Derrick said, "No... were we expecting him to?" I linked back, "No." Lexi smirked at me as she said it was Tate. Oh for the LOVE of god! WHO is Tate? I laughed way too hard when she told me it was Ted's brother.

I linked Matt, "You got all possessive on your mate because his brother hugged him." Matt was quiet for several moments then said, "That smell was Tate? He's home?" I said, "Lexi said this clusterfuck was his welcome home." Matt said, "Well f**k. At least I don't have to kill anyone." I said, "Killing the brother is frowned upon." Matt said, "Ted's family is really great. According to Ted, Tate was the rst one to tell him it was ok if he liked guys." I said, "How did he know?" Matt said, "Ted said he just knew. Thinks he could've seen him kiss a classmate. Who is an ex. I hope I never meet him." I laughed, "You'd clearly handle it really well." Matt linked, "Like you'd handle meeting the angel that was your mate's former bed buddy." I growled and shut our link. Lexi said she felt like Noah did this to punish her and Ted. Even Sally. For prank calls? That's insane. He could've shut off his damn phone or not answered. I didn't have answers, but I did know that Noah would be dead if he entered mine or any of my ally's territories. Lexi was trying to gure out who was helping him. Witches were a given. I'd offer Alpha Hammond but even in his crazed mind there's no way he gives a s**t about the hood. He's got enough problems without adding theirs. Lexi said that her people would never follow Noah. I hated the fact that she was wrong. If something happened to Heath, her people WOULD follow her. If Noah convinced her to be by his side... they'd follow him because she did. The very thought lled me with anger. I was trying to hold my need to claim her at bay. She didn't need that right now.

Lexi didn't agree with my logic. She said Noah wasn't a leader. He was a numbers guy. She thought somewhere the numbers told him he could win. His numbers were damn wishful thinking because no one would take her from my side. Alpha Conners wouldn't care that Lexi isn't marked. He knows she's my mate, and if he came to my aide. Everyone would. We'd bring her back from wherever Noah tried to take her. I couldn't stop myself from kissing Lexi when she was mine. Bolt and I both wanted to claim her. Kevin threw water onto the situation. "The pizza is at TeleTed's house. He's pacing waiting for Lexi according to Matt. I wouldn't know because I can't see him. Which is still freaking weird." I rolled my eyes. Matt couldn't have kept Ted busy for a little bit longer?

Lexi got up and I went downstairs. I believed Lexi, but I took a good sniff. I didn't smell any sort of drug in the house. Lexi came downstairs and we walked hand in hand to Ted's place. I had to stie my grawl when I arm reached out of thin air to pull me inside. Matt linked me, "This situation is f****d up." I said, "You're telling me? I am aware." Matt sighed, "Your dad is becoming VERY annoying. Now MY DAD is asking me about things. They act like you and I don't talk to each other and won't gure out what they are doing. Seriously this s**t didn't work when we were children. Why would it work as adults?" I linked back, "If you were still worried you might tell him something." Matt said, "No, I wouldn't." I raised an eyebrow, "You, Cameron, Nadine, Dad, and Reagan were all ready to do an intervention." Matt cringed, "Maybe." I said, "Not maybe. I'm sure with Cameron and you no longer being worried my dad feels like he's isolated in helping me. So, he's pulled in the man who always has his back."

Ted made sure I would be staying with Lexi tonight. Matt linked me, "If you need to deal with your dad, she can stay with us." I snorted, "I'm not missing time with Lexi to appease my father. I've got her." Ted looked at Matt in mock surprise that he'd linked me to ask Lexi about the smell of another man on him. Matt linked me, "Again.... I couldn't ask him. That would be insensitive. I'd look like an ass." Lexi told Matt that Tate wanted to meet him. I was just really happy that all this was working out for Matt and Ted. They would face discrimination in our world, but at least they had a strong support system around them. Matt linked, "Is it bad I'm glad Ted's brother is lethal?" I said, "No, I'm glad Lexi's brother is. Even though I SWEAR to you the man despises me." Matt said, "Despise... I'm not sure.... He wasn't all warm and fuzzy when we met him though." Ted started crying saying he wouldn't have gone to see Anne if not for Matt. Lexi cut him off pointing out that he would've gone to see his mother because she had to go meet with Heath. Mat linked me, "Bless her. What if we forge Sophia's signature on the annulment papers and bring Lexi into the pack to her rightful place? What's Sophia going to do? She can't ght it?" I said, "I'd like to do this above board, but I'm not saying no." Matt nodded. Ted realized that Noah had gone after his mom because they pranked her him. Matt linked me, "He's so BEYOND dead! This is about a few prank phone calls? Seriously? Haley is right. He's a damn troll!" I said, "Lexi thinks it's about something else too. She told me Anne thought she saw something. She said the rage portrayed didn't line up with how angry Noah would be about the prank calls."

Matt said, "That he would drug someone over prank calls and people are like... oh yeah... that sounds like Noah. Says entirely too much about the man. NONE of the things that says is good. I mean seriously, WHAT THE f**k?! Why is this a person who was in a position of power?" I said, "Lexi's family trauma bonded the three of them until Noah broke both bonds with the Scott siblings irrevocably." Matt frowned, "That couldn't have been the plan." I said, "No, I think the plan was for Noah to be with her, and either kill or reject his string. Then he nor Lexi would've met theirs, and they would have still been together." Matt said, "I mean... I'm glad that didn't happen, but ... what happened?" I replied, "Noah happened. He f****d up, and decided he wanted his string and Lexi. I think he thought he could have them both eventually." Matt raised an eyebrow, "That's.... unlikely. From what Ted's said about Sally... Hell Sally had enough strength to reject him. Lexi... she's a tough cookie, but she would never hurt Sally in that way. According to Ted when Noah did what he did Lexi was done with him. Even before Ted knew the reason, he said Lexi wouldn't even entertain the thought of Noah. Said she didn't even say his name. Whenever she saw him her disdain for him was clear." I said, "I don't think he really knows the real Lexi. Or he does and he believes his manipulations of her would win out eventually. He inadvertently gambled and broke everything he'd instilled in her with his lies." Matt said, "Well thank God. Ted said he always hated the two of them together."

Ted made them drinks. He glared at both Matt and I for just wanting a beer. We ate our pizza chatting about random things until Ted mentioned Halloween. Lexi stiffened for a brief moment before understanding lit in her eyes. She said she wanted to put something together for the kids. Matt linked me, "They are already really good at being the Luna and Beta male." I was so damn proud, and I didn't bother to hide it. Bolt said, "Mate will be an excellent mother." I smiled at the thought, "Yes, she will." I couldn't stop myself from kissing her. This would be a great thing. The kids would be so excited about it. I felt a utter in my chest that she wanted to include Nadine. She had no idea what it would mean to Nadine. Matt linked, "Sucks Nadine won't know that Lexi is your Luna. She's blubber for days about Lexi wanting her help." I said, "I know. When they nd out though, Nadine will still be touched." I explained with a heavy heart that the pack would need to think it was Ted's idea. It wasn't fair. To anyone. The pack deserved to know their Luna already cared about them and thought of them. It wasn't fair to Lexi because she could use this to bond with them. Instead she'd be in the shadows. Lexi was already planning everything in her mind. I smiled. She was so cute. The last time the kids did something like this my mother had been alive. Matt offered to let her come and participate. I hoped she could. Then I'd know she was safe. Maybe her mission would be over by the time they did everything.

Lexi politely declined. I sighed. Matt linked me, "Sorry man. I tried. Can Kevin and Kincade go?" I said, "No." Both of us stiffened when Ted talked about her sending out her SOS. Matt linked, "I hate this." I said, "Not more than me you don't." Lexi casually tried to slide it in that her missions wouldn't be too bad. Matt linked, "Oh good..." I linked back, "MISSIONS?!" Matt said, "Damn both you and Ted caught that." I growled, "She has to run.... Fast? She's already like the ash fast. What is her brother having her do?" Matt said, "You could ask?" I said, "She won't tell me. She's not even marked. I haven't been to the shroud. I can't ask because I WANT to keep her in the shadows until Sophia is not my wife. I feel like I just took out a gun and shot my damn self in the foot." Matt said, "I mean... maybe Ted could ask her." I said, "Don't you think he would've done that? He must know that he can't ask. If she can tell him she would." Matt frowned. He linked, "Ted said she didn't even mention it. I asked if she'd ever done that before. He said no." I frowned, "Then it's something he can't know because..." I trailed off and Matt said, "Because of me." Matt and I looked eyes, "f**k! What if she's going to be wiping out the coven Hammond is f****g working with?" Matt said, "Why would the hood care?" I said, "Sophia's territory is in danger. It's where their damn home is." Matt winced, "It does stand to reason. Not all the witches will be at the wedding. He could have Lexi taking on the outliers." I growled, "ALONE?!" Matt said, "Ted said she's the best." I growled, "Perfect. Just f****g perfect. Of course she's the best. I would be SO much happier about this if Kevin or Kincade could go." I said, "You could have them follow her." I said, "No, I can't. She'd lose them." Matt said, "One of them could try." I sighed, "That's true."

We talked for a while longer until both Ted and Lexi were comfortable that the other was truly ne. When we left, I told Lexi I'd wished she would take her guards with her. She told me if this was like the mission where she'd used her SOS, she would take them. I linked matt, "f**k! I think we are right. She just basically told me this mission she'll be her moniker. She's going to kill someone." Matt said, "While I wish someone else would do this. Good for us. Less of a headache. At least Sophia isn't giving us that additional headache. We don't need to worry about her borders because the hood is determined to keep her family in power. Wish we'd had that information oh gee.... four years ago." I snorted, "No joke." Lexi asked me to trust her. Her, I had no problem trusting. Other people who didn't want to die? Yeah, those people I had no trust in. They often fought dirty. She pointed out she was trusting me about the wedding. That was certainly one way to see it. The other was she relaxed because she remembered Haley would be there. Lexi didn't even bother to hide it. She said Haley wouldn't let anything happen to me because of her. That was true. Lexi wanted me to watch her too. I wanted to snort. Me and every other guest present. No one wanted the return of Alpha Conners without her. He was MUCH calmer with her around and when she was not injured. Lexi smiled and told me Haley would be harder to guard than I thought. Harder to guard? Her wolf would have her on lockdown. That's not hard. I'd imagine we'd be surrounding the fairies. Lexi said she'd pop away. Surly not when she wasn't drinking would she pop away from Alpha Conners. For anyone else that would be suicide. Even if she did, there were enough of us; I'd keep an eye on her.

Lexi saw her like a sister. I'd never let anything happen to Haley for that reason alone. Really the reasons to not let anything happen to Haley were endless. That was the Hackura. Alpha Conners, my mate, and it seemed the King of the Fairy's is now in his sister's life. Faerie was in a much more stable place now with King Aiden on the throne. He was very smart. He'd shored up allies, and the latest rumor was he was offering a liaison to the hood. I'd wondered if Lexi knew about it. King Aiden was making moves to be a strong King for Faerie. He wasn't even bothering to hide how powerful he was nor how powerful his sister was. Their little show with Alpha Lyons mate when the council had injured her... was still talked about. Both of them made it quite the show. Aiden basically announced that with his sister, anyone who came against him would lose their lives. The Fae were determined to be a strong powerhouse again. Something told me that with Aiden Holloran at the helm. They just might be. Lexi and I got ready for bed as thoughts in my head swirled. The werewolves were basically aligned with the Fae kingdom now. If Haley would protect her brother, Alpha Conners would as well. If Alpha Conners called on his allies we would too. Now the Hood may move to help the Fae. What was King Aiden preparing for? I couldn't keep my eyes open any longer.

I woke up to Lexi whimpering in her sleep. She yelled for her mother. I closed my eyes and pulled her closer to me. I trailed my ngers up her side, "Lexi...it's alright." Her whimpers turned to sobs. She was sobbing for Sally. She was beginning Noah to let her go. I sat up and shook Lexi. I begged her to wake up. I was about to go get some cold water to splash on her when she startled out of bed. She immediately called Haley to confirm Sally's location. I bit my lip when Haley said she hadn't been to sleep yet. If I laughed, Alpha Conners would hear me. Once Lexi hung up her hands were still shaking. She said she believes Sally and Derrick truly are mates. So did I. She said because of her dream she thinks if Sally didn't accept Derrick quickly, she thought Noah would get to Sally. I wouldn't let that happen to my Gamma. I would take Lexi's dream as a warning from the moon goddess herself. Sally could take her time, but she'd be very well protected until she was marked. Once she was then her protection detail could be just Opal and Willow again.

I would not let any harm come to Sally Quaid. I encouraged Lexi to call her brother about the other part in her dream. One look at Lexi and I could tell you there was one person in the world I could cut my family off for. It was her. If her parents cut their families off, it was for each other. I was worried that Lexi's thought process about isolating her parents was right. If it was.... That was one hell of a slow burn for revenge. I didn't know how to dig into Lexi's past, but something told me this was what was lurking in the shadows for her. Whatever hung over her family...? This was it. I couldn't lose her. Without her the rest meant nothing. She called her brother, and I linked Matt. "Are you awake?" Matt said, "I hate you." I linked, "We have lots to discuss. Someone possibly isolated Lexi's parents from their families. Enough that her father threw them out of the shroud. Neither Scott sibling remembers their family, but Lexi remembered the conversation being had that night. Seems to indicate they have family out here."

Matt said, "Or that there are two shrouds. Lexi's family created it for their people. If they were kicked out... they could just create a new one." I groaned, "f**k!" Matt groaned, "I'll get to the oce." Lexi and her brother hung up the phone and she went into hysterics. She wasn't wrong, their name was common. Their father's name even more so. I offered to help, but she was right. Heath would know I was looking. He'd probably come try to ght me. He seemed to be waiting for one mistake on my part. For some reason. Lexi and I took a shower. I wanted to take it further, but we both had a lot to do today. If I took her once, I wasn't going to leave. I walked her to her car and kissed her. I shifted and took off running. I knew that Kincade and Kevin would be with Lexi.