

Tango with the Alpha's Heart

Chapter 2- Intoxicating Scent

Emily's POV

The trip down to the pack house was quicker than I had hoped, and before I knew it, Jax stopped the car in front of the pack house.

Jax got out of the car and went around, opening the car door for Mila. He held his hand out and carefully helped his mate from the car.

"Mila, my love," Jax said, kissing the top of her hand. "I will be right back. Wait for me!"

My heart pinched at the tenderness of his voice. He spoke to her with so much love and care.

Mila nodded her head, and Jax got back in the car and drove off.

Two minutes later, the dark-headed wolf appeared next to Mila.

"Ready?" He asked, taking her hands in his.

Mila giggled like a typical schoolgirl and blushed.

I turned my gaze away, giving them some privacy.

Some days I wish I had what Mila and Jax had. Their love for one another was so tender and unconditional.

A small smile followed at the corners of my lips, remembering the night Mila found out Jax was her mate.

We were all in the clearing, waiting for her to shift, when the single word 'mate' slipped from her lips.

Jax came forward, answering her call. He knew all along that Mila was his mate. He found out the year before and kept it a secret while keeping a watchful eye on her.

My gaze moved to where the two lovebirds stood. The tall, dark-headed wolf had his arms around his blond and beautiful mate and his lips devouring hers.

Mila was the first to pull away, turning her gaze toward me and blushing.

"I'm sorry," she apologized. "We can't help it!"

I nodded, smiled, and got closer.

"I am used to it by now," I said, gesturing between the two of them. "No worries."

Jax's gaze moved toward the huge double doors and back to us.

"They are about to start," he announced.

Mila took my hand, and the three of us headed together toward the entrance.

The same unholy feeling crept up inside me, and my heart rate increased, warning me I shouldn't be there—I shouldn't have come.

We came to a stop a couple of feet from the door, and Jax let go of Mila's hand, opening the door.

I took a deep breath, trying to get my racing heart under control and force my anxiety aside.

As soon as Jax pushed the double door open, a scent so intoxicating hit my nostrils—apple crumble.

It was the most delicious scent I have ever smelled.

My mouth watered to have a taste of it.

The scent suddenly started to smother me, and I felt dizzy. I took an unwilling step back, turning my face away from the smell and seeking fresh air.

"What the hell?" I muttered to myself.

Mila turned to look at me, and concern crossed her eyes.

"Are you alright?" Jax asked worryingly.

"I-I-I don't know," I stuttered nervously.

"What's wrong?" Mila asked.

"There is this sweet smell of apple crumble coming from inside. It's overwhelming," I explained.

Mila knitted her eyebrows together, confused, and lifted her nose to the air, taking a whiff.

"I don't smell anything," she said a moment later. "Do you?" She asked, turning her gaze to Jax.

Jax, in return, shook his head.

"I don't smell anything out of the ordinary," he said.

"Maybe the kitchen is making some pies and desserts," Mila offered as an explanation. "Alpha Cole did mention that he was going out of his way to welcome Alexander back."

I nodded, and the scent suddenly cleared, giving me room to breathe.

I followed Mila and Jax into the pack house and down to the community room.

The community room was a huge room where we mostly had functions and packed meetings; tonight it looked more like a ballroom fit for a king.

"Wow!" Mila gasped, "It's Wow!"

"It's something, alright," I said, moving my gaze up the walls to the roof. Alpha Cole surely decorated the place beautifully.

We were just in time to see Alpha Cole leave the stage, and seconds later, the music started again.

I moved my gaze over the sea of people, hoping to get a glimpse of Alex, but he was nowhere to be found.

Did he leave already?

"Let's go dance," Mila said, interrupting my thoughts and grabbing my hand.

We were on the dance floor for about an hour when Mila said she wanted to go to the ladies' room.

"Jax, baby, we will be right back!" Mila shouted above the music.

He nodded, and we headed toward the exit.

"It seems like you are enjoying yourself after all," Mila said when we were in the hallway.

"You know I love dancing," I said. I felt more myself, and my anxiety was long gone.

"Yeah, I know," Mila chirped, seriously. "You do know that every unmated wolf was checking you!"

I was taken aback by her words. I didn't even notice that people were looking at me.

"Well, if they are," I said sourly. "They are chicken sh*t for not asking me to dance."

"Maybe it's for the best," Mila said, pushing the ladies' room door open. "We both know you are way better than them."

I couldn't help but smile. Mila always knew how to cheer me up.

I watched Mila disappear into the bathroom while I waited for her outside. The pack members came and went, ignoring my existence—they didn't even glance at me.

Some days I wish people would just notice me. I didn't disappear. I was still there and part of the pack.

A group of ten young adults passed me next, heading toward the exit of the building. They were my friends before my birthday. I used to be part of that group, and my Beta rank made me popular too.

I sighed.

"Don't beat yourself up." Mila's soft voice sounded behind me, and I froze. "They are not worth your tears."

Did she see the longing and sadness in my eyes?

Don't get me wrong; it wasn't that I didn't appreciate Mila's friendship—I did. I treasured our friendship. It stung to be shunned and turned away from my friends because I did not have a wolf.

Why was I part of a pack that didn't accept me the way I was?

My heart pinched, and my hands flew to my chest. The painful feeling made me feel numb inside.

"Em, are you coming?" Mila asked, taking my hand.

I lifted my gaze, and Mila smiled kindly at me, wiping the warm tears from my face that I didn't know had spilled over.

"Do you want to go home?" she asked, concerned.

I shook my head. If I went home now, my parents would think that something had happened, and I wasn't in the mood to answer their questions.

"No," I whispered. "I'll be fine. Just give me a minute."

Mila softly patted my shoulder, giving me time to gather myself.

"Feeling better?" she asked, and I gave her a weak smile, reading the pity in her eyes.

"Good," she said, and I slowly followed her back to the community room, but just as we passed the double doors going out to the gardens, I froze in my tracks.

It was as if everything inside me screamed to be outside.

"What's wrong, Em?" Mila asked, looking back at the door. "What are you looking at?"

I slowly turned my gaze to meet hers, and her hands flew to her lips as she gasped, taking a step back.

"Nothing," I said, my voice sounding higher than usual in my ears. "I just need to go check something. I'll meet up with you in just a few minutes!"

Mila blinks a couple of times before she reacts. She then turned on her heels and dashed off toward the community center, as if someone were chasing her.

As soon as she was out of sight, I turned toward the door.

What happened next left my world spinning out of control.
