

Chapter 2

1 - Kennedy

The peeling sound of screeching tires. A loud thunk and an explosion of glass. An invisible force throwing me forward. But no control over anything, nothing to grab as my hands fly through the air. I hit a solid surface and jolted up. I gasp as I blink my eyes open. I'm in my room. I am always in my room. I can still smell burned rubber and gas though. The pungent fumes still burn in my nose. This nightmare will never go away. It's the same thing every night. It has been for two years. I take another deep breath in, trying to clear the smell from my nose and the sight from the back of my eyelids.

My door bursts open and my best friend comes flying at me. At this point I think we should just share a room, with the amount of time he spends with me here. He says nothing, just climbs under the cushiony down blanket and wraps me in his arms, placing my head on his chest. His heartbeat and smell is comforting enough for me to fall back into a dreamless sleep.

I have had the same dream every night since the crash. I don't know what am I supposed to do? I have been to every doctor that Aunt Beth has sent me to and nothing seems to make it better, except being near Jeremiah. It is messing with my life which is already a complete sh*tshow anyway. I don't need any more weirdass situations. It's also not super convenient for him either.

"Awe, sweetheart, you look tired. Another bad night?" Aunt Beth asks like she couldn't hear me scream from across the house.

I can't bring myself to be a moody teenager to her though, her and Uncle James have done so much for me the last couple years. They didn't have to take me in, but when none of my other family members stepped in to claim guardianship over a fifteen year old teenager, my mom's best friend and her husband took me in without question. She was the one who stayed with me in the hospital while I recovered and she was the one who held me when the doctors told me my parents didn't survive. She made sure I saw the best doctors and specialists to help me process the whole situation.

"Yeah, They seem to be getting worse, but I don't know why." I grumble as I sit down at her massive island and she puts a plate of all my favorite breakfast foods in front of me and I just give her a big smile and dig in.

"You ready yet?" Oh the dulcet howl from my best friend comes from somewhere in the house ten minutes later. What would I do without him in my life?

"Almost. Aunt Beth is trying to gorge me on food and I can't be rude and leave anything behind." I say shoving a forkful of food into my mouth.

"Mom, you know she doesn't need to eat the same amount as me, right? I'm going to have to roll her to school." He throws my way walking towards the fridge like he isn't going to grab a plateful of food and wolf it down.

"Did you just call me fat?!" I took a swipe at him from my seat, but he's fast as f*ck and I missed. "I will remind you, sir, that I train just as much as you. My body just isn't predestined to be god-like with rock solid muscles stacked on more muscles."

"So, you're saying I'm hot and we should go out sometime?" He leans on the doorframe of the kitchen as he slings his backpack over his shoulder while simultaneously shoveling food into his face. I can't deny that my best friend is hot. He is one of the best looking guys I have ever seen and there are a lot of good looking guys here. I'm pretty sure it's a genetic trait for werewolves. With his chocolate hair in a strategically messy flop on the top of his head, like he ran his fingers through it but didn't bother to fix it. His light caramel eyes can draw you in and almost make you miss his full lips. His over six foot stature screams 'I will keep you safe' or 'I will f*ck you up' depending on who it's directed at. But, I will never say any of that to him out loud, his ego doesn't need the boost. But I have never felt the hormonal pull to him either. He is my brother for all intents and purposes and we are super close, but that's it.

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"Are you kidding?! One of your Luna wannabes would slit my throat in my sleep. And now that you're eighteen, they are so much worse." I grimace and pretend to vomit.

"Are those girls still giving you a hard time, honey?"

"Aunt Beth, it's fine. They would give me a hard time even if we were destined mates." I pretend to gag again. "They don't like me because I'm human and beneath them, but I somehow have the attention of their fearless future Alpha. Besides, no one has tried to hit me with anything in a long time. It's just stupid girls with stupid insults." I roll my eyes like it doesn't bother me as I push Jeremiah's big ass out of the house so we can head to our first day of senior year.

What I won't tell her is that the insults have gotten worse recently. Apparently, having dead parents and being a human in a werewolf pack wasn't enough to work with. Now, I am a sl*t who sleeps around with all of Jeremiah's friends behind his back, even though we have never dated and never will. We have known each other from birth, literal birth. We have the same birthday and were born in the same hospital. Our mom's had been best friends since college. They graduated together and opened a studio that taught yoga and women's self defense. My mom took over the studio when Aunt Beth met Uncle James and became the Luna of the pack, which takes a ton of time.

Aunt Beth kept the studio for me and I work there a couple days a week. I help train and the manager is teaching me about the inner workings of the business so I can take over some day. It's the one thing that my mom left to me that I feel the most connected to her. They started this from nothing and taught both humans and werewolves. It's a legacy that I really want to keep going, no matter what I do with my life.

"You still plan on leaving for school next year?" Jeremiah asks, not looking at me from the driver's seat of his muscle car. I couldn't tell you what it is, but it's sleek matte black, big and beefy with an engine that growls.

We have had this conversation so many times over the last year that I don't know what else to say to him.

"Yes, Jer. I have to go. You are going to really start Alpha training and I am a human so it's not like I am looking for a mate. I mean, it wasn't you and I don't know how anyone else will ever compare." I say dramatically, putting the back of my hand on my forehead. "And right now, I don't have any other useful purpose in the pack."

"You know how strangep that was right? Everyone waiting to see if we were mates. I mean, don't get me wrong, you are amazing and beautiful, but you're my twin sister." He shutters dramatically and I just laugh at him.

"You are such a weirdo. You ready for this year though? I mean there are a lot of expectations now. Everything is starting to feel real."

"Ready as I'll ever be I guess." He shrugs. "We already have a bunch of trips planned to visit with other pack Alphas so I can start building relationships with them. At least I'm not the only new Alpha. There are two more in our alliance, which helps. I won't be the odd man out and just treated like a stupid kid all by myself." I laugh at him, but I get it. The visiting Alphas can be patronizing to younger wolves. It's a hierarchy thing, but some of them, like some of our pack members, think that their species, rank and position make them automatically better and allowed to behave anyway and say anything they want with no retaliation.

We pull up to the school and into Jer's parking spot and of course the b*tch entourage is here waiting.

"Ooooh! Your fan club is here to make sure you don't break a nail on your way to classes." I sing song.

"Shut up." He growls, taking a deep breath before getting out.

These girls are ruthless in their pursuit of him and many of them are eighteen like us and know for a fact that he isn't their mate, but they still pursue him like he's available. I mean, he's not a saint by any stretch of the imagination, none of his crew is. They are actually kind of manwh*res. According to Tommy, it was to practice so they could be good for their mates.

But since our birthday when he came of age and is able to sense his mate, I don't think I have seen Jer with another girl, I don't think his wolf will let him. They are game on for their mate and only their mate. Too bad none of the b*tch brigade got the memo.

His lack of attention brought on more rumors about him slumming around with me, but I could at least shut those down pretty fast when I reminded them that means he chose me not them. They changed tactics pretty fast.

We both got out of the car and I had to fight the crowd that surrounded him just to get by, but he has never left me hanging, no matter how mean some of these girls can be, and now is no exception. I do love that he doesn't baby me or fight my fight for me. He knows that would be more detrimental. I can actually fight for myself and I have the attitude to match. He just keeps the trolls from getting in my way or holding me up from classes.

"Kennedy, let's go girl. The guys are waiting." He wraps his arm around my neck and leads me away. "What am I going to do without you here to c*ckblock for me? See, you can't go away to college. I need you here."

"First, that is your mate's job, so chop chop and find her already so I can pass the torch. Second, you know why I want to go. I can't be a burden any more. I want to do right by my parents and Aunt Beth and Uncle James. I need to be able to support myself, I can't rely on you guys forever."

"That is a lie and you know it. You had better rely on me forever. I fully plan to rely on you, Warrior." He tries to look stern, but his handsome face doesn't really do the look if he isn't actually angry. "And you know Mom is never letting you go, she's plotting just as hard as I am to keep you here."

Before I can reply, the rest of the guys walk up looking like a Magic Mike runway show before all the clothes come off. Not gonna lie, I might have drooled a bit, but what do you expect when all of my friends are hot as f*ck. Too bad none of them are my type, and I'm not their mate. And I have tested all the waters, except Jeremiah. It's just an unspoken rule that none of us bring it up or discuss it at all.

Ben is our dark haired, tattooed and broody Beta. Tommy is our fun loving Delta and Jason our blonde surfer boy Gamma. They are all tall, and wide like Jer, with Adonis muscles crammed into too tight shirts. I always wonder if that's on purpose or if they just can't be bothered to find clothes that fit.

They all do the bro hug thing as we meet up and each one gives me a hug and kiss on the head or cheek. It's all very public and very much on purpose after last year.