

Chapter One

Jamie-Lee, the Beta's daughter is disillusioned by her pack. Due to an intervention by the Moon Goddess, after a decline in Werewolf numbers, no wolf can now nd his mate until the she wolf turns twenty one. As their decline is due to chosen mate pairings, any attempt by a werewolf to mark a female who is not his fated mate leads to unbearable pain before the mark fades away.

With fated mates now more important than ever, a ceremony is performed the night of the full moon after each she-wolf matures where she is taken to the forest, alone to wait for her wolf to call out to her other half and draw him to her.

Jamie-Lee just wants to know what love feels like, and hates that her right to fall in love naturally has been taken away from her. Forced to endure the ceremony, her world upends when for the rst time in wolf pack history, not one but two wolves step out of the treeline to claim her as their own.

Faced with a decision, will she get her wish, will she fall in love the old fashioned way and feel the excitement of discovering her soul mate?

Jamie-Lee

'Oh my goddess! You must be so excited!' squeals my little sister Bailee as she bounces on her mattress, her strawberry blonde hair ying around her as she prances about on her hands and knees on top of the blankets like a baby lamb.

I rolled my eyes at my younger sister's excitement through the reection in the mirror, 'and why would I be excited?' I ask in a bored tone.

Gaping over at me as if I was some sort of alien being, her gaze meeting mine in the reection of her vanity, Bailee inhaled sharply, 'because you could nd your mate this weekend! Birthday ceremony baby!' she whoops as I pull a face and continue to my straighten my waist length brown hair, my chocolate brown eyes screwed up in concentration.

'Come onnnnnn' Bailee moans, 'this is like the biggest day of your life, you will ocially be an adult and have your true love!'

I sigh as I put my sister's straighteners on the vanity and turned toward her. 'But what about love?' I murmured sadly, voicing the same question I'd asked since I found out about fated mates and this stupid tradition.

As daughter of the Beta, my coming of age is a big deal within the pack, I will be turning twenty one on Thursday which means that my coming of age ceremony will take place in Four nights time at nightfall on Friday. According to werewolf lore, a she-wolf, when placed under the full moon after her twenty rst birthday, will call out silently to her mate, drawing him to her if he is within range. Her scent will be intoxicating to him and his wolf, and neither will be able to disobey the call, moving trance like to their mate until he is standing before her and then they, wolf and human, would claim her as their own.

Bailee's brow furrowed, 'what about it?' she asked in confusion.

'Don't you ever want the whole seeing someone across a room, thinking they are cute, getting to know them, and being taken on dates thing? Learning what they love, falling in love with them and them, falling head over heels in love with you?' I try again as my sister's face morphs into that familiar look that tells me she thinks I am crazy.

Bailee scoffs, 'but your mate will love you, you are the other half of his soul' she replies, her tone indicating she thinks I am acting weird.

I throw my hands up in the air, 'yes because a Goddess told him too' I groan in exasperation. 'He won't love me for me, I won't love him for him, we'll just be two people that probably wouldn't even look twice at each other if it wasn't for a mythical being deciding it was so.' I hold my younger sister's gaze imploringly, 'It's just, don't you think we are missing out by not having to nd our life partner?'

Bailee's eyes widen as she shakes her head, 'no!' she replies vehemently, 'I love our way, it takes all the pressure away! Can you imagine what it's like for humans? They live their entire life never knowing if the person they are with is their true love! Why do you think they are always getting divorced? We don't have that in our world.'

I snort mockingly, 'but we still have rejections and cheating' I reply haughtily. 'We have a true love but he can still reject us and sleep with another she wolf giving us the worst possible pain ever experienced. At least the humans don't have that, the pain of being unwanted by your soul mate! They can nd someone who loves them for them and make a life and if it ends? Well, they piece together their broken hearts and move on, our rejections can kill us Bay!'

The younger Beta waves her hand dismissively, 'but that hardly ever happens, let's be honest, some of these wolves have had to wait years for their fated mate. By the time they nd them, they are so horny they can't keep their hands off her. Look at poor Jules, he was thirty two before Willow came of age, I'm sure he thought she had died young! Now she's pregnant with their fourth pup, every time she walks into a room his whole body buzzes.' The she wolf sighed happily, 'it's beautiful, two people so in love and perfect for each other. I want that and I can't understand why you don't.'

I groan exasperatedly, standing up and moving over to my sister, sitting on the bed and wrapping an arm around her shoulders, 'I do' I admit, because it was true, I do want someone to physically glow because they love me so much, 'I want that love, I just want it because of me not because some Goddess told a guy to love me. I want him to see me and think I'm amazing, I want him to want to know about me, not just tell me that he doesn't need to know we have things in common, because nothing matters as he loves me anyway.'

Bailee throws her arms around me, despite being three years apart, we are closer to each other than any of our other siblings.

'Ugh, are you two having girl time? One of you isn't on your period are you?' came a sulky voice from the doorway just before our sixteen year old brother, Phillip enters the room, hands shoved into his jeans.

'Get out' Bailee orders immediately, raising a hand so she can point at the door behind him.

'What's going on, what did I miss?' another voice asks just as the strapping frame of our oldest brother, Isaac, lls the opening.

'One of them is gushing red again' Phillip offers before either of us can speak.

'No we are not!' Bailee shouts angrily, grabbing a pillow off her bed and throwing it at our youngest brother who catches it easily earning a growl of displeasure from our sister.

Sighing, Issac grabs the teenager and locks an arm around his neck, messing up his hair, 'just because girls look serious doesn't mean it's time of the month dude' he reminds him, chuckling as Phillip tries to prise himself from his brother's grip.

'Don't you have other people to annoy?' Bailee demands, eyeing both of them.

'Nope, my shift is over, and Ma made pot roast so I decided to eat here' Isaac replies easily as he releases his brother who brushes at his hair in annoyance.

'I just got back from school' he adds, giving our older brother a grumpy look.

'Oh then you must have homework, off you go' I offer# with a wide grin.

Growling, Phillip glances at Isaac who holds up his hands in surrender, 'hey I might be the oldest but Jamie Bear is the boss and you know it' he said quickly.

'p***y' Phillip grumbles but slouches out of the room again, leaving us behind.

'So anything I need to know about?' Isaac asks as he leans against the door frame.

'Just Lee having a bout of cold feet' Bailee replies helpfully, as I scowl at her, using my nickname that pretty much every person in the pack calls me with a few exceptions. My mother is the only one who calls me Jamie-lee, and she growsl in annoyance every time someone shortens it. Even dad gave up years ago, but my mother refuses, insists my name is Jamie-Lee and that is what I should be referred as. My brother calls me Jamie Bear because supposedly when I was little, I was really grumpy when I was woken from a nap. He insisted that I was a bear instead of a wolf and has called me Jamie bear ever since.

Isaac nods as he tenses slightly. He has yet to feel the calling, and everyone knows he is getting impatient for his fated mate. Any mention of mates and the ceremony is a sore point for him. At twenty four, he and his best friend Caden have spent every full moon agitated. Neither of them have found their mates and as the future Alpha and Beta of the pack, everyone crosses their ngers each ceremony, hoping that one of their future leaders' wolves will perk up and nd their other half.

'I'm not having cold feet' I reply quickly under my brother's scrutinising stare, making me feel like I'm being xrayed. I hate it when he studies me like that, he can read me better than anyone, I've never managed to keep a secret from him yet. 'I just said I thought the humans' way of mating is interesting and that it must be nice to know your mate likes you for your personality.'

Isaac pushes away from the frame, walking into the room and sitting down heavily beside me. 'You always were a romantic' he mutters, pulling my head toward him so he can place a kiss on my temple, his strong arms enveloping me so I'm being hugged from both sides.

'I feel awful' I admit in a whisper, 'here you are waiting for the love of your life and I'm berating the Moon Goddess for her rules before I've even had a chance to meet mine.'

My brother laughs, pulling me closer as I wrap my arms around his waist, 'you'll be alright Jamie Bear, once you lay eyes on your mate, you'll realise the romance is there all along.'