



## Chapter 2: Rich

As I walk into the after party, I'm surrounded by people who want to get close to the new Alpha. This isn't new. It's been this way most of my life. My brothers and I are constantly surrounded by she-wolves that want our attention or want in our beds. And then, there are the guys that want to be close to or friendly with Alpha males. 1

When I walk further into the room, Finley, my wolf sits up. 'What's up, Fin?'

'I don't know.'

'Something dangerous?' It's not uncommon for packs to be attacked during Alpha ceremonies or the night of the celebration in an attempt to weaken the pack by taking out the new Alpha on the night of their oath.

'No, not dangerous.'

'Well, let me know when you figure it out.' I tell him, refocusing on the party.

The party starts out as a full pack celebration with food, drinks, and dancing for pack members of all ages. As the night goes on, people begin to leave and only the young wolves are left. As the new Alpha, I wasn't drinking, taking the time to speak to those that wanted to speak to me, setting up appointments for meetings and beginning my Alpha duties. My intended Beta, Jackson, was beside me all night. While he isn't yet old enough to indoctrinate into his Beta role, he is my father's Beta's son, and we've grown up together, knowing he'd be my Beta.

Thankfully, my father also has a business, so my brothers aren't jealous of not being my Beta. If things continue as intended, I'll be sending Alexander off to college next year to get a business degree, so he can take



over as CEO of Holstin Enterprises, Inc.

As the families and older pack members head to bed, I see my sister, Leana, and her best friend Lily standing by the bar. I walk over to say hi and get a drink. I kiss both of them on the tops of their heads. Lily is as much of a sister to me as Leana. Lily and I were born very close together in age and Leana is only 6 months younger than us. They've practically grown up as sisters, they are so close. Almost as close as my twin sisters. 1

"Ladies." I say and order a bourbon.

"Alpha." They say in unison and when I raise my eyebrow at them, they both smirk.

"What do you think Lea? Do you think, now that he's Alpha, that Rich will let us use his name, or will we have to start calling him Alpha Richard?" Lily asks Leana as if I'm not standing right beside them.

"I don't know Lils. Sometimes the whole Alpha thing goes to their head and they start acting like they are so above everyone else." I shake my head and thank the bartender as he hands me my drink. He's smiling, watching the girls make fun of me.

"I guess it's a good thing we're Guardians. If his head gets too big, any one of us can bring him back down to size." Lily says.

"Good point. I mean, I love my brother, but he needs to keep his feet on the ground if he's going to be running this pack the way it should be."

"Okay, I'm out." I say, seeing my brothers across the room. As I head that way, Finley sits up again.

'Fin?'

'Let's go say hi.'



'I was already headed that way.'

I'm intercepted by a she-wolf that is obviously drunk and is practically falling out of her dress.

"Hi Alpha. Did you need some company?" She's slurring her words.

"I'm good, thank you. Maybe you should find your room and lay down?"

"Is that an offer, Alpha?"

'Get rid of her. I want to say hi to that woman with our brothers.' Fin growls in my head.

Thankfully, Jackson shows up at that moment. And this is why he's my future Beta. "Jackson, can you help this young woman find her room?"

"Of course, Alpha."

As he pulls her away, I look back over to where my brothers are laughing with a woman. Her hair is up, leaving her long, graceful neck exposed. Her one-shoulder black dress is hugging her curves and I can feel my body responding. She's tall, made taller by the black heels she's wearing. I wonder how she'll feel about keeping them on when I'm fucking her, because that's exactly what I'm going to do. I'm not sure why Fin and I are drawn to this woman, but I know I want her in my bed, naked, sweaty and screaming her pleasure tonight. I feel Fin growling his agreement.

When I walk up, I almost swallow my tongue when she turns around and I see it's Emlyn Gunnar. "Em...Emlyn. You look..." I'm honestly at a loss for words. I've watched Emlyn grow up. I don't remember a time when I saw her in a dress, not even for her birthday party a few months ago. She's a tomboy, always sweaty and dirty and doing whatever the guys are doing. I had no idea that she looked this good all done up.

'Mate.' Fin whispers in my head. 1

Well, fuck me! My mate is Emlyn Gunnar, who is about two years too young to recognize me as hers. 2

She's smirking at me over her drink. Is she drunk? I hope to the goddess that she isn't, or I'll have to kill my brothers. While drinking doesn't impact shifters the same as humans and we don't have a drinking age, I don't want my mate drunk.

"Cat got your tongue, Richie?"

She's the only person that has refused to call my Rich. When I turned 10 years old, I felt I was too old to have such a juvenile name. But Emlyn refused to quit calling me Richie. So, I never gave up my nickname for her, one that she also hates.

"Well, if it isn't one half of the Em and Em's." Her smirk turns to a scowl. I have a moment of prescience, seeing myself dominating this little Guardian in the bedroom, turning that scowl into an 'O' of pleasure. "I didn't recognize you all dressed up."

"Well, don't get used to it. My mother insisted, so here I am. I told her you wouldn't care."

I take my time, looking over her dress. It's elegant and has a slit up the front that goes to her mid-thigh, a thigh I want to kiss, lick and nip on my way to sweeter pleasures. My gaze lingers on her long enough that it makes her fidget. Now it's my turn to smirk.

"Well, I can't say I don't appreciate the effort. You should dress up more often." I take a sip of my bourbon, my eyes never leaving hers. She fidgets until she looks away. My smirk turns into a full-on smile. Oh, these next two years are going to be fun. 3




My brothers, and Cohen and Clint are scoping the room, looking for a girl they want to spend the evening with. I have no intention of spending time with anyone but the girl in front of me. The guys are nudging each other, pointing out the girls they are interested in. "Ugh, if all you're going to is look at girls, I'm going to see Lea and Lily." Emlyn says, about to walk away.

"Why don't you keep me company?" I say, hoping my brothers are too far into their drinks to catch on.

"Great idea, Rich. I mean Alpha." Cohen says, and I can tell he's definitely feeling good.

"Yeah, thanks Alpha." I ignore the use of my title. They'll be back to calling me Rich tomorrow.

I put my arm out to Emlyn. She frowns at me but takes my arm. "Where are we going, Alpha." She says, and the way she says it has my dick twitching. I can't wait to make her mine. But, of course, I can't officially make her mine until she turns 18. And based on the problems Aolis is having with Lily accepting her mate bond, I have no intention of telling Emlyn that she's my mate. But that doesn't mean that I can't make her mine. Her father, Eli, would never approve of me taking his daughter as a girlfriend, not knowing that she's my mate. So, we'll have to keep this quiet. Now, all I have to do is convince my mate. 

"How many of those have you had tonight?" I ask, nodding at her drink.

"This?" She asks, tilting her glass back and forth. "I've lost count."

Fuck, she's drunk. Well, I'll just make sure she's safe tonight then.

"I have a bar in my room. Do you want to come and have a nightcap with me?" I say, drawing her up the stairs to the Alpha floor.



She laughs, throwing her head back and exposing her throat to me. I know she doesn't mean it as a submission, but she's in the presence of an Alpha and the gesture is submissive. My fucking dick is so hard it's getting hard to walk.

"Maybe you better taste this before you invite me up to your room, Alpha."

Her taunting has me on the verge of insanity. We reach the Alpha floor, and I push her against the wall. "Do you want me to be your Alpha?" I say, taking the cup from her hand and taking a sip. Her eyes have gone wide, and I nearly choke on the plain water in her cup.

"This is water?" I say, giving it back to her.

"Yeah. My parents were here, and I haven't had a chance to get a drink since they left."

"Your parents don't want you to drink?"

"They didn't want me to do anything foolish and embarrass you or your family on your big day."

"Do you normally drink so much that you act foolishly?" I ask, not ever remembering her ever making a scene.


She snorts. "No, but I don't usually wear dresses either."

"Speaking of," I say as I slide my free hand up the inside of her dress on the outside of her thigh, "I really like you in this dress."

She frowns at me. "Are you drunk, Richie?"

I raise my drink, tilting it back and forth like she did hers. "My first one tonight."



I pull my hand away and step back, giving her space. I don't want to scare her. I take her hand and lead her to my room. She will be mine before the night is over. 

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