

## Change

\*Quil\*

Tonight is turning out to be a dicult night. Vilks is persistent and won't let up, pacing in my head. "I want our mate!" he cries. I know he does, but we messed up. "No, you messed up. You never listen to me. This is all your fault," he retorts. "Okay, ne. You're right. It is my fault, and I'm going to do everything in my power to show her that I've changed," I respond. "You'd better, or you'll lose me too," he warns. "I promise I'll get her back. I'll prove it to her," I said. "Actions speak louder than words. I can't wait to see this," he replies. I put my block up; I'm already struggling with myself, so I don't want to argue with Vilks either.

I keep stealing glances at Emry, but she doesn't look back at me. The guys suggest more shots, and I decide to take some to try and loosen up, so I can nally go over and talk to her. "Q, you're really not enjoying yourself tonight, are you?" Bryce asks. "Oh, I'm having a blast, trust me," I responded sarcastically. "Sure, you haven't even looked at anyone other than that group over there," Tony says, pointing towards Emry's group.

"I'm not really in the mood for any she-wolves tonight," I stated atly. Ashton chuckled and asked if I was feeling sick. "No, I am not sick. I'm serious about changing my ways, and I want to prove it to you all," I stated rmly. The constant questioning and doubting from my "friends" were starting to wear on me, but I understood why. It's not every day that someone makes a complete 180-degree turn in their life. However, I knew I had to do it if I wanted to get my mate back in my good graces and have her become my pack and my Luna. "Well, to prove it, let's see you keep your composure with the she-wolves coming our way right now" Caleb said, "I will do just that!" I responded as I accepted Caleb's challenge.

I saw 5 women approaching me and the guys from the dance oor. I was annoyed, especially when I recognized Amber among them. I had already told her I wasn't interested, but she didn't get the hint. 4 of the women greeted me."Ladies" I replied.

Amber stood directly in front of me with her hands on her hips. She asked if I wanted to have some fun, but I politely declined and thanked her for the offer. Amber persisted and attempted to initiate physical contact, but I had to rmly remind her of my position as alpha and declined her advances. Despite her emotional outburst, I felt justied in my actions. Emry witnessed the altercation and seemed satished with the outcome.

After Amber's departure, I was left with a room full of stunned guys, including Lowell and Alaric. I surprised myself by turning down a she-wolf. It felt empowering. I longed for Emry to come my way so I could embrace her, but that moment had yet to come. The new Alpha Quil was off to a great start, but the guys remained silent for the rest of the night. After an hour or so, I decided it was time to leave. I said my goodbyes and arranged to meet Alaric and Lowell at my oce the next day at 2 pm for some business matters. I glanced over at Emry's group one last time and saw her laughing and genuinely enjoying herself. I yearned to experience that kind of joy again. As I stepped outside, the crisp air awakened my senses, and I took a deep breath. I knew I still had a lot of work to do to win Emry back, but I hoped that tonight's events demonstrated my willingness to change. I drove back to the pack house with the stereo off, lost in thought.

\*Emry\*

Sensing his gaze on me, Moon couldn't resist the urge to run up to him and embrace him. However, I advise against it, reminding Moon of the need for caution. "He has a lot to prove to us," I said. "We don't want to get involved with someone who thinks they can do whatever they please." Moon agrees and suggests we keep a watchful eye on him throughout tonight at TLM and make a decision in the morning.

"That group of girls over there, ugh, so sleazy," Malia commented.

"I don't understand how they think it's attractive to walk up to a group of guys like that and throw themselves at them in hopes of gaining status," Randon added.

"I totally agree. Girls like that aren't worth any of my time," Chris said.

Then, Elle chimed in, "And now you have me!" to which the response was, "Yes, little mama, now I have you."

Chris just called Elle "little mama." It's a nickname he used to have for me, so it stung a bit to hear him call her that. However, I'm thrilled for them both as they are dear friends of mine and seem to be a great match. Suddenly, I heard some commotion from Quil's group. The "nurse" who was with my mate the other night was too close for comfort. It made me feel angry and possessive, but I didn't want to show it. I couldn't let him know that I still cared about what he did. Then, something incredible happened - he used his alpha tone to tell her to stay away indenitely. Is he changing? This could be a good sign. Our eyes met, and I smiled at him to show my approval. He smiled back but then just stared at me. I wanted to know what he was thinking and hear an apology from him, but he didn't speak. I turned my attention back to my friends and felt happy for them, even though I couldn't help but feel envious of the fact that everyone now had their mate but me.

"Would you like to dance?" Elle asked me, and I replied with a resounding "Yes!" Malia chimed in, "Let's make it a girls-only dance!" Excitedly, we headed to the dance oor, which was conveniently located near Chris and Randon. The DJ played some great music, and we danced to three songs before feeling the need for something to drink again. We made our way back to the guys and ordered another round of drinks. As I nished my drink, I realized I wanted to talk to Quil. I decided that this would be the perfect opportunity to start anew with him. If he was serious about making a change, then becoming friends again would be the best place to start.

I scanned the room for him but he was nowhere to be found. I didn't want to abandon my friends, so I decided to overlook the entire venue, yet still couldn't locate him. Without any pain or discomfort, I assumed he had left already. "Hey guys, it's getting late and I'm getting tired. Are you all ready to go?" I asked my friends. "Yeah, we can go! I've had enough of this place for tonight," Malia said. "How do you want to do this?" Randon asked me. "Not sure. Are you going home with Chris or is he going home with you, Elle?" I inquired. "That's up to him," Elle replied. "Let's go to my place," Chris suggested. "Alright," Elle agreed. "Okay, so I'll go back with Chris and Elle, and then we'll talk tomorrow?" I conrmed. "Absolutely," Malia agreed. "Okay, let's blow this popsicle stand!" I declared. We all headed outside. Malia and Randon said goodbye and left in Randon's car. Elle and I were going to ride with Chris since he drove us to the venue and my bike was at his shop. They both sat in the front seat, and I sat in the back. We drove in silence to Chris's place. When we arrived, Chris helped Elle out of the car. "Bye Emry, see ya tomorrow!" Elle said. "Bye girl! Don't do anything I wouldn't do!" I jokingly said to her, well aware of what had occurred the night before at the apartment. Chris unlocked the door for Elle, and she walked inside. He then walked over to me, standing next to his car. "Hey there, thank you for tonight," he said. "No need to thank me," I replied. "Yes, I do. You are my very best friend. None of this would have happened if it wasn't for you," he added. "Yeah, I guess you're right," I agreed. "Talk tomorrow?" he asked. "Of course, I just need to grab my things," I said. "Oh duh! Let me grab them for you," he offered. "Okay," I said.

Within seconds, he handed me my bag and bike keys. I effortlessly slung my bag over my back and headed towards my bike. One more wave to Chris and I securely fastened my helmet. I mounted my bike and took off.

\*Chris and Elle\*

After Emry's departure, I entered my apartment and found my mate, Elle, sitting on the couch. I greeted her with a compliment, sat beside her, and asked what she would like to do. Elle expressed her interest in getting to know me better, and I was happy to oblige. She began by asking about my pack, to which I explained that I was originally from the Dark Sands Pack but had since moved out after my mother's passing. When Elle inquired about me joining her pack, I asked for some time to think about it. I haven't lived within a pack for a while. As we continued our conversation, I learned that Elle was 19 years old and her favorite color was green. I mentioned that I loved the color gray and offered to teach her how to drive, to which she declined and explained that it was a sensitive subject for her. I reassured her that I understood and would be there to listen when she was ready to share.

I hugged her tightly, knowing that whatever reason she had for not driving must be dicult for her. I wanted to assure her that I was there for her, not just through words, but through my actions. We spent the rest of the night chatting and laughing, and eventually decided to wrap up with a movie. She picked out the 50 Shades trilogy, not my personal preference, but it made her happy, and that's all that mattered to me.

\*Emry\*

After parking my bike in the driveway, an idea struck me – I decided to visit his pack tomorrow and establish my boundaries and stipulations with him. I hope he feels the same way. Upon entering the house, I noticed that it was quiet, with most of the pack asleep except for the guards and warriors who were doing their shifts. I made my way upstairs to my room, where I grabbed my PJs and left them on the bathroom sink before taking a shower to remove my makeup. Feeling clean and relaxed, I put my pj's on and slipped into my cozy bed and quickly drifted off to sleep. As I closed my eyes, I couldn't help but think about what tomorrow would bring.