

Tests and Questions

Alpha Lucien drove me to the pack hospital. He said rumors and gossip were already coating around about me and he wanted to keep me from being overwhelmed. I appreciated it. Though, it seemed people knew his vehicle because they pointed and talked to each other as we drove through town.

It was ne. It's something interesting. Pack wolves loved interesting things happening in their community. If Queen Bellamy hadn't heard of a pack born wolf who never changed, then I bet I was probably the only one.

We stopped in front of a tall building and Alpha Lucien let me out of the back of his SUV. When he got in the doors of the hospital, he talked with the woman at the admissions desk politely and asked her to have someone move his car. She seemed really happy to do whatever he said and told him a room number.

My nose itched from the antiseptic scent of the hospital. He led me through several hallways before stopping and motioning to an open door. The wilder side of my nature kept urging me to run. I had to force it down and walked into the room.

Alpha Lucien sat in one of the chairs on the side of the room. He looked at me thoughtfully. It was the rst time I'd been alone with him.

"A few years ago, a friend of ours did a rune reading on you. She told us you weren't to blame for whatever happened with your old pack. Bellamy told me she wants to try to get you connected to the collective if we can. I still want you to consider joining Lune Rouge when you're healed." He said.

If they could help me wake Heather up, I'd be more than happy to join the pack. I wouldn't stop bugging her until she joined them. I knew she'd feel what I did when she got up. This was our home.

The door opened and a woman came in holding a le folder. She greeted Alpha Lucien, then turned her focus on me. She seemed fascinated.

"I'm Dr. Warren. There are some questions I need to ask you for your paperwork, Miss Wolf." She told me.

She opened the le and pulled out a folded strip of paper with numbers 0-9 on it and set it on the oor. Then, she put out a paper with 'yes' and a paper with 'no' on it. She came prepared.

"I have an alphabet one, but this room isn't really big enough. It would take entirely too long to get answers if we had you spell everything out. I'll keep my questions to things you can answer with what I've provided. The spirit healer is running late, so I gured we had time for this." Dr. Warren smiled.

I put my paw down on the 'yes'. Alpha Lucien sat forward and took more interest in what was going on. Even with this little bit, I could tell them a lot more.

"First, I need your birthday. Give it to me in day, month, year order, please."

Looking over the numbers, I started indicating the right ones in the right order. She nodded as she wrote down the information. Alpha Lucien was typing things into his phone as well, probably for his own les.

"Do you know what year it is?"

'No.'

"Do you have any indication of how long since you were human last?" She asked.

That took a little thought. I could simply answer yes, but I knew it would lead to another question. I could just answer that question and get this moving. I tapped the one and the nine. It was on our nineteenth birthday.

"Since you were nineteen. It looks like you'll be twenty-three in about a week, so around four years."

"That tracks with our information. She was rst reported in early November four years ago." Alpha Lucien told her.

"When did you leave your pack, Miss Wolf?" Dr. Warren asked.

I tapped the one and the seven. Then I remembered, we left a few days before our eighteenth birthday, so I wasn't wrong, but I wasn't as correct as I could be. I tapped the 'no' paper, then the one and eight.

"So either seventeen or eighteen. That gives me a better idea, thank you. Have you ever been pregnant?"

'No.'

"Have you met your mate?"

I tilted my head at that. Why would they need to know? It didn't have anything to do with my physical health. Not really.

"Did you understand the question?" Alpha Lucien asked.

'Yes.'

"There are several mate bond related issues that need to be taken into consideration. Plus, having your mate can help heal a multitude of conditions. I need to know if we should be looking for someone. Have you found your mate?" She replied.

They couldn't contact Michael. We broke our bond with him. It was breaking the bond that put us in this situation. I couldn't stop the small whine coming from me. I hated it, but the dream last night left my emotions raw and exposed.

'Yes.'

"Miss Wolf?" Alpha Lucien said quietly. "Did he reject you?"

I whipped my head up and looked at him. That whine could've meant anything. It could've meant my mate died.

How did he know I was rejected? Could he really read me so well? He was the one who knew I couldn't change, now he knew I was rejected.

"My rst mate rejected me, too. Even after the physical pain of rejection goes away, there's always the emotional pain that makes it a hard question to answer. We won't try to nd him. If he didn't want you, he doesn't deserve you." He told me.

The words were like the words Alpha Larson used. This time, though, it wasn't that Michael didn't deserve me because I wasn't enough. It was that he didn't deserve me because I was better than him.

It was a relief to hear him say that. I worried he'd think it was because of me like my last Alpha did. I don't know what kind of woman would reject a man like Alpha Lucien, but I was glad he found Queen Bellamy.

A memory came back. It hadn't even registered the last couple of times I heard the pack name. Wendy was talking about trying to get an older, unmated Alpha. Lune Rouge... that was one of the packs Lyd was applying to! I remembered Heather joking with her that Wendy could end up being her Lunal! Lyd could be here!

I jumped up and ran to the door. I needed to nd her. I scratched at the door and whined. Why did they have to have knobs that needed hands to work? Lyd could wake up Heather. They were best friends. Her wolf was my only friend.

"Calm down, Miss Wolf. Did you remember something important?"

I ran back and pounced on the 'yes' paper. Alpha Lucien looked up at Dr. Warren. She sighed a little and smiled tightly.

"Is it something that needs to happen immediately, or can we nish our visit before you go handle it? The Alpha worked hard last night making sure we could get you in to see a doctor and a spirit healer immediately." She told me.

Dr. Warren was right. I could nd Lyd later. This was important, too. I was being rude. I went back to where I was sitting before and sat down, then nodded to her.

"May I ask a question, doctor?" Alpha Lucien asked.

"Of course, Alpha."

"Miss Wolf, were you banished from your pack?"

'No.'

"Thank you." He replied and typed it into his phone.

"Have you ever been wounded by human weapons?" Dr. Warren asked.

'No.'

The questioning continued, using a number line and yes/no answers. When she was nished, the doctor picked up the papers and put them into the le folder on the counter. She had me stand and examined me from the oor.

It was a pretty standard exam... I guess. She touched and pressed parts of me, and looked in my mouth, nose, ears, and eyes. Dr. Warren went back to the counter and wrote some things down.

"She looks completely healthy. No broken bones that healed wrong. Everything's right where it should be. Healthy coat, teeth, eyes... as a werewolf should be. We can put her through some internal scans, but I'd want to wait until the spirit healer sees her. The nurses just linked me that she's nearly here. I'll go set up the scans." Dr. Warren said.

"Thank you, doctor." Alpha Lucien replied with a smile.

She bowed and left the room. We waited in silence. Not that I could really strike up a conversation, but he didn't seem to have a lot to say either.

The door opened and another woman came in. She was short with light brown hair and a friendly face. She smelled like magic. There was none of the rotting smell the witch yesterday had, so I was more than happy not to kill her.

"Hello, Alpha, Miss Wolf. Let's see if we can get you a better name and assess the damage you have." She smiled. "My name is Patty, don't ask what it's short for."

Alpha Lucien chuckled. Poor thing. She must have been given a terrible name by her parents.

Patty approached me and put her hands out so I could sniff her. I appreciated that, but I already knew what she smelled like. Smoke, herbs, and magic.

"I'm going to touch you now. I just want you to relax. I haven't done this much on someone who couldn't talk back or who wasn't part of the pack. Without the connection, I might not get as much from you as I have from other wolves in the past. I take it you contacted the Ursa, Alpha."

"Bellamy is contacting Clover right now. Magnus is still at school with Kay, so we would have to wait for them to come for winter break. The others don't understand the internal language we speak. Maybe Derrick could try, but he hasn't worked with shapeshifters in animal form before. We know Clover would be the best option, with her being a shapeshifter witch." He told her.

Patty knelt and put her hands on me. One on top of my head and one over my heart. She took slow deep breaths. I didn't feel anything.

Something prodded Heather and she stirred but went back to sleep. I got excited. This woman's magic could touch Heather. I tried to calm myself.

"I want you to focus on your name. I'm not well-versed in the internal language of shapeshifters, but we'll see if we can gure out your name. It'll be better than calling you 'Miss Wolf' all the time." She chuckled.

I did what she said and focused on my name. Please understand me. I didn't mind being called 'Miss Wolf', but I wanted to have people call me by my name.

"Sorry, it's just barks and howls to me. Dax can understand some animal spirits, but he's on vacation with his wife. They won't be back in town until after the new year." Patty said and stood up. "There aren't any spirits surrounding her, so there's no one to tell me anything else about her. Perhaps Mistress Hunter?"

"Sun doesn't like to do much outside of being with her family right now. Until we've exhausted all our options, she won't come help." Alpha Lucien told her.

Patty went to the counter and grabbed the chart. Sitting on the rolling stool, she started writing in it. I waited nervously for her to be done.

When she was, she took the yes/no papers out of the other folder on the counter and set them in front of me. More questions? I groaned internally. I wanted to leave. I wanted to run or hunt or nd Lyd.

"I'm going to give my assessment. This way, you can have some input into the conversation that you understand. If I have any questions, I'll make sure you can answer them in this method." She told me.

I put my paw on the 'yes' so she would know I understood. At least this meant it was probably over or would be soon.

Then I realized I couldn't contact Lyd. What kinds of lies had they told the pack when we left? What did she think of us now?

It didn't matter when this ended anymore. I was back where I started, only, now, I had to be even more careful about being out in the pack lands until I either knew Lyd wasn't here, or Heather was able to come out and tell her the truth. Damn it.

"From what I can tell, there's some soul damage. It's mostly healed over time. There are bigger wounds that won't heal unless the right medicine is found. I probed the injuries. Alpha, the soul damage was both internal and external. At least half of the injuries were self-inficted." Patty said to Alpha Lucien.

He looked over at me and I put my paw on the 'yes' again. Heather and I both knew it would hurt us to not accept the rejection for a year. It was worth it to give Michael what he deserved for using her so harshly, both physically and emotionally.

"It seems she knew that already. Anything else?" He asked.

"Her human self is starting to fade. Once her wolf has been in control continuously for the length of a natural Arctic wolf's lifespan, there won't be any way to bring her back. Shapeshifters need to share their lives in a certain way for both to live the longest and healthiest lives possible." She replied.

"You said she needs the right medicine. Do you know someone who can make it?"

"I looked at her le while I was ling out my assessment. It says her mate rejected her. What's stopping her from changing is likely the fact that her human self has given up on the world. I know Dr. Warren is getting tests set up, but I don't think you're going to nd anything. Sorry, Alpha. This is a damaged spirit, not a damaged body." Patty told him gently.

I put my paw on the 'yes'. Heather needed healing, not me. She needed a reason to wake up. She needed a purpose. How was I going to save her if no one could make the medicine? What could make her want to change?

The door opened again and Dr. Warren entered the room. She looked over at Patty, who nodded to her.

"Miss Wolf. Please get up on the bed. We're going to wheel you down to imaging and do a CT scan. All done here, Patty?"

"Yes, doctor. I added my notes and recommendations. I'll be going now. It's a full moon tonight. Lots of spells to be done." Patty smiled and left.

I climbed onto the bed and laid down. This was going to be interesting. At least we'd be leaving with more answers and Alpha Lucien knew why I was here and why Heather wasn't coming out. Every little bit helped.