

Beauty and The Beta Chapter 1-6

I looked at the clock on my bedroom wall. I think I have delayed the inevitable for as long as I physically can. I should go to the packhouse to go and wish our pack's upcoming Alpha a happy birthday. The bane of my life. My brother's best friend. One day to be Alpha Miles. Today he will turn 17, and meet his Alpha wolf. In all honesty, he was egotistical enough, thinking the world revolved around him, without him adding to that by finally gaining his wolf. Not your run-of-the-mill werewolf either. Oh no, Miles Davenport was destined to be an Alpha, so he would have a strong and powerful Alpha wolf, only adding to his arrogance and strength.

The crazy thing is, Miles had once upon a time been one of my closet friends too. In my younger childhood... Friends, that kind of thing comes when your father is the Beta to the Alpha. The children spend a lot of time together, and become friends. My older brother, Jordan, became the wing-man to Miles. His closest friend and ally, who as his Beta when the time came, was only right. But as the years went on, the friendship between Miles and I changed.

Friendship faded as he grew into a more popular sports star of our school. At the end of the day, he was always going to be popular, he was the upcoming Alpha after all, but as one of the top sports stars too, he was idolized. As was my brother. All the girls in school flocked around them like they were pop stars or something, and it was bizarre. I was nothing more to him now but a source of amusement for him and his sports buddies. A geek. Not one of the beauty queens who followed him around. Simply someone to make fun of.

I had gone from enjoying time with my one-day Alpha, to hating him, in the space of a school year. He thought he was God's gift, and in all honesty, if he was, he is a gift I would return...

"Bailey!" I heard my Mum call from downstairs, telling me I was definitely running it close now for time. I know Jordan had already headed over to the packhouse a while ago with my Dad to meet his friend and our Alpha.

"I know." I yelled back, looking at the books on my desk, desperate to continue with the assignment I was working on. I would so much rather continue working on the assignment and gain the additional credit available, work toward going to the college I want to go to instead of going to a party for the big-headed bully, I got to consider almost family, considering he was the son of my Dad's best friend.

I stood from my seat, and walked to my mirror, adjusting my black skater dress I had chosen to wear today. Something plain and simple, easy to blend into the background, but a dress all the same if anyone asked why I hadn't made an effort. Along with my chunky black sandals, I looked presentable, not that anyone would be looking at me. Today, all eyes would be on the birthday boy, as they always were. He would make

sure of that. I flicked back my curly brown hair, before I walked out of the door, already dreading the hours that lay ahead...

My Mum pulled the car into the parking spaces outside the packhouse, while my younger sister Morgan was flicking at the curls around my head, simply trying to irritate me. She knew I would rather be anywhere but here right now, and was loving every last moment of it. "Aww, you want to go home Bailey-boo?" she teased.

"Stop you two, come on, your Dad is waiting inside. Let us go and find the birthday boy." Mum says, sounding cheerful, completely oblivious to the fact how horrendous this party had the potential to be. She, too, worshiped Miles. Having seen him grow up alongside my brother, she seemed to think the sun shone out of his rear-end. It had always driven me insane.

"He won't even notice us there." I muttered under my breath as I followed her up the steps of the back house, shaking my head at my sister and how overdressed she looked. She definitely looked like she was out to impress someone today. A small part of me wondered if she hoped she might be the fated mate of Miles. After all, he was meeting his Alpha wolf today. He will have shifted for the first time today, and today could potentially be the day he can sense his fated mate out there waiting for him! There had been so much buzz around school about this, so many of the girls were excited about the potential possibility they could be his fated mate. The one chosen for him by the moon goddess. The one destined to be with him. So many of them are desperate for it to be them. While there I was desperate for anything but. I could think of nothing worse! Yet, looking at the amount of effort my younger sister had made today, I am beginning to think she was one of the many she-wolves that was holding out that hope...

We walked through the corridors of the packhouse, and it was filled with various pack members. Today was a day of celebration within pack, the birthday of the upcoming Alpha. And not just any birthday, the day he came of age. The day he met his Alpha wolf. The walls of the packhouse were adorned with decorations, music was blaring from various speakers dotted around the multiple rooms.

"Ooff, sorry!" a giggling she-wolf said to me as she nearly knocked me off my feet as she knocked into me. I would rather be anywhere but here right now. This was far too hectic and far too loud for me. I simply glare at the back of the girl as she moves away from me, not a care in the world.

I followed my Mum and my sister, who was almost skipping as she walked, toward the main lounge area. I can only assume my Mum had mindlinked my Dad to let him know we had arrived, and he said they were there, or else we could spend all day looking around for them! It appeared almost every member of the pack had turned up to celebrate the birthday of Miles f**king Davenport.

The lounge area was laden with people, music truly blasting, and everyone seeming to have a good time. Everyone but me. I caught the eye of my brother, leaning against the wall of the lounge, the furthest away from the door we had just walked into. He nodded in my direction before simply turning away.

‘Could have made an effort, Bailey.’ he mindlinked. ‘It is a birthday, not a funeral, you know?’

I felt my heart sink at his words. Great, the insults were starting already, which meant it would only be a matter of time until Miles started too. The two of them seemed to like working together like that. Finding great enjoyment in harassing me. I was only a year younger than both of them, and had desperately hoped the name-calling and insulting would ease off as they got a little older, but if anything, they seemed to get worse. All because I wasn’t like the girls they were interested in, I was sure of it. I wasn’t like the other girls. Made myself an easy target, my Mum told me, all because I enjoyed studying. Liked reading and learning. Said, I only made it harder for myself. The plan was to make it easier for myself by finding a way out...

“Jordan says your dress looks like you are going to a funeral, Bailey.” Morgan teased, fluffing up my curls again. My long brown hair fell in thick, unruly curls down my back. They drove me mad at times. Especially when my brother and sister decide to mess with them.

“Oh well, I wore a dress, like you asked.” I snapped, moving away from them, feeling angry already, so tempted just to turn around and walk home, only to be pulled back by my Mum.

“We are going to wish Miles a happy birthday. You will stay for a while at least. I do not need to be explaining to your Aunt and Uncle yet again why you have walked out on a social event, Bailey.” Mum warned me, her tone sounding grumpy, I swear she had to have read my thoughts on leaving the party already. I am sure she hated having me as a daughter, likely wishing for one that was more sociable, and one that enjoyed being a part of everything, instead of one that would rather have her head in a book.

“Awww, Happy Birthday, Miles!” I heard my sister squeal from by my side. I swear she spoke at a pitch so high only dogs could hear. Goddess knows why she is so excited. It is only his birthday. He likely doesn’t even care, he never normally does...

As I looked up, his blue eyes were locked on me, I raised my gaze to meet his, and could see his eyes shift to a darker blue... was that his wolf? I see a snarl across his face as he suddenly storms from the room. What the hell was that about?

‘Get out here.’ Miles is suddenly mindlinking me, and I have to say he sounded far from impressed. That, combined with the angry expression on his face, told me something was off. Would he have rather I had not come? Well, he was not the only one...

'What?' I questioned, completely confused. Was he annoyed over how I had dressed too? Jeez, it was just a dress. Does it really matter? I would go home if it was.

'Outside now.' He demanded once more, sounding even more irritated this time, making me realize I had little choice but to follow his orders, so I snuck away from the ongoing party back to the doors of the packhouse.

Only to find Miles pacing along the bottom of the steps, looking a mixture of confused and angry. So why did he need me here? Someone to take his anger out on? I was not willing to be that, I was sure about that... Just as I was about to walk away, he looked up.

"F**king took you long enough." He snapped.

I frowned, unsure what this was all about, but it was making no sense to me as I looked down toward him from where I stood at the top of the packhouse steps. His blue eyes shifted to the dark blue once more, like they had inside, taking me by surprise. His wolf is clearly lingering...

"What is wrong, Miles? Do you want me to get Jordan?" I asked.

"No I do not! I do not want anyone knowing this." He snarls, a growl slipping from his lips, though whether that was aimed at me or whether his wolf was angry at him, I do not know...

"I don't think I understand..." I began.

"You soon will." He sneers, and I simply look to him in confusion. Nothing he says makes sense to me. Until he continues. "Only today did I realize. The thought makes me sick. Why our own moon goddess would play a trick like this on me, I don't know. I am an Alpha. A f**king Alpha. I deserve a strong mate. A beautiful mate to be proud of. Not some feeble pathetic wallflower."

My body trembles at his words. No. I had yet to gain my wolf. I did not know this yet. Why... Why him of all people? "I am your fated mate?" I question with a shaky voice. "Are you sure?"

"Are you f**king doubting me?" he yells. "And you won't be. The moment you have your wolf, I will decide when the time is right to reject you."

My heart twists and contorts at the thought. Rejection was meant to be the most painful thing possible. Why would he want to reject the mate chosen for him by our own moon goddess? Am I truly so repulsive?

Beauty and The Beta Chapter 2

Chapter 2 – Bailey

A Year Later

Yet another birthday party for our beloved upcoming Alpha. Ha. Not my beloved upcoming Alpha. I hated the f**ker. Breaking my heart without a second thought. What I had done to deserve that I had never got a proper explanation from him. Other than the frequent insults, of why would he want to be with someone like me? Did I look like Luna material to him? I had no clue. What the hell did Luna material look like in his eyes? Some blond bimbo, no doubt. They were the she-wolves he tended to spend his time with within our pack. The ones who worshiped the ground he walked on. That would do anything he asked of them. Ones that I highly doubted read much more than the work set of them at school.

“Bailey!” my Mum yelled at me from the stairway of our family home. “Will you hurry up?!”

“Do I really need to come to the party?” I responded. “I am telling you, Miles will not be bothered if I am not there!”

“Your Aunt and Uncle will be though. And I am not explaining to them again why you are missing.” My Mum continues yelling. “Do you not realize just how many events you have missed this year, all because you have your head in a book?”

“Yeah Bai-Bai. Such a geek. No wonder you have no friends.” My sister Morgan giggles from outside my bedroom door.

“P iss off.” I hissed. “I have friends.”

I stormed from my room, and down the stairs toward my waiting family. I planned to greet the birthday boy, not that he would care in the slightest. I know that he would rather not see me at all. And then I would sneak home.

“Ew, are you wearing that?” Morgan asked.

I looked down at the skinny black trousers I had on and the white tank top. Great. I can’t win. Nothing I wear is approved of by my sister, evidently named the fashion queen without my knowledge. Oh well, I am dressed and wearing it. I think it looked good with my chunky black sandals I had on...

I scowled at my sister and walked out of the door. “Are we going or not?” I snapped at them all, truly not able to wait for the following month when I leave to go to university. Get away from them, and this pack!

The party was well underway when we arrived, music pounding from the speakers as couples made out in every available space, so I averted my eyes as we walked through

the corridors of the packhouse to the lounge where we would no doubt find Miles reigning over his people. Being all important, like he was partial to considering himself.

‘Why are you here?’ Miles’s voice filled my mindlink, before I had even fully entered the room behind my parents.

Great. ‘I didn’t get a choice. Trust me, I would rather not be.’ I snapped back.

I was getting more than a little tired of the way he would treat me. Yes, he planned on rejecting me. Decided I was not for him, but he could have left it at that. I didn’t need treating like I was some sort of social pariah because of the fact he decided I was not right for him. I do not think I deserved that. I had endured enough bullying through my time in high school, for the fact I enjoyed my education.

‘Oh. Excuse me? Are you implying you were not going to come to the party of your next Alpha?’ Miles links with some serious attitude.

‘Miles, you just asked why I had bothered coming. Now you are asking if I was not going to come? Make your mind up.’ I argued.

‘Remember who I am Bailey. You are not above me. Never will be. Could have been equal to me at most had I seen you as suitable to be my mate, but no. You were beneath that honor.’ He sneers.

I felt anger racing through me. ‘And you think I would not have rejected you?’ I snapped, moving back toward the exit, not wanting to be here anymore. Until I felt a hand grabbing the back of my tank top, yanking me back.

My eyes darted upward to see the dark eyes of Miles. Sneering down at me. Our Pack’s upcoming Alpha. The most arrogant man I think I have ever met. One, thankfully, I did not have to be mates with any longer as the stupid f**ker had chosen to reject his own fated mate before even giving her a chance. “Going somewhere Bailey?” he asked, his voice full of spite.

“Well, I do believe you asked me why I was here, so I assumed you wanted me to leave.” I told him.

Miles bows his head down so it is level with mine, he inhales deeply, like he still enjoys the scent of me. He has done this numerous times of late, which I find quite bizarre. But, I ignore him as he tilts his head to look at me, “Hmm, I think my Mum and Dad may have something to say if you leave. Their clever little Bailey. Heaven forbid.” He presses his forehead against mine. “Just stay away from me, and do not spoil my fun.”

I shake my head in disbelief at him, as he stalks away. Did he even think for a moment I would be going near him if I could avoid it? I would rather be anywhere but near him!

"Bailey, why are you harassing my friend for?" I heard my brother, Jordan demand, as he suddenly approached, causing many people to turn around and look at me. Wonderful. Nothing like starting pack gossip is there. I am sure Miles would appreciate that!

"I wasn't harassing him, he came to speak to me. Asking why I had come." I told him, and my brother laughed. He is as much an idiot as Miles. Any of my friends who have big brothers hate how protective they are. Me? No, my big brother is the one leading all the bullying and being a total di ck to me. He finds great embarrassment in the fact his younger sister is far from being one of the popular group, and is, in his words, 'far too into her books'. I think, in all honesty, my entire family found me, in one way or another, a huge embarrassment.

"Well, he has a point. Not like you will be joining in with the celebrations. You will probably be sitting in a quiet corner somewhere reading." He teases.

"Well, it is certainly more intellectually pleasing than any of you would be." I smirked at him as I walked away from my brother who was standing looking confused. I am sure he had no clue what I meant. The scary thing is he will be the next, pack Beta. Heaven help our pack. Between him and Miles they only had one brain cell between them, and that was one that they shared, I am sure of it! And even then, I think it was rechargeable and started losing power and knowledge at a rapid rate! They only graduated high school because they paid people to do their work for them.

As I snuck away, out of the busy lounge to the top of the stairway, where I hoped to hide out for as long as possible, I heard footsteps behind me. I quickly turned, hoping it was simply someone on their way to their bedroom or even to one of the spare bathrooms on this floor. But, sadly, luck was not on my side tonight. No. Miles was following me. Eyebrows raised and looking quite irritated.

"Oi. I want to talk to you." he demanded.

"You asked me to go away a minute ago, didn't you?" I asked him.

"Don't think so, think it was more a case of why you were here." Miles says with a smirk. Sitting on the top step with me.

"Miles, you have the whole pack here for your birthday, I am sure whatever you need to speak to me about can wait." I shrugged, desperately craving peace, which, considering the pounding beat of the music playing, would be difficult.

"No. Why didn't you tell me you were leaving?" he questions, like he is irate at the fact I had not let him know. Why would I let him know?

“Why would I? We aren’t friends, Miles. You also are not my Alpha yet. It was arranged with my parents, me and your Dad, as Alpha.” I explained to him, unsure why this would even bother him. If anything, I would think he would be glad to get rid of me.

“You are going away though.” he murmurs.

“That is generally what happens when you go to college or university. Yeah.” I said with another shrug.

“There wasn’t one closer to home?” he hisses. “Because it seems to me you picked the one furthest away.”

“What does it matter to you? You hate me. I won’t be here, You get your wish of being rid of me.” I snapped, truly sick of him trying to dictate to me what I should and shouldn’t be doing. I had worked hard in school, so I could do this. My parents had spoken to my Aunt and Uncle, the Luna and Alpha of our pack to allow me special permission to go to a university out of state to study, saying it was what I had dreamed of. I had nothing holding me back. And, with the fact Miles did not want me for his mate, or his Luna, I truly did not. Not that any of them knew of that. That was our own secret.

Even despite the pull to him as my mate since my wolf had arrived, I still found him truly repulsive. He sickened me. Though, the pains when he slept with the many she-wolves that visited his bed, made it even easier to detest the man that he had become. I still had no clue what I had done to deserve this treatment from this man, other than not being one of the popular group. But, I knew I deserved better than him.

Miles glanced at me, momentarily a thoughtful look passed over his face, almost caring, before a hardness replaced it. “That much is true. No more having to see the disappointing failure the moon goddess made of mating me to you. At least not for a few years. Who knows, perhaps you will meet someone while there. I suggest you do. That way you won’t have to come back, because, I, as Alpha, will be looking for my Luna.”

“Miles, I honestly do not care if you find someone else.” I told him, going to stand and head home, not wishing to spend another moment in the same place as him.

As I went to move away, he grabbed my hand, pulling me to him, so I was once more sitting level with him on the top step of the first floor landing of our packhouse. “Always so righteous aren’t you Bailey? You say you don’t care? We will see. Well, this will be on my terms. I, Miles Davenport, reject you, Bailey West, as my fated mate...” he began, and my head began to whirl as his words sunk in. The realization and excruciating pain of what was happening becoming too much for me...

Beauty and The Beta Chapter 3

Chapter 3 – Bailey

Three Years Later

I drove the long road down to pack. I hated this drive. It was like returning to hell for me. Lotus Shadow Pack. My very own version of hell. Though, three years away, studying had been truly amazing. Transforming myself into the woman I should always have been. Confident. Self-assured. Brave. Just me. And now a fully qualified teacher.

As a she-wolf, you spend so many years of your life being told your focus is finding your fated mate. Settling down with them and creating a strong matebond. A love. A family. Well, once I had come to accept that my naïve, teenage dreams would never surface, thanks to the moon goddess pairing me with a mate so incapable of loving anyone other than himself, I decided that my focus would be my career. My education had always been something I took great pride in. I loved to learn, and I had decided that I wanted to pass that gift along. I no longer cared what others thought of me. And, while at university, it felt so wonderful to be surrounded by others who felt the same way. I finally felt like I fit in somewhere.

And, I believe that is what allowed me to become the person I was meant to be. However, now, I had to return to my pack, at their orders. The agreement was, once I had completed my degree, I would return home. Unless, of course, I had found my fated mate. But, I knew within my heart, that was never to happen. For, my fated mate sat at home. Lording it over our pack. Acting like he was the best thing since sliced bread. Sleeping with any she-wolf that came near him, from what I heard, having rejected me.

I pulled up at our guarded pack gates. Harley, one of our pack warriors, currently on guard duty, stepped forward to my car window. "ID" he ordered.

I frowned at him. I do not think I have been asked for ID before when returning home, even in all the times I have visited home, though in all fairness, those visits have been few and far between. My visits were only when they were required of me. I had grown to loathe this place, and coming back had become less of a priority for me over the time I was away...

"Harley, it is me. Bailey." I explained, trying not to smile at his mistake.

Harley looked at me closer. "Sh it. Sorry Bailey, didn't really recognize you there. You changed your hair. And you aren't wearing your glasses. You look good." He says with a shrug, quickly looking away, clearly embarrassed by his faux-pas.

I smirk at his response. Yes, my hair is somewhat tamer than it used to be. The curls straightened out, and my hair now neat and sleek down my back. My glasses I had worn for reading had been long gone. Having got my eyes fixed with laser eye surgery whilst away. Plus, I now wore a little simple make-up to accentuate my features. Nice to know somebody has noticed a difference...

"No problem. You still need ID?" I asked him.

He grins at me. "I think I know who you are. Nice to see you." he nods at me in acknowledgment as the gate opens for me. "Maybe catch you around while you are back." He adds as I begin to drive away.

I smiled in response, I guess there would be nothing to stop me catching up with any guy I wanted to now. Not that I was really bothered right now... but it was not like I had a fated mate to wait for any longer. And it wasn't like Miles was making a point of staying single. Every time I had returned home, he had had a different she-wolf on his arm. Parading them through pack like a prized possession, only to have traded her in by the time I returned on my next visit. He was turning into quite the lothario. And quite a joke in my eyes.

I set off along the quiet, familiar roads of our sweet old pack. The evening sun was settling in the sky as I moved my car down the route to my family home. No doubt my Mum would be there waiting for me, perhaps my Dad, if he was in from work by now. My brother and sister, I was unsure. They still both lived at home with my parents, but were back and forth to friends' homes and my brother was looking to move into the Beta suite in the packhouse soon enough, in preparation for taking on the role from my father when the time came. Either way, they rarely bothered to rush home to see me when they knew I was returning. I don't think seeing me was at the top of their priority list...

I pulled my car up on the street in front of my familiar family home. I could not believe I was home. Stuck back here. The dread within my stomach churned heavily at the prospect of many years stuck here. Miserable and unhappy, with no way out, now my fated mate had rejected me. Not that anyone other than Miles and I knew of that. No. He had decided he would be considered weak if others knew an Alpha had gone against the powerful Moon Goddess's choice. So, this was our secret. Or he would make me pay in ways I did not want to imagine, apparently.

And, in all honesty, I did not want to think of it. He had allowed me to go away to do my degree. Doing the final bit of convincing when my Uncle, the current Alpha, and Miles's father, along with my parents were on the fence. Or, so he said. How true that was, I would never likely know the truth, but it had been for that reason, and that alone I had chosen to do as he had asked.

If he had done the things he said, then he had allowed me to fulfill my dream of gaining my degree of teaching away from pack. To allow me to be just me, not the daughter of the pack Beta. And I have thrived because of it. But, now, I had to return. Back to where I belonged. And, while I may have gained my degree, I had no real future prospects. I was likely stuck here.

I stepped from the car, determined more than ever to find work, as I heard my Mum's voice. "Bailey!" she greeted me from the porch steps, a big smile upon her face. "You look beautiful sweetheart."

I smiled back at her, as I moved toward the front door. Only to see Miles leaving the house next door to ours. The Alpha home. Could I have timed my arrival home any worse?

His eyes met mine, giving me a dark stare before looking at my Mum. "Hi Aunt Brianna. You didn't say she was home today."

Mum smiled at Miles like she thought the world of him, though most of the time she generally did. "Ah, I think it slipped my mind. Bailey is home for good now, Miles. How wonderful is that?"

Once more, Miles gave me a dark stare. "Hmmm. Truly wonderful." he said with some serious contempt in his voice.

'You stay out of my way unless I say otherwise, you understand?' Miles mindlinks me, as he moves toward his car.

"Are you not going to speak to him Bai?" Mum tries. "He will be Alpha this time next year, you know?"

"Oh it doesn't matter, Aunt Brianna. Bailey will be excused this time. I am sure she is tired from her drive back home. But no doubt I will be seeing her around. And yes, she will have to get used to me as her senior. Her Alpha." He says with a sneer, and at his words my stomach twists into knots. I don't think I can stay here... I not only need to find work, I need to find work away from my pack, so I can move away to get away from my psychotic Alpha and ex-mate!

Beauty and The Beta Chapter 4

Chapter 4 – Bailey

I sit out in the garden drinking my morning coffee, with my laptop open scrolling desperately through the job vacancies, when I hear a deep growl to my left, causing me to swirl my head to look. Miles was resting his head on the garden fence from next door, overlooking our back garden, to where I was sitting. Watching me intently, the look upon his face was one of sheer disgust...

I had no clue how long he had been standing there, or what had angered him to the point of growling, but he had made me jump. "F**king hell, Miles." I snapped, giving him a dark scowl. I had done well the past week since arriving and stayed out of his way. Managing to ensure I avoided all pack events, and ensuring I dodged any places he was likely to be. Yes, it meant I spent an awful lot of time in my bedroom at home, but I would rather do that than have to deal with him.

Today, the sun was glorious, and I thought it would be nice to take my breakfast outside while I looked for jobs online. Sitting on the patio furniture we have in the back garden,

under the warmth of the morning sunshine, my coffee was enjoyable, all until this st*pid f**ker disturbed me. I shook my head in his direction, wondering why he had snuck up on me. He had so many more places he could be...

"Who do you think you are cursing at?" Miles snarled.

"The creep who did exactly that. Crept up on me out of the blue for no good reason." I rolled my eyes at him in disgust, only to see this seemed to anger him further. Though, I think anything I did would anger Miles. He seemed to hold some serious resentment towards me at the moment, but should I really expect anything less?

"I will come over there and deal with you, Bailey." He hissed.

"Deal with me?" I questioned his choice of words. "Deal with me how? You asked me to stay out of your way. That is what I am doing."

"What are you doing?" he chose to ignore my words, and looks to my laptop screen instead, so I slowly shut the screen down, so he would be unable to see. I do not want him knowing I am applying for work outside the area. I would not put it past him to stop it from happening. He seems to be being deliberately nasty of late, so I truly do not know what he would sink to, in order to be nasty towards me...

"Nothing of your concern."

"I am your Alpha. So, all that goes on in my pack is my business." He tells me with a smirk.

I shook my head with a smirk back, "Hmm, not quite Miles, you are not. Your Dad is still Alpha, so don't be getting ahead of yourself."

An angry look flared across his face once more. His handsome features contorted in fury. He did not like having people disagree with him. But I was not about to have him dictating to me...

"Just because you were my mate once upon a time does not give you the right to talk to me however you please, you know." Miles snarls.

"She is your mate?" a voice questions, causing us both to whip our heads round, only to see the unexpected face of Miles's younger brother Ellis.

I look at Miles with despair now, my heart pounding within my chest and my palms becoming sweaty. Wondering what the hell he planned to do now the secret we had kept between us for so long was out now... how had neither of us heard him coming?

"No she is not. She rejected me." Miles said coldly, looking at me as if daring me to disagree with him.

Wait... he was making it out like I had rejected him? I looked at Miles in shock, but the look within his eyes was like he dared me to argue.

"You rejected your Alpha? What kind of fool are you?" Ellis asked as his eyes looked me up and down like a piece of dirt. Sadly, a look I am more than used to. "Do Mum and Dad know?"

Miles shakes his head. "No. I don't want them to either. It would worry them too much, Els, please do not say anything. Bailey and I were never a good match, so perhaps she made the right choice. Please for me?" Miles is pleading with his brother, and part of me wonders if he is worried what his family would do if they learned of his decision to go against the Moon Goddess. As an Alpha, this was almost unheard of. Blaming me was gutless. But, if that is what he wants to do, then let him.

'Do not even think of saying anything different.' Miles's voice reverberates through my mind via the link. 'Or you will learn to regret it. That degree you love so much could easily be destroyed.'

I took in the words Miles had said, and the sad thing is, I do not doubt them. I would not put it past him finding a way to have my degree removed. Having me stuck within our pack. He would be Alpha soon enough, and he would be the one able to dictate what I did... I had little choice but to do as he asked. Yet i felt anger racing through my veins...

I lifted my laptop and stood from my seat. "I will talk to you however I like Miles. When you seem to think you can treat me however you like." and with that I walked away from the two brothers, both looking at me, walking away in shock. I know I would come to regret what I had just said, but I truly no longer cared...

Beauty and The Beta Chapter 5

Chapter 5 – Asher

I pace the corridor of the packhouse for yet another night. Sleepless nights are becoming the most repetitive thing for me now. Almost tiresome... or they would be if I could actually f**king sleep! Nightmares plaguing my dreams were the thing stopping my sleep... making me fear sleep... visions of that night... reoccurring time and time again... the rogues invading our pack lands... us losing control... and them hurting my precious Isla. My beautiful Isla.

Fate had barely brought us together before snat ching us apart... life could be cruel... and it made me relive that night, time and time again through my dreams... the pain as her life ebbed away... the inability to be able to save her... the pain in her eyes... the fear... it made me hate life... hate fate. And now, now it makes me fear sleep. Which is what found me pacing these godforsaken corridors every night...

“Alright Beta!” Marc, one of our young warriors, greeted me enthusiastically, telling me he had likely been out spending time with friends. Especially returning to his room at this early hour of the morning.

“Hey Marc.” I smiled, raising my eyebrows questioningly at him as he stumbled toward the stairs. He was barely able to walk in a straight line.

“I not been dinking, honest boss.” He mutters with a chuckle. These guys make me smile. How could they not? Barely past shifting age, and newly trained warriors. They clearly decided to drink themselves to the point of stupor. Which, considering we are werewolves and alcohol has little to no effect on us in small doses, they had to have been drinking excessive amounts! Likely coming up with new and different drinking challenges to see who could drink the most, that was what they so often did.

But, I can’t say I had not done the same when I first shifted and on many a younger night with friends. It was all part of growing up for many, wasn’t it? Especially for our warriors, I knew that, having helped many a drunken warrior home in the past. And I am sure they had had a good night and many good memories to look back on... if they could actually remember any of them, of course!

“I never said a word Marc.” I gave him a nod as he fell up the stairs.

I continued my pacing of the corridor only to hear a few more drunken voices approaching, I assume likely Marc’s drunk friends. And, I, not in the right frame of mind to have to deal with anyone else tonight, ducked into the short corridor off the main hallway of the packhouse. Leading to my office. I could sit in here until they passed and then make my way back to my room, and hopefully, I could attempt to gain at least a few hours’ sleep tonight, so I would be at least partially functionable tomorrow...

“What are you doing down here?!” a voice made me jump awake from my sleep, making me stir, and realize just how uncomfortable I was. My whole body ached. The crick in my neck felt like it had been locked in a vice... Though, as I moved, it was only then I realized I had fallen asleep sitting at my office desk. I had been asleep collapsed over my office desk since the early hours of the morning when I came in here to hide from the drunken warriors...

I sleepily raised my eyes upward, only to see my best friend, and the pack Alpha, standing next to my desk looking more than a little concerned, looking down over me. “Asher?” he questioned. “Why are you sleeping down here? This has to be the third or fourth time in a matter of weeks. And don’t get me started on all the time prior to that.”

I sighed. Just what I need, him on my case. The third degree once again. Am I ok? Do I need some help? Support? That is likely what Caleb was about to start with... like always. He couldn’t help it. Though, I didn’t want to sound ungrateful. He was my closest friend after all, and he did just care. But, sometimes, some people just needed

their space! It wasn't like he could help... he couldn't stop my suffering... this has been going on too long now...

"Was struggling to sleep, so I came down to work. I am guessing I must have crashed." I told him. Not quite the truth, but it would do...

Caleb didn't need to know that my sleep was so badly disturbed that I struggled to sleep every night. That my nights were so messed up I hadn't slept properly since Isla had left...

"Is everything okay, Asher?" Caleb asked, and I could hear the concern dripping from his voice, like it so often does of late. "Eden said she has been worrying about you... that you just haven't seemed yourself since the rogue attacks began. She said you seem so distant. So withdrawn."

I shook my head with a disgusted roll of my eyes. So, they had been discussing me? Do they think that is acceptable? Yes, Eden may be his mate, and the Luna of the pack, as well as my friend, but I do not need to be some sort of sympathy case that needs to be sat and discussed between them over their evening meal! I am fine! I am the pack Beta for f**k's sake. I focused my eyes upon my friend, a dark glare hopefully saying all I needed to.

"Caleb, you may be a friend, but please, for the love of g od, f**k off. I am fine. Tired, yes. Stressed, yes. We have been dealing with rogue attacks regularly until lately. We need to work on improving the pack, which is what we are working on doing. It doesn't come easily. It takes time. It takes energy and effort. So yeah, I am stressed and tired. Is that not my f**king job?" I snap, knowing I am already overstepping the mark talking to my Alpha in that way. He knew I had lost my mate because of these rogue attacks too, so you would think he would have shown at least a little understanding... but I wanted to continue going... needed to keep functioning or else I had nothing...

Caleb looks to me with a shake of his head. "Fine. Go get showered. You look like a f**king state. We have a meeting in half an hour."

Beauty and The Beta Chapter 6

Chapter 6 – Asher

A shower later and a couple of coffees down, and I felt slightly more human, or as human as a werewolf can feel on next to no sleep...

"Right Ash, we need to sort this sh it out." Caleb's voice was sounding more than a little stressed out, telling me I was in for more than a fun day.

"What sh it now?" I asked with a deflated sigh. I am sure we had dealt with everything that needed doing yesterday.

“Quit sounding like you are overworked.” Caleb gave me a dirty look. “My Dad’s birthday party for a start. Plus, Eden is on my case about the teacher for school. We still need to replace Eloise.”

I do recall him mentioning needing to re-advertise for a new teacher, but I had thought Eden may have dealt with that. Being Luna, and a mother, I thought she may have wanted to be involved with those sorts of tasks. Evidently I was wrong. As for his Dad’s party, I think he was more than capable of sorting out that himself, or his Mum was. Seriously, is it my job to do everything around here?!

“And you are doing what exactly?” I question, feeling more than a little pissed off.

“Alpha duties.” Caleb says with a smug smile. Alpha duties knowing him would be sitting at his f**king desk with his feet up enjoying a coffee. Lazy f**ker. Delegating all his work to me, I am sure that is all he does.

“Well, I am sure your Dad would rather you took a part in arranging his party, or even his wife?”

“It will keep you busy.” Caleb said to me with a smile, and I knew then the reason why he was giving me the responsibility of the job. He was trying to find ways to occupy my mind. Something he had been doing since Isla had passed away. Something I did not need doing for me, yet something he and his mate seemed to find the incessant need to do. I truly wished they would stop...

The loss of a mate is a pain like no other, but I did not need treating like I was broken. Incapable of functioning any longer. “I do not need keeping busy Caleb.” I snapped, standing to walk from the office, needing to get away from my friend before I said something I regretted.

“Ash, come on, please, I am trying to help.” My best friend calls out to me.

“Cal, come on, if this is about Isla, she has been gone nearly seven years this year. I do not need keeping busy. I am doing that myself. I am Beta, that keeps me busy in itself. If I needed help I would f**king ask for it, okay?”

I saw the concern on his face, and it did nothing but irritate me. The same concerned expression I see on the face of my other friends, or my parents... the elder women in the pack... all feeling concerned for my well-being because I lost my mate. Worried I was falling apart. Worried about my heart... my soul. I got tired of sympathy. I didn’t need it. It did not bring back my mate. It didn’t make me feel any better. If anything, it made me feel worse...

“Ash, you aren’t okay though. We can see that. You are withdrawn, you are angry. Moody. Isolated. Borderline depressed...” Caleb looks to me with worry.

"That is your expert medical opinion, is it? Wasn't aware you'd been studying to be a doctor as well as being the pack Alpha, I must have missed that!" I said sarcastically, with a shake of my head at my friend, truly not wanting to deal with all of this right now. "Look, if you actually want me to help with sorting your Dad's birthday, you know I will, he is my Uncle, after all. As for the teacher, I can put another job advertisement out, but we had no response last time. So I think we are going to be struggling with that, unless you want to look out of area."

"We may have to consider that if there are no available teachers within the local packs." Caleb agrees, and I know that would be something we need to consider as the necessity for a teacher was becoming urgent.

"I will sort the advertisement out again, but I will consider one for further afield too." I told him, hating the idea of strangers within our pack, but we want a good teacher for our school. That has always been the case, and unfortunately this time there is none within our own pack that have decided to train.

"Okay. And I am sorry, Asher. I just worry about you." Caleb comes and puts his hand on my shoulder, so I give him a friendly nod. I guess he means well, even if he irritates the hell out of me.

I can't help the darkness that has clouded my life since I lost my mate. And I cannot make it go away. I have tried, numerous times. It appeared it was here to stay. The only thing keeping me going was my job. My pack. They relied on me. And that gave me a purpose. A reason to get up each day. But, the dark thoughts plaguing my mind and the mind of my wolf, Zion, were almost like a curse upon my being. They held me down. Almost suffocated me. Especially when I was alone. Yet, I preferred to be alone. The pain I felt was almost addictive.

There was no other way to describe it. I think I almost enjoyed the pain I felt. I enjoyed the darkness that lingered over me now. It was who I had become. The Asher I had been was gone. He was gone the moment Isla's life was torn from her. The moment she was torn from me. The young, carefree, happy, joker always laughing and joking with pack members was long gone. Replaced with a withdrawn, isolated, lonely guy who felt down most of the time. Avoiding interaction with pack members whenever he could, and now had a reputation for being moody and snappy... Gone was the happy, handsome Beta, leaving more a moody, f**king monster that nobody wanted to be around...