

Chapter 3

2 - Kennedy

"Hey Kennedy! Looking good girl! I think you get hotter every time I see you."

"Tommy. You saw me yesterday...at training...when I kicked your ass." I didn't actually kick his ass. I just didn't get beat, and gave him a run for his money.

"That's better every time too." He closes his eyes and smiles and we all just laugh.

"You are so stupid!" I say to our future Delta. "Does that line work on any girls?"

"I save my best lines for you, until I find my mate of course. Then I won't need any lines, she will love me no matter what." He puts his hand on his heart.

"Lucky girl." I pretend to vomit on Jason, who just laughs.

"You're lucky the Moon Goddess is going to force someone to be with you forever. Otherwise, I don't know if anyone would put up with you that long." Ben huffs a laugh. I don't know if I have ever seen our tough-as-nails friend really show any emotion outwardly. He's actually a really nice guy, when you get to know him, but to the outside world he's stern and quiet, but he seems to make that look work based on the amount of girls that try and get him to open up, so determined to 'fix' him or 'save' him. I don't think he's broken, just reserved. His mate will be the only person he shows that side to.

We head into the school ready to start the first day of our senior year.

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The first week of classes were about as expected. Mean girls say mean things, but the guys don't let it go too far. They don't step in right away like they used to. When I first got here, it was a big deal that I was human and best friends with the Alpha's son, and no matter what race, species or supernatural powers you have, teenagers can just be assholes. So the guys would jump in to protect me, but that just made things worse. It made me a bigger target to pick on because I was perceived as being weak, an easy target.

I struggled to even just get out of bed after the accident, the kids at school didn't help. Jeremiah used to drag me to training to get me out of the house. It did give me an outlet when my depression morphed into the anger stage of grieving. One day at training a girl got extra rough after she got laughed at. A prank she tried to set on me backfired and she ended up with syrup on her pants for part of the day.

She decided to retaliate publicly. Since I was human, she assumed I wouldn't know how to really fight even though I train with all of them every day. Her first mistake. She also thought she wouldn't have to put a lot of effort in because, again, I was human and she was a wolf and there is no comparison. Her second mistake. I beat her severely, and since then I have been training with the guys as a future warrior as well as training self defense at my mom's studio.

There are things I can't do, like shift into an enormous beast, but I still train with them even when they are in their wolf form. It has made me faster and more aware. I think the guys go easy on me, but the jealous girls do not. My skill set is varied and probably better because of that.

I have also been working with the trainers on using my other senses to enhance them like any other muscle. I have found I am really good at tracking and hiding from trackers. Even though a wolf's sense of smell is very strong. I can even fool Jeremiah, who is one of the strongest with Alpha blood.

"So, what exactly is this meeting about? I mean all of the alliances are good, right?" Tommy asks Jer as they are circling each other in the sparring ring after school.

"I think it's more about getting me and the other future Alphas ready to take over. You know meeting the other Alphas, establishing relationships, that kind of thing. I've known most of these guys my whole life, so it won't be too bad. Mostly a formality." Jeremiah dodges a series of punches, but doesn't respond quick enough, because he talks with his hands, and is taken out with a leg swipe and he hits the ground hard, recovers and rolls before Tommy can land another kick. Jer pushes Tommy's foot away, causing him to stumble and stands to take the offensive.

Before they get too rowdy, Jason steps up and taps Tommy on the shoulder, switching out to partner with Jer. We rotate frequently to work on his stamina. I went first and got a great right hook in, but I was taken out shortly after with a punch to the ribs. I may have heard a few crack, but I am not saying anything to them. The last time they thought they hurt me, no one fought against me for a month. I have been working with our main healer at the clinic on ways to heal faster and not get sick as often. Werewolves apparently have no issues with sickness or disease the way humans do and they heal from broken bones in days and scrapes in a matter of hours. My human body needs more time, but the herbs and teas our healer has speeds up healing and takes away most of the soreness and pain.

"When do you leave?" Jason asks as they continue to work around each other. Our resident surfer boy with sandy blonde hair and dark eyes. He's the sweet calm to Ben's military rigidity and Tommy's wild silliness.

"We take off tonight, so make sure you keep an eye on her." He pointed to me and I almost spit out the water I was drinking.

"What are you talking about 'watch me'? What do I need a babysitter for? You're going to be gone for the weekend." I am trying to stay calm, but not doing a great job. I hate it when they get like this.

"You know there have been rogue attacks up and down the southern borders. They haven't been too close to us, but now that I am in transition for the Alpha title we are vulnerable and you will be a target for several reasons. The other new Alphas have noticed a similar situation. It's just a precaution, I promise."

"What reasons are those exactly?" I can't let the idea drop. He's been more obsessive in his protectiveness of me lately and I don't know why. Something is going on and I want to know what it is.

"You know why Ken, come on." He pleads, knowing where this conversation is going to lead. He can't focus on me for too long though, Jason is still working his grappling skills and they all use me as a distraction for Jer.

"Nope. I'm going to need you to spell that sh*t out for me."

He huffs and looks around at the rest of the guys, like they are going to save him. They know better than to jump into this warpath, but they aren't running for the hills either.

"Fine. It can't happen again, I can't handle it, we can't handle it." He gestures at the guys.

"What, Jer-e-mi-ah," I enunciated his name, "can't happen again?"

"You can't get taken again!" He grits out through clenched teeth.

"Nothing happened last time." My voice is getting louder. "They had me for all of 2 days, you have to get past this."

"Bullsh*t! You were targeted because of me. That can't happen again."

I change tactics. "Who had to rescue me then, hmm?" I'm fighting for a calm I don't feel. I can appreciate his feelings, but I do not have to put up with his stupid reactions to them.

He takes a breath and halts his fight with Jason. "You got yourself away, okay? I know that, we all know that, but that is beside the point. You are a human who was left unguarded." He growled at me.

"The f*ck?! I was and am a warrior with this pack. Anyone in my position, in my location, could have been taken. Or am I not good enough to hold that title anymore?"

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"You know you are, I just..." He grunts. "I can't lose you. People know you are important to me and they will target you because of that and the fact that you are human." He rubs his face.

"Ben and Jason and Tommy are important to you. Are you going to put a babysitting detail on them too?"

"What? No, of course not. That's their job. They're just..." He stutters again, knowing he's losing this argument.

"Just what? Guys? Werewolves?" I shrug. "I know you worry about me, but I'm not dumb enough to run into danger. So stop treating me like a fragile piece of glass. And what about your Luna? Are you going to put her under lock and key when you find her? I'd like to be around for that fight."

"But you are fragile, Ken, ugh," He jumps in front of me, grabs my shoulders and pulls me into his chest, locking my arms by my side in his control hold type hug. "You are more fragile than we are. One of the new Alphas was moving his mate to his pack and her vehicle was attacked enroute. She's okay, but a lot of people were hurt and she was held for ransom. She fought Ken, fought hard and was still captured."

I can't argue that they are less breakable than me, it's a scientific fact. And a Luna is the heart of her pack, it's the one thing that makes an Alpha his strongest, but can also destroy him. He just seems to keep forgetting, I am not his Luna.

"I'll be fine." I mumble noncommittal.

"Oh yeah? How are the ribs?"

"Wha...?"

"Don't try to lie, I felt them crack. I don't think they are broken, since you are able to yell at me, but that is my point. You are my sister and very, very important. And very much in need of the healer," He squeezes my side and I wince. "Let's go."

"No! I'll be fine in a couple days. Healer Gwen gave me something to speed up healing. I'll be good as new to beat your ass when you get back."

"We go now or I mindlink mom."

I gasp. "Low blow, Jer."

"Come on Ken, let's get you checked out and then he can buy all of us something to eat to guarantee you'll feel better." Tommy chimes in. He already has his stuff packed up and ready to go. We have been fighting longer than I thought when I look at the time.

"Here, Kennedy." Ben hands me my bag. Well, I guess we're going then. I grudgingly follow them out to Jeremiah's car. I know if I stall too long someone will just pick me up and throw me in like a toy.

It was two small fractures and the guys were sworn to secrecy about it. Aunt Beth tended to get very over protective when I got hurt in any way. Worse than Jeremiah, and I always had bruises and scrapes. It was a wonder she let me train with the pack at all, but I think she knew I would find a way and the guys, and probably Uncle James, would have fully supported the anarchy. I had also been taking classes with my mom for my whole life, so I wasn't accident prone or weak, just human. I just tended to play hard, always have, like I was part wolf myself.

When we got back to the pack house Aunt Beth had pizzas all lined up for us. Even though Tommy made us stop for burgers on the way back from the healer, all the guys rushed for the food.

Aunt Beth walked up to me while Uncle James and Delta Drake carried the bags outside.

"We will be back in a couple days, hon." Aunt Beth hugs me, that worried look in her eyes.

"Seriously, I will be fine. Besides, I have the boy band to keep me company." I point my thumb over my shoulder at Tommy, Ben and Jason sitting at the island working on a pizza.

"You better go, so I can get over there, you know they won't leave me any." I hugged her one more time.

I walked over to the island and had to slap Tommy's hand away from the last slice of cheese pizza. He just giggled like a little kid. Big strong arms wrapped around me from behind and squeezed me tight.

"Love you, Ken. I left a shirt in your room. Just in case." He whispers in my ear.

"Thanks. Love you too." I lean back into him and squeeze his massive arm with my hand. Then he was gone.

gone.