



Chapter Eight | This Should be Good

---POV Benson---

My heart swelled with pride when I heard Duncan's declaration. I'm not too sure how Julie felt about it, but her silence spoke volumes. I guess I'll have to show them I am worth my son's condence. I'm not going to mess that up. It might mean the difference between the twins being on my side or not.

I cleared my throat and walked up to the mat. Bowing once, I kicked off my shoes and stood in the middle of the blue square. "R-Right. Maybe he's a little young to gamble?" Ken said, trying his best to bring a little joy back into the stunned room.

"It's ne. It will make this more interesting." Julie said, shrugging off the chuckling children. They're just kids. It's not like we are playing for money or anything. She walked over to the side of the mat, bowed and walked up to stand in front of me. "All I care about is your brother keeping his word. When I win, he will disappear. That's all I want." She declared and it stung a bit. Well...a lot. The others took their seats in the small set of bleachers running parallel to the mat and Ken shook his head.

"Now I can see where she found the courage to run from you in the rst place, brother." Ken snickered through the link.

"Not again." I conrmed.

"I hope not. If she can step toe to toe with you, she will be one badass queen. Human or otherwise." I couldn't disagree with him. She holds her own against wolves. She already lives with them. There isn't anything that says she can't be exactly what I hoped for when we rst met. There is nothing that says she cannot be my queen. Nothing accept...well...her.

"Right then! Are you ready?" James called, raising his hand, and looking between the two of us. We both nodded and he dropped his hand in the same instant. "Fight!" He called and the match began.

I slipped around her attacks, enjoying every minute of the ght. For a human, she really could hold her own. However, one attack after the other, precise, and intentional, nally caught her off guard and she stumbled a bit before falling backwards. I slipped my arm around her waist and pulled her back onto her feet before she hit the oor. This may be a ght, but I will do my best to minimize her injuries. "Momma, are you okay? Please be okay! I'll...I'll root for you this time." Duncan whimpered.

Once she righted herself in my arms, she pulled away and wiped a stray hair from her cheek. I couldn't help the smile on my face as she squared up again. She won't give up that easy. Even better. "Would you like to continue? You have a pretty convincing cheering section." I nodded towards the twins that looked like they were holding their breath.

"Just focus on the match." She grumbled before racing towards me once more. She was extremely talented. I will give her that much, but my size against hers was something she just couldn't learn. Within minutes, I had my hand aimed at her neck and she froze, catching her breath. The room stilled and she pulled away, raising her hands in defeat. "Alright, I lost." She conceded and even I was surprised at how easy that was. From the look on her face, I don't think the feeling was mutual.

With her skills I can see why the frustration was so...warranted. I'm sure she doesn't lose often, human and werewolf opponents alike.

I held out my hand for her to shake and she looked at it as if it was foreign to her. "You did quite well, I'm impressed." I wasn't joking either. She really did have some amazing skills and with her training, she really could hold her own on the mat.

She nodded and took my hand, shaking it once before letting go a little too quickly. "Let's be clear, I may have lost, but seeing my children does not mean you have the right to take them away from me. Prince or not, I won't let you." She warned coolly and even with her even tone and poised gure, those words were not a suggestion. They were a promise.

I shook my head and combed my hair back in place with my ngers. "I would never do that to you. From what I can see, you are a great mother and you have worked hard to keep you and the twins safe. I cannot fault you for that, but a deal is a deal. I will get to see them again and you owe me some of your time."

"He's right momma. That means I win!" Duncan giggled.

She turned to him and raised a brow. "I thought you changed your mind?"

He raced up to her with Ricky following behind. "No, I just didn't want momma to be sad, but...but I voted for dad so now he has to tell us the truth! He has to tell us why he's here. Right Ricky?" Ricky nodded once and darted his eyes between his mom and I with...was that regret?

I'm starting to think that he's trying to gure out what is more important. However, this will be no easy task. If I was his age and I was told my father isn't around, then he just appeared out of nowhere. I'd want some answers too. "Okay then. I guess you are right. A promise is a promise. There is just one thing you have to do rst." Julie said.

"And what would that be?" I asked, entertaining the amendment to our deal.

"Do you like pasta?"

"What?"

"It's a simple question, dad. Do you like pasta?" Ricky asked, but there was that hint of concern again. The title seemed so normal to hear them call me that like we've been together all this time. Like they've known me all their life, but I didn't like the side eye Ricky was giving me along with it. This was his idea.

I folded my arms and nodded. "Yes, I like pasta."

"Good. Then..." Julie looked around the room until she found what she was looking for. A piece of paper and a pen. "Here is my address. I have to leave now, but tomorrow I will entertain your request. They need to start their homework and my les aren't going to redact themselves. Six o'clock." She swiftly grabbed it and wrote down the location. I took the paper to read its content. It was an address, so at least I know she isn't trying to slip away again. I already had her address anyway so there wasn't anything new on the paper either. Just the truth. Good.

"Alright. That sounds fair. I can get the test done in the meantime." I added.

"Test?" She questioned.

"We both know they are mine, but I think the formality would be in our best interest for now. We already know for sure, but it won't hurt to conrm." I waved my hand to the boys, and I could see the gears turning before she nally nodded in agreement. It's part of our deal.

"Cody, can you nd a small plastic bag in the medicine cabinet?" She called and the younger boy who tried to make peace between me and that James guy raced out of the room and came back with a small bag. "Perfect. Thanks dude." She nodded and took the bag before kneeling down to the twins' height.

"What do you need the bag for mom?" Ricky asked.

"We are going to put some hair in here. It will tell momma if he's your father." Julie explained.

"But he is, momma! We already know he is. He looks just like Ricky!" Duncan shouted.

His mom laughed lightly and rued his hair. "What happened to my quiet twin?" She asked.

Duncan shook his head and balled his st, concentrating on whatever he was going to say next. "I'm just excited is all. I never thought I'd see a big version of Ricky."

"We are twins bro. He looks like both of us. He will be our dad. Right mom?" Ricky corrected and I agreed. Duncan's features are a little softer than his brother's but from what I saw, it looks like Duncan prefers more sedentary hobbies unlike Ricky. He is more than happy to hit a bag or two. Regularly. Either way, they both looked like me. They had their mom's button nose, but other than that, the dened jaw line, eye color, skin tone, and hair color...it was all me. No doubt about it. They were twins and they were my pride.

Julie hesitated and turned to Ricky. "I hope so." She mumbled before pulling a couple hairs from each boy's head. I don't think I was supposed to hear her response, so I just grinned and let it slide. "See? That was easy as pie. Now, we will know for sure." She called with a little more condence before turning towards me and standing back to her full height. She handed over the bag and I took it, sealing the hairs from any other contamination.

"I will have the results when I see you tomorrow then." I conrmed.

"But mom, why do we have to wait? It's already been six years." Ricky huffed, all concern long gone and replaced with impatience.

"Kid's got a point." Ken chimed in. Ugh. I forgot we had an audience for some reason.

"It has, so that means they won't be neglected to wait one more day." She shot back, shutting my brother down with ease. "It's time to go. Ricky, Duncan.... You will see him tomorrow."

"Promise?" Ricky asked.

"I have never lied to you, and I won't start now. Don't forget your backpacks."

"Yes momma." They both hummed together before plowing into me. I was denitely caught off guard, but it only took me a second to hug them back.

"Tomorrow! You better not disappear." Duncan said.

"Ha! Tell that to your mom." I called and she laughed, slipping on her ats from earlier.

"I gave you my address this time. No use running now." Just like last time, she held out her hands and both boys raced over to take them. They are very well-behaved kids. I also know they have amazing grades. Each with straight A's. Quite the success, those two....

"Bye daddy!" Duncan called over his shoulder while I watched my princess leave once again.

"What if she does leave again? She seems really good at disappearing. This is the rst time we actually found her after a lead. Don't forget that." Aaron said, unintentionally confessing my biggest fear.

"I have to trust her this time. She said she wouldn't leave so, I'll trust her to stay."

"But she's your mate. How can you stand to be so far away from her anyway?" Ken asked as we headed out of the dojo with our guards in toe. I pulled a few strands of my hair and placed it along with the kids' samples. I thought I'd see one more glance of her on our way out, but she was long gone, and I could hear my spirit whimper at that fact.

"I did it for seven years. Like she said, I can wait for one more day." One more day. "Get this to a lab stat. I need to know, and I want to know now." I growled to one of my men and he nodded, grabbing the bag and racing to the closest car we left parked on the street. The small little street where my life will nally be renewed again.