

Chapter 114

63 - Kennedy

As I watch, I know when Bennet found me. Maybe my assumptions weren't that far off. I can feel his presence like pressure from a storm. It pushes against me from whatever direction he's hiding from me. He's behind me to my right. Probably behind a tree. I don't even have to look to know. A constant, always here, always watching, just not close enough to be a comfort. Then it hits me. A sensation I haven't felt in a long time. I stop breathing, thinking maybe I have finally lost my mind looking for that connection since I got here. I blink slowly concentrating on the pressure coming from my left. Then the scent hits me, rosemary and mint. He's here, when I finally am ready to give him up, he shows up.

I take another deep breath to stifle a sob, blink again and keep my eyes forward. I'm torn between the need to know what he's up to and wanting to run away. I have barely had eye contact with him since the incident with Amy in the breakfast room. I don't know what he could want with me after confirming he hasn't been loyal. I see the massive black wolf step out of the tree line in my peripherals. I slowly inhale his scent again and I can feel my whole body relax. I feel light and calm all of a sudden and when his wolf sits next to me I can't resist leaning into the heat radiating off of him. 1

The alpha wolf doesn't move to look at me, just sits quietly observing the pups. Or, more likely, observing Bennet and my guards and probably berating them for something he finds wrong. There it is, my irritation is back. I have to keep it strong to fight this stupid bond.

A loud Whoop! comes from the field taking my attention and I see Emily barreling towards me.

"Did you see? Did you see? Kennedy! Did you see that goal? It was so

amazing!” She jumps into my lap wrapping her arms around me and I can't help laughing. “Did you see?” She pulls back and looks in my eyes.

“It was amazing. But, tell me about it. It was hard to see from way over here.” I have no idea what she's talking about, I was too focused on the Alpha wolf next to me.

She launches into a play by play of her moves around Todd and the other kids and how she was able to score around three boys when none of her teammates were open. Her story is barely done when she looks over my shoulder. “Ohmygosh! The alpha! You knows the alpha?”

I giggle again. “Yeah, something like that.”

She leans into me and tries to whisper, but five year olds don't really understand the concept. “He's really big and kinda scary.”

I laugh again, this time looking at the massive black wolf next to me. He is gigantic and gives off an aura of power, but I have never felt afraid when he is around. “Eh, not really. I bet if you asked, Alpha would let you pet him behind his ears.” I had to stifle a laugh as the wolf's head whips towards me. If he had eyebrows, they would be in his hair line right now.

I hear Bennet chuckle behind me but keep my focus and eye contact on the wolf in front of me. He's here and he has some atoning to do. I will start with some embarrassment and humility.

“Can I?” Emily's question comes out small but clear as she lifts her hand.

Alpha looks from me to her and back, but I won't give him any guidance. He can interact or not, I won't force him. This is his pack not mine. How his pack members see him is on him. This will set the tone for the rest of these kids forever. They have idolized him from a distance, now it's time for him to be real.

He tilts his head into her hand and she gasps. "He's so soft! I thought he would be scratchy like my daddy's face." She giggles again as he leans in and knocks her deeper into my lap. We both laugh as I catch her. She grabs both sides of his muzzle and looks deep into those ruby eyes. "You are still a little scary." she shudders and tilts her head. "But the scary bit helps you keep us safe right?" Alpha dips his head a little in her firm grasp. "Then that's okay." She shrugs. With that she lets him go and runs over to the boys who have made a semicircle watching the interaction. I guess that conversation is over.

