

## Chapter 66

4.2 - Kennedy

My stance by Aunt Beth and Uncle James was already going to be a hot topic amongst the pack members who don't like me, we had actually discussed, at length, whether I should stand up front with them or be given a seat. My vote was to sit, this day wasn't about me. But Aunt Beth shot that down. I am Jeremiah's sister for all intents and purposes and as a part of the family I will stand up by him while we welcome our future Luna into the pack. But, now that I have a bodyguard from Dark Moon also following me around, the whispers aren't exactly whispers and Uncle James had to audibly growl to silence them as we made our way to the platform in front of the gathered crowd. Clearly people from the party last night have been running their mouths.

We each met Jeremiah and gave him a hug. He held onto me for a second longer. "I love you Ken. We'll figure this out." He whispers in my ear.

"Love you to Jer." I give him one last squeeze and move to stand by my aunt and uncle, Bennet right behind me. ↪

So far I have avoided looking at the front row where I can feel Alpha Ryker's presence. I knew the moment he was outside, like a pressure pushing on my skin letting me know he's here. The closer I am to him the stronger the pressure and it changes as I move around. I could tell which direction he was in without looking. His stare is making my skin heat up too. I feel flush all over, like the summer sun is beating down on me in the late fall air.

The ceremony is beautiful. I've never seen one before since they only happen once a generation typically. The elders give some pack history and describe the lore that brought Alphas and Lunas into power and their roles as the leaders of the pack. He uses a ceremonial silver blade with all

kinds of jewels embedded into the handle to slice into each of their hands. When they clasp them together, mixing her blood with his, I hear all the pack members gasp as she becomes a part of the Silver Crescent pack.

An instant sadness and longing fill me. Is that all that it would take to become a pack member? A nick of the hand and a few pretty words? I have always felt like an outsider and jealous of the bond that these wolves have through their Goddess. Now I really don't understand what all the fuss has been about keeping me out of the pack. There is no way that simple little action could harm me. I get cuts and scrapes all the time when we train or when I run in the woods. I have to fight the tears back. Am I really that unwanted because I am human? Deep breath in and out slowly. Did the elders just make up an excuse to keep me out because of that? Preying on Aunt Beth's unreasonable fear of losing me after losing my mom. I take another slow breath in and out. I can't get upset here, it's not about me I remind myself. I blink away the moisture behind my eyes.

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I feel a light touch of fingertips on my back and my emotions instantly settle and it takes me a second to realize it isn't Aunt Beth's hand from my left, but Bennet's from my right. Another breath in and out, along with more questions to ask.

A few more words are spoken, but I don't really hear them. All my focus is on my best friend as he gently sweeps a loose lock of hair from Rayna's face. Then he leans in, fangs bared and marks her as his Luna and mate. When she marks him even I feel the surge of power as they are blessed by the Goddess. The whole pack cheers and breaks me out of whatever trance I was in during all of that and I smile and clap along. I feel fuzzy and numb. So many emotions and none of them the happy ones that I

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should be feeling for Jer and Rayna. 1

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