

My Mate, My Enemy

prologue

Book Three: My Mate, My Enemy

Years after the White Wolves helped prevent humans from stealing werewolf abilities, humankind has once again learned of the existence of werewolves, sparking the Feral War. With raids and battles common from coast to coast, werewolves have been driven from their territories and forced to live in camps or migrate to the last safe spaces in the North. Persuaded by his uncle and King Sebastian, Keegan Stone uses his gift with words to encourage wolves across the country to fight humans, while his human counterpart, Stan Freeman, uses this same talent to stoke anti-werewolf sentiment. In an effort to crush enemy morale, the werewolves kidnap Stan's daughter, Lux, and she is gifted as a slave to Keegan. But when the two meet, they sense an unexpected connection. A dormant power awakens in Lux, and the two begin to look beyond what separates them and their species to discover what binds them.

Lux Freeman

"We must steel ourselves against the influence of our wild counterparts. They walk among us, undetected and deadly. They look like us, speak like us, mate with us.

"But do not be fooled, they are not us. They are not what they appear to be. Underneath their skin is an animal, wild and uncontrollable, dangerous and feral.

"They are a menace to our society, and I believe they must be eradicated."

The applause was deafening as hundreds of people in business suits stood and clapped. I clapped politely, even while my stomach churned.

The speaker, my father, turned around and gave a small thumbs-up to me from behind his pedestal. I grimaced and gave a thumbs-up back.

He turned around, adjusting his black tie at the collar.

"The werewolf race is a genetic mistake that must be fixed. They claim they do not want anything to do with us, yet they steal away our young girls to mate with.

"They claim they are peaceful, yet they have packs whose sole purpose it is to destroy.

"They claim they are in control of their population, yet their kings leave their packs all the time to go rogue.

"Do you want to know what I think they really are? I think they are animals that belong in cages."

My father's words were met with an outburst of appreciation. Everyone in the room agreed with him. They all believed that werewolves were our worst enemy.

Since the Feral War five years ago, the existence of werewolves had become common knowledge.

"They claim they are part human, but what they can do is not human. Their habits aren't human, their relationships aren't human.

"Perhaps you could say they wear human skin, but that very skin shreds when they become monsters. They are not human. They simply wear the mask of one."

I swallowed back the bile that rose in my throat and smiled tightly. I knew people would be watching me. The daughter of the most recognized anti-werewolf activist.

My dad hushed the crowd, looking at them seriously. "Last year, my daughter's friend, Sophie, was abducted. She was dragged into a pack and has never resurfaced.

"They are poison to society. They have claimed the more heavily forested states and have inhabited most of Canada. They lurk near our towns, recruiting our young for their packs. They must be stopped."

Everyone in the room cheered and screamed. I yelled out encouragement as well; keeping up appearances was important.

"How are we going to stop them? We are going to do what humans do best, we are going to overpower our enemies. We are going to burn them out of the forests they love so dearly.

"We are going to shoot them out of our towns and run them out of our schools. We will take back our country, we will get rid of the threat aimed at our throats, ready to lunge.

"Stand with me against them!"

The crowd roared defiantly. Young children jumped around screaming death threats while their parents yelled and jeered.

Old men spat on the ground and pumped their fists into the air, and young men planned hunting expeditions.

And my father sat back and watched the crowd with satisfaction. He had convinced another five hundred people of the threat the werewolf community posed to humans.

He turned to me, his gray eyes shining with a defiance that he had held his entire life. A thin sheen of sweat shined on his forehead and he had pushed back his brown hair.

He held out a hand for me and I walked over to him, hugging him from the side. The crowd's applause grew even louder. People snapped pictures, and the flashes temporarily blinded me.

The war between werewolves and humans had escalated and I was caught in between. This was my life: hate rallies and bigoted speeches.

I am Lux Freeman, daughter of Stan Freeman, the most famous anti-werewolf activist in North America.

The man who inspired hate in the hearts of millions. The man who planned on killing every werewolf alive.

And I was half werewolf myself.

Keegan Stone

“They want to end us,” I said. “They want us dead. They want us stuffed. They want us to be turned into rugs and tested on in laboratories.

“They believe we wish to harm them, but ignore that we’ve lived in harmony with them for thousands of years. Well, I say it’s time to rid ourselves of that harmony. It’s kill or be killed.”

The packs in front of me barked, howled, and clapped in response to my words. I drew in a deep breath and continued.

“The human race has chosen the wrong enemy. They believe no force is great enough to oppose them. But they do not know the strength of the wolf.”

Howls erupted throughout the crowd, causing my wolf to be more on edge.

I looked to my left at the older man just off the stage. He inclined his head slightly, telling me I was doing a good job.

“Our own Goddess begs us not to pick up arms.” These words made the crowd grow silent.

“She wants us to make peace with the humans, even when they kill us, even when they test on our pups and lock us up. She is not looking out for us anymore; she no longer cares about her children.”

“Damn right!” a man shouted. This was followed by “Forget the Goddess!” and “Traitor!” from others in the crowd.

“Her pack of special wolves, the Pura Lupus, has fallen. No longer do the White Wolves rule over us.

“Do you want to know what this means? It means that we no longer have to follow the Goddess that does not care for us.

“It is time we defend ourselves! It is time we stand together to annihilate our enemy.”

“Let’s kill the humans!” a group of rowdy young wolves yelled.

An older lady yelled, “We have to protect the pups!”

“They’re dangerous,” I said. “And we have to be aware of the threat they pose. If we go into this naively and do not educate ourselves on their war tactics, we will lose.

“Humans have great experience in warfare, yet they have never faced another species as old as their own. They have greater technology, but we are stronger and faster with better reflexes. We can win.”

“Damn the Goddess!” a man shouted, and many others followed suit.

I had to resist the urge to flinch. A few years ago, it would have been considered sacrilegious to speak of our goddess like this. But since the Feral War began, worse things had been said about her.

“I have traveled to your quadrant to ask if you will stand by me, your brothers, and your sisters against the threat that is ready to exterminate our race at a moment’s notice.

“Will you fight the Feral War?”

There was a strong reply as everyone cheered and howled for me, showing their support. I nodded once and waved before shuffling off the stage.

The older man clapped my shoulder and walked with me, waving at the crowd of werewolves as we passed.

“You did great, Keegan,” my uncle whispered in my ear.

“Thanks, Eric,” I mumbled back.

I felt feverish and sick, my head was spinning. Inspiring hate was something I was good at, but it wasn’t something I liked.

This was who I am, Keegan Stone, the man who encouraged hate and bloodshed.

And I hated myself for it.