

Chapter 6

5 - Kennedy

Of course a text isn't enough, Ben has to call with his response. "Are you sure? Have you talked to Jer about this. He's going to be pissed if you leave and don't say anything. I do like living you know."

"He doesn't get a choice, Ben. I don't want to be here right now and I need a place to go. If you won't help me I will call someone else." I'm getting angry the longer he tries to stall.

"I'm on my way, just do me a favor and talk to him. You are important to him."

"Um, sure, whatever. I'll see you in a couple minutes."

"I mean it, talk to him."

"Or what, Ben?" I'm back to being angry. Great. Adding mood swings to the list of new emotions.

"I'll make you." He grunts and I just hang up on him too irritated for this right now.

I walk my two bags downstairs and set them by the front door and grit my teeth. I need to say something to Aunt Beth or she will tear this whole pack apart looking for me. Come to think of it, I didn't see her when we got here to meet Rayna today. Weird. She probably would have made the whole introduction so much smoother.

I follow sounds to the common room. It doesn't cross my mind to make myself known before I walk in.

A moan and grunt and then "WHAT THE HELL?!" A female screech pierces my ears.

"Oh sh*t! Sorry. Didn't mean to interrupt." I shield my eyes. "I was just looking for Aunt Beth before I head out." I start to back out of the room as quickly as possible.

"Ken, wait! Come back." I hear a ton of cloth rustling and I move faster.

"Nope! Not a chance. Continue, I will find her on my own, sorry for the interruption." I continue down the hallway heading for the door fighting tears. It took less than an hour for him to be distracted enough to forget I'm even here. 'Important' is no longer a word anyone gets to use when it comes to how Jer feels about me.

"Ken, stop." He's so fucking fast and right in front of me now, blocking my way to the front door. I slam my eyes closed. I'm not going to have his mate try to beat me up for looking at him naked. "Where are you going? Why do you have a bag packed? And why are you looking for Mom?" Now he's worried? I mentally roll my eyes.

"I was going to tell her I was heading out. Are you dressed? I like my eyes where they are in my face. I don't need them ripped out." I squeezed my eyes tighter and ignored his other questions.

"Yes." He laughs. "Now look at me and tell me where you are going. What's going on?"

"I told you, I haven't been sleeping well. I'm going to go stay at Ben's so I'm not a problem."

"What are you talking about? I left you my shirt, that usually works when I'm gone. And since when have you ever been a problem?"

"Really? Are you that dense? The shirt isn't working anymore." I lied. "And It became a problem when you found your mate, who you very obviously forgot to say anything to, cause she didn't expect me based on the welcome I got when you brought her home. She doesn't want me here and you aren't going to choose."

"I'm right here, you know. Don't talk about me like I'm not in the room." Her voice comes up close behind me. I close my eyes and take a deep breath in, then out.

Don't get an attitude, don't get an attitude, don't get an attitude. I have to keep repeating to myself. This is not her fault, she's just as much a victim here as I am and she has just as much if not more right to be angry than I do.

"I still don't understand the problem?" Jeremiah looks from her to me and back again.

It's my turn to glare and growl and I don't even have a wolf. Jer's eyes go wide and he takes a step back from me. Hands up in a surrendering gesture. At least he's smart enough to know we are both pissed, even if he doesn't understand the problem.

"Why are boys so stupid?!" I don't yell, but my temper is getting harder and harder to control. I let out another sigh and decided to get this over with. I turn around. "Rayna, I'm Kennedy, Jeremiah's best friend, his female best friend. I live here in the packhouse." I gesture around me. "I've been here for the last three years. My mom was his mom's best friend and I'm here because my parents died three years ago. I still have nightmares from that day and Jeremiah usually sleeps in my room with me..."

I get nothing else out when she launches herself at me snarling and grabbing for my hair. She's strong but I don't know if she trains much, her movement is clumsy. We both fall back and I take the brunt of both our weights before flipping us both over trying to gain the advantage. I don't want to hurt her, but I also don't want to get hurt by her. She's clawing at everything she can and her legs are kicking wildly underneath me. She's snarling and growling but having a hard time getting words out.

"You b*ch! You can't have him!" She yells as she swipes at my face with her nails and distracts me enough to shift our positions and move on top of me. I can feel the blood trickle down my face.

She thinks I'm just a rando girl trying to claim her man. With all the time he has spent with her even since she found out about me, he still never explained who I was. Jackass. Now I understand her frustration, I would find that shady too, and I'm fighting to get words out to reassure her while not letting her hurt me. I can only get a few choppy syllables uttered here and there while trying to hold her off.

"I don't f*cking want him you crazy ass. He's like my brother." I grunt as she gets a good punch to my stomach. "But you would know that if you two spent just as much time talking as you do f*cking! Now stop trying to claw my eyes out!" That made her pause long enough for me to thrust my hips and flip her on her back.

I have her wrists in my hands and finally get them pinned above her head. She's still flailing as I'm straddling her torso leaning in almost nose to nose. We are both panting, but she's slowly stopped fighting me. Maybe she realized I'm not trying to hurt her back or my words are sinking in. Whatever, it's working.

"Stop trying to kill me. He's like my brother." I say again, breathing hard, now that I seem to have some of her attention. "He should have told you about me and to be honest a heads up about you would have been nice. But sometimes these boys aren't the brightest." I rolled my eyes and finally looked up at him just staring at us and noticed we have a whole audience.

"Oh Goddess! That is so f*cking hot! How did you get so lucky?" Tommy slaps Jeremiah on the back and bites down on his lower lip. Such a perv.

"So all four of you assholes just stood there and let us fight? You weren't concerned for your best friend or your future Luna hurting each other? We should beat the sh*t out of all of you instead."

Ben and Jason roll their eyes, then Ben walks over.

"You two get it out of your system?" He reaches his hand out to me.

"Maybe." I raise an eyebrow looking back at her, slowly releasing her arms and sitting back, straddling her waist, waiting for her to take a cheap shot. Nothing comes so I take his offered hand. Jason helps Rayna up.

I fix my clothes and run my fingers through my hair, not looking at anyone.

"I'm ready Ben, let's go." They need to talk and decide if this is something she can deal with. I don't want to walk away, but an Alpha needs his Luna. In this case she is more important. My friendship with Jeremiah is solely in her hands. If she says no, then that's it, for now at least.

I start walking toward the front door. I set my jaw, I will not cry again. I have said my peace and I can only hope she believes my words. This is for Jeremiah to explain and fix if he wants to keep me in his life. He has to make her see what he and I are, and she has to believe it's not romantic.

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"Wait, don't go." Her voice is sweet but confident and I don't know if I can do this. I shake my head and keep moving. "Please, we should talk."

I keep looking at the door. "I really do need to try and sleep, that wasn't a line. Don't make this any harder for me. Please. I need to go." My plea came out barely audible to my own ears, but I know they can hear me. It is getting harder to breathe.

"But you live here..." She's right behind me whispering. I know the guys can hear us though.

I keep my eyes locked in the door. Each breath is controlled in and then out. "Yep... for now... and soon you will too. I need to learn how to work through the nightmares and bullsh*t on my own anyway, but this was kind of a shock." I bend over and grab my bags, my hands still sore from my impromptu workout earlier. She steps me, her hand on mine. The first tear falls. I shake my head side to side, my heart is breaking.

"Let's go put these away and we can get to know each other. It seems like we will be spending a lot of time together." She pulls on my hand holding the strap to my duffel bag. It wasn't anything harsh or controlling, but something in me just snapped, and I don't have the energy to fight her anymore.

There go my tears again, stupid emotions. She takes my bag and slides her gentle hand on my upper arm turning me around. I sling my backpack on my shoulder, eyes down just focusing on putting one foot in front of the other. We both walk up the stairs to head back to my room, Rayna right behind me without a backwards glance at the guys.

"Ken..." Jeremiah breathes. I just shake my head and keep walking.

"I think your girls just left you hanging. I hope you finished whatever you started in here brother otherwise you're going to sleep with some blue balls." Tommy is always the charmer. But the rest of the guys laugh as well.

We get to my room and I drop my bag by my desk and take a deep breath before I turn around.

I move to take my duffel from her and drop it next to my school bag.

"Were you really just going to leave? No fight at all?" She seems appalled.

"He's my brother, not my boyfriend." I'm kind of getting tired of saying that. "There's never been anything like that between us. I may be human, but I've known him my whole life and we are tight. I understand how mates work, how integral they are. He's an Alpha and an Alpha needs his Luna. There is nothing more important than that for the future of the pack. I'm not getting in the way of that out of selfishness. So yes, I was going to leave, because you don't want me near him. You don't want me here."

I rub my face and go to sit on my bed and pat the place next to me.

"I have never once run at my brother like that. I'm usually more inclined to throw something at him." This has the effect of breaking the tension as I let out a strangled laugh.

"But how close are you and your brother? In age, I mean?"

"Six years difference. He's 26, I'm 20"

I nod. " Jer and I are the same age, literally. We were born on the same day in the same hospital. That's how close our mom's were. My mom was visiting and they both went into labor at the same time. We are more like twins, basically raised that way."

She nods. "That explains a few things then. Not why he sleeps in your room, but we'll get to that. What about the other guys?"

"What about them?" I am trying to get my breathing under control now that she isn't growling at me. I have a headache from all the crying too.

"Oh, come on. There's no way you left all of them alone! That much hotness and no mate yet. And they are all so protective over you. You are close with all of them, anyone can see it."

"What are you talking about 'no mate yet?' I'm human, do you know the odds of me being mated to someone? I can't even be inducted into the pack, because the elders think it will kill me. I'm sure being marked would be just as bad." I chose to skip her other statement. I don't know her that well.

"I don't think I've ever heard that before. We don't have any humans in our pack right now though, so I'm not sure how that works."

"No idea, but Aunt Beth won't even entertain the idea. So I'm a human in a werewolf pack with no actual connection to the pack, living with the Alpha's family, but not blood related." I say darkly.

"So...I believe you've never had any romantic interest in Jeremiah. It's written all over your face." She giggles, like an actual little girl. "But, you avoided my other question, that means you have given the other guys a test drive." She winks and I look at the door, sure someone is probably listening.

"Test drive is a strong phrase." I try to dodge.

"Oh give it up! I need to know these guys and I will get some of that in my own time here, but I want to know what kind of team the Goddess put around my Alpha. How they treat a woman can be a big indicator of the type of people they are." She giggles again.

'My Alpha.' Her brain has already made the switch.

"They are all great, but I might be biased." I shrug and smile.

"So which one are you dating right now? I feel like each one would bring something different. Who was your first?"