

Chapter 61: The Kiss

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Travis

The moment I'd woken up in this hospital, I'd known she was here., my mate Her smell alone had helped my wolf to heal. Every time the door opened, I'd hoped that it would be her, coming to find me, but it wasn't. I couldn't understand why her scent was so strong, but she never came to me.

That is until she'd walked out of a hospital room herself. When she'd clapped her hands at Luna Yara, I'd wondered about it, but then she hadn't spoken out loud and I figured she was mute. Doesn't matter to me. Once she has my mark, we'll be able to talk in the mind link. If she wants my mark, that is.

I know we're in chaos, but she barely even glanced at me when she came out. Maybe she thinks I'm like my old Alpha. I can have Noelle and Laney assure her that I'm not, if we ever get the chance.

I'm not sure that the chance that I get is the one I was hoping for, but when Luna Yara is taken and Noelle has to try and save the warrior who was protecting her, I get the opportunity I wanted to speak with my mate.

Of course, I'd been staring at her, my wolf, Ronyn, enamored with her beauty and her scent.

"Hi, I'm Travis," I say, walking up to where she's looking over a warrior. She glances up and smiles briefly before returning to her work.



"You're Piper, right?" I ask, knowing she can't speak.

She nods, not looking up. I begin helping her look over the injured as some of the warriors who were guarding the hospital are brought in. They were attacked and are unconscious, but they are alive. I prioritize them to be stitched up over some of the others with more shallow or already healing injuries.

"This one," I say, pointing out a warrior more injured than the others. She comes over, looks at his injuries and nods.

"You know what you are to me, right?" I ask quietly.

She looks at me, no smile this time. It's a moment before she nods.

"I'm not like my previous Alpha. I'm different. Noelle has already vouched for me to your Alpha and Luna, and she's your Beta female, or will be if your Beta ever has a chance to mark her," I say.

She doesn't say anything, of course, so we continue working, triaging the injured.

"I mean, I'd really like for you to give me a chance. Get to know me. I never thought I'd find my fated mate, and here you are. I guess I got lucky to be captured by your pack so I could meet you," I say, wishing that I could figure out what she's thinking.

"Travis, Beta Noelle wants to know if there is anyone more critical than the warrior who was bleeding out," Anna says, walking out and pulling off bloody gloves.

I look around, making sure I haven't missed anyone, then look at

Piper. "You haven't seen anyone else that critical, right?"

She shakes her head, no, and I look back at Anna. I see her eyes are unfocused and when they refocus, her eyes are sharp on me. I guess Piper told her that I'm her mate.

"There's no one more critical," I say.

She nods, then looks at Piper again, before turning back to the surgery rooms.

I work in silence for a bit, getting Piper what she needs to stitch up the most injured and talking to the warriors to hear what's going on. They've lost contact with the warriors who went after their Luna, which means they're so far away that they can't hear them.

Periodically, I see Piper mind linking the warriors, probably telling them what she's doing or going to do with them. I have no idea.

I sigh and I must have done it several times because Piper stops, turning to look at me and raising an eyebrow as if asking me what my problem is.

"This would just be a lot easier if I knew if you were willing to give me a chance or not. I have no idea what you're thinking, if you hate me, if you're scared of me, if you're as distracted by my scent as I am with yours. I just..." I sigh again. "I just wish I knew how you were feeling and if you're going to give me a chance."

The room goes quiet. I'm basically professing my desire to be with this woman in front of a group of her pack members who only know me as a warrior who was fighting against them a couple days ago. If

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they didn't know that she was my mate before, they do now. If she says she doesn't want to get to know me, I'll have to suck it up and deal with her pack members' condescension and judgement while I help them, but I don't see any other way around it. It's the truth, the not knowing is killing me.

She steps up to me and I watch her, wondering if she's going to slap me across the face. Instead, she leans in and presses her lips to mine. I close my eyes, feeling something inside me relax. The kiss doesn't last nearly long enough, but when she pulls back, her eyes are warm and kind.

"That's a good sign, right?" I ask her softly.

She smiles and nods her head at me. 1

"Okay. Okay, good," I say, returning her smile, my heart feeling lighter than it has in a very long time.

Warren POV

'Why can't I smell her?' I growl at Arric. We've been chasing Simon's pack for hours, slowly catching his pack members and killing them as we go. They're heading back to their pack, and I've sent some warriors to cut them off.

'It has to be the river. It must have muted her scent,' Arric says.

I hear the howl of return and attack, one after the other. We've reached Simon's pack lands.

More warriors come rushing out, but my adrenaline is still pumping

hard and fast in my veins. I need to find Yara. I have to get to her before that bastard hurts my mate.

'At least she's wearing our mark,' Arric says.

'That won't stop that asshole from doing other things to her,' I snarl. I will kill him, slowly and painfully for taking my mate.

Before I'd left the pack lands, I'd heard my warriors tell me that he'd attacked some of my already injured warriors, the ones protecting the hospital. I curse myself for not leaving my strong warriors in place to protect Yara. I'd thought with that many warriors, he wouldn't get through, but Simon's a sneaky bastard.

His warriors are ready to fight, but I don't have time for them. I need to find Simon and get Yara.

'Kill them!' I snarl, seeing Simon's Beta guarding the back of the packhouse. I don't have time to waste with this asshole, so we leap on him, Arric biting and slashing him. When the Beta pulls himself away from us, Arric rips a large chunk of flesh out of his back. We don't stop to finish him. My warriors will do that.

Arric rushes inside, his nose in the air.

'Where is she?' I growl.

I can feel Arric beginning to panic. He rushes past the women and children screaming in fear, rushing up the stairs to the Alpha floor, taking out anyone who tries to get in our way.

When I get there, there's a woman standing in the hallway.

"Are you Alpha Warren?" she asks.

Arric sniffs the air. Yara isn't here. He turns ready to go search the rest of the packhouse.

"Because if you are, the woman you're after isn't here."

I turn back and look at her. "The lady doctor, right? Yara?"

I shift, moving fast and slamming the woman against the wall at the end of the hallway, my hand on her throat.

"What do you know about my mate?" I snarl.

"I know he wants her. He has some place, not here, where he planned to hide her. I don't know where, but that's where he will have taken her," she says and I can smell her fear.

"Why are you telling me this?" I growl.

"Because he hurts me, especially when he's mad at her or you. I want you to take me with you. Please."

I step back, releasing her throat, realizing that she has faint bruises on her arms and her throat.

"What's your name?"

"Trena."

"Trena, you don't know where he took her?"

"No. I just know that he wouldn't bring her here. Not yet. He knew

you'd come for her."

She looks at my neck. "He won't be happy when he finds out she's marked already. He wanted to make her his Luna."

"Too bad. She's mine," I snarl, turning to go.

"Wait. Please. Take me with you. Please, don't leave me here with him."

I turn back to her. "Can you shift?"

She nods, yes.

"Come on then, you're with me. If this is a trap, or you try to betray me, my mate, or my pack, I won't hesitate to kill you."

She nods again and I leap over the banister, shifting as I go. I look up seeing her looking at me with wide eyes. Arric barks, telling her to hurry. She rushes down the stairs as I howl the retreat. We need to get back to the river. That's where I lost her scent. ⓘ



Cooper Author

*"The hunt for Yara continues."*

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