

Tango with the Alpha's Heart

Chapter 8 - A first in the werewolf world

Emily's POV

A huge white building greeted me as I drove up the driveway. I lived in the building—the pack house—for almost a year and knew the place like the back of my hand.

A youngish blond guard rushed closer as I set foot out of the truck. He looked about nineteen.

"Morning Parker," he bowed. "King Xavier is waiting for you."

I nodded and handed him the truck keys.

"Parker?" He asked, looking at me confused.

"I'll be running back in wolf form," I said, smiling. "Willow wants to stretch her legs."

The guard nodded and opened the driver's door. He looked quite happy to be driving my black truck.

"Don't scratch her," I warned, and I ran up the stairs.

As suspected, Xavier waited for me in the gardens, and a tender smile followed on his lips as I made my way down the steps to meet him.

"Welcome back, dear!" He said, throwing his arms wide open for me.

I didn't shy away from the embrace and ran into his arms, hugging him back.

Xavier is Mila's uncle, and he has become a father figure for me. He has pups of his own—all my age and all boys—and they have all accepted me as part of the family.

It wasn't easy in the beginning; I didn't trust any male wolf close to me, but Xavier had a gentle heart and found a way for me to open up and trust him.

"So?" The huge wolf asked. His green eyes were sparkling in delight at seeing me. "How did it go?"

"I would say very well," I said, taking an envelope out of my pocket and handing it to him.

I was sent to visit the four corners of the kingdom. I needed to get insight into how every pack was doing. I was instructed to go through their finances, look at their training and training

schedules, and check the number of members living in the pack. The main reason for my trip was to find out which pack had suffered losses of pack members to rogue attacks.

The rogue attacks were on the increase, and pack members have gone missing. We were trying to figure out who was responsible and why they needed these wolves.

Well, forty-five packs later, I had decided to return home for a short break. I still needed to do eight more, including the Opal Pack.

I sighed, dreading the thought that I needed to show my face there, but Mila already gave me an idea of how to get around that—I would be sending Jax to my place.

"So many already?" Xavier gasped, pulling his hand through his gray, short hair.

Xavier was surprised that I had visited so many packs in such a short time. He turned, headed to the garden table under the trees, and sat down.

The huge wolf looked a bit uncomfortable, but he managed to squeeze his long legs in, bringing him down to my level.

He set the papers down on the table, folded his arms, and looked at me.

"What?" I asked.

"I need to take you off your assignment," he said seriously.

"Wait? What? Why?" I knitted my eyebrows together. I was fine with moving between the packs and meeting everyone; I was accepted and welcomed.

Xavier gestured for me to sit down, and I followed the unspoken order.

"What's going on, Xavier?" I asked.

We didn't do formalities in private, but we did when elders and pack members were around; then I would call him by his title.

I didn't have one, even when Xavier tried to give me one. I refused.

I was happy to just be called Parker, using my mother's maiden name to hide my identity.

Mila accepted the Royal Delta title, handed down from her father. He officially surrendered his birthright to his daughter, and he seemed happy that his daughter could continue his bloodline under the title.

"I have received critical information on the attacks," he said. "I need you to follow up on the leads."

"Where?" I asked.

"The city," he said. That was close to the Opal Pack, and the chances of me running into Alexander were huge.

"When am I leaving?" I asked. I just got back and would love to spend a bit of time with my son, Lex.

"In three days," he said, searching my gaze. "Lex came and asked me personally if I would give you some time off. He wants to spend some time with his mom. He misses you."

My heart warmed in my chest. I hadn't seen Lex for a while, and he was constantly on my mind.

I did call him every night, but I could hear in his voice that it was enough—he needed me to be there with him.

"One week," I said, stretching out my hand for him to take.

Xavier lifted an eyebrow, taunting me. He knew if I made up my mind about something, it was hard to try and change it.

"I need the rest, Xavier," I said, with no room for argument. "I have been on the road for almost three months. I need to spend some proper time with Lex."

Xavier just stared at me, not saying a word, then got to his feet and took my hand in his.

"Deal," he said, and I knew immediately that this was way too easy.

"But?" I asked. There were some caveats to the agreement.

"I need the full report of your visits to the packs on my table by the end of that week," he said.

"I can live with that," I said, shaking his hand.

If only Xavier knew I had already compiled the report, it would be just a matter of printing it and giving it to him.

"Very well," he said, and I took a few steps back, shifting into my wolf, Willow.

"She is still spectacular," Xavier said when I was fully shifted. He rubbed Willow's ear and then wandered off toward the entrance of the pack house.

Willow took control and darted off in the direction of home, while my mind shifted to the heartbreaking night when I was blessed with both Lex and Willow.

We were preparing for the blood moon festival when I lost my balance and tumbled over.

At first, I thought all was fine until I tried to get to my feet. The most excruciating pain rippled through my body, and I yelled out in agony.

Mila was the first to be by my side; her eyes were huge out of shock. She tried to help me to my feet, but she froze, lifting her hand just high enough for me to see.

Blood.

I was bleeding.

My pup was in danger.

Xavier and his three sons rushed to my side, and seconds later, the doctor arrived. They lifted me and carried me to the infirmary, careful not to drop me.

A chill went down my spine. I remember hearing my own horrific screams traveling and echoing down the hallways.

Worried and curious pack members followed us, trying to assist wherever they could.

"So much blood," someone whispered.

"If she makes it..." another said.

"The poor pup-"

I was in and out of consciousness. When I eventually came by, the smell of a strong disinfectant hit my nostrils, and I knew I was in the infirmary.

I scrunched my nose, looking around, searching for someone who could tell me what was going on.

I had been given a change of clothes and seemed to be lying on an operating table.

I tried to call, but instead, a scream of agony escaped my lips.

My eyes became teary, and I sobbed. I haven't been in so much pain before.

I could hear the door open, and a second later, a cold, shaking hand took mine.

"Em," Mila said, her voice quivering. She sounded upset and close to tears. She must know what's going on. "The pup..."

She suddenly became quiet, struggling to find the correct words to inform me of what was going on. "The doctor..."

The sound of breaking bones suddenly filled the quiet infirmary, cutting Mila's thoughts short. A painful scream escaped my lips, and my body started to heat up.

Did someone dump hot oil on me? The feeling burned down my back, through my arms and legs, forcing my head back.

I fought against the excruciating pain, praying that it would soon be over.

My gaze fell on my hands.

"Oh, Goddess!" I yelled in horror, seeing that my hands had shifted into claws.

What happened next was seen as a first in the werewolf world.
