

## Chapter 8

7 - Ryker

I am so sick of all these damn meetings, but I can't say that out loud, because this was my idea in the first place. I just didn't expect all of these former Alphas and Betas to be whiny b\*tches. They get worse every time we do this. I guess this explains why they couldn't hold onto their packs.

I am supposed to be getting ready for the new Alphas ceremony. I do not envy the three new Alphas coming up. Some of the old pompous assholes like to throw their weight around and try to make these kids bow down and convince them not to make waves, but that is the point of appointing the next Alpha, new blood, new ideas. We get better and learn from past mistakes and triumphs. Some of these guys though, they need to be put out to pasture and not even allowed a seat on the Elders council.

We haven't had new Alphas come of age in a couple years. I'm not the most recent, but not too far off. I am an exception to the rule though. My dad was injured in a huge war and even with his Alpha lineage and healing powers he never fully recovered, so he appointed me Alpha at sixteen. I can't believe I've been doing this for a decade now. I just know how these kids feel and I prefer to be there as a buffer. I'm known as an asshole and wear that badge proudly, especially to egotistical pricks who have worn out their welcome. Some of the other Alphas are afraid of me, or more accurately my reputation, which I use to my advantage. I tend to keep my mouth shut and let my actions do the talking and some of these kids need help straightening their backbone. 7

"Alpha Ryker? Will you help us?" The man in front of me asks, breaking me out of my thoughts.

Alpha Edward has a small pack and no heir. His Luna died in childbirth and he never took a chosen mate or found his second chance mate. This has been inevitable and he and I have been in negotiations for his pack for a while now, but there is a threat from some of his pack members that

think they should be able to fight him for the position of Alpha and his warriors have come to me with rumors from neighboring packs with the same ideas. He is getting weaker and more vulnerable. He's held on for as long as he can, but he can't risk his pack any longer. 1

Normally I wouldn't get involved and let the herd thin itself out before taking over, but the neighboring packs are not known for handling business and calling it a day. They are more likely to use this as an excuse to kill at will no matter if the victim is innocent or not. Meaning women and children are going to get hurt in the fight or worse. And the fight won't end there, it will bleed into the packs surrounding Alpha Edwards. 1

That is where I come in. If Alpha Edward hands his pack to me willingly then there will be no, or more likely very little blood shed. There's always one person who thinks they should be in charge and tries to challenge me. It's rarely one of the ranked leaders too. They are usually on board with the transfer since we talk and negotiate for months before a transfer like this actually happens. They make sure that their pack is taken care of and I make sure that their future leaders have a place in my ranks. It makes no sense for a future Beta to be cut off simply because the pack merged with another and the position is currently filled. Those ranked members maintain their title as long as they understand the hierarchy. I have had to make a few examples of what happens when they don't fall in line. 2

"Yes, of course, Alpha Edward. How soon will you need me in your pack? I was under the impression that those challenging the merger were being handled."

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"I think they were just biding their time until they thought I would be too weak to stop them or fight off the challenge. I received reports of some aggression today after I left. My Beta and Gamma both have young families. I do not want to see anyone get hurt and I think they will take out anyone loyal to me, or you. I think we need to transfer immediately, I

have a terrible feeling about this." 1

"Do not worry. I have warriors in your pack now and they will ensure that your pack members are safe until I arrive. I believe you should stay close to me though, just as a precaution. We will leave tomorrow morning and can be in your pack by midafternoon. Have your Beta set up the ceremony and we will transfer as soon as we are able."

"Thank you, Ryker." He sounds so weary. I think he has been holding on until he could see his pack safely taken care of.

I'm surprised he made it as long as he did after his mate died. Many don't. The pain from the loss of your mate is supposed to be the worst kind of torture imaginable. Many die from a broken heart or just go mad and have to be eliminated for everyone's safety. I have dispatched many alpha's for that alone. 1

That's one of the reasons Alphas are so protective of their Lunas and why I am sometimes glad I still haven't found mine yet. My wolf always grumbles in my head when that thought crosses my mind. An Alpha is at his strongest when he has his fated Luna by his side and would burn the world for her and anyone who managed to capture her or hurt her would have a level of control over that Alpha. There's nothing we wouldn't do to save her, including sacrificing anyone or anything. I ripped a man's arms off for having the audacity to touch my little sister after she said 'no.' I would probably do worse to someone who even looked at my mate. Just the idea of that kind of possession presses on my chest and terrifies me. I don't want anyone to have that kind of effect on me.

I talked with each former Alpha or Beta that was here. Some of my acquisitions were bloody and not all the leadership was spared. With so many pack members, I rely on the continued, appropriate leadership to help maintain order. Which is why I have these monthly meetings with all the territories. I can make sure needs are being met and I can gauge if the leaders are actually doing their jobs. I get most of my information from the planted warriors I have in each territory, I like to make my





presence and authority known regularly, just in case. It's stupid, but necessary. We rotate the meeting location through the different territories on my pack lands, just so everyone can see I treat them all the same. All pretentious d\*ck measuring. Speaking of d\*cks. 2

"It is about time, Alpha Ryker. Some of us have pressing matters to deal with and you are shooting the sh\*t with old washed up Alphas not worth your time."

"Hello Claude. What pressing matter do you have for me this time?" He visibly bristles at my lack of using a title. He no longer has one because I took it from him.

Former Alpha Claude Craig is the biggest pain in the ass that I have ever had to deal with. And still insists on being called by a title he no longer has the right to. I never use it, my guys never use it. There are many 'Alphas' in this room, he isn't unique or the only one holding on tight to his past, so I let his attitude go, choosing bigger battles. He decided to try and challenge me very early in my reign as Alpha of the Dark Moon pack, thinking it would be easy to take over my father's very prominent pack for his own simply because I was young. 3

He underestimated me and my skills. He also underestimated the fact that my way of running a pack would appeal to the pack I absorbed from him. Many gave me their loyalty willingly. Unfortunately, I was young and naive and thought that since I beat him, he would submit to me. In theory, he did, but he negotiated a way to maintain a small amount of control and he has enough minions to be a problem. He's basically harmless, but I don't take that for granted. I have someone in his ranks too. I have already been informed of the drivel he was going to come to me with. He's not dumb enough to outright challenge me again, but he rides that line tightly and I have to regularly remind him who is actually in charge.

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I don't listen to a word he says as he leads us over to a table with a large map, I don't have to. I'm not going to agree to extend the border of his territory area. He seems to think that having more land will make 'his pack members', my pack members, more comfortable. What he really wants is to expand and start taking over territories before I do. What he doesn't seem to know is his borders are completely surrounded on all sides by territories I control, with people loyal to me. That wasn't an accident, and he is a moron if he doesn't know that.

"I believe a school and training facility would work best in this area here." He points to a spot on the map that is miles outside his own borders. He wants me to give him more land to control and pay for the build so he can use it to his benefit. He must still think I am a stupid trusting sixteen year old kid. He's already abused every ounce of leadership I have given him.

"I will talk to Don and see what he thinks about sharing a school and training facility, since that land is well outside your borders. I would shift the position a bit and open the offer to Nathan and Rory since that will be close to residential areas for both of them as well. We will also need a small healer's center there so none of the trainees will have to travel far



fo care in an emergency.”

He just sits there and gapes at me like a fish. With four leaders controlling those facilities, it will have to be cooperative and none of those three will be swayed by his bullsh\*t. He should have thought better before bringing this to me.

“If you will excuse me, I have another meeting that I must get to. Make sure you get your proposal, in writing, to Robin ASAP. I will let you know the results of your proposal by the end of the week.” I leave him just staring at my back. 1

I need to handle Edward’s transfer and then get to the Elders Council. My sister and my dad went in my place and I trust both of them to hold off the assholes for me, but I hate it when my sister is alone with unmated alphas. She hasn’t found her mate yet and she is 20. Many older alphas started eyeing her last year as a chosen or second chance mate since she is of alpha descent. I shot all of that down immediately, but that won’t stop them from trying while I’m not around. She needs to be protected at all times from that bullsh\*t.

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