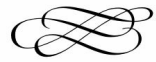


# THE TWINS

The book cover for 'The Twins' by Emilia Rose features a dramatic, monochromatic purple and blue color scheme. In the foreground, two muscular men are shown from the waist up. The man on the left is flexing his right arm, while the man on the right stands with his arms at his sides, looking off to the side. In the background, a rugged, rocky landscape is visible under a large, full moon. A wolf is perched on a high cliff to the left, and a bison stands on a lower ridge to the right. The title 'THE TWINS' is written in a large, elegant, serif font, with 'THE' in smaller letters above 'TWINS'. The author's name, 'EMILIA ROSE', is at the bottom in a clean, sans-serif font.

EMILIA ROSE

# THE TWINS



EMILIA ROSE

Copyright © 2022 by Emilia Rose

All rights reserved.

This book or parts thereof may not be reproduced in any form, stored in any retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or otherwise—without prior written permission of the author, except as provided by United States of America copyright law. For permission requests, write to the author at “Attention: Permissions Coordinator” at the email address below.

Any references to historical events, real people, or real places are used fictitiously. Names, characters, and places are products of the author’s imagination.

Cover by: Covers by Christian

Editing by: Jovana Shirley, Unforeseen Editing, [www.unforeseenediting.com](http://www.unforeseenediting.com)

Proofreading by: Heart Full of Reads

Emilia Rose

[emiliarosewriting@gmail.com](mailto:emiliarosewriting@gmail.com)

# CONTENTS

[Chapter 1](#)  
[Chapter 2](#)  
[Chapter 3](#)  
[Chapter 4](#)  
[Chapter 5](#)  
[Chapter 6](#)  
[Chapter 7](#)  
[Chapter 8](#)  
[Chapter 9](#)  
[Chapter 10](#)  
[Chapter 11](#)  
[Chapter 12](#)  
[Chapter 13](#)  
[Chapter 14](#)  
[Chapter 15](#)  
[Chapter 16](#)  
[Chapter 17](#)  
[Chapter 18](#)  
[Chapter 19](#)  
[Chapter 20](#)  
[Chapter 21](#)  
[Chapter 22](#)  
[Chapter 23](#)  
[Chapter 24](#)  
[Chapter 25](#)  
[Chapter 26](#)  
[Chapter 27](#)  
[Chapter 28](#)  
[Chapter 29](#)  
[Chapter 30](#)  
[Chapter 31](#)  
[Chapter 32](#)  
[Chapter 33](#)  
[Chapter 34](#)  
[Chapter 35](#)  
[Chapter 36](#)

[Chapter 37](#)  
[Chapter 38](#)  
[Chapter 39](#)  
[Chapter 40](#)  
[Chapter 41](#)  
[Chapter 42](#)  
[Chapter 43](#)  
[Chapter 44](#)  
[Chapter 45](#)  
[Chapter 46](#)  
[Chapter 47](#)  
[Chapter 48](#)  
[Chapter 49](#)  
[Chapter 50](#)  
[Chapter 51](#)  
[Chapter 52](#)  
[Chapter 53](#)  
[Chapter 54](#)  
[Chapter 55](#)  
[Chapter 56](#)  
[Chapter 57](#)  
[Chapter 58](#)  
[Chapter 59](#)  
[Chapter 60](#)  
[Chapter 61](#)  
[Chapter 62](#)  
[Chapter 63](#)  
[Chapter 64](#)  
[Chapter 65](#)  
[Chapter 66](#)  
[Chapter 67](#)  
[Chapter 68](#)  
[Chapter 69](#)  
[Chapter 70](#)  
[Chapter 71](#)  
[Chapter 72](#)  
[Chapter 73](#)  
[Chapter 74](#)  
[Chapter 75](#)  
[Chapter 76](#)  
[Chapter 77](#)  
[Chapter 78](#)  
[Chapter 79](#)

[Chapter 80](#)

[Chapter 81](#)

[Chapter 82](#)

[Chapter 83](#)

[Chapter 84](#)

[Also by Emilia Rose](#)

[About the Author](#)

# CHAPTER 1





NAOMI

“*Y*ou’re late,” my older sister, Adelyne, said. She was bouncing on her toes, her arms crossed, trying to keep warm. Her black Adidas gym bag was draped over her shoulder. “They’re waiting.”

I shuffled through my gym bag and suitcase in the trunk of my car, taking out one of the items and stuffing it deep in my suitcase.

Adelyne wrinkled her nose at me and gazed at the clothes that were now hiding the second vibrator that I had bought this week. “That’s why you were late?”

I zipped up the suitcase and pulled it out of the trunk. “Yes.”

Her cheeks flushed, but mine didn’t. There was no use in trying to hide it. I wasn’t embarrassed. I—voluntarily—hadn’t been touched by a man in weeks since Oliver, so I needed it.

“What’s the rush, anyway?” I asked, throwing my backpack around my shoulders and maneuvering my suitcase onto the cracked concrete.

Adelyne smiled wickedly at me, her dark brown locks blowing against the hood of her forest-green Columbia coat.

I rolled my eyes. “Not this again. Addie, I already told you that I’m not interested.”

After I shut the trunk, she tugged on my arm. “Come on, Naomi. I know you’ll love them!”

The bright red lights of Bainundo Martial Arts glowed against the dark backdrop of the night sky. The large glass windows were already foggy, yet I could see the inside was crowded with unfamiliar bodies. The forest that surrounded us was eerily quiet.

“I highly doubt that.”

Men around here didn't know anything about pleasing a woman, and this woman had goddamn needs.

"Besides, you have terrible taste." I wrinkled my nose. "I mean, Derek?"

She growled at me. "Hey, he's my mate."

I raised a brow as we walked toward Bainundo. "No, you were his mate. Not the other way around." I bumped my shoulder into hers. "Remember that you were human, like me, before he marked you."

"You're just jealous."

*Jealous.* She knew that I wasn't ever jealous of her being a werewolf.

I was strong and smart as a human—that was why the Shadowcrown Pack had hired me. With two alphas who had both been bred for war since they were pups, the Shadowcrown Pack was already one of the strongest packs in this region. But they wanted to strengthen their weakest ties. A war was brewing, and even the strongest pack needed to be ready.

Being the only human who trained with the Lycans—the best of the best werewolf warriors around—I had learned from the inside out what a strong pack was comprised of, and so I dedicated myself to helping packs.

Addie opened the door and grabbed my suitcase, pulling it in with her. Unlike the stench of body odor, which hit me like a wall, the chatter from within the room came out in waves. We walked around people, trying to find her mate.

"Give them a chance." She leaned closer to me and whispered in my ear, "They're twins."

"So, you get embarrassed when I tell you that I masturbate, but you're fine with pushing me to get fucked by twins?"

Derek suddenly appeared in front of us, brow raised. "Whoa, whoa, whoa. TMI, Naomi."

Addie kissed his lips and wrapped her arm around his. "I'm trying to convince her that she'll like them."

Derek raised his eyebrows suggestively at me, and I shook my head. Men.

Goddamn men. Had one thing on their mind all damn day, and so did I.

I shifted from foot to foot and surveyed the room. It was filled with Lycans and werewolves. Some were wrestling, throwing each other onto the mat with a loud slam. Others were boxing, their fists colliding with each other's faces. And from all the way across the room, two wolves were staring right at me.

Two pairs of hazel eyes. Dark brown hair. Arms covered in tattoos.

After taking a few moments to recover, I smiled in their direction. One of them smirked back at me, his dark hair falling onto his forehead slightly. The other didn't smile. Instead, he tightened his jaw, his eyes glowing gold.

Addie nudged me. "Told you."

"Watch my stuff." I placed my backpack on the ground next to my suitcase. "I'm going to use the bathroom."

*"Use the bathroom,"* Derek commented.

Again, Addie's cheeks flushed. Before she could scold me for what I was about to do—touch myself because I hadn't in nearly two weeks, and they were much hotter than I'd expected—I stepped through the crowd.

Over everyone's chatter, I heard her say, "You'll thank me later!"

I glanced over my shoulder at the twins. They were both still watching me but had stopped talking to the woman they were chatting with. The one who had clenched his jaw at me leaned over to his brother and whispered something. He nodded.

Then, as if in sync, they disappeared into the crowd.

I continued to the bathroom, glancing back every so often to see their golden eyes staring back at me—closer each time. My stomach tingled.

When I finally pushed through the crowd, I glanced back once more. I bumped into someone's chest, my hands feeling the thick muscle under his shirt. I looked up at one of the twins and swallowed hard.

His eyes glowed gold, and he growled lowly.

The other brushed his fingers against my hips from behind. "Where do

you think you're going, Little One?"

## CHAPTER 2



NAOMI

*I* desperately tried to peel my eyes away from his, but couldn't. They were golden suns, burning with such intensity, holding so much dominance over me. He didn't smirk, smile, or say anything. Just stared like he didn't know what to say or just didn't want to say anything at all.

The other one dug his fingers into my hips a bit harsher. "Curling your fingers into his chest like that only makes you look desperate."

I pulled my hands off of his chest, narrowed my eyes, and turned on my heel. "Excuse me? Desperate?"

He smirked at me, his eyes dark.

"Hypocrite much?"

He peered back at his brother. "A feisty Little One." He curled a finger around a stray piece of my hair and gently tugged on it.

"What do you think you're doing?" I asked, slapping his hand away.

He chuckled, stepped toward me, and posted his hands on the wall next to either side of my head. "I'm thinking about skipping this little introduction to that chick who wants to *fix* our pack and locking us all in that bathroom for the next fifteen minutes." He smirked. "What do you think, Noah?"

Pure dominance dripped off of every word that he said, and I couldn't help pressing my legs together.

I gathered all of my strength, placed my hands on his muscular shoulders, and pushed him away. "Actually, I'm busy at the moment."

I sidestepped him and slipped through the women's bathroom door, locking it behind me. I pressed one hand against the wooden door and pushed the other into my underwear. Those were the idiots that I was going to work with for the next month.

My fingers glided over my clit, rubbing small circles around it. *The damn idiots.*

I pressed a hand against my mouth to muffle a moan. *Rude.*

A wave of pleasure rolled through me, and I rested my forehead against the door. *Arrogant.*

My fingers moved faster. *Dominant.*

All I could imagine was them barreling into the room and taking me. One from behind, digging his fingers into my hips and thrusting into me, and the other from the front, his hand laced in my hair, pushing my head down to his cock, making me take all of him.

My legs trembled, and I whimpered. I pressed my fingertips into the door until they turned white, like it was the only thing keeping me standing. I pulled my fingers out of my pants and took a deep breath.

After taking a few moments to splash some water on my face, I finally caught my breath, pushed any sexy thoughts of those assholes out of my mind, and opened the door. Like I'd expected, they were both standing there.

Noah tightened his jaw, his gaze traveling down my body to my hips. He sniffed the air lightly and cursed under his breath, and when his eyes returned to mine, his eyes were golden. His canines emerged from under his lips.

The other crossed his arms over his chest. "You smell like you just—"

"There you are, Naomi!" Isabella, the leader of the Lycans and my boss, beamed at me from my left. "So, you've met Noah and Jax."

Jax's eyes widened. "You're Naomi?"

Noah closed his eyes briefly, shaking his head at his brother.

I nodded. "Yes, or you can just call me that chick who wants to *fix* your pack. Either works."

"Jax is an idiot." Noah spoke for the first time. His voice was deep and low. He ripped his stare away from me to look at Isabella. "Thanks for putting it together." He had a black tattoo designed on the side of his neck.

Isabella glanced awkwardly between us all and then nodded her head. She

grabbed my wrist and pulled me away from the alphas. “Well, before she leaves with you for the next few months, she needs to meet everyone.”

Isabella tugged me toward the woman that Noah and Jax had been talking to earlier. She had dark red hair and a bright smile. *Young* and *beautiful* were honestly the only words that came to mind when I saw her.

“And last but not least, this is Makayla.” Isabella wrapped an arm around her shoulders. “She’s small, like you, so I thought you could show her all of your tricks.” She winked.

Makayla blushed. “It’s nice to meet you, Naomi. Alpha Noah has talked a lot about you. He’s excited for you to help us.”

I raised a brow and scanned the crowd to see the twins talking to Addie and Derek. Neither of them seemed particularly excited about it. Jax definitely didn’t want anyone coming into the pack, and Noah hadn’t even said a word to me.

I thanked the Moon Goddess that Isabella had pulled me away because if I had been there for another moment, I’d have probably ended up letting them lock me in that bathroom and doing whatever I wanted them to do to me.

Desperate, maybe. Horny all the damn time, definitely.

Men around here might not know how to please women, but those two surely did. I didn’t have to find out to know it. The way they talked, devoured me with their eyes, *hell*, just their mere presence screamed that living with them for the next few months to train their pack was going to be a ride. A ride that I was looking forward to.



## CHAPTER 3



NAOMI

Isabella turned off the light inside of Bainundo, one of the indoor fighting areas within the Lycans territory. After I was introduced to everyone and hopped in on some of the fighting, almost everyone left.

I peered out into the busy forest, listening to wolves run and howl deep into the night. I tossed my backpack over my shoulder, and Jax grabbed the handle of my suitcase.

“I can do it myself,” I said, taking it back.

He smirked and walked next to me with his hands in his pockets. “You seem to want to do a lot yourself.” His eyes were dark even though the moon was hitting his tan skin perfectly.

“Well, that’s because I don’t need anyone who can’t do things right getting in my way.”

“Can’t do things right?” Noah asked from in front of us. He turned around. His golden eyes were already staring intently into mine—again so intensely, like earlier.

Jax crossed his arms over his chest. “Listen, Little One, I don’t know what you’re referring to, but—”

Isabella cleared her throat. “But ... I expect you two to take care of Naomi.” She tossed her arm around my shoulders and pulled me into a hug. “She’s one of the strongest that I have on the Lycans.” She opened the trunk of my car and placed my suitcase in it. “And when I say take care of her”—she shut the trunk—“I mean, take care of her in *any* way that she might need.” She leaned in, covered my ears, and said, “You know what I’m talking about. This girl hasn’t gotten—”

Before she could continue, I shoved her slightly.

She giggled. “Well, you haven’t!”

Jax leaned against my car, smirking. “We can take care of that.”  
Noah’s lips curled into a smile, mirroring his brother.  
“I don’t need any taking care of.” But I wanted to be taken care of.

\* \* \*

WHEN WE MADE it to their pack house, I lugged my suitcase all the way upstairs to my new room. We showered—not together, only I wished that we had when I was standing under the hot water, teasing my clit with my fingers.

By the time I finished edging myself in the shower, I was aching for a release. Jax and Noah were in my room, waiting for me. Both showered, hair dripping. Their shirts clinging to their body, hugging their biceps.

“We’re going to get you settled in,” Jax said.

My gaze lingered on him and Noah longer than it should have as I tried to decipher how exactly he was going to help me settle in. Help me put my clothes away or introduce me to the real Alpha Noah and Alpha Jax.

I was hoping for the latter, but when Noah set the suitcase on my bed, I frowned.

Jax talked the whole time, asking me about anything and everything, while Noah stayed quiet. When Jax went silent for a moment, I knew something was up. I looked back at him from my closet to see him smirking at Noah and holding my ... vibrator.

“Where do you want me to put this?” he asked, his hand swaying it up in the air.

“Up your ass,” I said, walking over to him and trying to take it from his hand.

He held it higher, so I couldn’t reach it. *An immature idiot. Great.*

“Why do you have this?” he asked.

“I told you already.” I reached for it again, my body brushing against his.  
“Because guys can’t do things right.”

Noah growled slowly from behind me. I glanced over at him, locking on to that intense stare. Every part of my body felt like it was on fire when he was looking at me.

Jax wrapped his arm around my waist and pulled me closer, his nose brushing up the side of my neck, making me shiver. He stopped toying with my vibrator and threw it down on the bed behind me. My breath caught in my throat.

“Well,” Jax started as Noah placed a hand on my arm and stepped closer to me, “I guess we’ll have to show you what guys can do right.”

## CHAPTER 4



NAOMI

Noah sat behind me and grabbed my hips, pulling me onto his lap. His hardness pressed against my ass. I moved my hips slowly, teasing him. He growled in my ear and wrapped an arm around my waist, slipping his hand into my pants.

Jax smirked and stalked over to me. His fingers moved up each of my legs until he reached my leggings. He gripped the edges of them and pulled them down my legs. My pussy tightened.

I slid my feet up so that they were resting on each of Noah's thighs. Jax gazed at my pussy, smirking. Noah moved his fingers around the hem of my lace underwear.

"Look at her pussy through those panties," Jax said. He rubbed his hard-on. "You can see fucking everything."

I tightened again and raised my hips, getting tired of Noah teasing me. He brushed his fingers down my underwear and began to rub my clit. I leaned back against him, moaning softly.

"You're so wet," he mumbled against my ear.

Jax knelt in front of me, pressing his fingers into my underwear as well. He brushed them against my wetness and slipped one inside of my panties and then inside of me. Immediately, I clasped around him.

"Fuck," he said. "Her pussy is so tight."

Noah's hand traveled up my body, and he groped one of my breasts through my shirt. My nipples hardened through my sports bra. He drew his fingers around it, and then he took it between two fingers and squeezed harshly.

I whimpered out, digging my nails into his thighs under me.

He chuckled lowly in my ear. "Do you like that?"

He did it again, and I whimpered.

Jax pushed another finger inside of me, and I gripped his fingers. He moved them slowly, pushing them in and out, curling them each time they pressed all the way in. He twirled them around lightly and then added another.

“Better than your vibrator?” Jax asked from below me.

I bit my lip and shook my head. “No.”

Noah tensed and growled in my ear. He wrapped a hand around my neck and picked me up with his other arm. Jax pulled his fingers out of me, his eyes dark. He ripped off my panties. Noah leaned against the headboard with me between his legs. He shoved his fingers into my pussy—the calm, quiet Noah gone—and began to wildly pump them in and out as his hand tightened around my throat.

Jax smirked at me, and my face grew hot.

“There it is.” He grabbed my vibrator and turned it on, handing it to me.

My brows furrowed as my body jerked back and forth from Noah’s fingers, my head falling against his chest. Jax put it in my hand and placed it on my clit, holding it there.

“Don’t come,” Noah said lowly in my ear. “Not until we tell you that you can.”

My pussy tightened around his fingers. Jax pulled his shirt over his head and pulled down his pants, his cock springing out. He crawled onto the bed next to me, grabbed my head, and pulled me toward his cock.

My lips wrapped around the head of it. Jax laced his hand in my hair, pulling me all the way onto him until my lips were flat against the base of his hips. I could feel his cock pressing against the front of my throat.

I moaned on him, my eyes closing. My core tightened and tightened and tightened. Noah drove his fingers into me faster, making it difficult for me to hold my vibrator steady. The vibrations coursed through my body.

My fingers dug into the bedsheets. I bobbed my head back and forth on

Jax's cock, trying to think about anything but coming. My legs began to tremble, and I arched my back against Noah. I pulled back to breathe and cried out in pleasure.

"Don't come," he commanded again, but I was so close.

His fingers stilled inside of me, and I whimpered against him. Jax grabbed his cock in one hand and pushed it against my lips, wetting them with my spit. He pushed himself back inside of me and against my cheek. With the side of his hand, he lightly slapped it and groaned.

I moved my hips back and forth, trying to get Noah to continue to please me, but he stilled my hips. He grabbed the vibrator from me and began to move it around my clit in small circles. I unclenched around his fingers and clamped down on them again.

"Look at me, Little One," Jax commanded.

I looked up at him through my lashes. He groaned. His hand tightened around my throat, making my eyes water, and then he shoved himself down my throat.

Noah's free hand wandered up my body, lightly grazing over my nipple, and then found my neck. He placed his hand right under Jax's and felt his cock in my throat.

"I can't wait to be this deep inside of you," he whispered in my ear.



## CHAPTER 5



NAOMI

Noah let go of my throat, trailing his hand back down to my breasts. He pulled my shirt up, giving him a clear view of my breasts through my sports bra. I could feel him smirk against me. He groped one of my breasts, flicking my nipple through my bra, and shook it lightly. He growled against me.

Jax began to pound into my throat, and again, my pussy tightened. Noah pinched both of my nipples, sending a wave of pleasure to my core. I wanted them so bad.

Noah rubbed his cock against my ass. It was hard and big. I rubbed him through his pants while mumbling on Jax's cock.

He looked down at me, chuckling. "What was that?" He didn't take his cock out of my throat. "Huh?"

When he finally pulled out, I gasped for air. "Please."

"Please, what?" He grabbed my chin and drew a finger down my bottom lip.

I swallowed hard and rubbed Noah through his pants. "Please," I begged again.

Noah placed me on the bed and stood up next to his brother.

"On your knees," Jax said.

My pussy clenched, but I obeyed him. Alpha's command.

I scurried off of the bed and knelt in front of them, still pressing the vibrator to my pussy. Jax pulled my shirt over my head as Noah pulled his pants off. I grabbed his cock with my free hand, not waiting for him to come to me. I crawled over to him and wrapped my lips around his head.

Jax spit on his cock and placed my free hand on him. I stroked him, and he moved closer.

Noah grabbed my head and began to shove himself quickly in and out of me. After a few thrusts, he buried his cock in my throat and held me to him. He pulled out, and Jax immediately pushed himself inside. In and out, and in and out.

My pussy tightened.

And when he pulled out, Noah pushed himself back inside of me. "Look at me," he demanded.

I peered up at him through teary eyes and pressed my lips to the base of his hips. He wrapped his hand around my throat, feeling his cock inside of me.

I moaned on his cock.

He placed a single finger on my chin. "Don't come," he said.

He pulled out slowly. I sucked Jax back in my mouth, stroking Noah's cock. Noah grabbed my tits through my sports bra.

"Fuck." He took his cock, lifted the bottom of my sports bra just enough, and pushed it between my tits.

I rested the vibrator on the ground, spreading my legs and rubbing my pussy on it. I pushed my tits closer together for him.

"No hands," Jax said. He pulled himself out of my mouth, seized my arms, and pulled them behind my back. He grabbed my leggings from the floor and tied them around my arms, holding them back.

Noah plunged his cock between my tits, then pinched my nipples through my bra. I whimpered.

"Can I come? Please, can I come?" I begged.

"No," he said.

I furrowed my brows together, and he pinched my sensitive buds harder. I whimpered.

Jax walked over to me, stroking his cock. Instead of pushing himself inside of me, he lifted the bottom of my sports bra and pushed his cock between my tits as well. They both pushed their cocks between them.

“Please,” I begged. My tits bounced. “Please.”

“Please, what?” Jax asked.

“Use your words,” Noah said.

“I want to come.” The vibrator continued to make my pussy tighten.  
“Please let me come.”

Noah took his cock out of my sports bra and rubbed his cock on my lips.

“You want to come?”

I nodded my head.

“Open your mouth.”

I obeyed, and he pushed himself inside of me, all the way until he was down my throat.

He rubbed my throat, stroking his cock.

Jax stilled between my tits and groaned.

“Come, Little One,” Noah said.

My legs trembled underneath me. Noah held me in place, and suddenly, I felt his cum fill my throat.

Wave after wave of pleasure pumped out of me. My legs continued to tremble, and I placed my hands on Jax’s thighs, digging my nails into them.

Noah didn’t pull out. “Swallow.”

When I swallowed his cum, he pulled out of me and took a step back. I collapsed onto the ground, breathing heavily. Cum covered my tits and my neck, but Jax still pulled me into his arms.

“Come on. You’re not sleeping in this room tonight.”

## CHAPTER 6



NAOMI

When Jax brought me into one of their rooms, I scrambled out of his hold and hopped onto the ground. The plain white carpet that covered part of the red oak hardwood floor felt soft against my toes.

I stepped away from the twins and raised a sharp brow at them. “I’m not sleeping in here.”

I snatched a dress shirt from one of the dressers and tugged it over my shoulders to cover myself from them. Don’t get me wrong; I wasn’t ashamed of my body. I just liked to tease. My fingers grazed across the side of the dresser, drenching it in my scent.

The room was bigger than mine. Fit for an alpha, of course. The bed was twice as big as mine back at the Lycans’ with a grand oak headboard and a dark comforter. It looked so comfortable that I wanted to hop right on with both of them, sink into the blankets, and watch the snow fall out of the large window across from the bed.

Noah leaned against the bed, arms crossed and jaw tight. “Sit, Naomi,” he said. His voice was gentle yet held so much power in it.

*If I were a werewolf in his pack, his alpha command would be irresistible. And even as a human, I had the urge to sit right next to him on the bed and let them both do as they pleased.*

My fingers trailed across the blankets. “No.”

Jax stood in front of the door. “Don’t tell me that you want to sleep in your room after *that*?”

His shirt tightened against his biceps, and I swallowed hard.

*Business before pleasure, Naomi. Business before pleasure.*

Oliver had taught me that the hard way when he left.

Everything I did—or at least tried to do—was business. Pleasure was a

side effect. I gazed at Noah, who was staring intently at me again, capturing me with those big hazel eyes. Trapping me. My breath nearly caught in my throat.

After a few moments, I gathered my thoughts, tried not to give off any action that what I really wanted was to be bent over that bed and fucked senseless, and broke my stare with Noah.

The air was warm, humid, hot—unbreathable. *My God.*

My eyes traveled around the room again as I chanted my motto inside my head. *Business before pleasure. Business before pleasure.*

There were no pictures on the walls, no sentiments on the side tables. Just sleek oak furniture and black decor. So chilling, so utterly chilling. This wasn't Jax's room. It was Noah's. It fit him perfectly.

Jax stepped toward me, and I glanced over at him.

"I thought that you Lycans fucked all the time?" He tilted his head, lip curling into a smirk.

I raised a brow. "You thought that carrying me"—I stepped closer to him, brushed a hand against his shoulder, and lowered my voice—"in your *big, strong arms* to the bedroom was going to make me want to fuck you?"

What a great moment to teach them the first lesson in battle.

I smirked at them, finally regaining my sanity. "You'll have to try harder than that."

Jax stepped closer. "Try hard?" He chuckled. "You have it all wrong, Little One."

Noah pushed himself off of the bed and snaked his hand up my neck, his lips close to my ear. "We didn't have to try hard when his cock was in your mouth." He softly gripped my chin between his fingers, but I knew that he could snap at any moment, and those fingers could dig into my chin so damn dominantly. "We didn't have to try when my fingers were in your wet little pussy, thrusting into you until you were *begging*."

Jax's hand brushed against the front of my pussy.

I shifted slightly, so I was standing between the two men and grazed my fingers up their abdomens. Watching, analyzing how *I* affected them. Noah held my gaze so confidently that I thought I had no effect on him. But when his golden eyes appeared through his hazel ones, my lips curled into a smirk. He grabbed my hand.

And in a moment, I pulled both of my hands away. “Of course you didn’t have to try earlier,” I said, “because I let you. It was the first and only way to teach notorious twins like you the first lesson of war.”

Jax scoffed. “Teaching us a lesson of war?” He crossed his arms over his chest. “Sure, you have trained with the Lycans, but when have you ever fought in war?”

I raised a brow and smirked. “Offended that I played you at your own game, Jax?” I curled my finger around his hair. “Listen.” I gathered all of the damn sanity that I had left with these two, knowing that they would take it again within a few days. “I’m not here to fuck you both, no matter how hot you are.”

Noah paused, snatching my hand and squeezing tighter than I’d expected him to. “Then, what was *that*?” he asked, referring to earlier. His voice was tense.

“To teach you to know your enemy before you engage. Engaging too early leads to messy, messy mistakes.”

I knew exactly what I would be getting myself into when I said what I did next, but I couldn’t resist. They were too tempting.

Without giving them much of another thought, I sashayed to the door and peered back at them. Noah was standing there, jaw clenched, body tense. Jax had an amused smirk on his face yet a hidden fury behind his eyes.

“I’m here to teach your weakest members how to fight as best as your strongest ones do. And after *that* poor performance, it seems like you two need the most help.”

And with that, I smirked at the twins that I had seemed to wrap around



my finger within the past two hours, and I walked right out of the room without another word.

## CHAPTER 7



NAOMI

I expected them to barge into my room in the middle of the night, tear the covers right off of my naked body, and show me just how well they could perform, but they didn't.

Instead, I stayed awake all night and stared at the ceiling, listening to the howls in the night. They got up in the middle of the night and came back an hour later, the stench of sweat seeping under my door. But they never came into my room.

Which left me disappointed and horny.

When morning finally came, I tugged on a shirt and jogged through the pack house to the back door. A bunch of wolves were gathered around in the backyard, chatting with each other. Most were big and bulky; others were tall and lean. Some had scars. Warriors.

As soon as I walked through the door, Noah and Jax stared over at me. Jax smirked while Noah's eyes glowed gold. Makayla was talking about something to them, but it didn't seem like they were paying attention. *Poor girl.*

The twins walked through the crowd to me, like they had last night. I cleared my throat, and everyone quieted down.

"Good morning." My gaze lingered on them. "We're going to start with a light five-mile run. Human form only."

Everyone nodded, nearly in unison, and started toward the woods. I smirked at the twins and walked right by them with my head held high.

Before I could sneak into the woods and start the run, Noah grabbed my upper arm, holding me in place. "Don't think you're off the hook from last night."

"What about last night?" I took off in a light jog with them running

behind me.

The rest of the pack was already far enough ahead to not hear our conversation.

Jax growled lowly, “You know exactly what we’re talking about.”

“That you two need help the most? That you two are the weakest members of your pack? That you two are the ones holding your pack back?” I called over my shoulder, picking up my speed, knowing that they would be right behind me and breathing down my neck in a few moments.

Of course, it was a lie. I was just trying to get under their skin.

Noah’s growl echoed through the forest. I closed my eyes briefly, taking in the chase. There was something so natural about it that made me feel so thrilled.

“Does me calling you out make you mad?” I asked, not daring to turn around.

Their footsteps pounded against the ground behind me. Each step closer and closer than the last. My heart leaped in my chest.

Running with the wolves had never felt so damn good.

“Does it get under your skin? Make you angry, furious even?”

This time, they both growled, and the forest became eerily quiet. I hopped over a few branches that had fallen in the pathway and ducked under others.

“How angry does it make you?”

Jax grabbed my waist and pushed me up against the nearest tree, shoving my face up against the bark and forcing me to look at him. His hand was wrapped in my hair, and his cock was pressed up against my backside.

“You *are* angry.” I laughed softly.

He growled in my ear, making me shiver.

“What are you going to do about it?” I whispered.

His canines brushed against my neck, and I pushed my knees together. After a moment of silence, he pulled away and breathed deeply against me. Still pressing me into the tree.

I turned around. Noah stood beside Jax, already gripping my chin in his hands. He stared at me, first my eyes and then my lips. He brushed his thumb roughly down my bottom lip.

I smirked at the two men, eyes alight with excitement. Who knew that business could be so ... pleasing? I'd have to thank Adelyne later.

"What are you going to do?" I repeated.

Noah's jaw twitched. These twins were stronger than I'd thought they would be, more resilient.

Before either of them could speak, I shook my head at them. "I'm disappointed."

Neither of them said anything.

"I give you another shot to redeem yourselves, and you break rule number two." I stepped away from both of the twins. "Don't let the enemy get under your skin."

## CHAPTER 8



NAOMI

When I finished my run, all of the warriors were already waiting for us. Noah and Jax jogged out of the woods a few moments later. They both stared at me, fuming, but didn't speak a word.

For the first half of practice, I watched the twins lead and the warriors fight, and I took notes on the weakest members, specifically Makayla. She was smaller than the rest and was being thrown around so easily, especially by the lower-ranked wolves. I frowned at her, remembering when I had been in her shoes. I'd had no idea what to do until Oliver showed me how to really fight.

Toward the end of the first hour, Makayla was working with Noah. For some odd reason, the other wolves her size didn't want to fight her, so she was stuck with him. He had her pinned on her back, and she was struggling to move. She pushed her chest up into the air, trying to roll back, but he was too strong for her.

I cleared my throat. A part of me didn't like their proximity or the way her chest kept rubbing against his.

"Makayla," I said.

Noah released her, and she gulped from underneath him. Her big, bright eyes stared back at me.

"Why don't you wrestle Cecile?" I asked. "She's more your size. I can work with you privately later, if you would like."

Cecile, one of the warriors, gnawed on the inside of her cheek, stood from the sidelines, and walked over to Makayla. I didn't miss the way Cecile was hesitant to even fight her.

After a few moments of watching them fight and taking mental notes, I turned to Noah. He tore off his shirt, which was covered in sweat, and casted

it to the side. His biceps were swollen, his chest was taut, and I was still horny.

“My turn,” I said.

It had been a while since I had last fought against an alpha, but I was looking forward to this. When I reached him, I lowered into my wrestling stance, waiting for him to do the same. After a few moments, he lowered too.

He was so much bigger than me. And I knew that if I let him, he could toss me around so easily. A part of me wanted him to. I had wanted him to since the moment I’d laid eyes upon him. Chuck me onto the bed like I weighed absolutely nothing. Throw me around and bend me in any position that would please him the most.

But this was *business*. So, at first, I didn’t let him fling me around. I kept up with him, pushing him harder than any other wolf here did, except Jax. He would grab my wrist. I would grab his back. He would try to posture over me. I would posture over him.

When I finally saw the opening, I grabbed his wrist, stepped in until our bodies were pressed together, and hurled him over my hip and onto the ground. He had seen it coming, which I hadn’t expected, and immediately, he turned me over, so he was on top of me. He interlaced his legs with mine, forcing me on the ground on my stomach.

His cock was pressed against my ass. He grabbed one of my arms, holding me back from posting my hand on the ground and standing back up. Instead, he drove me into the ground, his cock pressing harder against my ass until I could feel him stiffen.

I pressed my legs together and stopped struggling. He breathed heavily in my ear.

“Is that all you have, Noah?”

He grabbed a fistful of my hair, pushing my head down, his chest rippling against my back. Gently, I moved my hips back, grinding them against his. I gazed at Jax, who stood, watching us from a few feet away, hiding his



hardness behind the shirt he had taken off.

Noah growled in my ear, “If I gave you all I had, I’d be pounding you into the ground right now.”

I gulped and took a deep breath, pulling my knees together even more. “I doubt that,” I whispered. But I didn’t.

I knew that he was telling the truth. He would be pounding into me, and I would be taking it like the desperate and horny woman I was.

“Don’t think for one more minute that you can walk around here, talking to Jax and me like that, and not be punished for it,” he said. His lips grazed against my ear. “Because you’ll be punished, you’ll be taught a lesson, and you’ll be *begging* for us, Little One.”

## CHAPTER 9



NAOMI

After my little talk with Noah, I voluntarily stood at the sidelines and watched the rest of the practice. My core was pulsing—aching—for me to touch it. I couldn't wait to edge myself tonight, but I had business to take care of first.

When everyone left, Makayla smiled at me from across the yard. "Could you teach me how to do a takedown? I think it's the thing I struggle with the most since I'm so much smaller."

I stared over at the pack house to see Noah and Jax standing inside of a lit room, freshly showered. Jax was leaning against a desk, talking to Noah, who was sitting at his desk. That must be their office. *Perfect*. I knew where I was going to touch myself tonight.

"Taking down a larger opponent is easier if you know how to manipulate their body weight and use it against them," I said. "Here, try this."

I slowly approached her, grabbing her arm and flipping her over my hip. She landed on the ground with a thud. She was a lot lighter than I'd expected, lighter than I was. And much, much weaker.

When she got up, she grabbed my wrist and repeated my movements, tossing me over her hip as well. I landed lightly and promptly stood up.

"Good. Now, let's try while moving."

For the next hour, she continued to throw me. Over and over and over, I would hit the ground and immediately stand back up. Training with the Lycans was paying off. All those long practices with Isabella, being thrown over and over by Oliver, had really benefited me with this.

And I honestly wanted to pass my knowledge on to Makayla.

Being the smallest in the pack must suck, especially when you were in one of the strongest packs in the world. In Makayla, I saw a bit of myself

when I'd first started, and I wanted to make her strong enough to compete against all of these other high-level wolves.

After a couple of hours, she leaned against the tree, drenched in sweat and breathing ragged. She gazed over at me. "How are you not tired?" she asked.

I smiled and sat next to her. "I've been doing this for a while."

"When will I get there?" she asked, pursing her lips. Her eyes were big and blue. "I've been training with this pack since I was twelve, and I have barely improved. Nobody ..." She paused for a moment. "Nobody in this pack usually wants to work with me," she whispered.

In the corners of her eyes, I could see tears, but she didn't let them fall. She curled her knees into her chest and frowned. "Sometimes, I feel like I'm useless to them. I'm the weakest link. I know it, but Noah and Jax say otherwise."

I wrapped an arm around her shoulders and leaned my head on hers. "You're not useless to them. You just need to learn how to use what your moon goddess gave you." I could see a sliver of the moon in the dark sky. "You're small. Use that to your advantage. You're fast. Use that to your advantage. Fit in those small spaces, run faster than the rest of them, act quick, think quick."

She smiled, pushing her tears away, and nodded. "Thank you." Her voice was quiet.

I grabbed my bag and rummaged through it for another shirt since mine was covered in sweat. "Anytime," I said, mirroring her smile.

After a few moments of silence, she turned to me. "What are you doing for the rest of the night?" she asked.

I scanned the property, eyeing the twins still in their office. Howls echoed through the woods from the right. Then, I looked around the forest, seeing a few lights glimmering through the trees from the pack town.

"Do you want to come to The Beast Tavern with me tonight?" she asked. "They're having a happy hour. You can meet a few pack members."

Noah glanced through the window at us, those dark eyes directed on me. I smiled and nodded my head. “Sure, I’d love that.”

The Beast Tavern was an old building, painted a light blue and surrounded by bushes of glowing white moonflowers. The outside looked soft and inviting, but as soon as I stepped in, I was enveloped in a bustling bar with handsy, drunk wolves.

Some of the men looked over at me. Eyes dark, dangerous, and daring.

I smiled at them, lifting my eyes just enough to linger on each one of them. Trying to determine if they were worth my time or not.

Makayla walked to the middle of the bar, where there were two empty seats. “Two Gin Starlights,” she said to the bartender.

He placed two glasses on the table and filled them with alcohol. “Alcohol after practice is probably not the best idea,” she said. “But it won’t hurt on the first night, would it?” She smiled cheekily at me.

I laughed and shook my head.

A wolf that I had trained earlier with us leaned over the bar and gazed at me. “Fill a third,” he said to the bartender. When the bartender came back with a full glass, the wolf clanked our glasses together. “To Naomi.”

I took a sip of my drink, the sweetness hitting me immediately. From the first sip, I could tell that it was bound to make me drunk. Just this one hit me so quickly.

Makayla smiled at me. “Isn’t it good?” She took another sip of hers, her eyes becoming hazy, and grabbed my wrist. “I’m going to go dance. Wanna come?”

I chuckled and shook my head. “Go ahead.”

Once she disappeared through the crowd, I smiled. She was something else. She seemed like she was going to be fun to be friends with and fun to work with—as long as she actually did as I instructed.

## CHAPTER 10



NAOMI

The wolf hopped up onto the seat that Makayla had left open. With his dark hair and dark brown eyes, he resembled Oliver. He jingled the glass lightly in his hand, letting the alcohol swish in it.

“What’s your name?” I asked.

He smirked. “I must not have left a good enough impression this morning if you don’t remember me.”

I sipped my drink and smirked, trying to figure him out. “Must not have.”

He chuckled lowly and shook his head. “You’re ...”

“Not what you were expecting?”

“No, not at all. I’m Ryan.”

I swiveled in my chair, so I was leaning against the bar. “So, what do you do in the pack?” I asked.

“He’s a warrior,” Noah said from behind me. He placed a hand on my shoulder, squeezing tightly.

Jax appeared in front of me.

I gazed at the twins, who looked absolutely furious again. It seemed like they were still angry from earlier or maybe for a whole different reason.

Jax nodded his head at Ryan to get him to leave.

Ryan tipped his glass at me, smirked, and said, “I’ll have to make a better impression tomorrow. Show you what I’m really capable of.”

Noah growled as he hopped off of the stool.

Just to anger him—because why not?—I raised a brow. “I’ll be looking forward to it, warrior.”

He walked backward toward the crowd and pointed to the twins. “You two have your hands full with her, I can already tell.”

Noah tensed from behind me but stayed silent. His fingers pressed into

my shoulder muscle quite harshly. Jax pursed his lips together angrily and stepped back toward him. I grabbed Jax's wrist before he could follow him and do who knew what to him.

I turned to face both of them. "Why're you so mad? I'm just getting to know the pack. It's my job."

"And I suppose your job is also to get to know him the way you decided to get to know us?" Noah said harshly.

I raised a brow at him.

"Did you plan to let him touch—"

"Ryan is the pack whore," Jax cut in. "You shouldn't talk to him."

They paused for a moment, talking to each other through that damn link, like they always did. Both had scowls on their faces. Their eyes quickly flickered back and forth from their wolves to their humans. Flashing hazel and gold.

I gnawed on the inside of my cheek and took another sip.

They were hiding something.

"The pack whore?" I eyed the crowd to see him dancing with a female wolf that I didn't recognize. Looked like he just wanted to get fucked. But didn't we all?

The tension continued to rise between the brothers until Jax growled, making some of the people in the bar quiet down.

"Moon Goddess, Noah, go get some air," Jax finally said, turning back to the bar.

I glanced between the two. Noah's jaw twitched, and he stormed off through the crowd.

"What's wrong with him?" I asked.

Jax took a drink from the bartender and looked toward the door. He shook his head. "He just ... has been hurt before. We don't want to take any chances with guys like Ryan being around you."

I sipped my drink again. Man, was this good. Tasted like tea.



I smiled hazily at Jax and placed a hand on his knee. “You should know not to worry.” I didn’t know why I was trying to reassure him that I wouldn’t do anything with anyone else, but I found myself saying it and not being able to stop. “Business before pleasure, Jax. Business before pleasure.”

I placed my empty glass on the bar. He peered at me with that same intense stare that Noah always gave me.

My gaze traveled along his face, and I noticed the tattoo of a crescent moon behind his ear.

I drew my finger across it, smiling. “Why me, Jax?”

“Why you?”

“You said that you don’t want to take any chances with me being around Ryan.”

Ryan stared over at me and winked when he heard his name.

Jax saw the exchange and placed a possessive hand on the back of my chair, turning me back to the bar. The intensity in his eyes grew. He searched my face for a few moments and then nodded. “You’ve figured that out already, haven’t you?”

A smile stretched across my face when he said those words. I had. I’d figured it out the moment the twins followed me to the bathroom, the moment the two notorious alphas insisted to help me unpack in my room, the moment that those two men became obsessed with the smallest comments that I made about them.

## CHAPTER 11



NAOMI

“Oh my gosh. Shut up!” Adelyne screamed through the phone once Jax walked me back to the pack house. “Do you know what this means?”

“No, Addie, what does this mean?” I asked, smiling. I lay on my stomach and swung my legs back and forth in the air. I drew my nail across the comforter of my bed.

“You’re their ma—”

“Addie,” I said, drawing out her name. “Stop spilling nonsense.” It wasn’t nonsense.

“Oh gosh,” she said again. I could just imagine her lying on her bed, fanning herself with her hand. “Two alphas. Twin alphas! I told you that you’d thank me ... so I’m waiting for a thank-you.”

I giggled. “Well, you’re not getting one ... yet. I don’t even know if they want me to be their m—”

“Are you kidding?!” she yelled. “You literally just told me every single reason why they would want you, and all of these reasons have happened in the last twenty-four hours, and ... you know what? You need to go sleep on this. This is big, huge, enormous news! AHH, okay, I’ll let you sleep. Call me tomorrow. Love you.”

I chuckled and clicked off the phone after telling Addie that I loved her too. I rolled off of the bed. This whole *business before pleasure* thing was proving to be harder than I’d expected, especially when Adelyne was dead set on trying to get me with them.

After tugging on one of Jax’s shirts that I’d stolen from his room earlier when he was in the shower, I peeked my head into the hallway. It was empty and quiet.

Instead of just barging into their rooms and demanding they pay attention to me—because what girl didn't want to be paid attention to?—I decided on a quiet night. So, I crept through the house in nothing but an oversize shirt and my panties.

My fingers grazed against the hallway walls. When I passed Noah's room, I paused. His door was closed, like it usually always was, but I could hear the soft pitter-patter of water from the shower coming from his room.

I wanted to lean against his door, eyes closed, thinking about them as I touched myself, but I would *never* do such a thing. *Never*.

Especially in the middle of the hallway.

Especially since I hadn't seen him since the bar.

Continuing down the hall, I passed Jax's empty room and was tempted to creep into it. But I contained myself and walked toward their office. I pressed my ear to their door and sighed in relief when I heard the silence.

I snuck in, turned on the light, and shut the door behind me. Fuck business before pleasure.

This was nothing more than pleasure. This was nothing more than pure instinct. Shitty instinct but instinct all the same.

Two desks sat in the center of the room. One side was vibrant and lively. The other was plain without pictures. Of course, the right side was Noah's, but I didn't care whose side was whose. I was here for a reason.

I hopped onto a desk, legs dangling over the edge, one hand posted behind me. I plunged the other inside of my panties. I closed my eyes, touching my folds so lightly. I was wet already, and I fucking loved it. My toes curled, and I arched my back, letting my body jolt every time I touched my sensitive clit.

I moaned softly as a wave of pleasure coursed through my body. It felt so good. My fingers moved faster, rougher, harder against me as the pressure built within my body. My nails dug into the wood behind me.

From behind, someone grabbed my neck, his hand snaking around it. He

pulled me to his hard chest, howling.

“What do we have here?” Noah asked.

I swallowed hard, heart pounding against my chest. He smelled so good.

I opened my eyes to see Jax approaching me. He grazed a hand against my knee and tilted his head, his eyes dark.

“Is this another one of your little lessons that you’ve thought so hard about?”

I took my fingers away from my pussy and pushed my legs together. “You learn from them, don’t you?”

I tried to keep my cool, but my heart was pounding in my ears now, not letting me think straight. They *weren’t* supposed to catch me.

Noah growled in my ear, “Don’t stop touching yourself. Show us what you were planning to do.”

I gulped, my pussy clenching from the sudden dominance he had over me. I wasn’t even a wolf, yet I wanted to submit to every word he said. I pressed my fingers against my clit again, my breathing ragged.

Jax stood between my legs, spreading them with his hands.

Noah pulled my throat toward him. “Faster,” he said in my ear.

My fingers rubbed small circles faster than before. Noah gazed over my shoulder, staring down at my fingers as I touched myself. He moved his other hand up my torso and to my breast, squeezing it roughly in his hand.

Jax stepped closer to me, so his pants were nearly grazing against my core. He was already so hard. I wanted to pull them off and push him inside of me.

“It’s time to teach *you* a lesson,” Jax said. “Thinking you can just walk around and tell us what to do and when to do it, lie to us about how much you don’t want us both to be inside of you.”

Noah groped my breast harder, and my nipple stiffened against his hand. He rolled it between his fingers. “I bet that’s what she’s doing now, sitting on my fucking desk, thinking about us pounding her into it.”

## CHAPTER 12



NAOMI

Jax gripped my hips and pulled me to the edge of the desk. Dressed in his clothes from earlier, he pressed his hardness against my panties.

For six months, I had been craving a man's touch—a real man's touch. And now, I had two men, wanting to devour me.

Noah's fingers glided up the column of my neck, so slowly until he lightly grabbed my jaw from behind and pulled me against his chest. His scruff brushed against my neck, and I shivered. He placed his lips against the top of my jaw. I could feel him press his hardness into my backside.

Jax kissed me, and I moaned softly into him. But I wanted anything but something soft. I pulled away slightly and smirked.

"Still don't want me to *fix* your pack, Jax?" I looked into his eyes, which were darkening by the moment. My fingers brushed against the front of his pants, outlining his cock. "I can fix this."

"Don't be so modest, Little One." He took my hand and slipped it under his pants, letting me really feel him.

I curled my legs around the back of his, tightening my pussy.

Noah growled lowly behind me and tugged on my hair, pulling me against him. He took my head in his hands and gave me an open-mouthed kiss. Jax again pressed his lips to my jaw and began to leave small kisses down my neck, down my chest, around the hem of my shirt.

He slowly unbuttoned it. One by one until my shirt fell open.

Noah groped my bare breasts and swore under his breath. "You're so fucking sexy."

Jax kissed down my stomach to my pussy until he was hovering over my panties. He hooked his fingers around the edges of them and pulled them off

of me. He trailed his fingers up the sides of my inner thighs, making me shiver. Then, he hovered his mouth over my clit.

I whined softly and pushed my hips toward him. He steadied my hips on the desk and pressed his lips to my clit. He pushed my feet onto the desk beside me, giving him all the access that he needed.

His tongue moved effortlessly against my clit, making my legs shake. Noah trailed his nose up the side of my neck, lips hovering over the sensitive spot on my neck. I moaned again, his facial hair tickling my skin. His canines then brushed against me, and I drove a hand through his hair, curling my fingers into it.

Jax pushed a finger into my pussy, tongue still flicking my clit. I curled my toes around the side of the desk. Jax gazed up at Noah, eyes darkening when he saw his canines. He growled, vibrating my clit. He suddenly sucked my clit into his mouth and roughly pulled it with his lips. Then, he pulled away from me and stood.

His eyes were glowing gold. He stood, placed his lips on mine, and kissed me. Hard. Grabbing my breasts, he pushed Noah away. Noah growled and walked around me, changing spots with him.

Jax walked behind me, taking Noah's place. Noah unbuckled his pants, and I immediately grabbed him through them, feeling his hard cock. All I wanted was for him to be inside of me, pounding into me against Jax. I wanted it, and I wanted it now.

He pulled down his pants and took his cock in his hand, hovering it near my pussy.

"This is what you want?" Jax said. "You want him inside of you?"

I nodded my head. "Yes," I said. "I do." I furrowed my brows together.

Noah rubbed his hard cock against my wet pussy, trailing it up my folds and teasing my clit with it. He looked up at me, rubbing it in small circles around my clit.

"Please," I whispered, my toes curling.



He swallowed hard. The moonlight bounced off of his skin through the window. His chest muscles rippled, and his biceps flexed.

“Beg,” Jax said from behind me. He groped my breasts and pinched my nipples, causing me to moan. “Beg,” he demanded again, fingers pinching harder.

I whimpered into him, shifting on the desk, trying to pull my legs together. With one hand, Noah held my thigh down against the desk, steadying me. With the other, he continued to rub his hardness against my core.

“Please,” I cried out. “Please, I need it.” I lifted my hips, hoping that he’d thrust himself inside of me.

Noah growled. His eyes glowed gold. His claws dug into my hips, steadying me again. “So needy.”

“So desperate,” Jax said, pinching my nipples harder, twisting them in his fingers. “Beg louder,” he said. “Let the whole fucking pack hear you beg to be fucked by your alpha.”

I swallowed hard. “He’s not my alpha.”

Noah growled, “Not your alpha?”

I raised my hips, waiting for him to snap and force himself into me. “Not my alpha,” I repeated.

He pulled himself away from me. “I guess that you don’t need this then,” he said so calmly.

I grabbed his shoulder. “No, please.”

Jax was right. I was desperate for it. Desperate to be fucked by twins who knew exactly what they wanted—me.

Noah curled his lip at Jax.

Then, he looked back at me, cock in hand. “No.”

## CHAPTER 13



NAOMI

Noah pulled up his briefs, the outline of his dick pressed hard against the gray material. All I wanted was for him to pull me closer and to shove himself inside of me while Jax held my hair back, whispering every dirty thing that I'd ever wanted to hear in my ear.

I grabbed Noah's hand, pulling him toward me. "No."

"No?" He raised an eyebrow, his gaze dropping to my pussy for a moment.

I sucked in a sharp breath when his briefs rubbed so lightly against me. He had so much more self-control than I did. Who was I even kidding?

"Don't go," I said. "Please."

I could just imagine Jax shaking his head in that condescending yet tantalizing way behind me. *Desperate, desperate, desperate, aren't we, Naomi?*

Heat rushed to my core.

Jax gently pulled my hair out of my face, holding it in his hands and pulling me back slightly against him. "How bad do you want it, Naomi?" he said.

I furrowed my brows together, whining softly. He pressed his lips against the skin just below my jaw. I dug my nails into the desk, feeling the wetness pool between my legs.

"Tell us," he said.

Noah grabbed my chin lightly, forcing me to stare up at him. The moonlight illuminated every inch of his face, even those dark, demanding eyes. "*Show us.*"

My heart raced. "*Show us.*" I knew exactly how I wanted to show them how bad I wanted it.

I wrapped my legs around Noah's waist, pulling him toward me. He grabbed my hips, pulling *me* closer to him.

"If I show you, will you give it to me?" I asked, brushing a hand down his abdomen, finger trailing down a vein that disappeared under his briefs.

He peered at his brother behind me, eyes glazed over as they talked through their mind link. His fingers dug into my hips.

Jax pushed himself against me from behind, nose trailing up my neck. "Naomi," he said in my ear, "I don't think you understand what kind of position you're in right now. You don't get to be making any requests, don't get to be asking any questions of us."

Noah ground his hardness into my wetness. "You're ours," he said.

Jax smirked. His hard chest rippled against my back. "We get to do what we want, where we want, with you. If we want to make you come over and over until your legs are shaking and you can't stand upright, we will."

"If we want to watch you beg on your knees for our cocks, we will," Noah said.

"If we want to listen to you through our bedroom walls as you touch yourself all night, edging"—Jax wrapped an arm around my waist, trailed it down my abdomen, and rubbed my clit in small circles—"because we didn't give you what *you* wanted, then we will."

"You don't make the rules around here, Little One," Noah said, lightly gripping my chin.

I sucked in my bottom lip, pussy tightening. This *business over pleasure* thing was going right out the fucking window along with all the dignity and self-control I had left.

I gripped his shoulder, feeling the muscle underneath, and swallowed hard. "I wouldn't have to touch myself if you would actually fuck me already."

Noah growled lowly, golden eyes focused intently on me. His grip on my chin tightened.

Jax chuckled from behind me, his teeth grazing against my neck. “Who are you trying to fool, Naomi? You would touch yourself anyway, like you did the other night. As soon as you fucking saw us, I bet you were aching for us to touch you, aching to touch yourself, lock yourself in the bathroom and rub one out. That was your plan all along, wasn’t it?”

I pressed my lips together and turned slightly around on the desk, gazing back at him through narrowed eyes. “No.” Yes. “I have self-control.” *I do not.* “You guys aren’t as tempting as you think you are, you know. I don’t have to touch myself every night just because I’m living with some alphas.”

They paused for a long time, and then they laughed.

Noah shook his head, a smirk evident on his face. “I don’t believe you.”

“Well, that’s too ba—”

Jax pulled away from me and crossed his arms over his chest. “Prove it to us.”

“I don’t have to prove anything to you. I don’t touch myself every night. I’m not that ... *desperate.*” *Lying through your teeth now, Naomi.*

Noah and Jax stared at each other for a few moments, their eyes darkening.

Noah finally turned to me, grabbing my hand off of his abdomen. “Lie with us,” Noah said. “All night.”

I raised my brows. “Sleep with you guys?”

Jax nodded in agreement.

I looked between the two men, heart racing. Then, I turned my head in the other direction toward the window. “You two wouldn’t last the whole night.”

I hopped off of the desk, pushing my T-shirt down to cover my ass, and walked to their office door.

When I reached the door, I turned around and smirked. “Whose bedroom are we sleeping in?”

## CHAPTER 14



NAOMI

“*N*oah’s room,” Jax said almost immediately.

I giggled softly, brow raised. “Why don’t you want me going into your room? Isn’t Noah supposed to be the mysterious one?”

Noah chuckled lowly and gazed over at Jax. “She has a point.”

Jax rubbed the back of his neck. “My room is—”

I opened the office door, and Jax stopped talking. Makayla stood right outside of the office door, about to knock. She widened her eyes when she saw me. Her breath reeked of the liquor from the bar, and she swayed lightly.

Before anyone could say anything, I pulled down the bottom of my shirt, trying to cover myself up. I snuck a peek back at Noah and Jax. Neither of them was fully dressed yet, just covering the important parts.

“Put your shirts on,” I said.

A part of me didn’t like the fact that they were nearly naked in front of one of their pack members. Sure, it probably happened all the time when they went out for a run. But this was not a nightly run.

And I felt ... possessive.

Makayla smiled at me, leaning against the doorframe. “Hey, what are you doing here?” she slurred.

“What are *you* doing here?” I asked.

She peered back at Noah. “I had something that I wanted to discuss with Noah.”

I stepped forward, into her line of sight. “It is late,” I said. “You should go to bed. We’re practicing early tomorrow morning, and you’re going to have a hangover.”

Noah—who had finally put his shirt on—placed a hand on my shoulder, squeezing it tightly. “What do you need to discuss?”

“I want to train more,” she said. “Pleeease.”

Noah sighed softly, body relaxing behind me. “We already discussed this,” he said. “Naomi is here for a few months. You don’t need to train all at once.”

She glanced at me and then back to Noah. “Please,” she said with pouty lips and big blue eyes.

My nails dug into the doorframe. She was staring at him with so much admiration, so much desire.

I gnawed on the inside of my lip. Makayla was a nice girl, but showing up in the pack house this late at night was not how I’d expected her to act. Maybe I was just jealous. Probably. I just didn’t like this.

“But ... Roger,” she whispered, a sudden sadness in her voice. Tears welled up in her drunken eyes. She frowned. “I need to be stronger,” she said. “Maybe he will accept me then.”

Noah frowned at me. “I’ll meet you both in the bedroom in a few minutes,” he said. “I’ll be back.” He opened the door wider and led Makayla down the hallway.

When they disappeared down the stairs, I turned to Jax. “Who is Roger?”

Jax again rubbed the back of his neck and placed a hand on my lower back, guiding me to Noah’s room. “Roger was her mate. He rejected her a while ago because he didn’t think that she was strong enough to lead his pack with him.”

I frowned, feeling bad. Noah was just being a good guy, helping one of his wolves through a breakup, and here I was, thinking the absolute worst.

I opened Noah’s door and walked in. “Roger from the Moon Ridge Pack?” I asked.

“How do you know him?”

A heap of guilt washed over me. I couldn’t believe that Makayla was his mate. She was not as weak as he had mentioned the last time I talked to him. “I had some missions that I did with him.”



Jax tensed. “What kind of missions?”

I placed my hand on his shoulder, rubbing softly. Nothing that he would want to know about. Oliver and I had done things with Roger that I didn’t want to think about ever again. *Business* things, of course.

Noah opened the door and walked in. I gazed at him for a few moments, wanting to talk to him about Makayla. But I could save that for later—for her.

I just wanted to sleep in the same bed as the twins. So, I crawled up onto the bed. Noah watched me the whole time, his eyes dark. His eyes drifted down every inch of me until they landed on my ass. I smirked and sat at the top of the bed, dipping my legs under the covers.

“Hope you don’t mind,” I said. “I sleep naked.” I pulled my shirt over my head, keeping my breasts hidden behind the covers by pulling them over me.

Jax pulled his shirt over his head and chuckled. “We don’t mind.” He got into bed to my left.

Noah paused for a moment and slowly tugged his shirt over his head, his muscles rippling. Then, he got in next to me.

I gulped, suddenly warm from their body heat, and sank deeper into the blankets. “Well,” I said, “good night.”

From the moment that they’d both gotten into bed with me, I could tell that it was going to be a long night.

Noah reached over and turned the light off, his body grazing against mine for a moment. I bit my lip and pulled the covers over my chest. Boy, was this going to be a really long night.

Silence erupted around the room. I sank down into the covers, stretching out, ready for a good night’s sleep.

Jax groaned, “Oh, come on. You sleep in the starfish position?”

## CHAPTER 15



NAOMI

I woke up in the middle of the night with my phone buzzing on Noah's dresser. The time on the clock read 2:36 a.m. I was lying on my side, Noah's arm draped around me from behind, clutching onto me and pulling me tighter whenever I shifted.

Jax had pulled my head against his shoulder as his chest rose and fell with each breath. I lifted my head to stare over at my phone. It stopped buzzing, and the screen went dark.

I shifted uncomfortably in the bed. Whenever I got phone calls this late at night, they were always important. Lycan business.

The phone flickered on again, the buzzing filling the room. I groaned softly, not wanting to move from this position, but when the call didn't stop this time, I pushed Noah's arm off of me.

Noah immediately grabbed my waist again, pulling me toward him. "Mine," he grumbled, eyes closed, breathing steady.

I shifted again, this time pushing his arm off of me and crawling out of the bed. He rolled onto his back, groaning softly. Jax was out like a light because he barely moved a muscle. He actually started snoring a bit. I grabbed my phone from the dresser, pulling one of the sheets off the bed to hide my body.

*Five new messages. Oliver (1). Isabella (4).*

"Come back to bed," Noah groaned.

I peered over at him to see his hair ruffled in all directions. The moonlight flooded in from the window, hitting his hair. I could barely make out the outline of his frown, but I could tell that he was leaning on his elbows and staring at me.

"Don't wake Jax." The phone started buzzing in my hand again. *Oliver.*

“I have to take this. It’s work.”

I slipped out of the room, tossed on one of Noah’s spare shirts, and shut the door behind me.

I answered the call. “Oliver,” I said. “This’d better be good. It’s the middle of the night, and I was sleeping.”

“Heard you were staying at the Shadowcrown Pack. How’re those alphas treating you?” he asked.

I pressed my lips together. “Cut the shit, Oliver. What do you want?”

“When will their pack be ready for war?” he asked suddenly.

I furrowed my brows together. “I’ve been here for a day. I don’t know.”

“You’ve been there for a day, and you’re already sleeping with them, huh?”

“What’s your problem? And, no, I’m not. Not that that’s any of your business,” I said, walking down the dark hall, fingers grazing against the walls to guide me.

“Business before pleasure, Naomi,” he said.

I walked into the living room and glanced out of the wide-open window into the forest. Piercing yellow eyes were staring at me from the woods, and I gulped.

“Are you watching me? Are you here?”

“What are you talking about? I just called you to tell you that you need to prepare them for war as soon as possible. I failed the mission that Isabella gave me. For the first time, I failed it. And there is no way any of us can stop the war now. I thought I could, but ...” He paused for a long moment. “Wait, why did you ask if I was watching you?”

The wolf stared at me for the longest time, and then, as if it heard Oliver through the phone, it sprinted into the woods. My heart raced in my chest. Dressed in Noah’s shirt, I sprinted out of the house, following its path into the woods.

Stupid of me, yes. What I had been trained to do, also yes.

I sprinted through the woods with the phone to my ear.

“Na, what’s going on?” Oliver said.

“Someone is here,” I said.

The wolf was just barely in the distance.

Someone growled from behind me, paws pounding into the ground. I turned around to see Noah’s wolf. He transformed into his human and gazed at me—completely naked.

“Where do you think you’re going? It’s two in the fucking morning.” He grabbed my arm. “You’re running away?” He dragged me back to the pack house, but then he stopped suddenly and sniffed the air.

In a moment, he was tense, completely tense. I furrowed my brows.

“You know that smell, don’t you?” I asked.

He growled but continued walking.

“Who is it? Who was here? Who was that wolf?”

Noah didn’t say anything, just continued to walk. He dragged me all the way back to the pack house, into his room, started the shower, and pushed me into it after undressing me. Mud dripped down my legs and swirled into the drain. When I gazed out of the shower, Noah was sitting on the toilet in his briefs, leaning over his thighs. His whole body was tense.

“What’s wrong?” I asked, gazing over at him as I stepped out of the shower, covering myself in a towel.

He glanced up at me, jaw tense, and stood. “Nothing. Let’s get back to sleep.”

But I wasn’t convinced. There was something off, and I was going to find out what it was.

He ushered me to the bed again, gave me another one of his shirts, and held the covers for me to get in. Jax was lying on his back in the starfish position, mouth half-open. I shuffled on the bed, and Noah joined in after me.

Whoever that was, I was going to find out who and what he or she had been doing here. And why they had been watching *us*.

## CHAPTER 16



NAOMI

I moaned softly, twisting in the bed. Someone grabbed my hips, pinning them to the bed. My eyes fluttering open, I gazed down to see Noah between my legs. His lips were on my clit, his tongue massaging it in small circles.

My eyes widened slightly. He was staring at me intently, his hazel eyes flickering gold. He pulled me apart with his fingers and stuck one of them inside of me.

I grabbed on to the bedsheets. Jax was still fast asleep next to me, arm draped around my waist.

Noah's tongue moved faster against me. I bit my lip, careful not to wake Jax, and dug my nails into the comforter.

I pushed one of my hands through Noah's hair. "What are you doing?" I whispered.

He peered up at me, eyes flashing gold. "Mine," he mumbled against my clit, fingers moving faster.

I grasped his hair in my hand, gripping it tightly.

"Noah," I whimpered softly, furrowing my brows together. "Fuck," I breathed.

He placed my legs up on his shoulders and pulled me toward him, lifting my hips off of the bed and forcing his lips closer to me.

"Holy ..." I whispered. My legs trembled. "Noah, I'm going to ..."

"Come," he said.

I squeezed my eyes closed, my body seizing, but he kept me stable.

He watched me the whole time, never taking his lips off of my clit. Not even when I sank deeper into the sheets and came down from my orgasm. He pressed his lips into me harder, fingers digging into my hips, making them

pink, just to steady me. My legs shook around him.

The sunlight flooded into the room, hitting his face. His hazel eyes turned into a wonder of a hundred shades of light brown and honey. I pushed my hands through his hair again, fingers curling around the strands.

Jax shifted beside me, groaning softly.

I tried pulling my legs together, the pressure almost too much to handle. He continued to massage my clit with his tongue. I pressed my hand over my mouth, legs shaking uncontrollably now, and arched my back. Moaning into my hand, I furrowed my brows together.

“Noah,” I breathed. Wave after wave of pleasure coursed through my body.

He smirked up at me, lapping up my juices from orgasm two within the past five minutes. His eyes flashed gold. He paused for a moment, inhaling my scent.

“I’m going to make you come again,” he said.

One of his hands trailed up my body, stretching across the length of my stomach. So big.

His other hand dipped between my legs. He shoved a finger inside of me, making a come-hither motion with it.

Jax turned on his side, body facing me. His cock was hard. He rested his head on my shoulder, breaths still even.

Noah trailed his finger against my shirt, nails lightly grazing over my hardened nipples. He rolled one around in his hand and groaned. “You’re so fucking sexy, Naomi,” he mumbled against me. “So fucking sexy.”

I clenched around his fingers when he inserted another one. I placed my hand over his, letting him grope my breast. He pinched my nipple harder, making my body jump.

Jax began shifting more beside me, mumbling to himself. “Morning,” he said, eyes still closed.

“Mornin’.” I pressed my lips together when Noah suddenly rammed his



fingers harder into me.

He continued to eat me out as Jax pulled me closer to him.

Noah pinched my nipple harder, and I furrowed my brows together, trying to keep my legs still as I came for the third time this morning. Noah licked his lips and crawled back up the bed, lying next to me.

“You’re up too, Noah?” Jax asked.

When he finally opened his eyes, he smiled. I took a few deep breaths, trying to calm down. My core was still pulsing from the orgasm, and my mind was in a fog.

Jax sighed. “I haven’t had that good of sleep since A—” He paused. “For a few years now.”

He sat up and stretched, the muscles in his bare back rippling.

“You’re a deep sleeper,” I said, impressed.

He turned back and winked at me. “That’s not the only thing that could get de—”

“She doesn’t want to hear your bad sex jokes, Jax,” Noah said.

I sat up, pulling the blankets up with me. “Sure, I do.”

Jax smirked, hopped out of the bed, and threw me over his shoulder.

“They’re best over breakfast,” he said, slapping my bare ass.

He walked me to the door and gazed back at Noah, who was lying in the bed, shirtless and shameless, in all of his glory. His cock was pressed hard against the front of his pants again.

“You coming?”

Noah smirked at me. “I already ate.”

## CHAPTER 17



NAOMI

“Faster!” I placed my hands on my hips, addressing the twins. “You’re not going to get an advantage on anyone if you keep thinking that hard about your next move.”

Noah growled lowly, trying to pin Jax to the ground. For forty-five minutes, I’d been watching them roll around, trying to get an advantage on each other. But they were both too strong and smart. They expected each other’s moves.

“Stop,” I said, shaking my head.

The pair stopped, each breathing heavily. They were both covered in sweat.

“Your reactions should be instant. Don’t think while you’re fighting. Think before. It needs to come naturally to you.”

“It does,” Noah said, standing up. He threw his shirt to the side.

I raised my brows at him and motioned for Ryan to come over. “Go fight Noah,” I said.

Jax stood up and walked over to me. We watched the men fight. Ryan was keeping his own against Noah—for the most part. His strength didn’t come close to Noah’s, but at least he wasn’t getting pinned.

He was stronger than many of the other warriors in the Shadowcrown Pack.

“Very impressive, Ryan.”

Noah growled, giving Ryan an opportunity to take him down.

I crossed my arms. “What did I tell you, Noah? Don’t let me get you angry.”

I didn’t mind if he got angry with me sometimes. Like in the bedroom. I just wasn’t going to tell him that. I would let him figure that out for himself.

I gazed around at the other warriors fighting. Makayla stood across the yard, arms crossed over her chest. I walked over to her, letting Jax, Noah, and Ryan fight it out together.

“Have you tried what I taught you yesterday?”

“Not yet.”

Some people took a break on the sidelines, leaving the mats open for us.

I walked onto it, letting her follow me. “Well, go ahead, try.”

She came at me quickly but not as quick as I wanted her to. She did so a few more times, and each time, I ducked out of the way.

“I’m not going to go easy on you,” I said. “I expect you to be faster than that.”

One takedown after another after another, she was getting better. Stronger. Faster. Becoming more of an animal.

I looked up from the ground. Ryan was sitting on the grass, shirt off, breathing heavy. Noah and Jax were wrestling again, close to Makayla and me. I let her run her moves as I silently listened to Jax and Noah.

As they pushed each other, flipped each other over, and tried to pin each other to the ground, they were talking. Quietly.

“She was here this morning,” Noah said.

Flip.

“Ava?” Jax said.

Thud.

“I don’t know why,” Noah said.

Grunt.

“Nai was running after her,” Noah continued.

Pop.

My eyes widened. Noah was clutching his shoulder.

“Are you trying to kill him?” I asked Jax.

I left Makayla on the grass and hurried over to Noah. “Are you okay?”

My fingers grazed against his shoulder, where it looked like it had popped

right out of its socket.

He rubbed it softly. "I'm fine." He took a deep breath. "Jax and I have to go. We'll see you tonight." He walked across the yard to grab his shirt, back tense.

Jax leaned down, his scruff grazing against my cheek. He pushed some pieces of hair behind my ear. "Listen, Little One, meet me back here at eight-thirty. Do whatever you have to do before then because when I'm finished with you—"

"You?" I raised my brows. "What about Noah?"

He cupped my chin in his hand. "Noah isn't as fun," he said. "And besides ... you had your fun with Noah this morning, didn't you?" he asked, brow cocked. "You probably thought I was sleeping."

He stepped away from me, walking backward, and then turned.

"Eight-thirty," he called over his shoulder. "Don't be late."

## CHAPTER 18



NAOMI

The sun was setting over the trees, darkening the forest around me. I walked down the dimly lit path toward the town. The light in front of The Beast Tavern was guiding me. I was on a mission, and this time, yes, it really was for business.

The first rule in war was to always know your enemy. So, that was exactly what I was going to do. I needed information on this woman—the wolf in the woods—and I was going to do whatever it took to get it.

I walked into The Beast Tavern. The place wasn't as crowded as it had been yesterday. Some guys were leaning against the bar, half-dozed off already. Some she-wolves were dancing. Makayla sat across from the bartender with a half-full glass of their finest ale.

I slid next to her on the seat and frowned. "You know drinking won't make you feel any better."

She furrowed her brows. "What're you talking about?" She sipped her drink.

"Roger," I said.

She raised her brows and then furrowed them again. "Did they tell you about him? Was it Jax? He always seems to—"

I shook my head and ordered a drink. "I didn't need either of them to tell me who Roger was to you in order to understand that he is why you want to get stronger." I sipped the ale. "How long has it been since it happened?"

"Three months."

*Three months.*

I frowned, remembering sitting on Roger's porch with Oliver on our mission three months ago.

Everything had been calm. The wind. The trees. The forest. His eyes were

hazy as he stared into the woods, that smug look on his face. The look that he always hid behind. That was the night he rejected her.

He didn't make eye contact with me that whole night despite my best efforts to get him to. After those few moments on that porch, he was anything but soft and calm. With booze, liquor, and the need to act like he didn't care about his mate anymore, he had done so much to Oliver and me.

"Three months without him, and you're still strong," I said. "Don't let him define you."

She gnawed on the inside of her cheek and brushed a stray tear from her face. "Sometimes, he calls me."

Of course, he did. He loved those mind games. He thought that he could always figure us out.

"What does he say?" I asked.

Her lips trembled. "Nothing," she said. "Just that he still wants me. It's when he's drunk, late at night. And ..." Her hair fell into her face. "And ... right before he ends the call, I can always hear women calling for him to come back to bed."

My heart raced, and I pulled her into a hug. All I wanted to do was to tell her that it wasn't meant to happen this way. Those women had probably been sent from Isabella to get information out of Roger. Those women were probably not having a good time there. He wasn't that good in bed anyway, so she wasn't missing anything.

But I didn't want her to think of me as one of those women. I wanted her to trust me. I wanted her to be honest with me. I wanted to be her friend.

The Lycans had shown me what true friendship was, and I wanted to pass it along. I didn't like tearing girls down.

I pulled away and sipped my ale. "Makayla," I said. I didn't want to lie to her. "Roger and I were seeing each other for a while a few months ago."

Her eyes widened and filled with tears. She gripped her glass until the tips of her fingers became white. "What?" she almost whispered.



“He’s a weak man,” I said. “There’s not anything really good about him.” I pressed my lips together and looked her straight in the eye. “I know that you don’t want to hear that because he’s your mate, but it’s true.”

She downed her drink and looked away from me. “Did you fuck him?”

I sucked in a deep breath and fiddled with my fingers. “Yes.”

“How many times?”

“I’m not going to answer that, Makayla,” I said. “I’m not telling you this to make you angry. I’m telling you because I want you to be able to get over him. He’s a liar and a cheater, and he only cares about himself for the most part. You wouldn’t be happy with him anyway.”

She pressed her lips together. “You don’t get to tell me who I would be happy with and who I wouldn’t.” The bartender refilled her glass, and she took another swig of it. “If I want to be with him ... if I love him ...” Tears fell down her face. She doubled over, forehead against the wooden bar. Her body began to heave up and down.

I placed a hand on her back, rubbing gently. I expected her to shove me away, but she leaned closer to me. I pulled her into my lap, brushing my nails through her hair.

“It’s okay,” I said softly. “It’s okay.”

After a few moments, she stopped crying, sat back up, and wiped the tears from her cheeks. “He never loved me?” she asked, but she already knew the answer. “Nobody here ever liked him much anyway.”

She studied her half-finished beer and then at the clock. She hopped off of her stool.

“I’m sorry for getting angry with you,” she said. “You’re just trying to make me stronger, I know.”

She pulled her purse over her shoulder. “I should get going. Can we, uh ... practice tomorrow morning?”

I paused for a moment, hoping she was asking me this so she could become stronger for herself. Then, I smiled. “Of course.”

## CHAPTER 19



NAOMI

When Makayla left the bar, I waited around. There was no way that he wasn't going to show up. Seeing that there were so many half-naked people here already, the *manwhore* would have a great time trying to pick up people to take back to his place later.

But before that, I would hit him with all the questions that I needed answered.

Just as the clock hit eight p.m., Ryan walked in. I watched him walk through everyone who was dancing in the middle of the floor, gaze traveling down their bodies, smirking at a few of them.

When he saw me, he made a beeline to the bar. "What's up, buttercup?"

"I hope you're not using that line on any women around here," I said, giving him a once-over.

He winked. "I get the ladies all the time with that one." He leaned over the bar. "Ale," he said to the bartender. He slid onto the stool next to me. "So, what're you doing around here without those two hanging over your shoulder?"

"You mean, your alphas?" I raised a brow.

He sipped his drink. "Yes, the alphas."

I turned to him. "I was actually waiting for you."

"Wow, made that good of an impression on you today, huh?"

I leaned closer to him on the bar. "I had a question, and I think that you have an answer to it."

"How big my—"

"No."

"How much I could—"

"No."

“How tempting you—”

“Who is Ava?”

All emotion drained from his face. He swallowed hard and then looked around to make sure nobody was watching. People had looked over, some that I had never spoken to before. Others looked away, but I could tell that they were still listening, still eavesdropping on the conversation.

He shook his head. “I don’t know what you’re talking about,” he finally said, throwing back his glass. He nodded at the bartender. “Another one!” Then, he hazily threw an arm around me and swayed into me. “Make that two! One for this sexy lady.”

I shoved him away, but he pulled me tighter.

“What are you doing?” I asked.

When the bartender placed two drinks in front of us, he grabbed one. “Follow me,” he said lowly into my ear.

He stumbled away from me, sipping on his drink, acting like he was drunk. And when I stood, he wrapped an arm around my waist, pulling me closer.

His nose brushed against my neck. “Act cool.”

I relaxed a bit, grabbing my drink from off of the bar. By “act cool,” I assumed he meant *act like you’re flirting with me* because he was way too close for comfort. But I had done this type of thing so many times before with Oliver—and especially with Roger—so I gently rested my fingers on his abdomen and giggled like I was already too drunk to think straight.

We walked to the side of the room. Some people were still gazing in our direction. Others had turned around.

Placing one hand on the wall behind me, he leaned closer. “Why are you asking about her?” he said in my ear.

“I just need information,” I said, curling my fingers around his collar.

His dark hair was disheveled.

He brushed his fingers up my thigh. I could tell that he had done this

before, probably with so many women. But thanks to the Lycans, so had I. I was a natural at flirting and fighting. *This*, however, just felt wrong to me.

Jax was waiting for me to meet him. He had something planned.

I just needed to get this information, and I needed it now. Who was this woman? Why had she been watching us? If this had to do with the war, we needed to eliminate her as soon as possible.

“If I tell you any details on her, I need something from you,” he said.

I pulled him closer, pressing myself into him, feeling his abdomen flex. “What?” I looked into his dark eyes.

“I need you to put a good word in with Isabella for me,” he said.

I raised a brow and smiled. “You want to be a Lycan?” I asked.

He bit his lip lightly and nodded, resting his forehead against mine. “I think I’d be pretty good at it.”

“I think so too,” I breathed. The flirting. The fighting. This guy would be perfect. “And I can make it happen—as long as you tell me everything that I need to know.”

He smirked, his lips so close to mine. “Deal, but I can’t tell you anything here.” He gazed over to the back door. “Let’s get out of here.”

I placed my drink down on an empty table, smirked at Ryan, and grabbed his hand. We walked to the back door. Ryan was close enough to me to make it believable that I was just another girl heading home with him.

Just as I was about to push the door open, a growl echoed through the entire bar, and Ryan was yanked away from me. Jax stood behind us, eyes completely gold, holding Ryan by his neck.

## CHAPTER 20



NAOMI

Jax growled, holding Ryan even higher off of the ground by his neck. Glasses broke on the bar itself. Drinks spilled around them and onto the floor, drenching Ryan's back.

Jax's claws were piercing through Ryan's skin, red drops of blood running down his neck. Ryan's eyes widened.

Nobody in the bar said a word. Everyone stopped drinking and dancing. The music even ended. What had once been a lively bar turned deathly silent—more silent than when I'd mentioned Ava's name.

Jax was breathing deeply, his body tense. His eyes were pure gold. No hint of hazel. The calm, funny Jax was gone. And I was actually terrified of this Jax.

"Jax," I said. "Put him down."

Nobody moved.

His hand just tightened around Ryan's neck.

"Jax!"

I didn't dare move. I remembered the last time I had been in this situation. Roger had snapped that man's neck in a second and left him for dead deep in the woods without much care about his pack, his mate, or his life.

"Out!" Jax growled.

Despite everyone's jolly moods before, they all placed their beers down, grabbed their things, and hurried out of the bar. The bartender gave me a quick glance before ducking through the back doors, leaving us three in the empty bar.

I could only imagine Noah showing up at this time. It would be a very Noah thing to do. My heart raced at the thought. Two men—twins—handling

the situation. Probably much, much harsher than I would.

Ryan squirmed in his grip, clutching Jax's hand and trying to pull it away from him so he could breathe. By the way Ryan pulled and prodded, I could tell that Jax was holding back.

Jax shoved him further against the bar. "Don't fucking move."

I walked over to him and placed a hand on his back. "Jax," I whispered.

I trailed my hand along his arm and down to his hand. I had seen Addie do this so many times with Derek to calm him down. I had seen Isabella do this so many times with Roman, her mate, to calm him down. So, I was going to try it to calm Jax down—even just a bit.

"Jax, let him go."

Jax relaxed in the slightest bit, the muscles in his back not as tense, and I internally sighed in relief.

"Yeah, listen to your wom—" Ryan started.

Jax growled at him. I nearly slapped a hand onto my forehead.

*Stupid. Ryan, just keep your mouth shut.*

I placed a gentle hand against his back again. "Jax," I whispered.

"Leave, Naomi," he growled.

"J—"

"I said, leave!" His eyes burned gold.

I crossed my arms over my chest. "I'm not leaving until you put him down."

Foolish of me to challenge an alpha, yes. Also what I had been trained to do, yes.

I grazed my nails against his back.

He pulled away. "Touch me again, Naomi, and I will snap his neck, right here in front of you."

"Nothing happened between us, Jax." I didn't move my fingers from his back.

He glared at Ryan with so much hatred, so much intensity. Muscles



tensed so tightly. Ryan widened his eyes at me, his cheeks turning a light pink.

Jax lowered his voice. He seemed so calm, yet I knew he could snap at any moment. “If you don’t leave before Noah gets here, you’re going to regret it, Naomi.”

Ryan nodded at me. “Go, Nai.” He winked at me. “I’ll talk to you lat—”

Jax threw him across the bar, and he landed in a mess of tables and chairs, breaking some of them. A loud crash echoed through the bar. Ryan gave me a sheepish smile. Well, if he was going to act like this, he was putting this on himself.

I clenched my jaw, staring at them.

“We will deal with you later, Naomi,” Jax said. “And you’re not going to like the way we do.”

My nostrils flared, and I wanted to scream at him to stop. But I calmly gathered my thoughts and walked right out of the back doors, hoping to avoid Noah. When I was out of earshot, I sprinted to the pack house, into my room, and slammed the door shut.

This was not a part of the damn plan. This was going to go very, very badly.

For the first time, I couldn’t figure out what was going to come next. So, I did the one thing I knew I had to do. I paced around the room, thinking about the hundred different things that could happen and preparing for the worst.

It was what any Lycan would do.

## CHAPTER 21



NAOMI

They both walked into my room, looking completely calm. But if I had learned anything in the past few months with the Lycans, I'd learned that looks could be deceiving. By their disheveled hair and the blood on the back of Jax's hand, I could tell that they were anything but calm.

Jax loosened his tie from around his neck and walked to the side of the room. Noah pulled up the sleeves on his shirt. Neither of them looked at me.

I shifted from foot to foot, fiddling with my fingers. Trying to choose my words carefully. I wasn't stupid. Nothing had happened between Ryan and me, but it'd looked like it did. It'd looked like I was leaving to fuck the manwhore after Jax warned me not to, after Noah already got mad about it.

After a few moments of complete silence, Jax turned to me—still not making eye contact—and said, "Sit."

And I obeyed.

I sat right down on my bed, with my lips and thighs pressed together. I gazed up at them, waiting for them to talk. I wanted to speak my mind, but I knew that was exactly what they wanted.

*Rule number three in war: Don't give the enemy what they want unless it is a part of your plan.*

This was not a part of the plan at all.

Noah walked behind me and grasped my shoulders, squeezing them tightly. "Naomi," he said.

"Noah," I said back.

He tensed, squeezing my shoulders tighter. "Don't use that tone with me right now, Naomi. I'm not in the fucking mood after what you did."

I took a deep breath, staring at Jax from across the room. His arms were crossed over his chest. His eyes were still gold. He had a speck of blood on

his collarbone.

“I didn’t do anything,” I said.

Jax stormed toward me. “Didn’t do anything?” He shook his head, growling. “After I told you not to talk to Ryan, after I told you that he wanted nothing more than to get with any girl he could get his hands on, you went after him anyway. And you let him touch you like that, lead you out of the fucking bar in front of every single person there.”

Noah stayed quiet behind me, growling lowly.

“I wasn’t going to do—”

“Don’t tell us that *this* is not one of your stupid lessons,” Noah interrupted. “I’m beginning to think that you’re making those fucking things up on the spot to try to make excuses for your behavior.”

I pressed my lips together and stood, but Jax pushed me back down.

“I said to sit,” he growled.

“I’m not trying to teach you a lesson. If you would just listen to me, you would know that I wasn’t going to do anything with him!”

“Disrespecting us in front of our own pack,” Jax said, shaking his head.

I raised my brows. “So, this is what that’s about. You don’t want to seem weak in front of your pack members.”

“No!” Noah growled. “We’re angry because our fucking mate was going to sleep with one of our pack members.”

All three of us suddenly got quiet. I sucked in a deep breath. I had known I was theirs from the moment that I saw them, but to hear him say it, to claim me as his, it felt exhilarating.

“I wasn’t going to do anything with him,” I repeated breathlessly.

“I don’t care,” he growled in my ear. “You’re *ours*.” Noah grabbed a fistful of my hair, pulling it back roughly, giving him a clear view of my neck. “Ours.” His voice was lower this time. His lips were nearly pressing against my soft spot.

I didn’t say a word, and neither did they. All I heard was their breathing

in my ear, felt it against my neck. Deep, ragged breaths.

Their teeth lengthened into canines, grazing against the soft spot on my neck. I knew what was coming next, yet I couldn't pull myself away. My fingers trailed up their necks ever so slowly.

"I told you this before," I said quietly. "I'm not yours."

They growled loudly in my ear. Noah yanked my hair back again, giving them both access to my neck. And in one swift movement, they sank their teeth deep into my neck. Deeper and deeper and deeper.

My toes curled, and all I could smell was their woodsy scent, filling my nostrils. Wave after wave of pleasure rolled through me. It felt so fucking good. So intense. I saw stars.

I clutched on to their shoulders, trying to hold myself up. "Noah," I breathed. "Jax." I took a deep breath. "I ... I can—"

They didn't move, just stilled with their teeth inside of me, biting down harsher. My fingers dug into their shoulders, and I squeezed my eyes shut. It felt so fucking good. When they finally pulled their teeth out of me, I sank onto the bed, trying to hold myself up, but failing to.

I grasped on to them, fingers digging into their forearms, and blacked out.

## CHAPTER 22



NAOMI

I woke up in Noah's room, propped upright in a chair, hands tied behind my back, in nothing but my bra and panties. My clothes were torn to shreds next to me. The last thing that I remembered was their teeth sinking into my neck and pure adrenaline rushing through my veins.

"Don't worry, Little One," Jax said from the corner of the room. He was sitting on the bed, leaning back on his hands.

Noah rested against the wall across from him, arms crossed over his chest. He was gazing at me intently.

"We haven't touched you."

"Yet," Noah said.

I gulped, heart racing faster than usual. Their woodsy scent was stronger and smelled sweeter than it normally did. I struggled against the restraints.

"Let me go," I said breathlessly.

"No," Noah said, stepping toward me. "We're claiming you, Little One."

Jax hopped off of the bed and stalked over to me. I continued to struggle. Their scent was so overwhelming that my head felt like it did after an orgasm—fuzzy, light, good.

"We told you that you're ours, that we'll do anything to you whenever we want," Jax said.

Noah stood behind me, drawing his finger down the side of my cheek so lightly, making me shiver. "Do you like that, *mate*?"

I took a deep breath. "Noah."

I wanted to reach up to him, stroke his face, but the more I struggled, the tighter the restraints became. I was totally vulnerable to them. They could do absolutely anything they wanted to me, and all I could do was let them.

He did it again, finger lingering near his mark, but he didn't touch it. I

pushed my head closer to his hand, wanting him to touch my mark, aching for him to touch it because it ached to be touched by *him*.

Jax grabbed my chin. "He asked if you liked it," Jax said.

I gulped again, drawing my knees together. "Yes," I breathed.

Jax took a step back and forced me to gaze into the full-length mirror in Noah's room that they had placed in front of me. My heart raced, gazing at my marks. Eight large teeth marks imprinted in my flesh, red and raised and fresh.

They looked somewhat beautiful on me.

*The larger the teeth, the stronger the wolf.* I had heard that so many times, but seeing these marks on my skin, seeing their girth and length, the deep red, I knew these alphas were stronger and more vicious than what I had given them credit for.

My heart raced as I studied the marks, beating so loud that I could hear it in my ears.

"Do you like our marks?" Noah said.

My brows furrowed together. I didn't like them. I loved them. I didn't want them, but I was glad they'd marked me.

"I never wanted to be a wolf," I said breathlessly. It wasn't meant to come out so harsh, so terribly undeserving, but it did.

Noah growled loudly. His fingers dug into my sensitive skin just below my mark. His eyes were completely gold. And before I could stop him, he took my jaw from Jax and turned it to the side, so his mark was reflecting in the mirror.

"Do you like it?" His voice was dark and demanding.

I could hear his heart racing, blood pumping through his veins. I swallowed hard, gazing at it. I wanted him to touch it. God, I wanted him to touch the mark so fucking bad. "If I don't?"

Jax stepped back from me, eyeing my reaction to Noah. He smirked. "She likes it," he said. "Look at the way she squirms, just thinking about it. She



can't sit still, can't take her eyes off of it."

Noah trailed his fingers down my neck again, getting dangerously close to his mark. Then, he pulled his fingers away right before he touched it. He growled lowly.

My toes curled, and I squirmed again, wanting him to touch it.

Jax walked over to my other side, kneeling next to me. "I know you want it, Little One," he rumbled. "You know what you have to do."

His breath made my neck and my mark feel warm. I groaned softly.

*Touch me, damn it.*

He moved his fingers up my inner thigh, up my stomach, up my chest, until he reached my neck. He lightly grabbed my throat in his hand, his thumb hovering ever so slightly over his mark.

After a few moments, I couldn't get myself to open my mouth. I was afraid if I did, I wouldn't be able to speak straight.

"Why are you stubborn, Naomi?" Jax said. He pulled his hand away.

I shook my head. "No, please," I whispered. "Touch it."

He brushed his fingers against it so very lightly, and I shook in pleasure.

I furrowed my brows at Noah. "Please, Noah," I pleaded softly. "Touch me too."

Noah gazed at me, jaw clenched, and drew his finger down my jaw line.

"Please," I whispered. When he touched my neck, I couldn't stop the moan from escaping my lips. "More. I need more."

## CHAPTER 23



NAOMI

“Take this off of her,” Noah said, grabbing the strap of my bra and flinging it down harshly onto my shoulder. “I want to see our mate before we claim her fully.” He brushed his nose up the back of my neck, lips brushing against my mark.

A wave of pleasure rushed through me. My toes curled.

Jax grabbed the front of my bra, between the cups, and dug his claws into the material, cutting it in half. The bra flung open, my breasts falling out of it. Noah groped me from behind, his hands taking a handful of my breasts.

He gazed at me in the mirror with his golden eyes. “Look at you,” he said in my ear. “Our mate.”

Jax knelt in front of me, grasping my panties. He pulled them down to my ankles and off completely, leaving me bare to them. “Spread your legs,” he demanded.

“Do it, Little One,” Noah said in my ear. “Let us see you.”

I gulped and pulled my legs open, curling them around the legs of the chair. Jax smirked at my pussy, fingers trailing up the insides of my thighs and pulling me apart. Noah groped me harder, pinching my nipples in his fingers.

I threw my head back and moaned. Jax lifted my legs to rest on his shoulders and pulled my ass to the edge of the chair.

He pressed his lips onto my clit, massaging it with his tongue. “Fuck, you taste so good.”

With my hands tied behind my back, I reached behind me, wanting to feel Noah. Something, anything to get me closer to them. The mark—marks—were aching again. Needing me to get as close to them as possible. Needing to get us so close that they claimed me.

Noah chuckled lowly in my ear, leaving a lingering kiss on my mark. Then, he stood up. I watched him take off his belt, unbuckle his pants, and pull his hard cock out. He wrapped his hand around it, stroking slowly, and walked over to my side.

Without saying a word, he laced a hand through my hair and pushed my head down on his dick. Like the alpha he was. I clenched my pussy, wrapping my lips around his hard cock.

Jax pushed a finger inside of me, making me tighten around him.

“Holy shit,” I whispered. My tongue swirled around Noah’s head.

Noah wrapped a hand around my throat, pulling his cock out of my mouth, and lifted me to a standing position. Jax pushed the chair out of the way, and Noah pushed me back down onto my knees, sitting parallel to the mirror.

He stood in front of me, cock on my lips. “What do you say?”

My eyes widened slightly, and I furrowed my brows at him. “Please,” I said. And as I did, he pushed himself down my throat.

Without stopping, he grabbed the sides of my head, fingers touching my marks, and shoved himself into me. Hard and fast thrusts. Over and over, until I was gagging on him.

I pulled my knees together and tried to ease the throbbing between my legs. My breasts bounced against his thighs as he fucked my throat. With each push, he hit the back of my throat.

“Look up at him,” Jax said.

I gazed at him through teary eyes to see him glance in the mirror at us. He groaned and continued. He placed one hand on the back of my head, the other grasping my breast roughly. My nipple swept against his palm, and he tugged on it with his fingers.

“Fuck,” Noah said. “Her head is so fucking good.”

After a few more thrusts, he pulled out of me, finally letting me breathe. Spit dripped down my lips and onto my breasts. Jax appeared in front of me,

stroking his cock. I parted my lips, waiting for him to give it to me just as hard.

He placed his cock at my lips but didn't push it inside yet. Instead, he smirked. "Look at you, Little One." He took my chin in his hand and forced me to look into the mirror. His hard cock grazed against my cheek. He slapped my cheek lightly with his hardness. "So hungry for your alphas' cocks, aren't you?"

I pressed my knees together. "Yes," I said quietly.

"Yes?" Noah said. "Yes, what?"

I stared at them both through the mirror. "Please, give it to me. Fuck my throat. I need it."

Jax smirked, eyes glowing gold. He pushed his cock down my throat, one hand around my neck. Slowly, he pulled himself out of me and pushed himself back into me. I moaned on his cock.

He grabbed the base of his cock and his balls, shoving as much as he could inside of me, and held me on his cock until I gagged on it. Spit dripped out of my mouth and down my chin.

When Jax pulled out of me, I took a deep breath. Noah shoved himself back inside of me. I gagged, eyes watering.

Jax undid my restraint. He took his cock in one hand and my hand in the other. He placed my hand around my own throat. "Feel our cocks down your throat. Feel how much of us that pretty little throat of yours can take."

I placed my hand around my throat, hand grazing against my marks, pleasure pumping through me. Noah pushed himself inside of me, and I felt his cock all the way down my throat. I tightened my grip, loving the feeling of him inside of me. Taking me. Claiming me.

I wanted more.

When he pulled out, Jax pushed himself into me. They took turns, one after the other. Barely giving me time to breathe before they pushed themselves inside me again. Jax pulled out of me, and they both gazed down

at my body. Spit was covering my tits, dripping down my nipples and onto my thighs.

Noah smirked at me. He pulled me up, taking me into his arms and tossing me onto the bed like I was nothing. Jax crawled up the bed, lay on his back, and drew me into his lap.

## CHAPTER 24



NAOMI

Jax took me into his lap with my back against his chest, placing my feet on his thighs. He rubbed my clit with one hand and grabbed my breast with another. “Fuck,” he growled in my ear.

His cock was pressed against my pussy, and I wanted nothing more than for him to drive it inside of me.

I wasn’t going to wait any longer.

Noah crawled up the bed between my legs, stroking his cock. “You’re so fucking sexy, Nai.”

I groaned when he rubbed his cock onto my pussy, letting it glisten with my juices.

“So fucking sexy.”

I pulled my legs together, pleading. “Please give it to me this time,” I said. “I need it.” I bit my lip. “My pussy is throbbing.”

Jax chuckled in my ear. “I can only imagine how desperate you look,” he said. “Desperate little Naomi, aching to get her pussy pounded by us.” He pressed his lips against his mark. “Show us how bad you want it.”

I squirmed in his grip. “Please,” I begged. “Oh God, please.”

“Show us,” Noah said, teasing my pussy with his cock.

He pressed his cock against my clit, moving it in small circles. A rush of pleasure warmed my core.

I gripped his shoulder in one hand and held his cock in the other. “Please.”

Noah pulled it away from me.

“Show us,” Jax growled louder in my ear. “Show us how desperate you are.”

My toes curled. I wrapped my arms under my knees, pulling my legs



apart, giving him more access. Noah smirked down at me.

“There you go,” Jax said in a mocking tone, so condescending yet so fucking sexy.

“Please,” I whispered. “One of you, please, fill me.”

I sounded so fucking desperate, and I was.

“One?” Noah said. He pushed his cock around against my clit again. “We’re both claiming you tonight, Little One.”

“Keep your legs spread,” Jax said in my ear. He lifted my hips just briefly, positioning himself at my entrance.

And in one swift movement, he pushed himself inside of me, inch by inch until it filled me completely.

My eyes widened as I stared up into Noah’s golden eyes. I clenched my pussy around Jax’s cock, clamping down hard.

“You’re so big.”

When he was all the way inside of me, he stilled. He breathed harshly against my neck. “Fuck, Naomi. Fuck, you feel so good.”

He pulled out of me for a moment and then rammed himself back in steadily. After a few thrusts, he stilled again. Noah brushed his cock against my wetness. He spat in his hand and stroked his cock.

When he began pressing it against my entrance as well, my eyes widened. I tightened around Jax, making it harder for him. He placed his hands on the insides of my thighs, holding them as far apart as they would go.

“Relax,” Jax said.

Noah continued to push himself into me. As soon as he pressed his head into my pussy, I yelled out, squeezing my eyes closed.

“Noah,” I whispered. I gazed up at him, brows furrowed together. Hurting.

But he didn’t stop. He continued to push himself inside of me. My pussy was so full of cock; all I could feel was pain.

Noah dipped his head into my neck and inhaled. Then, he pressed his lips

to his mark. “The pain will go away soon.” His lips trailed down my neck, kissing every inch of my mark and setting it aflame.

I gripped his shoulders, the pressure in my core becoming more bearable. Jax squeezed my breasts. Noah sucked one of my nipples into his mouth.

Jax pulled his cock out of me and thrust back in. They both began to move leisurely, in and out. Filling me. Noah sucked on my breast, fingers kneading it. My pussy clenched tighter. Waves of pleasure were rolling through me. I sucked in a deep breath as they began to move faster into me at the same pace. In and out. In and out.

Noah grasped my shoulders, using me to pound harder. I moaned loudly.

“Oh my G—” I threw my head back. “Holy—”

“Don’t come,” Jax said in my ear. “Not yet.”

He pinched my nipples between his fingers. I closed my eyes, feeling my breast rub against Noah’s bare chest.

“I ... I can’t,” I said.

Noah wrapped his hand around my throat, sitting up. “You will.”

“Oh God.” I threw my head back.

Noah’s hand tightened. Pressure built in my core.

“I’m going to come.” I couldn’t hold back anymore. My body shook with pleasure. I tried gripping Noah’s shoulders to steady myself, but I couldn’t.

A gush of ecstasy rushed through me. My core pulsing around them.

“Fuck,” Jax groaned behind me. “Fuck, I’m going to come.”

Noah pulled out of me, stroking his cock in his hand. Jax pulled out, head of his cock against my stomach. Cum shot out of him, covering my stomach. His body tensed below me.

“Fuck,” he whispered in my ear.

Noah moved around us until he was kneeling beside me to the right. Jax breathed heavily underneath me and then wrapped a hand around my neck.

“Open your mouth for Noah,” he said in my ear. His fingers set my marks on fire, sending pleasure to my core. “Show him those eyes.”

I gazed up at Noah, mouth opened, and waited for his cum. His lips parted slightly.

Jax moved one of his hands up my thigh to my stomach, where his cum had splattered. With a finger, he pushed it through the cum and trailed it up my body to my breasts. His finger circled around my nipple, making it glisten.

My brows furrowed together. He tugged roughly on it, and I closed my eyes as another rush rolled through me. His hand tightened around my throat.

“Open your eyes,” he demanded as he continued to tug on my nipple.

I opened my eyes again, just as Noah’s cum shot across my face. He posted a hand on the bed beside me, stroking his cock and pushing the rest of his cum out.

“Ours.”

## CHAPTER 25



NAOMI

When I woke up the next morning, the sun was flooding in through the window. Noah was lying next to me, gazing at me with those intense gold eyes. It looked like he had been awake for a while. His forehead was creased slightly, as if he was worried about something, but he didn't say anything. Just stared.

I frowned at him, but he gave me a half-smile. He brushed his thumb against my cheek so lightly that I thought he hadn't touched me at all. It was so different than last night. Last night was raw, vicious, wild. But at this moment, he was gentle and even looked vulnerable.

Jax had his arm around my waist, pulling me toward him. He was hard again and pressed against my ass. I smiled at Noah, the sun hitting his face perfectly. A few pieces of stray hair curled onto his forehead.

Noah gently grabbed my face and pulled me to him, placing his lips on mine. Soft and slow.

Jax groaned behind me, pulling my waist to him and driving his hips back and forth like he wanted to fuck again. He groaned, thrusting them a bit harder. "You're so sexy," he said, voice gruff. He moved his hand down my back and squeezed my ass.

"Let's go out for breakfast," he said in my ear. He rolled me onto my back and brushed my hair out of my face. Propped up onto one elbow, he smiled. "I want to spend time with you today."

Noah frowned and rolled out of bed, pulling on a pair of sweatpants. "We can't. We have a meeting with Isabella today."

"A meeting with Isabella?" I asked.

I hadn't known that she was coming here. That was probably what she'd wanted to talk about the other day when she called me about five times. My

heart raced. If she was coming, did that mean that Oliver would be coming here too? He was my partner after all.

“Cancel it,” Jax said.

I gnawed on the inside of my lip. It would take Oliver a few days to get back to the Lycans from his assignment in Roger’s pack, and he’d called me yesterday. He wouldn’t come. But I was still nervous for him to meet the twins.

“*Postpone* it,” I said carefully.

We weren’t dating anymore, but he had been my partner for a few years now. He was still important to me. He always would be.

Jax curled his fingers into my waist. “What are you thinking about, Little One?”

After the whole ordeal with Ryan and after last night—the mark, the claim—I couldn’t tell them that I was thinking about my ex-boyfriend. That would turn out ugly for all of us.

So, I smiled softly and shook my head. “Nothing,” I said. “Let’s get breakfast at The Night Raiders Café. We will be back before Isabella gets here.”

Jax rested his hand on my shoulder, wrapping his arm around my waist and pulling me closer. He gazed over at Noah, who was pulling on a T-shirt that hugged his frame. “Don’t you want to show everyone that she’s ours?”

Noah’s eyes flickered down to my neck. And finally, he smiled. “Of course I do.” He was confident in his words, yet there was a certain hesitation to them.

“We will be back before Isabella gets here,” I reassured as I hopped up from the bed.

Once I dressed, I brushed my hair out in front of the mirror. My curls were knotted from being tossed around last night. When Jax and Noah appeared at the door, Jax frowned. He walked in, stood behind me in the mirror, and pulled my hair behind my shoulders, so both of my marks were

on full display.

They were still sensitive and swollen a bit from yesterday, and they were bright red.

“There you go. Much better.” He took my hand and led me to the car.

The Night Raider’s Café was packed with werewolves from all of the packs in the area. Warriors and omegas alike were chatting with each other over coffee that, to me, now smelled awfully similar to the ale at the bar.

When we sat down in one of the deep blue booths, I looked around. Each time that one of the Lycans smiled at me, Noah or Jax would be quick to growl in their direction, warning them off.

But it wasn’t like any of the Lycans were intimidated by them.

“Morning!” someone said from beside me. Makayla was standing there, smiling at Noah, in a brown knit dress that hugged her curves.

“Morning, Makayla,” Noah said.

Jax paused, gazing at Noah, and then squeezed my thigh. “Do you need anything, Makayla?”

She smiled at us with her perfect pearly whites and her dark red hair that seemed to effortlessly flow down her chest. Her eyes landed on me and then on my neck. Her blue eyes widened, and she looked between us all. “I, uh ...” She pressed her lips together, toying with her sleeve. “You’re their mates?” Her eyes never left my marks.

I shifted in my seat, suddenly wanting to cover the scars on my neck. Don’t get me wrong; I didn’t hate that they’d marked me. But I didn’t particularly enjoy the fact that I was now a wolf myself. I’d be judged for it, and I would have to prove myself over again to so many people—just like I had done with the Lycans the first few weeks that I started with them.

And besides, I enjoyed being one of the only humans in the woods with my team. It was exhilarating.

Makayla didn’t say anything else, just stood there and frowned. She parted her lips to speak again, and then she looked at Jax and Noah and

pressed her lips together. She looked stunned and hurt.

My phone buzzed on the table. Addie's name lit up on the screen. Thank God for Addie, calling at the exact moment I needed her the most.

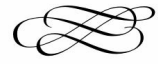
I looked at the guys, knowing that Addie was going to start to scream through the phone about the twins as soon as I answered it. When I excused myself from the table, Jax grabbed my waist, wanting me to stay, but I stood up anyway. Addie was going to have my ass for not telling her first.

So, as soon as I got up, I clicked the answer button and listened to her through the phone.

“TWIN FUCKING MATES?! I’M WAITING FOR YOUR DAMN THANKS FOR INTRODUCING YOU ALL RIGHT NOW.”



## CHAPTER 26



NAOMI

I walked over to the window, gazing out to see the pine trees covered in snow. Wolves were coming and exiting The Night Raider's Café, dressed in their warmest coats. I rocked back on my heels and smiled. My heart felt warm—something that hadn't happened in a while.

"Thank you, Addie," I said after a few moments.

She whispered something to Derek on the other side of the phone and then said, "Why didn't you call me as soon as possible? I had to hear it from Derek, who'd heard it from Cayden, who'd heard it from Vanessa."

I frowned, leaning my forehead against the window. "It happened last night ... and besides, we have a slight problem."

She quieted down for a moment. "Oliver?"

I gave her half a laugh. "No," I said. My phone buzzed in my hand. I pulled my phone from my ear for a moment to see his name appear on the screen. "But speak of the devil ..."

*Damn, word gets around really quick.*

I pushed his call to voicemail and returned to Addie. "He's not a problem."

I gazed around to make sure nobody was listening, especially Jax and Noah. They were sitting at the booth still, talking with Makayla. Jax looked extra annoyed with a deep frown on his face.

"There is this wolf named Ava," I continued. "She was ... standing outside the pack house the other night when I was talking to Oliver—for Lycan business—and I'm not getting a good read on her. She seems to have a bad reputation among the pack members, but I can't figure out what's going on."

Out the window, deep in the forest, I saw the same eyes that I had seen

the other night.

Ava.

She was watching us again.

“Maybe she went rogue?” Addie said.

I quieted my voice. “Last time I tried to get a read on her, this poor wolf nearly got killed.”

“I didn’t get killed.” Someone scoffed from behind me. “I’m going to be a Lycan. I took the punishment like any Lycan would.”

My eyes widened as I caught Ryan sitting at the coffee bar with a cup of coffee. He wasn’t facing me, but he *was* talking to me.

Addie sighed. “Okay, I know the Lycan in you is probably going to try to fuck the information out of Jax and Noah, but let me just say, even though they’re hot as fuck, I don’t think you should do that to your mates.”

“Addie,” I said, fingers digging into the window. “That’s probably true, and you know I’m not going to take your advice, but I have to go. I promise that we will get together soon. I just have to go now. I love you.”

“It’s okay, Naomi. I love you too,” she said. Someone yelled in the background. “Oh, and Derek says hi.”

I chuckled and listened to the line go dead. Without pulling the phone away from my ear, I sucked in a deep breath and peered out the window.

“Are you okay?” I asked. “Did they hurt you?”

“Do you really care?” he asked.

“If you’re going to be a future Lycan, which I think you could definitely be, I do care. Lycans care about each other.”

We paused for a brief moment, and finally, I heard him sigh.

“You’re marked,” he said. “You’re a wolf now.”

“Can you tell me who *she* is?” I asked.

He paused. “Not here. I told you that we need to talk in private. She has ears everywhere, and people in our pack don’t really like mentioning her. It’s kind of forbidden.”

I gnawed on the inside of my cheek. “Where? Give me a place to meet, and I will meet you there tonight.”

He pushed his coffee mug to the other side of the bar. The coffeepot beeped, and the waitress walked over.

He sucked in a deep breath. “Bainundo, midnight. Tell them that you’re going to see—”

“I can come up with my own excuse.”

And with that, I clicked off the phone, deposited it into my pocket, and walked over to the table. Makayla was sitting next to Noah in the booth. I slid next to Jax, trying to look as calm as I had before.

“What did your sister say?” Jax asked.

“Not much,” I said.

I looked across the table at Makayla and nearly growled, which surprised me. My wolf wouldn’t come until the next full moon, and I was already almost growling.

I frowned at Makayla, realizing why she was really here. “We were supposed to meet this morning, weren’t we?”

She gave me a shy, small smile and nodded.

“I’m sorry. Things, as you can see, kind of took a wild turn last night.”

She nodded it off. “It’s okay,” she said.

Jax looked down at his watch. “Well, we are meeting with Isabella soon, so we’re going to have to go. Sorry, Makayla. Naomi will help you later.” Jax yanked me out of the booth and possessively wrapped his arm around my waist.

Noah scooted out of the booth and grabbed my hand, squeezing tightly. I separated myself from them—because they were over-the-top possessive sometimes—and wrapped myself in my coat. Together, we walked back to our car.

Jax opened the door for me and grabbed my arm before I could get in. “I can’t wait to get my hands on your sexy ass.”

## CHAPTER 27



NAOMI

Once Noah closed the front door to the pack house, Jax pushed me against it, hand in my pants. “Not wearing any underwear, Little One?” He drew his nose up the back of my neck. “It’s almost as if you wanted me to take you while we were back at the café.”

I playfully pushed him away and walked up the stairs to their office. “Why didn’t you?”

He chuckled lowly, chasing me up the stairs. “I’ve been thinking about getting you into *my* bed since last night.”

I giggled, walking down the hallway. “Finally going to let me see what you’ve been hiding in there for the past week?”

“You two can flirt later,” Noah said, walking into his office.

I followed him and hopped up on his desk, crossing one leg over the other. He gazed at me with a tight jaw.

“Naomi,” he said, eyes golden. “You have to get down. Isabella will be here any moment.”

“Do you remember the last time we were all in here?” I asked, tilting my head to the side and gazing at Jax.

I wasn’t planning on trying to flirt to get information out of them, but if my plan to meet Ryan tonight fell through like it had last time, this might be my only hope. And if it didn’t fall through, then I’d still get to let them take me.

I rested my hands on the desk behind me. Noah sat in his desk chair, one brow raised. I grabbed him by the tie and pulled him closer to me, resting my feet on either side of his thighs beside him.

“You don’t want to play with me, *Alpha*?” I asked.

Jax brushed his hand up my throat from behind and drew me toward him.

“I’ll have fun with you, Little One.”

I stared at Noah as Jax kissed his mark, and I moaned. I drew my toes against Noah’s crotch, feeling his hardness.

Jax smirked over my shoulder. “Come on, Noah. You don’t want this?” He drew his hands up my body and groped my breasts.

Someone knocked on the door.

I jumped off of the desk, brushing my hand across Noah’s crotch. “I expect this later.”

“You think you will get what you want?” he asked as I walked to the door.

“I know I will get what I want, and if I don’t, then I have ways to get it.”

I pulled the door open. Isabella stood on the other side, smiling.

When she saw my neck, her eyes widened. “What happ—”

I smiled back at the twins. “Sorry, boys, I have to talk to Isabella for a moment. She’ll be back.” I pulled further into the hallway and slammed the door.

Before she could say anything, I stopped her. “I know. I’m their mate. Long story. Anyway, you need to cover for me. Tell them that I am meeting you at Bainundo tonight.” I smiled widely at her. “Thanks!” I shoved her inside, giving her a cheeky smile, and shut the door.

Hopefully, she would pull through.

\* \* \*

I GOT IN THE CAR, starting it as quickly and as quietly as I could. They knew that I had to meet *Isabella* tonight, but I still felt a bit weird about lying directly to them.

It was shitty of me to hide things from my mates, but I had to. They didn’t want to talk about it. They were keeping this secret from me.

When I parked in front of Bainundo, I cut my lights. I waited for half an

hour for Ryan to pull up. But he didn't.

After fifty-eight minutes, I gazed out of the window, and I saw the twins deep in the forest, their golden eyes not hard to miss.

I squeezed my hand around the steering wheel. They were watching me. I had known it was too easy. If Isabella didn't show up, they would think that I wasn't going to meet her at all, and then ... I didn't know what they would do.

So, I got right out of the car and walked into Bainundo. Of course, Ryan was standing in the dark on one of the blue mats. The moonlight flooded into the room just enough for me to see him.

"Took you long enough," Ryan said, still sitting in the dark.

I walked into the back room, turning on one of the lights so as not to look suspicious. He didn't move from his spot, and I applauded him for it. Actually thinking smart this time.

"We have to make this quick. Tell me who she is."

He paused for a long moment.

"Tell me," I repeated.

"It's difficult now that you're marked."

"Now, Ryan."

After a few moments, he sighed. "She used to be our luna."



## CHAPTER 28



NAOMI

After Ryan told me that Ava was their mate, I didn't listen to much of anything else he said. He was rambling on about something—probably her—but I just couldn't listen. My whole mind went blank. All I could think about were her eyes, staring intently at me, daring me, taunting me.

I wanted to listen to him. I really did.

I didn't know if I was jealous or disappointed. Maybe a bit of both. But I was really, really angry that she'd had the audacity to come back to their property to provoke me, to torment them. She was still here, and as far as I knew, they were doing nothing about it. Even when they knew that I was their mate.

Whatever the reason that Ava wasn't their luna anymore, it had to be a rough one since nobody dared to speak her name. Yet, if she was dangerous, I would hope that Noah and Jax would have done something about her.

But nothing. Absolutely nothing had changed since Noah had caught the scent of her the other day.

When I got home, I sat in my car. My hands were still on the steering wheel, knuckles white. The lights were cut, but I was parked right in front of the pack house. One look out of the window, and they'd see me sitting there.

I gazed at my phone, looking at the dark screen, and sighed. If only Oliver would call me now, when I wanted him to and not at some random time at night. I had the urge to call Addie, but I didn't want to worry her. I had to figure this out before Ava became more confident in what she was doing, before she threatened me or this pack.

Who was she? Why was she not their mate anymore? What had she done? And what was she up to now?

Those were the questions that I needed to figure out as soon as possible. Before she tampered with anything, especially *my* mates.

I felt my chest rumble lowly, and I found myself growling again.

I peered through the windshield to see a half-moon glaring down at me. Soon—very soon—I would shift, and I didn’t need any interruptions. It would go smoothly. I would make sure of it even if that meant doing the worst thing I could to Ava to get her out of our lives. She was a threat to us.

Someone knocked on my window. I looked over at Jax, who was standing in his briefs and nothing else. The moonlight was glistening off of his abdomen. His hair looked a bit disheveled.

“Come in,” he said. “Why are you still out here?”

His eyes looked so innocent. It didn’t look like he was hiding anything from me. And that hurt the worst.

I pulled the key out of the ignition, sighed too quietly for him to hear, and opened the car.

Noah was waiting for us at the front door. His arms were crossed over each other. “How was your meeting with Isabella?” he asked.

“Good,” I said quickly and walked up the stairs.

They followed after me.

“Good?” Jax asked. “You seem upset.”

“I’m not upset,” I said. “Just stressed out.”

I pulled off my coat and set it on the back of one of the chairs in the kitchen.

“You were there for a while.”

“So were you guys,” I said, matching Noah’s intense stare.

Their eyes widened just slightly. They knew they had been caught, but Noah brushed off the comment quite quickly.

“We were making sure nothing happened to you.

I raised a brow. “Nothing happened to me? I’m a Lycan, Noah,” I said, sounding harsher than I’d meant to.

“Why are you freaking out about it, Little One?” Jax asked. He placed his hands on my shoulders from behind, his mere touch enough to calm me down for a moment. His fingers grazed against my marks, and a wave of pleasure rushed through me. “We’re just making sure nothing happens to you.”

I wanted to ask him why they were keeping something from me, but I didn’t want to seem crazy.

I sighed and sat down on a chair in the kitchen, pushing my hands through my hair, hiding my face from them. “I just have a lot on my plate right now,” I said. “There’s a threat that I need to take care of because nobody else can, it seems.”

Noah sat across from me, golden eyes so intensely staring at me. “If Isabella is giving you too much work, I can talk to her for you.”

I shook my head. “No,” I said. “No. I’ve had more on my plate than this before.” Especially when I had worked a job with Oliver at Makayla’s mate’s pack. “It’s fine.”

“Are you sure, Nai?” he asked, brows furrowed together so slightly. “They’re coming back in a week or two to train with us a bit. Let’s see how the work is then, and we can—”

I swallowed hard, then furrowed my brows. “They?”

“Isabella didn’t tell you?” Jax said. He placed a hand on my shoulder, leaning into me.

“Tell me what?”

“Isabella and some of the Lycans are coming to train with us in a couple of weeks. They want to see how we are progressing, particularly Makayla since she is one of the reasons that I requested you to come here,” Noah said.

“Who? Which Lycans?” I pressed my lips together.

Jax looked at Noah, brows furrowed. “Who’d they say again?”

Noah sighed. “Do you even listen in the meetings?”

“Yes, but ... I had other things to think about.” He curled a finger around my hair. “Like this one.”

“Isabella is coming, Roman might come, Oliver, and I believe she said that Caleb is coming too.”

I sucked in on my cheek. Oliver was coming. I paused for a moment. This would be a great time to tell them who he was to me and hope that they told me who Ava was to them.

It would make them angry, no doubt, but it was essential.

So, I sighed and gazed at them. “Oliver is my partner.”

Jax nodded. “We know.”

“He’s also my ex-boyfriend.”

## CHAPTER 29



NAOMI

Jax gripped the chair that I was sitting in, his knuckles turning white.

Noah growled. His eyes turned a dangerous dark gold color. “Your boyfriend?” he said lowly.

“My ex-boyfriend,” I said.

“Your boyfriend is your partner?” Jax asked. He was tense behind me.

I placed a hand on his chest. “My ex-boyfriend.” I pulled away from him and tossed my jacket over my shoulder. “Don’t worry about it. We broke up a few months ago.”

“Don’t worry about it?” Noah said, standing up and towering over the table. “He was your boyfriend. How are we not supposed to worry about it? He’s seen you naked. He probably still has feelings for you. He—”

I pursed my lips together, my heart racing. “You two have ex-girlfriends,” I said, testing the waters.

For a split second, an emotion that I had never seen crossed Noah’s face. Worry. Fear. Sadness. I didn’t know which one it was.

I waited for them to say something. To say anything about Ava. I wanted them *to want to* tell me about Ava, so I didn’t have to pry for information. I gave them a chance, but neither of them spoke a word. So, I gazed down at the ground, disappointed, and frowned. Well, if this was how it was going to go, then I was going to have to figure her out myself.

*Never trust your friends when they’re keeping something this big from you.*

“Oliver is like your ex-girlfriends,” I said. “Just like I don’t have anything to worry about,” I started, “you don’t have anything to worry about either.”

But I did have something to worry about. Her.

And with that, I walked right out of the kitchen without another word. I walked down the hall to my room and shut the door. I didn't feel like sleeping with them tonight. Or any night in the near future. We could fuck, but that was it. They would have to earn my trust. They would have to tell me something, anything, about her before I gave them that.

When I closed my door, I rested my head on my pillow. Waiting for them. I heard them shuffle down the hallway to my room, and then they opened my door without knocking.

"Sleep with us," Noah said. There was a certain despair in his voice. It wasn't prominent. It was just a thread of despair, of need, of want.

"I'm too tired, Noah." I kicked off my shoes and pulled the blankets up my body, staring out the window on my right. "I need to sleep and think. And I won't be able to do either while lying in bed with you guys."

"Please," Noah said from the door. The word was so quiet that I thought that I hadn't heard it. He sounded so sad. It was like he was about to beg.

I shook my head. "No," I said.

After about two more minutes of feeling their presence in the room, I heard them walk out and shut the door. I listened to one of their doors slam shut, and the other one shut more quietly.

I felt bad—extremely bad—that this was happening. But I had to think of something. Being with them would distract me, and I bet that was exactly what they wanted. They didn't want me to pry.

I looked out the window at the woods, thinking. I wished that I could dial Oliver's number and talk things through with him, but I couldn't get myself to pick up the phone.

I must've thought all night about it, just staring into those woods. Just when I was about to close my eyes and fall asleep, I saw her eyes in the distance. Ava was in the woods again. And she was staring right in my direction.

She was getting more confident in herself. She thought that she could



waltz right in here, probably to try to make me feel like I didn't matter, try to intimidate me, but she obviously didn't know who I was.

Instead of rushing outside like I had last time, I sat up in bed, calmed my racing heart. She was still there. I tied one of my silky robes around my body, wearing nothing but a pair of underwear underneath.

After I smiled sweetly at her, I snuck down the hallway. The twins had both of their doors closed. I could hear Jax's light snoring coming from his room, but I heard Noah as he tossed and turned in his bed. Without sparing a second glance, I walked down the hallway and slipped out the front door.

She was still standing in the woods when I came out. I sat on one of the chairs on the front porch, crossing one leg over the other, and rested my arms on the arm handles. A queen sitting on the damn porch, guarding her mates and her pack. Because her mates obviously couldn't do it themselves.

Ava walked a bit closer, just a few steps, until she was in the moonlight. I pressed my lips together when I saw the marks on her neck. It hurt so fucking bad to see them. It was true. This had really been her pack before me. And neither Jax nor Noah wanted to tell me about it.

Intimidating, she thought she was. I pushed my hair behind my shoulders, letting her see my marks. They were still a biting red with the flesh raised. So new. Nothing like what she had. I smirked in her direction when she growled at me.

I thought of a thousand ways to make her jealous, to make her come to me, to make her try to fight me, to watch her lose. Yet she didn't move closer.

We must've stared at each other for a good ten minutes.

My left shoulder sleeve fell down my shoulder slightly, but I held up my right sleeve, not wanting her to see the Lycan tattoo on my shoulder. She didn't need to know that I was a Lycan. I didn't want her to get any ideas. She growled lowly, seeing the red love bites on my shoulder, down my chest.

After another minute, she sprinted back into the woods.

*Know your enemy. Check.*

*Never let the enemy get under your skin. Kinda-sorta check.*

*Never give the enemy what they want, unless it's part of your plan.  
Check.*

## CHAPTER 30



NAOMI

*B*ecause I was feeling frisky and needed a goddamn relief, I walked back up to my room, shut the door quietly behind me, and found my vibrator stuffed in one of my drawers. I pulled my curtains closed and crawled under the blankets, so nobody could hear or see as I pleased myself.

I turned the vibrator on, placing it on the weakest setting, and pressed it against my clit, letting the vibrations rush through me. Pulse after pulse, I clenched my pussy, feeling myself get wet. I pressed my lips together, trying to suppress a moan, and closed my eyes, letting the pleasure build in my core.

My fingers grazed against the marks on my neck, and I held my breath. Wanting—needing—to come. My toes curled, and just as I was about to release, my phone rang.

I sucked in a deep breath and growled lowly under my breath, ignoring it. It was almost four in the morning. Lycan business was over. Nobody important should be calling me now.

I closed my eyes again, turning up the vibration, and sank back into the blankets. All I wanted was to be in Noah's room, being thrust into, having them fill me. Noah's lips on my folds, tongue massaging small circles around my clit. Jax pushing himself down my throat, his big cock gagging me.

My phone rang again, nearly vibrating all the way off of the damn nightstand this time.

I squeezed my eyes shut and turned the vibrator to its highest setting. As I toyed with my clit, I reached over to end the call, so I could focus on Noah and Jax. As aggravating as they were, I still couldn't stop thinking about the way they'd claimed me. It was so feral. Just pulling back my hair, sinking their teeth into my neck, making me theirs.

Another gush of delight rolled through me.

*Holy fuck.*

I was going to come. My fingers grazed against my neck once more, and I slapped a hand over my mouth, moaning into it. Wave after wave of pleasure washed over me. My pussy pulsed, over and over, until I was sinking into my bed, legs shaking uncontrollably.

“That was hot,” I heard someone say.

I opened my eyes wide, gazing at the door, which was closed.

“Naomi?”

“Fuck,” I whispered, grabbing my phone, which was glaring Oliver’s contact information. After taking a deep breath, I pressed the phone to my ear and shut off my vibrator. “Please don’t, Oliver.”

“Were you masturbating?” he asked.

I slapped a hand over my forehead. “That’s none of your business.”

He chuckled. “Niiiiice.”

“What do you want? Why are you calling me at four in the morning?”

“Why did you pick up?”

“I didn’t mean to.”

“Why are you awake? Why didn’t you pick up my call this morning?”

“You ask too many questions.”

“I worry about you.”

I sighed and sat up, feeling the wetness between my legs. I tossed my vibrator to the edge of the bed and leaned against my headboard, pulling my legs together. “Remember the other night when I said that someone was watching me?” I asked. “Well, turns out, that wolf is Noah and Jax’s ex-mate Ava. I haven’t found any information on her. It’s forbidden to talk about her here.” I gnawed on the inside of my cheek.

“Is someone jealous?” Oliver asked. He sounded amused. “Never thought I’d see you jealous. It’s probably the wolf coming out in you. Heard you got marked.”

I sighed. The sun was coming up behind the trees, and rays of light were glaring above them, bouncing off of the snow, nearly making it blinding even through the sheer curtains.

Yes, it was the wolf coming out in me. I had never been jealous before, and I hated to admit to it.

“I’m more protective,” I said. “And I don’t need her messing this mission up for this pack. I’m here to train them to become stronger for war.”

“War is coming soon,” Oliver said.

He’d never warned me this often before of war. He was either very worried or very serious about it. He sighed over the phone. I could only imagine him staring up at his ceiling, one foot kicked over the other, arm behind his head.

“Maybe Isabella assigned you to the twins because they’re the weakest links in their pack, because they have this association with their mate.”

I nodded my head. “That’s what I was thinking.”

“I can find something about Ava for you, but I think you should try to pry info out of them. Any way you have to.”

I thought about flirting with them to get what I wanted again. It felt so wrong, so disgusting, but it looked like it was going to be my only option. I would try to get what I needed out of Ryan, but he probably didn’t know everything that had happened between them. I needed everything about her to figure out how big of a threat she was to me—both as a Lycan and as the luna of this pack.

The line was quiet for a few moments. All I could hear was his deep breathing. And it felt so natural that it made me smile.

“Hey, Naomi,” he said.

“Yes?” I said, feeling tired.

He paused. “I miss you.”

Now, I paused. It felt wrong to say it back to him, especially after being marked, but he wasn’t just my ex-boyfriend. He was also my friend. And my

partner. And the twins were keeping something from me still.

So, I lay back on the bed and closed my eyes. “I miss you too.”

## CHAPTER 31





## NAOMI

The twins didn't say anything the next morning, not even when I showed up to practice with less than two hours of sleep. I had the darkest circles under my eyes. I could barely keep my eyes open. I was cranky and angry and just needed sleep, but I led the practice like they had hired me to.

I stood on the sidelines, watching Makayla take down Noah easier than she used to. Ryan and Jax were tensely fighting to my right. I crossed my arms over my chest. If I was here to strengthen Jax and Noah, then I was going to have to turn up the hurt on them.

So, I nodded my head at Ryan. "Good job, Ryan. Keep it up, and you'll be the strongest one here."

Noah growled from my left, hearing the compliment.

And when Ryan smirked at me and said, "Anything for you, babe," Jax punched him right in the eye. Ryan landed on the ground with a thud, his eye immediately bruising.

A part of me felt bad for him, but with some of his comments, he just brought things upon himself. I cleared my throat, yet Jax didn't look at me. Noah stood near Makayla, and I stalked over to him. Everyone was silent.

"You two have learned absolutely nothing since I've been here," I said.

Every one of the warriors stared at us four with wide eyes. Noah stopped suddenly and turned to me. His eyes were a deathly gold and were gazing at me with such intensity. I placed a hand on my hip.

"Leave," he said to the warriors.

Everyone stood and gathered their things.

"Stay here," I said. "Nobody leaves the field."

I stepped toward him, nostrils flaring. This was Naomi with two hours of

sleep because her two mates' ex-luna was taunting her.

"I said to leave," he said, growling.

"And I told them that nobody leaves the field. You're supposed to be strong. Both of you. Yet you let comments like that break you. What the hell happens when Makayla's mate uses that against you in battle? Because he's about to become one of your enemies. If he uses it against you, if he calls me hot, calls me babe—because I know he will—are you just going to get pissed?"

Before he could answer the question, I answered it for him. "Yes, you will. And I will tell you honestly that you three will fight, and he will beat you both." I shook my head. "Don't fight with anger. You don't think straight." I stepped toward him.

He stood there, fuming because I was embarrassing him in front of the crowd.

I lowered into a fighting stance. "Try it. Come at me."

"Naomi, I'm not doing that."

So, I did it to him. I stepped right at him, threw him over my hip, and pinned him onto the ground. He growled and pushed me off of him. And I let him.

"See?" I said.

Jax growled lowly, and I gazed at him.

"I could do the same to you, Jax."

"Very confident in yourself, Little One."

"Learn humility," I snapped. "Learn to fight without anger. Stop letting him"—I pointed to Ryan—"get in your head."

Everyone still peered between us. Nobody had moved. I looked around at the pack, wanting the truth about Ava to come out because she was holding them back—for some reason that I couldn't quite figure out. But I didn't want to push too hard, too soon.

So, I sighed. "You are now dismissed. Practice is over for today."

As soon as I said it, the warriors scrambled to their feet and fled the training area. Everyone, except Ryan and the twins. Ryan's eye was already purple and swollen.

"What are your problems?" I asked, gazing between the two guys. "Why do you get angry so quickly?"

"How do you expect an alpha to react to someone hitting on their mate?"

"Like a sane fucking person," I said.

"That's not fun," Jax said. He was trying to be the fun-loving Jax, but I heard the anger in his voice.

I resisted the urge to roll my eyes. "Is something making you angry? Other than Ryan hitting on me?" Pry. Pry. Pry.

They didn't say anything, just continued to stand there, seething. Noah had his hands balled into tight fists. His eyes were golden, and I could feel the heat of his stare coming at me in waves.

I helped Ryan up. "You two figure out whatever you need to figure out. Get this out of your systems. I'm going to help Ryan clean up his wound."

Once I cleaned Ryan's eyes, I let him leave. He didn't say anything else to the boys, just good-bye to me at the front door. Noah and Jax didn't let him out of their sight until the door was closed.

When he was gone, I walked right by the guys without sparing them a glance.

Noah cleared his throat. "Naomi, what are you doing?" he asked.

"What are you talking about?"

He raised a brow. "What do you know?"

I shook my head. "What is there to know?" I said. "Should I know something?" Neither of them said anything, so I crossed my arms over my chest. "Do you have a secret that I should know about?"

"We don't have a secret," Noah said too quickly.

"Okay," I said, shrugging.

"Okay?"

“Okay. Now, let’s go upstairs,” I said, guilt washing over me. This was not what I’d wanted this to come to, but I was going to get nowhere with them just denying and denying. “I’m tired, and I want to sleep.”

“You didn’t want to sleep with us last night,” Noah said, butthurt.

*Well, you didn’t want to tell me your stupid secret.*

I mustered up the sweetest smile that I could come up with. “Well, I actually wanted to get sleep last night. Now ...” I pulled off my shirt. *Flirt, Naomi.* “Are you coming to bed?”

## CHAPTER 32



NAOMI

*I* crawled into Noah's bed and rested on the pillows. They walked into the room and quietly shut the door behind them. Instead of coming into the bed with me, they stood at the foot of the bed.

"Who says that we want to sleep with you after what you pulled this morning?"

I shrugged my shoulders, hooked my thumbs in my pants, and pulled them down. I lay on the bed, bare to them, and toyed with myself. Fingers trailing up my thighs, touching the folds of my pussy.

"You don't have to," I said, resting back into the bed. "I can call Ryan back to help me, if you would like."

Noah growled, hands balling into fists.

I smirked at the men. "Is that a yes?"

"You embarrassed us for the second time in front of the whole damn pack," Jax said.

"They think we're weak," Noah continued.

I trailed a finger up my abdomen to my breast and grabbed a handful in my hand. "You are."

Noah's eyes turned completely gold. Golder than I had ever seen them before. Jax growled lowly. I closed my eyes and sank into the blankets, rolling my nipple between my fingers and pinching it lightly.

Wow, the power such words had over these men.

A hand wrapped around my ankle, and suddenly, I was yanked to the edge of the bed and was on my knees in front of the alphas.

"Weak?" Noah repeated menacingly. "You think we're weak?"

Jax roughly snatched my chin in his hand. "You're the one in his bed, touching yourself. You're the one on your knees. I bet you're even thinking

about us inside of you.” He grabbed his hard cock above his pants and took my hand, making me feel him. “Desperate for this, aren’t you?”

Noah knelt next to me, hand slipping between my legs. He rubbed my clit. Gently at first and then roughly. “So fucking wet.” With his free hand, he seized my throat, fingers grazing against the marks, sending a wave of pleasure through me. He forced me to stare at him as he rubbed me.

“Our desperate mate,” Jax said. He laughed and unzipped his pants, letting me grasp his cock in my hand. “It’s actually quite adorable to see you act all tough in front of the pack, but as soon as you’re in this bedroom, you’re so desperate, just waiting on your knees for us.”

“Where should we fill you first?” Noah asked.

My heart raced as I looked at those golden eyes. They were so demanding, so dominant. I could barely hold myself together. I parted my lips, but nothing came out.

“Do we get to choose for you, Little One?” Jax said.

My pussy clenched. Noah continued to rub my clit, sending a rush of delight through me. I dug my fingernails into his thigh. *Oh my gosh.*

“Open your mouth,” Jax said.

I parted my lips.

“Wider.”

Noah smirked at me. He stuck a finger into my mouth, and I closed my lips around it, making it wet. After he pulled it out of me, he pushed it into my pussy.

“Good girl,” he said, thrusting it inside of me. “For once.”

Jax stood in front of me, watching my tits bounce each time Noah pushed his fingers up into me. He pinched my nipples between his fingers and twisted them roughly, and then he gripped my breasts in his hands, pushing them together. He pressed the head of his cock between them and watched it disappear.

I tightened around Noah. He inserted another finger and continued. I

whined, brows furrowing together.

Jax moved his cock between my breasts. He flicked my nipples with his fingers, and I moaned.

“Look at our mate,” Jax said to Noah. “How hard is her pussy clenching on your fingers?”

Noah plunged them faster into me, making my pussy tighten even more. All I wanted was for them to fill me. Any part of me. Now.

“Please,” I said. “Please.” I stroked Noah’s hard cock through his pants and then slipped my hand inside. “I want it.”

“How do you want her?” Jax asked, pulling his cock from between my breasts.

Without saying a word, Noah pulled his fingers out of me, wrapped an arm around my waist, and tossed me onto the bed like I weighed nothing. I landed on all fours, ass in the air. I gazed back at Noah, who was staring at my ass.

He gripped my cheeks in his hands and crawled up on the bed with me. “Just like this.”

His cock pressed against my core, making it glisten with my wetness. He pressed his head against me, teasing me. I pushed myself back on him, wanting nothing more than for him to fill me right now.

He steadied my hips and slipped one hand around my waist to touch my clit again. “Spread your legs.”

I wanted to pull my legs together, to ease the ache somehow.

“Spread your fucking legs.”

Without giving me time, he placed his hands under my thighs and lifted me off of the bed, and he pushed my legs apart for me.

“Was that hard?” Jax asked.

“Thinking too much about Ryan to obey a simple command?” Noah said, gripping my waist harshly in his fingers.

*Here we go again.*



He pressed himself all the way inside of my pussy and stilled.

“Is that how you feel about it?” Noah said. “Your pussy clenches at the fucking thought?”

“Noah,” I breathed.

“Does it turn you on to know we were just standing there, jealous that another man was getting all of your fucking attention?” He began to thrust slowly. “Huh?”

“If it does?” I asked. He pulled himself out of me, and I whined, “Put it back in, please, Noah.”

He took his cock in one hand and smacked it against my ass. Jax crawled up on the bed in front of me. Noah grabbed both of my wrists from behind and pulled me back. He pushed himself against my ass and suddenly drove himself inside of me.

I furrowed my brows together, the pain unbearable for a moment. “Noah,” I said again.

He chuckled so menacingly at me and pounded into me from behind, making my breasts bounce.

His cock filled me fully, and I gripped onto him tightly.

Jax snatched my chin in his hand. “Tell us that it does,” Jax said, “and we’ll make sure you never”—he drew a finger across my bottom lip—“think about another man again.”

He pulled my chin closer to his cock and forced me to take him inside of my mouth. I balled my hands into fists, trying to take it. He laced his hands in my hair and pounded into my throat.

From above, he wrapped his hand around my neck, feeling his cock deep inside of me and pulling me toward him with each thrust. “Tell us, Little One,” he taunted me. “Tell us how much you think about him.”

I gazed up at him through teary eyes and gagged on his cock. “Ah, uhnh ahauh huh.”

He rammed harder into me. Each time that Noah pushed himself into me

sent Jax deeper down my throat. “What was that, Little One?” He gently brushed his fingers against my upper lip, smirking. “Say it again.”

I couldn’t form any words, just babbled on his cock. Over and over until spit was dripping down my chin.

When Jax pulled out of me, I smirked up at him. “I think about him so fucking much.”

He pushed himself down my throat again, angrier, and began to face-fuck me this time. Hard. “I don’t know how many times we have to tell you this, Naomi,” he said. “You’re ours.”

When Jax pulled out of me the second time, Noah flipped us over, so I was lying on his chest. He continued to push into me while Jax pressed himself into my pussy.

“All of you.”

And when he was all the way inside of me, I felt full, so full.

I clenched myself on both of them, sinking into Noah’s chest. “All of me,” I said breathlessly. “Take fucking all of me.”

They continued to pound in and out of me. The pressure was almost too much. I furrowed my brows in ecstasy.

Jax placed his hands on the back of my thighs and held them open wide. “Come for us,” he demanded.

Noah’s hand trailed up my body, and he grabbed a handful of my breast, pinching my nipple. I threw my head back and came. A toe-curling, leg-trembling orgasm.

## CHAPTER 33



NAOMI

I lay back in bed, breathing deeply, and pulled the blankets over myself. I hadn't had an orgasm that good in a long time. I could barely think straight. My mind was in a fog.

Noah and Jax were lying next to me. Neither of them had said anything since they had pulled out.

After coming down from my orgasm, I stared up at the ceiling, a thousand thoughts suddenly rushing through my mind.

Ryan. Oliver. Ava.

Noah's hand brushed against mine. "Do you really think about Ryan?" he asked suddenly.

My brows furrowed. His eyes were gold, so beautifully gold.

I brushed my fingers across the strands of hair that had fallen on his forehead. "No," I said.

He went quiet after that, and so did I. I didn't want to give them too much of me—emotionally—yet. I wasn't sure how this was going to work out with Ava still in their life, one way or another.

My mind was replaying one thought over and over again, not letting me think about anything else. It was something that had been bothering me since they'd marked me. And something that had been bothering me since I'd found out who Ava really was.

"Do you love me?" I asked after a long time. It was a stupid question to ask, but I did anyway.

They paused for a few moments.

Jax wrapped an arm around my waist. He brushed his thumb against my hip, making me shiver. "Of course, we do."

"How do you know that you love someone you just met?" I asked,

squinting my eyes at the afternoon sun through the window.

Jax dug his fingers into my side. He smelled like pine. “Because you’re our mate.”

Noah didn’t say anything, and I noticed the way that his chest moved just a bit faster as Jax answered the question.

I frowned and sat up between them, pulling the blankets over my chest. “If you love me and I’m your mate, why do you two keep things from me?” I asked.

Again, that same guilty look crossed their faces.

“Why do you think we’re hiding things from you?” Noah asked.

I pressed my lips together. “Because I’m not stupid. Do you think I’m stupid? You’re acting like you’re hiding something from me. You’re acting like I can’t put two and two together. Do you think I’ll just overlook things because I’m your mate? Be absolutely blinded by things so blatantly obvious? I’m not like those other girls.”

When they didn’t say anything, I shook my head and rolled my eyes. “Always know your enemy. I told you that. So, I know that you’re lying to me.” This was ridiculous.

Noah clenched his jaw. “So, we’re your enemy now?” he asked. “Is that what we’ve been the entire time?”

I shook my head. “You’re not listening.” I gritted my teeth, bunching the blankets up in my hand. “You have such a way of turning things around on people, Noah. You’re trying to make this my fault when you’re the one hiding something from me.”

Noah growled, eyes turning gold.

Jax noticed and placed a hand on his shoulder. “Noah,” he said as a warning. “Stop.”

Noah growled again. “I’m not turning anything around on you. Since you’ve been here, you’ve been acting so fucking sneaky. Sneaking out at night, talking late on the phone with Moon Goddess knows who, seeing

*Isabella* last night.” He narrowed his eyes at me. “Was that even who you were seeing?”

My nostrils flared. “I told you that it was for work.”

“Who was it then?” he snapped. “If you weren’t meeting *Isabella*?”

“Stop turning this around on me,” I said angrily.

“Why can’t you just tell us?” he asked. “Was it Ryan? Oliver?”

I didn’t say anything, just paused, took a deep breath, and tried to form the next words without hurting either of them.

“Last night, there was a wolf in the woods. She was staring at me. She didn’t leave. She stayed here for hours. I think she was waiting for either one of you. Who is she?” I asked. “She was beautiful with dark fur, piercing eyes. Ring a bell?”

## CHAPTER 34



NAOMI

Neither of them said anything for the longest time, and I frowned. Why were they keeping this from me? Why was it this hard to just tell me her name? Say it once, and that was it. Did thinking about her hurt this much for them?

For some reason, I felt damn tears welling up in my eyes. And I hated it because I never cried, yet right now, that was the only thing that I felt like doing. I just wanted to bawl my eyes out.

*Stupid mate bonds.*

“Her name is Ava,” I said. “Her name is Ava.” My voice was quiet, letting it sink in. “And nobody here will tell me anything about her. It is forbidden to speak her name. It is forbidden to say anything about her. And ...” I turned away, my heart aching. “You know what?” A tear fell down my cheek, and I pushed it away angrily. “You two are protecting her.”

Jax scooted closer to me, about to pull me into his embrace. “Don’t cry, Naomi, please.”

He reached for me, but I pulled away from him.

“The worst part about this whole thing is that your mate is supposed to be the one you care about. And you do, don’t you? You care about Ava. You care about her more than you care about me.”

My heart ached as I thought about Addie and Derek. They were always so protective of each other, always so loving. Yet I hadn’t felt that here. I hadn’t felt loved or protected. I’d felt like someone who they wanted to fuck every now and then—which was fine—just ...

I shook my head. *Damn stupid fucking bond.*

I hated being a wolf. Hated it.

Jax furrowed his brows together. “We do care about you,” he said.



I gazed over at Noah, who didn't move. His face was emotionless. Absolutely emotionless.

My lips trembled. "You protect her."

"We're protecting you," Jax said.

I furiously shook my head at him. He looked so sorrowful, so fucking sorrowful. His hair lay gently against his forehead. I frowned. He reached for my hand again, but I pulled it away.

"Don't give me that stupid bullshit excuse."

"It's not an excuse," he said.

Noah didn't say anything. Just stared at me with those intense eyes.

Another tear slipped down my cheek. "Why are you lying?"

Jax shook his head and grabbed my hands, pulling them to his chest. "I'll tell you about her, if you want me to. Just ... you have to believe me. I'll tell you anything you want to know."

"Jax, stop," Noah said, jaw tense.

"Why, Noah?" I asked. I clutched the blankets as hard as I could. "Do you still love her?"

"No."

"Do you love me?"

He didn't respond.

My eyes widened. I didn't know why I was suddenly so emotional. I ripped my hands out of Jax's, took the covers, and walked to the door. "You don't have to love me," I said. "Because I don't love people who keep things from me. I don't care who they are."

And with that, I marched right out of the room. I walked into my room and slammed the door closed, tears streaming down my face. What the hell was happening to me? I never shed a tear for Oliver. Never.

And now, I was in tears over two guys I had barely known for a week.

Someone knocked on my door. "Naomi, please, open up. Please."

But I didn't. Instead, I sat in front of the door, rested my head against it,

and frowned. I waited for the knocks to stop, but they never did. So, I closed my eyes, wanting nothing more than to be with my own thoughts for a moment.

All of Oliver's advice just washed right over my head.

"Flirt with them," he would have said.

All my horny ass had done was fuck them and cry.

This was absolutely terrible. I couldn't even use anything I had learned with the Lycans to get information out of them. My emotions had to get in the way.

I curled into a ball on the floor, finding it comfortable, rested my eyes, and fell asleep.

\* \* \*

WHEN I WOKE UP, it was dark outside. My eyes were puffy. I felt so bloated. And all I wanted was to go on a run. It'd always cleared my mind when I went on runs with Oliver. So, I put on my clothes and tied up my shoes and exited my room.

I didn't want to give them any sort of information that I was awake. So, I snuck past their bedrooms and past their office, but I stopped when I realized that they were in it. Their voices were hushed, yet I could still hear them fighting inside.

"This is the exact same situation we were in last time," Noah said. "We marked her too soon. She's going to reject us."

"Calm down, Noah. She won't," Jax said, "if you stop acting like such an asshole and actually show her that you care."

He growled, "That's easy for you to fucking say."

Jax shushed him. "If you keep yelling like that, you'll wake her."

"You're not the one who always gets hurt," Noah continued, still being loud.

There was a long pause, and I thought they had heard me.

And then Noah said the one thing I wished he hadn't. "I should've never marked her."

## CHAPTER 35



NAOMI

Maybe he was talking about Ava, not me. It couldn't be me. Ava was the one who had broken his heart for whatever reason. Ava was the one who had hurt him. Ava was the villain. He should be regretting her, but in my heart, I knew that he was talking about me.

He'd marked me out of anger, and I knew I shouldn't be affected by the way he claimed me, but I was because of these damn markings on my neck had changed me into something more than a human. They made me a needy mess for them, for my mates. I wanted them to be mine and mine only.

"Shut the fuck up, dude," Jax said as he shuffled around the room. "You don't mean that."

I stood against the wall with eyes wide while I tried to keep my breathing even. Tears threatened to fall, but I held them back. All I could feel was my heart pounding against my chest.

Noah didn't say anything for a few moments. "Naomi can't be—"

"Noah, what are you even say—"

Noah growled lowly, "Let me finish." I listened to his footsteps walk around the room. "Naomi can't be trusted."

"Oh, don't give me that bullshit," Jax said. "You did your research on her before she came here. You know that she can be trusted. She's a Lycan, for fuck's sake."

"A Lycan," Noah said. The words sounded so distasteful on his tongue. "Exactly. You know what she does for a job? Who knows how many guys she has slept with or will sleep with in the future?"

I didn't know whether to be angry or to be sad. In that moment, I was both, because he was judging me on something he knew so little about.

But this stigma and this way of thinking was common within the Lycan

community. People, specifically mates of Lycans, thought that we were creatures who enjoyed having many lovers rather than their own mate.

That was never true. Ever.

And I never could relate to the Lycans who had been rejected by their mates because of this stigma, because their mates couldn't trust a damn Lycan and were insecure about their love life.

This was my first time being able to relate to Isabella's struggle with her mate, Roman. And so many other Lycans who went through the same thing.

"Makayla told me that Naomi fucked Roger, her ex-mate," Noah continued. "Who else do you think she has? Every fucking alpha in the area? She's so horny all the time. I wouldn't put it past her."

*Always be the tough girl, Naomi.*

I dug my fingers into the wall, watching the sides crumble beneath them. Bit my tongue until it was bleeding, holding back all the tears that came with being a Lycan.

That was always who I was. That was always who I had to be.

But this was pain that I had never felt before. This was the pain of heartbreak, of betrayal, of thinking that I had two amazing guys right in front of me and learning that one of them wished that he'd never claimed me.

What was worse was that I knew that he wasn't lying. He really didn't want to be with me.

Jax growled loudly, "Listen to yourself for a fucking second, Noah. Do you hear what you're saying about our mate?"

Noah howled, and then I heard something crash. "You think you can handle learning that Naomi gets so horny that she fucks anyone and anything, Jax? Because I sure couldn't handle it when Ava did it."

"Stop letting Ava dictate your life," Jax yelled back at him. "She's gone. Gone! We haven't seen her in months, almost a year now—" He suddenly stopped speaking. "What's that look on your face for?"

My heart raced, and all I wanted to do was peer around the doorway to

see his face. To see the shame. To see the guilt.

“Moon Goddess, are you fucking serious?” Jax asked quietly. “You’ve got to be fucking kidding me.”

“Jax, it’s nothing. Don’t blow it out of proportion.”

“Have you seen her since we rejected her?” I could just imagine him running his hands through his hair, eyes wild.

“No.”

“What’s wrong with you?” Jax asked. He took a deep breath, and my heart ached. “We have a mate, and you’re still seeing our ex, whom you hate?”

Some more things were knocked over, and I squeezed my eyes shut.

*Don’t cry, Naomi. Don’t fucking cry. Not right here. Not right now.*

“Fuck!” Jax yelled. He was quiet for a few moments, and then he sighed. “Do you still love her, Noah?”

“No.”

“Do you think about her?”

“Of course I do. She was our mate.”

“Do you want her back?”

I waited for what seemed like forever, but Noah didn’t respond. And that was all I needed to feel rejected.

I pressed my lips together because I didn’t want them to hear my cries, but I couldn’t get myself to leave because I wanted to hear that this was all fake.

I wanted Noah to peek around the doorway, stick his head out, smile, and say, *Nai, stop crying, I’m not talking about when I marked you. I’m talking about Ava.*

And, Moon Goddess, I wished that he were talking about Ava.

But before he could come out and tell me that this was all a huge joke, before any of the tears actually fell, before I made a fool out of myself for putting pleasure before business, I gathered my thoughts and walked down

the hallway.

My hands were balled into fists. My heart was pounding against my chest. My vision was so blurry that I could barely see where I was going, but I went. I exited the house. I stripped off my shirt. I tied my shoes. And I ran in the snow like any Lycan would to clear her head.

*Business before pleasure. Business before pleasure. Business before pleasure. Always.*

But no matter how hard I thought about it, I couldn't shake this feeling.



## CHAPTER 36



NAOMI

The path I took was the same one all of the wolves took around here. Through the woods, around the whole pack, passing The Beast Tavern. Not once. Not twice. About twenty-two times.

Snow was falling into my face, beating down harder and harder each moment. I could barely see two feet in front of me, but that was probably because of the tears. Snow soaked through my shoes and rolled down my bare arms and abdomen.

Making me feel comfortably cold because all I'd felt when I left the pack house was pure heat from anger.

When I pushed myself to the absolute limit and didn't have any more tears to cry, I grabbed my shirt off of the front porch and walked to The Beast Tavern. I didn't know what time it was, but I didn't want to go back inside and face them. I didn't know what I was going to say—or if I was going to say anything at all.

A part of me wanted to just leave this pack and never look back, but I was here to make it stronger. I had a job to do. Oliver and Isabella would be here soon to judge my progress.

The moon was blazing above me as I opened the door to the town pub. There were a few stragglers here this late at night. Some warriors too.

Ryan sat at the bar. He was leaning over it, talking to some girl that I hadn't seen before. She was smiling at him, drawing her finger down the center of his chest, probably whispering something sinister to him. She puckered her lips, fingers playing with the front of his pants.

When he saw me, he whispered something back to her, placed a kiss on her cheek, and sent her on her way. She gazed over at me, an annoyed look on her face, and stormed out of the bar.

“What kind of information are you trying to get out of her, you *Lycan*?” I asked teasingly. Trying to make myself laugh even if it was just a bit.

“Any information that you’re looking for?” He smirked, tipping back his drink.

I rolled my eyes and sat on the stool next to him. “Actually, I’m just looking for a drink.”

Ryan leaned across the bar and asked the bartender for two drinks. He eyed us warily, probably thinking about the last time Ryan and I had sat in the bar together and Jax walked in.

I could only imagine how long it had taken him to clean the mess up. All of the spilled drinks. All of the glass. All of the blood.

After a few moments, he poured two drinks, pushed them toward us, and pointed a finger at us. “I’m not going to have to call Jax or Noah, am I?” He examined my neck.

Ryan arched a brow, a smirk stretching across his face. “I mean, if you want to. I don’t know how frisky we’ll be after these suckers.” He took the drink and started sipping from it.

I rolled my eyes and shook my head at the bartender. “We will be fine. Nothing can or will happen between us. Not that that’s any of your business.” I grabbed my drink and raised a brow at the bartender.

He stared at me for a few moments, and I stared back. Not backing down. Noah, Jax, and I were the only ones who needed to be in our own business. I didn’t need anyone prying into my life, especially those people who knew nothing about me.

Like Noah and Jax.

I gripped the drink in my hand until my knuckles turned white.

And after what seemed like forever, the bartender gave me a, “Hmmpf,” and walked toward other paying customers.

Ryan leaned over the bar, one hand holding his drink, the other rubbing his knee. “Well, you got your drink, and you got me, babe,” he said.

“Wonderful,” I said sarcastically, enjoying the easy conversation.

I smiled slightly at Ryan. He kind of reminded me of Oliver—tousled hair, flirty attitude. Funny. Annoying. Able to easily get himself into sticky situations.

It felt nice to have that kind of personality back in my life.

With all of this damn drama, I felt like I was in the middle of a three-way tug-of-war. Noah on one side, determined to lead me on but regretting me wholeheartedly. Jax on one side, wanting me—maybe—but also loving his brother. And me on the third side, trying to figure out what the hell I wanted and what the hell I was doing.

I took a sip of my drink and sighed.

“What’s bothering you?” he asked, head tilting slightly.

I frowned at him, not knowing if I should tell him the truth or not. Besides Makayla, he seemed like my only *friend* here, and that was a stretch.

“Is it what I told you about yesterday?” he asked, brows drawn together. He actually looked as if he cared. So different than the flirty Ryan that I had come to know and different from the Ryan that Jax had warned me of.

I leaned closer to him, keeping my eyes glued to the bar in front of me. “It’s not that she was their mate,” I said honestly. I hadn’t expected them to be single for the majority of their lives. I had known of their notorious reputation, their striking good looks, how they could get any girl if they wanted. I had been warned by Isabella before I left that they were just my type. “It’s that they didn’t tell me about her after I asked.”

My frown deepened. Hell, it was a lot more than just that, but I didn’t know how much I wanted to tell Ryan at the moment, especially with all of these prying ears.

I bet if I said anything, they would go run to Jax and Noah and tell them that Ryan and I were getting close again. And for some stupid-ass reason, they would act as if they really cared about me.

“Jax is pretty open about things, but Noah has refused to speak much

since she left. He barely says anything to anyone about her,” he said. “Don’t feel left out.”

“Did she cheat on them?” I asked lowly.

Ryan frowned down at his drink. “That’s what everyone assumes, but nobody knows for sure. I think it was a lot more than that, to be honest with you.”

## CHAPTER 37



NAOMI

After the bar, I decided to take the long way home. I was sloshing around in my wet shoes. Snow soaked through them with every single step that I took. It had stopped snowing sometime during the night as I was getting drunk and trying to forget everything that had happened.

The moon was still shining brightly up in the sky. I brushed my fingers against my marks. I would shift soon. So soon. And I hoped that they would want me then. I hoped that this shift wasn't going to leave me lonely. I hoped that this shift wouldn't leave me broken and rejected and alone. Because I never wanted this; I never wanted to be a wolf.

My phone buzzed in my pocket, and a part of me hoped that it was Oliver. Not that I would answer it now. I was too ashamed of going directly against his advice. Business before pleasure.

When I reached for it, Addie's name and picture glowed on the screen. I smiled softly and pressed the phone to my ear.

"Hello?" I said, walking toward the pack house. The lights were on upstairs in the bedrooms and in the office. "What are you doing up so late?"

"Is everything okay?" she asked, sounding worried.

I paused for a moment and sighed. "Yes. Why?"

"Noah called Isabella, who called Derek, who told me that you all got into a fight and they couldn't find you." She paused for a moment, and I could picture her leaning on one foot, hand on hip, in the fuzzy pink robe she always wore at night. "So, I'll ask you again. Is everything okay?"

I wanted to tell her everything that I'd learned within the past twenty-four hours. But I couldn't because word got around fast in that pack. Everyone, even the Lycans, would know that I had put myself and my emotional connection with the twins before them. And that wasn't something that I

could risk. Lycans lived by trusting one another with their lives, and although this wasn't as serious a situation, it was still a mission that I'd compromised.

Business first.

Not sex.

Not mates.

But I had done both, and now, I was hurt beyond belief.

"Everything is fine, Addie," I said quietly, sitting on one of the porch chairs. "Everything is fine. It couldn't be better. I love you, and you should really go to bed. It's late."

She waited for a long time, and I thought that the line had gone dead.

"Hello?" she said. "Did you say something? All I heard was, *Blah, blah, blah, I'm really not fine, but I'm going to tell you that anyway because I have to pretend to be a big, bad Lycan who will always put the pack before myself even though I have two bite marks on my neck, and I'm going to shift soon, and I just got into a fight with my twin mates, who are exceptionally sexy.*"

I heard Derek in the background say, "Hey! What about me?"

She shushed him. "I'm trying to make her feel better. You know you're sexier."

Derek said something back to her, and I wrinkled my nose but giggled. That was the relationship I wanted. Not this.

"Addie," I said, wiping a happy tear from my cheek, "I'm fine."

"Well, I'm not letting you off this phone until you're not fine."

So, we waited. For minutes, hours—I didn't know how long. All I knew was that I couldn't get myself to hang up the phone because she was right. I wasn't fine. And I loved her so much for staying with me.

When the living room light turned on and when I heard Noah and Jax fighting again inside the house, I let my head hang between my legs. "Addie," I whispered, "I'm not fine." I rested my forehead against the back of my hand for a moment. "I want to feel bad for them after what they've been through. I want to try to understand, but I'm just so angry." I wiped a tear



from my cheek. “And so hurt,” I said quietly.

The door to the pack house opened, and Jax and Noah walked out.

“Where is she?” Noah said.

They were both bundled up in winter jackets, hair tousled.

“Maybe you woke her up with all that fucking yelling you were doing,” Jax said.

They walked down the stairs, not noticing me at all. Not even my scent.

“Do you need me to come over there and whip them into shape?” Addie said over the phone.

I smiled, still gazing at them. “No,” I said.

They turned toward me. A look of relief passing over their faces.

“You should come here in a few days.”

“Roman has some things for me to do at the hospital, but I will definitely try.”

“If you do ...” I said. The twins walked over to me, hands stuffed in their pockets. They were both quiet. “I can tell Oliver to bring you over. He wouldn’t mind.” I sighed, watching Noah’s eyes darken at Oliver’s name. “All right, I’ve got to go.”

I clicked off the phone, and promptly, Noah shook his head and grabbed my hand.

“Why are you outside in the cold?” He pulled me toward the door. His skin felt good against mine, and I didn’t want to pull away. “You barely have any clothes on. You’re going to get sick.”

“I’m waiting for Ava,” I lied.

“You smell like alcohol,” he said.

“Do you want to wait for Ava with me?” I asked, head in such a fog. My fingers were red and tingly. I shouldn’t have been outside for so long. I pulled away from him.

Noah growled lowly.

Jax opened the door and nodded to the room. “Please go in, Naomi. We

don't want you to get sick."

I glared between the two men, heart racing in my chest. But I grabbed my phone and walked into the house, immediately becoming warm. The fireplace was on, wood cracking in the corner of the room. I kicked off my wet shoes and socks and walked over, needing to get the feeling back in my toes.

Noah opened the small closet in the corner of the room, and Jax approached the fireplace. "Where'd you go?" Jax asked.

"To the bar."

"Why didn't you tell us?"

"Because I don't have to."

Noah walked back over with one of his oversize sweatshirts. "Put it on." His eyes looked tired. Nothing like that intense stare he had given me earlier.

I studied the sweatshirt and shook my head. I curled my knees to my chest and wrapped my arms around myself. "I'm good."

"Take the sweatshirt, Naomi," he said, stronger this time. "You're shaking."

"No."

He knelt down next to me, placing the sweatshirt in my lap, but not letting it go. "Please," he said softly.

His eyes were filled with worry, sadness. At least, that was what it looked like. I didn't know what to believe from him anymore. What was true, and what was fake? I knotted my brows together. But I didn't say anything.

"Just give it to her," Jax said.

Noah frowned, and I swore that I almost saw his lips quiver. There was so much hurt in his eyes. He released the sweatshirt in my lap and stood up.

Jax walked over, so he and Noah were standing next to each other. Noah glanced over at Jax, clenching his jaw.

"We're taking you out on a date tomorrow," Jax said. "Tomorrow afternoon. There will be no practice in the morning. Just you, me, and Noah."

I nodded at the fire, waiting for them to leave. And when they did, I

sighed to myself, not knowing what to think, and put on Noah's sweatshirt.

## CHAPTER 38



NAOMI

There was a knock on my bedroom door. I ran my fingers through my curls one last time and frowned at myself in the mirror. Deep, dark circles lay under my puffy eyes. I was a pure mess and wasn't ready to go out on a date with the twins.

I caked on some more concealer, hoping that I could make myself look semi-decent and presentable enough that they would want to call me their own.

When I walked out of the room, Jax stood in the hallway. He was dressed in a navy sweater that hugged his shoulders and biceps. If I wasn't angry with them, I would've just ripped his clothes off right then and there.

He raised his brows and smirked. "Damn, look at you."

By the way that he was staring at me, I could tell that he wanted the same thing as I did, but instead, he took my hand and walked with me down the hall.

"Noah's waiting in the living room."

Wearing Noah's sweatshirt last night had been a mistake. All I could think about was him the whole night. I'd thought his scent was ingrained in my skin. And as we walked toward the living room, I could still smell him.

These stupid marks were controlling every aspect of me, and I hated it.

Noah was on the phone in the living room, tie hanging loosely around his neck. When he saw me, his eyes widened. They moved up my body so dreadfully slow until they finally landed on my eyes. He didn't say anything, but his lips were parted slightly.

I frowned and wrapped my arms around myself. Feeling self-conscious. Feeling like he was looking right at me, but all he could think about was Ava.

Pain flashed across his face for a split moment. Then, I turned away. He

was thinking about her. He was always thinking about her.

He sighed deeply and turned toward the door, pacing around the room. “Yeah, I’ll get it to you as soon as possible.” He nodded again and shut off his phone. When he placed it in his pocket, he stared at Jax. Not at me. “I have to go do some work that Isabella needs done.”

Jax furrowed his brows. “You can do that later. We have a date.”

Noah tilted his head. “I have to do it now. I can’t go.”

“Dude, we’re taking our ma—”

I placed a hand on Jax’s chest. “Let him go, Jax.” I stared right at Noah, seeing if he would actually go, seeing what he would do, seeing if any single emotion crossed his face because of me.

Noah grimaced at me, paused, and then walked right out of the room toward the hallway. We watched him walk down the hall to the stairs without turning back once. No emotion. No good-bye. No apology.

Jax grabbed my hand quite tightly and pulled me toward the car without saying a word.

He took me to a chic restaurant in the city, named Toni’s Taphouse. It didn’t seem like any werewolves frequented the place. All I could smell were humans.

I sat next to Jax at the corner of the bar, glancing at the menu every now and then as we waited to be seated.

We hadn’t talked in the car ride over. Jax had just gripped the steering wheel, knuckles white, angry eyes fixed on the road.

The bartender placed two drinks in front of us.

After a few good moments of silence, Jax grabbed my hand. “Noah is an idiot sometimes. Don’t hate him for it.”

“I didn’t expect him to come anyway.”

He shook his head. “He’s a good guy. He really is—or at least, he tries to be.”

I pressed my lips together.

“He’s been hurt,” Jax said, eyes filled with pain. “He’s scared.”

I dug my nails into my palms. He was scared? Yes, he might’ve been. But that didn’t make up for the fact that he’d said he didn’t want to mark me. It didn’t make up for the fact that this was not like anything that I’d expected from him. It didn’t make up for the fact that he still thought about her, that he’d seen her, that they’d both lied to me about it.

Jax grabbed my hands. There was a candle between us, flickering every so often. “What do you want to know about her?” he asked. “Ava?”

I chewed on the inside of my lip. All I wanted to do was ask him about what Noah had said, about that conversation that I wasn’t supposed to hear. I wanted him to tell me everything. But I didn’t. Instead, I frowned. My heart was racing.

“What is it?” he asked.

“Do you regret marking her?”

Jax looked surprised at the question, his brows furrowing together, lips pulled into a tight line. “No.” He shook his head. “I don’t regret marking her, and neither does Noah.”

My heart sank in my chest. He didn’t regret it. Neither of them regretted it. Did he still think about her too? Every night? Did they think about her when I was with them?

“Being with her taught me a lot about what I value and about who I am as a person and as a leader.” His eyes were soft. He wasn’t lying.

“What did you learn?” I asked quietly and sipped my drink.

He laughed without any emotion. “Not to make senseless decisions because I think I’m in love. Not to ignore the red flags.” He squeezed my hands tighter.

“What has Noah learned?”

He paused. “To not trust.”

I let that sit for a few moments and pulled my hands away from his, feeling scared and nervous. “Do you regret marking me?”

## CHAPTER 39





NAOMI

Jax grabbed my hand, pulled me off of my stool, and made me sit on his lap. “Regret?” he whispered in my ear. He wrapped an arm around my waist, pulling me even closer. His fingers slid against the waistband of my skirt, and then he stretched his hand across the front of me. “Do I regret being able to play with you anytime that I want to?”

I grabbed his wrist lightly. “Jax, I’m being serious.”

He smirked against my neck, moving his fingers on my skirt and rubbing my pussy. “I am too.” He slipped his hand into my skirt and pushed two fingers against my clit. “Not wearing panties again for me?” He chuckled in my ear.

“We’re in the middle of a bar,” I whispered to him.

“We are,” he said, fingers moving against me. “And you’re wet.”

The bartender nodded to us, noticing our empty glasses. “Want anything?”

I sucked in a breath and gripped Jax’s hand tighter.

“We’ll take two more,” Jax said, leaning us forward and slipping his hand further into my skirt, drawing his finger against my wetness. He pressed a lingering kiss against his mark. “Won’t we?”

I smiled softly. A part of me relaxed, and another part was freaking out that someone would actually see, but we were in the corner of the bar. He pushed his finger inside of me, thrusting it in and out. I pressed my knees together.

“Don’t do that, Little One. Let me touch you.”

I gulped and let my legs relax—only slightly. His cock hardened against my ass.

He smirked. “I wish I could take you right here.” He pushed some stray

hair behind my ear. “Bend you over this bar, drive myself inside your tight pussy.”

I tightened around him again, and he chuckled.

“You’d like that, wouldn’t you?”

I pressed my lips together, taking an unsteady breath. My heart was racing against my chest, and I could only imagine who was staring at us. He slipped another finger inside of me, moving it faster.

“What was that?” he asked.

“Yes,” I said quietly.

“Yes, what?”

I took a deep breath. “Yes, I want you inside of me.”

The bartender came over and placed two drinks in front of us. “There you go,” he said. “Can I get you anything else? Ordering food off the menu?”

“No,” I said quickly and avoided all eye contact with him. I dug my fingers into the wooden bar top.

“Actually ...” Jax leaned forward again, pressing my breasts into the counter, making my nipples brush against the edge. “Can you explain the specials tonight?” His fingers continued to move in and out of me, moving quickly and slowing down. Over and over.

“Yeah, of course.” He grabbed a menu and placed it in front of us.

I squeezed my pussy on Jax’s fingers, grinding myself into him. My pussy was wet and aching to be filled by him. After last night, I needed it. Needed to feel wanted by a man. And Jax wanted to make me feel wanted in front of a bar full of people.

Jax continued to tease my clit with his thumb, moving it around in small, fast circles. I took a deep breath and bit my lip, holding back a moan. I tightened my grip on his wrist when I knew that I was seconds from coming.

He nodded his head to the bartender, pretending like he was listening. He grabbed my wrist and pulled my hand away. His fingers moved faster and faster.

My brows furrowed together. I ground myself against him harder. So desperate for him.

He leaned in close. "Come for me," he whispered.

I tightened around him, legs shaking, and dug my fingers into my knees.

Wave after wave of pleasure pulsed through me. I closed my eyes softly, leaning against Jax's chest, my chest heaving up and down. When he pulled his fingers out of me, I relaxed against the bar.

*My God.*

He pushed me off of him, readjusting himself in his pants, then immediately, he pulled me back on. Against my bare ass, I could feel his zipper was undone. He toyed with the end of my skirt, reshaping it out around his crotch so nobody could see anything. I gripped his knee, fingers digging into his pants.

"Jax," I whispered.

The bartender pushed the menu toward us. "Let me know if I can get you anything else."

Jax smiled. "Thanks." When he walked away, Jax smirked against my neck. "I'm going to put myself inside of you," he said.

"Jax, we're in public," I said, gazing around at everyone else who seemed to be lost in their own little worlds.

He pulled his cock out of his pants and positioned himself at my entrance. My heart was racing in my chest, but I wanted him.

So, I sat down on his cock, letting him fill my pussy and holding back my moans.

"You sure don't mind that, do you?" he asked. He groaned softly in my ear, curling his fingers around my hips. "Look at how bad you want my cock, Little One. Willing to risk everybody staring at us, just so you can be filled."

I gripped harder on him with my pussy, not moving.

"Ride me," he said. "I want to see how desperate you really are."

"Jax," I said breathlessly. "Please."

“Do it for me, Little One.”

I moved my hips, back and forth, trying not to draw attention to us. He felt so big inside of me. Filling every inch.

“Faster.”

“Jax ...”

He grabbed my hips, lifting me up slightly and pulling me back down. “I said, faster.”

My pussy clenched around him. “Oh God, Jax.” I couldn’t believe that I was actually here, actually sitting in a damn restaurant with Jax’s cock inside of me, begging him to thrust into me.

Jax chuckled lowly, pushing his hips slowly up into mine. He pinched my nipples harshly under the bar top. “Keep clenching your pussy, Little One. You feel so good,” he said.

I tightened even harder, drawing my lip between my teeth.

“Moon Goddess,” he whispered against my mark.

Suddenly, from across the bar, someone started yelling something. I gazed over, heart pounding against my chest, thinking that they’d just seen us. A bunch of waiters came out of the back, holding a cake and singing “Happy Birthday” to an older woman in the back.

Jax grabbed on to my hips, leaned back, and began driving his up, hard and fast, into me while everyone was occupied. I gripped the barstool, pussy clenching on him. Yet he didn’t stop. He continued to thrust up, hitting my soft spot each time.

A wave of pleasure pulsed through my body, and Jax pulled out of me, coming on my thighs.

## CHAPTER 40



NAOMI

I grabbed his hand and rested my head on his shoulder as we walked out of the restaurant. “I can’t believe that we just did that,” I said breathlessly. To hell with dinner. I wanted him to fuck me like that again.

He wrapped his arm around me, pulling me closer to him. “Best date I’ve ever been on.”

“And nobody suspected a thing!” I said.

“You know what else nobody suspected?” he asked from behind me.

I turned around to face him, a big, goofy grin on my face. Happy. Content. Everything. And when I did, he took a handful of snow and threw it full force at me, smacking me right in the side of the head.

My lips parted in disbelief. “Jax!” I grabbed a handful of snow, throwing it back at him. Missing completely.

“Have to be faster than that, Little One.” He threw another one at me, and I ducked out of the way.

“Have to be faster than that, *annoying ass*.” I threw another handful right at his ass.

For the next twenty minutes, we threw snowballs at each other. Running around, hiding behind cars, hitting windshields, and accidentally making the car alarms go off. People that came out of the restaurants were smiling at us. Little kids were tugging on their parents’ sleeves, asking if they could play. An older couple even joined in on the fun. And when one too many car alarms went off—to the point where it started to sound like “Jingle Bells”—Jax wrapped his arms around me, lifted me off the ground, and walked with me to his car.

When he put me down, I ran my hand through his thick brown hair and shook off all of the snow. He smiled at me, the moon bouncing off of his skin

perfectly. I pressed a quick kiss on his lips and got into the car, needing the warmth.

As we started down the street, the hot air from the vents blew straight out at me. Jax smiled to himself every now and then throughout our drive home. He had small dimples on his cheeks. It made my heart warm.

When we got home, Jax stopped the car, and we just sat there. I didn't want to go inside yet. I wasn't sure I wanted to face Noah after spending such a great afternoon with Jax.

It was dark outside, and it had started snowing again. The car windows were fogging up. Jax looked over at me and held out his hand for me to take. I placed mine in his. He squeezed it.

"Naomi," he said softly. "I don't regret marking you because we can act so stupid together and I don't feel bad about myself after." His voice was quiet but full with sincerity.

I brushed my fingers across his cheek, brows furrowing together. It was the first words of endearment that I felt were true and from a place deep down within him. I pulled him in for a kiss on his lips. Slow and passionate.

"Come on," Jax said against my lips. He pulled me out of the car and led me to the pack house. "Noah's going to be pissed after he hears what we did." He wiggled his brows at me.

Noah was sitting in the living room, dressed in something a lot more comfortable, compared to that dress shirt and tie he had been wearing earlier, and was typing on his phone. He looked snug and even... cute.

But as soon as I saw him, my smile fell. Jax took my coat and hung it up.

"Missed out on the time of your life, dude," Jax said. "We had a sno—" Jax stopped suddenly when Makayla walked out of the kitchen. "Makayla."

She smiled at me. "Naomi, you're back!" She hurried to place the two cups of hot chocolate down on the table. She grabbed my hands. "Are you okay?"

I furrowed my brows at her and then at Noah. "Yes, I'm fine. Why?"

Jax placed a hand on my shoulder and pulled me away from her. “What are you doing here, Makayla?” He gazed at Noah, giving him a pointed look, and then looked down at the mugs.

There was a long pause, and my heart sank.

“Noah invited me over,” she said.

He would rather spend his time with her than he would with me? She looked like she was his mate. Making hot chocolate for him, dressed in a cute little outfit around their pack house.

She grabbed one of the hot chocolate mugs and handed it to me. “I made this for you. Noah said you’ve been down lately.”

I took the mug warily and arched a brow at Noah. “Noah shouldn’t be telling people about my business.”

Jax squeezed my shoulder lightly and peered down at me. His eyes told me to stop whatever I was going to say. Noah was scared. Noah didn’t know how to love after what he had gone through.

A part of me wanted to curse Noah out for skipping our date, for being here with Makayla instead of me, for telling people things that didn’t need to be told, but instead, I pressed my lips together. “I’m fine, Makayla. I’m fine.”

She eyed me, blue eyes so bright, and smiled. “Well, if you’re fine, come out with me.”

She tugged on my hand and pulled me toward the door, but Jax pulled me back.

“Where are you going?” he asked her, brows still furrowed together.

“To finish the day strong,” she said. “At the mall.” She smiled widely, tossed her perfect red hair over her shoulder, and tugged on her white Columbia coat. “We’re going to do what I know how to do best. Shop.”

“She should stay in,” Jax said, still squeezing my hand like Makayla was trying to pry me away from him. “Right, Noah?”

Noah glanced at me, jaw tight. “Let her go out. Relax with a friend. We can talk about the date later.”



Jax's eyes widened, and he was going to fight with Noah again. I could just see the anger boiling in his eyes. I placed my fingers on his chin and kissed him slowly. I didn't want to be the reason that they kept fighting.

"It's okay. Just talk to him."

When I looked back at Noah, he was staring at my fingers on Jax's chin that were just lingering there, frowning deeply. He looked so damn desperate, yet he didn't stop me from leaving with her.

## CHAPTER 41



NAOMI

“*R*oger never liked when I went shopping,” Makayla said, pulling into the shopping mall.

It was a Friday night, and everyone was here. We had to park all the way in the back. Groups of kids were at the entrance. Some were playing hacky sack. Others were on their phones in the corner, trying to catch Pokémon.

Makayla led me inside and held the door open for me.

“Really?” I asked. “He didn’t like that you shopped?”

When Oliver and I had been assigned to him, he’d take me shopping all the time. It was the little things that had turned him on, like watching me dress in a skimpy little lingerie in Victoria’s Secret, peeking through the door as I struggled with one of their bras that had more than two straps.

Just the thought of it made me shiver now.

She frowned as we walked down the mall, gazing at all the stores. “He refused to bring me. Said that I would just end up wearing the stuff for someone else.” Her frown deepened. “He never trusted me either.” She gazed at me. “What was it like when you were there? Did you guys go out often?”

I sighed and walked into one of the overpriced shops, fingers grazing against all of the soft sweaters inside. “Makayla, I really don’t think that we should talk about this right now.”

Not only did I not want to hurt her feelings, but also those times only brought up good memories. Overall. Now, I was just making memories of Noah and how much he didn’t want to be with me. Trying to get rid of me every chance he got just because I’d brought up her name, just because I knew the secret he was hiding.

She grabbed on to my hand. “Please tell me.” She swallowed hard. “I want to ... know.”

“No,” I said, grabbing a cream sweater. It looked just like two sweaters that I had back home, but I needed another. It was too damn cold here.

“Please,” she said. She sounded desperate.

And although I wanted to tell her, I didn’t want her to feel worse. She already knew that we’d had sex. If she knew that he had taken Oliver and me out on fancy little dates every weekend, spent money on us, lay in bed at three in the morning and spilled every single thing he was thinking about, she would be devastated. Because that was more than physical; that was a bond. And a strong one.

If only it had lasted long enough to prevent this war. If only I had been the one to go back with him instead of Oliver to stop him from making the decisions he had, which had plunged us deeper and deeper into war. I wouldn’t be here, standing around in a store at the mall that I really didn’t want to be in before going home to a pissed off Noah and an even more pissed off Jax.

I took a deep breath and rubbed the bridge of my nose. “Makayla, you’re the sweetest girl I know, but I am not going to tell you anything about what went on between us. That is Lycan business, and that’s it.”

She frowned. “I’m sorry.” Her voice was quiet. “I just ... think about him a lot.”

I put down the sweater and rubbed her shoulders. “I know that it’s hard.” I was going through it right now. “But you have to believe in yourself, know that you’re worth more than what he told you that you were, know that you deserve more than him.”

My phone buzzed in my pocket. I ignored it.

I wrapped my arm around her, and together, we walked out of the store. She rested her head on my shoulder.

“I didn’t mean to intrude earlier. I didn’t know that you didn’t want Noah to tell me anything.” Her voice was quiet. “And I know that it was disrespectful to be hanging out with him while you and Jax were out on a

date.”

“Yeah,” I said quietly. “It was.”

My phone buzzed again.

“I’m sorry.” She intertwined my fingers with hers. “I just don’t have many friends in this pack, and he really helped me out when Roger rejected me.” She frowned. “He’s honestly like my only friend.” She hesitated. “Besides you.”

Again, I saw myself in her. That one weird girl in the Lycans. The only human fighting with a bunch of werewolves that, at first, hadn’t wanted her to be there with them.

“I’m glad,” I said quietly. I was glad that she could call me a friend after what I had done with her mate.

My phone buzzed for a third time, and I sighed. I pulled it out of my pocket. Two missed calls from Oliver. Three text messages.

**Oliver: Answer your phone.**

Makayla glanced over my shoulder. “Who’s Ollie?”

I gnawed on the inside of my cheek. “My partner.”

**Oliver: I have information about Ava.**

Makayla dropped my hand. “Ava?” she said with so much distaste. “You know about her?”

Instead of responding to her, I continued to walk. She wasn’t supposed to know that I was trying to get information on her. Nobody was, except Ryan.

She grabbed my hand and stopped me in the middle of the mall. “You’re going behind Noah’s and Jax’s backs, aren’t you?”

## CHAPTER 42



NAOMI

“What I do is none of your business, Makayla,” I said, snatching my phone and putting it back in my purse. The phone buzzed again, and I shut the whole thing off, not wanting to listen to the damn thing right now.

Makayla furrowed her brows, gaze pointed. “If you’re going behind Noah’s and Jax’s backs, it is.”

I growled lowly, a sudden and intense rage pulsing through my veins. I felt like a wolf was ripping itself apart inside of me and begging me to release her. “Why?” I asked, annoyance dripping from the word. “Why is it your business?”

“Because they’re my alphas.” She ran a hand through the hair on her shoulder, brushing it out. “Why’re you getting all defensive over it? If you’re not doing anything bad behind their backs, you should be fine. Shouldn’t you?”

“I’m not dealing with this right now,” I said.

If I spent one more second here with her, I was going to snap. And it took a lot to get me to snap like this. I snatched the strap to my purse and hurried down the walkway of the mall.

Makayla hurried after me, keeping up with my pace. “I thought we were friends, Naomi. Why are you acting like this?”

I suddenly stopped. “Thought we were friends?” I widened my eyes, that rage returning. “I thought we were friends, too, until you went back to Noah and told him that I fucked your ex-mate.”

She shook her head, like she didn’t see anything wrong with it. “You did.”

“And, now, Noah doesn’t trust me because he thinks that I’d do it again.”

Makayla didn't say anything, but she gave me that same look that Noah had given me earlier. She didn't believe me either. She thought I would do the same thing.

After a couple of moments, she sighed. "You *are* a Lycan."

I just stood there, lips parted. I didn't know if I was angry or sad. My emotions were all over the place. Instead of snapping, I clenched my jaw. "I tell you things because I want you to trust me, so I can help you get stronger. You obviously know nothing about being a Lycan. You obviously don't understand that we do things because we have to do them, not because we want to. I'm here with your pack, trying to help you get stronger because that is my job. I'm not doing it to make friends. I'm not doing it because I care about how strong the pack is. This is my fucking job, just like fucking Roger for months to get information was my job."

Her blue eyes widened. She hadn't expected me to call her out on her bullshit. "Naomi, I don't mean to make you upset. I just care about them. They're my alphas. They've been hurt."

"Well, you're making me angry. You're breaking *my* trust. You're disrespecting *me*."

People began to look over at us—more so at me, making this big scene, but I didn't care. I was tired of this. I stood right in the middle of the walkway, fists clenched tightly by my sides, angry that nobody was believing me.

"H ... how am I disrespecting you?" She was quiet like a damn mouse, acting all innocent. I hated it.

"By visiting *my* mate while I was out on a date with Jax. By always being so close to him. By wanting to work with him all the time, dropping in to see him late at night. Do you think that I just let that go by? You don't think that I put two and two together. Do you think that I'm stupid or something? I don't even know why I tolerate going out with you."

It was a mean thing to say. I just couldn't stop myself. I wanted to go



back home and lie in bed in Oliver's house, stare up at the stars that he'd put on his ceiling when we were together, and cry. I didn't want this drama. I didn't want any of this damn drama.

I wanted my old life back. The life with the Lycans, where people didn't judge me for the things that I did that were a part of the job. The life with the Lycans, where people actually respected me for being me. The life with the Lycans, where there weren't all of these fake people hiding all of their secrets.

She shook her head. "I—We didn't do anything. I was there for you. He said that you were upset and wanted me to come over to comfort you because ... because he doesn't know how to," she said. Her voice was quiet toward the end.

My heart ached. A part of me knew that Noah was acting like this because of Ava, but that didn't make up for the fact that he didn't want me. He'd marked me, but he hadn't really wanted to. It was just instinct.

"It's still disrespectful, whether it was for my benefit or not. You should've called or texted me instead of going to the pack house when I wasn't there." I shook my head. "I will not take this disrespect. I am your luna right now. And if they want to reject me, I'll still be a Lycan. I'll still be someone who protects you, no matter what. So, stop pissing me off."

And with that, I left her in the walkway and walked down the mall, disappearing into whatever store smelled so much like Noah's and Jax's natural scents.

## CHAPTER 43



JAX

As soon as Naomi left, Noah walked right out of the room and back to our office. I dug my claws into my palms, breaking the skin. I couldn't believe that idiot.

I followed after him, nostrils flaring, and rammed open the door to our office. "What the fuck is your problem?" I asked, seething.

He sat at his desk, busily pretending to look through paperwork. There were papers scattered around, his desk filled with piles and piles of work. I slammed my palms right down on the paper he was staring at.

I ripped the papers from his desk, so the only thing he had left to look at was me. "Why are you pushing us away, Noah?"

He stared up at me, completely emotionless, just how Ava had made him. "I'm not pushing you away." His face was void of emotion, but his voice wavered. He was scared, terrified.

"Yes, you are. You made me go out on a date alone with our mate. And I know you hate that—to see us happy together—but I couldn't say no. I couldn't disappoint our mate."

I wanted to tell him more, like how she'd asked me if I regretted marking her. She had heard our conversation from the other night—every bit of it—but I didn't want Noah to feel worse about himself. I didn't want to keep fighting over her. It was tearing us apart.

But I was done with his lying.

I tilted my head. "If you just had to skip our date to send Isabella paperwork, show it to me."

He took a deep breath, jaw tight. "Jax, you know that there was no paperwork."

"Well, that makes three of us that know you're a liar because Naomi isn't

stupid.”

He gazed out the window, watching the snow fall onto the tree outside. Didn't say a word. He'd wanted her to know that he stayed home for a reason—and that reason wasn't paperwork to send to Isabella.

*Fuck him.*

“So, you fucking stayed home, missing a date with our mate, to hang out with Makayla?”

He growled lowly and struck his fists on the table, standing up to meet my glare. “I did not hang out with her. She was over for Naomi.”

“Bullshit. You're a terrible liar, Noah.” After a few moments, I shook my head and leaned against his desk, fucking done with this shit. “Have you cheated on her with Makayla or Ava?”

To be honest, I was terrified of his answer because I didn't know what it would be. I had never seen Noah this scared of his feelings before. But fucking Ava had had to fuck him up.

He stayed quiet, and then he placed his hands on the windowsill and leaned over. He paused for a good five minutes, not saying anything. We stood in an awkward silence until I saw the muscles in his back involuntarily twitch.

“She hates me,” he said quietly.

“She doesn't hate you,” I said, sighing. “She doesn't even know that you care.”

Noah dug his fingertips into the windowsill. “I'm nothing to Naomi.” He swallowed hard. “Nothing. Absolutely nothing.”

It broke my heart to see my own brother so weak because of a woman. Because of Ava.

“Noah,” I said softly, “she wants to be with you.”

He shook his head, back tense. The muscles in his back twitched again. “She doesn't want me. She doesn't. I know it.”

My heart ached. Noah was always stronger than me in every aspect,

especially strength and fighting. But with his emotions, with his mate, he was so weak. Ava had done so much to him every day that he actually started to believe everything that she said.

“Naomi isn’t Ava,” I said. I placed a hand on his shoulder, and he tensed even more. “She won’t hurt you.”

He swallowed and parted his lips. “She embarrasses us in front of the pack every single day.”

“She does that to get us to fuck her,” I said, trying to make light of the conversation.

He rolled his eyes and pushed me away. “Not everything has to do with sex, Jax.”

“Fine, fine.” I took a deep breath. “Has she ever told you that you were nothing, Noah?” I asked.

He didn’t say anything.

“All she says is that you—we—are weak. And she’s here to make us stronger. With Ava still being around, we are weak. Especially you. She has taken too much of your life from you. She’s still a huge part of it, and Naomi is trying to kick that out of you.”

“She’s being really shitty with it.”

“And you’re not being a really shitty mate with her?” I asked.

He didn’t say anything, just frowned. “I’m scared that Ava will try to hurt her. She’s vulnerable now, especially since we marked her.”

It was true. Naomi was going to shift any day now, and Ava was still wandering our property, getting past the guards, plotting to do something to hurt him even more. And hurting Naomi would be the perfect plan.

He was terrified of Ava, terrified that she would try to hurt Naomi, terrified that Naomi would hurt him.

“So, you think ignoring Naomi will get Ava to not hurt her?” I asked. “She has seen our marks on her neck. Can probably hear every single time we fuck her.”

Ava was an incredible manipulator. Spewing hatred at Noah, getting jealous over any woman who would even look at him, telling him he was nothing, acting like she loved him again. Every single day.

I wasn't going to lie. I was scared, too, because Ava *was* dangerous, and Naomi was vulnerable.

## CHAPTER 44



NOAH

*She sat there in the rose-pink dress I bought her for her birthday. Her soft brown hair curled around her face. The mate necklace I gave her was on the floor in pieces. All of the beads that I handpicked were scattered on the hardwood, disappeared under the stove, thrown in the garbage.*

*Jax's necklace was still around her neck, sitting perfectly in the center of her pale chest. She grazed her fingers on his mark, like she always did. It was never my mark.*

*I was on my knees. I didn't know what to do. This situation had played out a hundred different ways in my nightmares, and it always ended the same.*

*"Ava, what can I do?" I whispered desperately.*

*"How many times do I have to tell you, Noah?" She pursed her lips. She was crying again, but I had done absolutely nothing to her. Every tear made my heart break into smaller pieces. "Stop this! I can't handle this anymore. I don't want you."*

*This happened every day. She was the only thing that I would ever love, and she knew that she had me curled around her finger. She knew I wouldn't let her go. She knew that I couldn't.*

*"I hate you. I have never wanted you. Why can't you get that through your thick fucking skull?" she screamed.*

*"Ava ..." I stepped closer to her, wanting nothing more than to hold her like I did that first night before she started hating me—before she met Jax.*

*She slapped me across the face, and I let her because she was my mate. She was supposed to love me. She was just mad. And if I tried to stop her, she'd become more violent, try to sink her teeth into my abdomen again. Threaten another poor girl that I looked at once at the mall while we were*



together. I was just trying to hand that woman a napkin to wipe off the ice cream on her son's face.

"Ava," I said, voice soft, hoping that it would calm her down.

Her eyes flashed a dark brown—the color of her wolf's eyes. She was more than angry. "All I hear every fucking day is your nagging. Ava this, Ava that. Ava, why don't you love me? Ava, we're mates; you have to love me." She shook her head, brown hair flying everywhere. "You know, your own brother thinks that you're overbearing."

"Ava," I said on repeat. I didn't want to make her angrier with me. I would do anything to make her happy. Absolutely anything.

She stared at me with so much hatred in her eyes. "He tells me every night before we sleep that he wishes it were just him and me. He wishes that you were out of the picture, that you had your own mate instead of unrightfully marking what was his."

I clenched my jaw. "Don't lie like that." My voice wavered. "Don't you dare do that to me. You knew that from the moment we saw each other, we were mates." My heart was racing, and I wondered why I couldn't be more for her. Why couldn't I be enough for my own mate?

"Whether we are or not, I don't want to be mates with you. Ever."

She stepped closer to me, and I could feel her breath on my face. It felt bittersweet. I just wanted her to touch me even if it was just her fingertips on my chin. Anything to stop this constant pain.

Instead, she stared me right in the eye. "You're nothing, Noah. Nothing."

She raised her hand again, and I flinched. It was desperate and probably so sad to fucking watch. An alpha getting pushed around by his own mate, a woman who was three times smaller than him.

But I'd seen the way Dad acted with Mom, the way he pushed her around like she meant nothing to him. And I didn't ever want to end up like him, so I let her push me.

After she hit me again, she turned on her heels and walked right out of my

*room. Her sweet scent lingered, only tormenting me more.*

I LAY IN MY BED, staring up at the ceiling, and pushed away the memory of Ava. It felt so real. I could even smell her scent. It was a distinct vanilla, and Naomi smelled just like it. Naomi's scent was sweeter, though. Her scent was pure, not like Ava's artificial perfume.

The window was cracked slightly, cold air chilling my bare chest. I ran a hand down my chest, feeling my racing heart. Could I ever be enough for her?

I gazed out the window and watched the snow fall on the trees, each flake building up on a brittle branch, making it bend.

Ava was in the woods again, like she'd been every single night that Naomi had been here. She just sat at the edge of the woods, right outside the pack house, staring right at my window. It was never Jax's.

I wanted to talk to her. I ached to talk to her. All I wanted to know from her was why I wasn't enough, so I could be enough this time around. But she wouldn't even let me have that. She refused to stay long enough in the woods to even say two words to me. She just haunted me each night.

And each night, she appeared closer and closer to the pack house.

The front door closed, and I heard Naomi shuffling up the stairs with bags from the mall. Her heels scraped against the hardwood floor lightly. When she reached my room, I heard her pause. But then she proceeded to her room and closed the door.

I rested my palms on the door, aching to go into her room and see her. I wanted to go see her. I wanted to talk about the date. I wanted to see if she would go out with me sometime. Just us two. But I was terrified.

I was terrified of moving too quickly. I was terrified that she'd be another Ava and like spending time with Jax more than me—or worse, like spending time with someone else more than us. I was terrified that she would think of

me as nothing too.

At least like this—standing beside my door and listening to the light hum of her snoring from her bedroom every night—I was something to her. I was that asshole man in the next room who had marked her out of anger. The man who she *thought* regretted marking her.

## CHAPTER 45



NAOMI

The next morning, I woke up early to lead practice. Everyone seemed to be going so much slower than I wanted them to. Maybe I was annoyed. Maybe I wanted to prepare before Oliver and Isabella came to check on me. Maybe I was just pissed off that nobody—except Ryan, *the pack whore*, and possibly Jax—respected me.

So, I pushed everyone so much harder than I had been. I joined in while everyone fought against each other. Throwing everyone over my hip, pinning them to the mat, not letting them turn me over. They had to work today. No more slacking off.

The snow was falling down on us, hitting the ground so hard. We could barely see two feet in front of us. We could barely get grips on another person. We could barely stay standing for two moments. But this was how it would be during war.

I refused to listen to any of the nagging. I refused to speak to Makayla.

When everyone was taking a break, I pulled Ryan onto the mat and started fighting him. Wanting to really see how much he could take, especially because I was going to make sure he was a Lycan after what he had done for me.

Besides Noah and Jax, he was the only one who could keep up with me. He grabbed my wrist, nearly slipping off from the wet snow, and yanked me toward him. In one throw, he hurled me over his hip and pressed me into the ground.

“Good.” I curled my hand around his throat, pushing him back. “Now, pin me,” I said.

He tried pushing my hand away but slipped, so I took this as an opportunity to push him off of me and latch on to his back, my legs wrapping

around his torso. I curled my arm around his neck and squeezed, putting him in a choke hold.

“Makayla knows that I know about Ava,” I said in his ear. “What would you do, as a Lycan, in my position?”

He choked slightly, coughing. He peeled my arm away from his neck and hurled me over his hip again, making me fall onto the ground. He got on top of me from behind, trying to regain control. “I would find out more about her ... like the fact that she hates Ava for what she did to them, or that she will do anything for the twins, or that she is very close to them. Maybe not even for their own good.”

I nodded my head and let him pin me onto my back in the snow. After he held me down for a few moments, he released his weight from my chest and stood back up, grabbing my hand and pulling me with him.

“Okay, switch partners,” I said.

Jax walked up to me. Makayla walked up to Noah. A part of me finally knew why people didn’t want to work with Makayla. She was a snitch. Of course they wouldn’t want to work with someone like that.

The whole time I was working with Jax, he was trying to talk to me about something sexual, and although I was trying to pay attention, I couldn’t stop staring at Noah and Makayla.

She said something to him, probably that I knew about Ava. Probably that I was trying to gather any information on her, so I could destroy her. She was probably even turning the tables and telling him that I was going to try to destroy him with that information. Probably throwing in Oliver’s name to see if she could get a rise out of him. He clenched his jaw the whole time. And when they were finished, he glanced over at me with a hard look.

I turned away and gritted my teeth. *I’m here because this is my assignment. I’m here because this is my assignment.* That was the only reason. Business. Not pleasure.

\* \* \*

WHEN PRACTICE WAS OVER, I dismissed everyone and walked to the pack house alone. My clothes were soaked in snow. I was shivering. I could barely feel my toes and fingers, but that was my own fault for not wearing gloves or thick socks.

The twins followed in after me, Noah farther behind than Jax.

Jax was standing next to me, rubbing his hands together. “You want to take a shower together?” he asked, wiggling his eyebrows. “I wouldn’t mind that, Little One. You, me, and Noah.”

Noah shut the door behind us, and I peeled off my shirt in the living room, the heat from the fireplace immediately warming me.

Everything was jumbled in my mind, and although I had spent some good time last night with Jax, Makayla had gotten in my head. She’d reminded me why I was really here—for a job. She’d reminded me that I needed to protect myself from everyone. She’d reminded me that these twin mates were notorious for all the wrong reasons.

So, I turned on my heel and pulled off my wet socks. “I feel like all you think I am is a sex doll or something.”

“What are you talking about?” he asked.

Noah stood at the door, taking off his wet clothes.

“Yes, I like sex, but I’m tired of you both treating me like all you want is sex. My emotions are all over the place because you two marked me and ... you know what? I know sex is all that Noah wants.”

Noah furrowed his brows at me. “That’s not what I want.”

My heart raced, and I finally had the opportunity to bring up what I’d heard. “Really? Doesn’t seem like that. Especially after you said that you wish you’d never marked me. It seems like all you want to do is fuck.”

Jax parted his lips, standing between us.

I shook my head, held a hand up, and glared at Noah. “I am more than

that, and if you two can't see that, there are other men who can."

Noah growled lowly.

Jax placed his hands on my shoulders. "Naomi, calm down."

I ripped myself out of his grip. "No, because it's true. You two got me into this fucking mess. You two marked me. I am going to shift in a few nights because you two were the ones who couldn't control your fucking anger, so don't tell me that kind of shit. I have every right to be pissed off at both of you. I wish you'd act like fucking mates for once and just love me for me or even show that you care. Make the damn effort!" Tears pricked at the corners of my eyes, and I wanted to cry. Moon Goddess, I wanted to cry.

"Naomi, Noah doesn't just want you for sex," Jax said.

I crossed my arms over my chest. "Prove it," I said to Noah.

I didn't know why I'd said it; he had made it clear that he didn't want me, but I couldn't stop myself. I wanted him to feel something. I wanted to feel something for him. It hurt that he'd hurt me. That he didn't want his own mate even though I bore his mark.

"Tell me that you don't want me just for sex."



## CHAPTER 46



NOAH

I'd listened to my brother and tried to believe that Naomi wasn't the woman Ava was.

She was just a Lycan who was doing business. That was what Makayla had told me while I was working with her. She'd told me about the fight they had last night. She'd told me the look of pure pain on Naomi's face when she talked about doing things with other people because it was her job.

So, after practice, I gathered all of the courage I had and followed Jax and Naomi to the pack house, trailing behind and wondering what I could say to her to start a conversation without her hating me for all of the shit that I did. But she would always hate me, because she thought that I didn't care about her.

She crossed her arms over her chest. "Prove it," she repeated again, staring at me.

Even while drenched in snow and dirt from practice, I could still smell her vanilla scent. I wanted to wash her off in the shower—actually wash her off—and place her in my bed, tuck her into the sheets, and watch her sleep soundly like she had one of the first nights she lay with us.

I swallowed my pride, trying to bite back my pain, and frowned. "Naomi," I said. She looked so scared. "I want more than sex." I didn't know how loudly my words were coming out. I was just glad they were. The expression on her face looked beyond pained, and that hurt me worse. I was hurting her, and I honestly wished that I'd never, ever hurt her. "I ... I don't regret marking you."

Her lips curled into a frown, and a tear rolled down her cheek. "You're lying," she said, shivering. "You're lying."

My heart sank. She really thought that I was lying. It was what I'd wanted

when I said it. I had known that she was out there, listening to our conversation, but I didn't know how much she would hurt. I just hadn't wanted to get close to her, but seeing those fat tears roll down her cheeks, feeling her pain within my body, made me curse myself for ever hurting her. I just wanted to love her. Every part of her.

Jax placed his hands on her shoulders again, and she relaxed. He smiled down at her, brushing his fingertips across her cheek. "Naomi, why don't we all take a shower, take a few deep breaths, warm up, and we can talk with a clear mind when we're all finished?"

Naomi sighed and grabbed his hand. "Come with me, please." A stray tear rolled down her cheek.

He sighed and looked back at me. I turned away and gazed out the window, heart aching. Jax always knew how to calm our mates down, and I could never do it.

Jax sighed. "I can't, Naomi."

"Go, Jax," I said. I wanted her to be happy.

Jax paused for a long moment and grabbed her hand, leading her out of the room. I listened to them walk all the way up the stairs. This was how it had gone last time. This was how it had gone with Ava.

But she wasn't Ava. Naomi wasn't Ava. I had to keep reminding myself of that.

I clenched my jaw, trying to stop this. They were probably going to shower together. Fuck each other again. And I wanted to join them, wanted to wash off her body. But I couldn't get myself to show up.

After a few moments, I heard the shower start. I sat down in the chair, hands balled into fists, heart breaking.

*Why can't I be enough? Why can't I ever be enough?*

Jax walked back into the living room. "Are you okay?" he asked, brows drawn together.

"Why aren't you with our mate?" I asked, annoyance in my voice.

“Because it’ll hurt you,” he said. “Now, we’re meeting back here in a couple hours. Don’t flake out this time, Noah. Show her that you care.”

\* \* \*

I STOOD in the shower for forty-five minutes, hands running through my wet hair, not knowing what I was going to do or what I was going to say to her.

All I wanted was for her to be happy.

I brushed a hand down my abdomen.

She was everything to me.

Soap ran down my legs, and I grabbed my cock, stroking it slowly. Thinking about her. Her small body against mine. The way her dimples appeared every time she smiled. The way her eyes had widened when she looked at me that first night at Bainundo. Everything I fucking needed.

I rested my forehead against the shower wall and took a deep breath. My heart was racing hard in my chest. I stroked myself faster, harder, wishing she were with me. Wishing that she would love me.

I groaned softly and shut off the shower. Her vanilla scent was drifting into my room and lingering there.

Once I dressed, I walked downstairs. She was sitting on the couch in a blue dress that hung so damn sexily around her body. Jax wasn’t here yet.

When she looked up at me, she pursed her lips together and looked away. I felt rejected.

I sat awkwardly on the other couch, gazing at her every so often. Not being able to tear my eyes away from her, but not being able to come up with the right words.

My wolf begged me to go over to her, to rip her clothes off, claim her over and over and over until she knew that we loved her, that we wished we’d never hurt her. But I contained myself. I didn’t want to make any rash decisions again. We would only end up hurt.

## CHAPTER 47



NAOMI

I sat on the couch, knees bouncing. I hoped that Jax would be down soon, but I had a bad feeling in my gut that this was his plan all along. So, I sat there, staring at the ground. Noah was sitting across from me, and I could feel his stare. He was wearing a sweater that hugged every one of his muscles. And all my wolf wanted to do was jump him, rip off his clothes, and let him take me any way he wanted to take me.

After waiting another five minutes for him, I looked at Noah. He was staring at me with those intense eyes that had drawn me to him the first day.

I had the urge to be a bitch to him, hurt him more than he'd hurt me. I could act like he was nothing to me. He made me feel that low, and I wanted him to feel the same way.

But I didn't want to hurt him more. I already felt how bad he was feeling. So, I stood up and walked toward the kitchen, not trusting myself not to say anything hurtful and not trusting myself to not jump *him*.

He shuffled after me. I placed my hands on the counter and faced away from him, heart racing in my chest. I listened to him at the kitchen door, lingering there, but I didn't dare look back. Half of me wanted him to hurt; the other half just wanted him. A hungry desire for more.

I'd had my fix of Jax yesterday. Now, I just wanted my time with Noah. But he didn't want me.

"Naomi," he said quietly, like if he was too loud, I would snap at him. "Naomi, talk to me."

"Why would I want to talk to someone who doesn't want me?"

He took a step toward me. "You don't have to talk to me if you don't want to. Whatever makes you happy."

I tightened my hands into fists. "Noah," I whispered, turning around. I

was literally all over the place, not knowing what I really wanted. My wolf was becoming stronger, more feral, yet I was trying to be sensible. But failing—hard. “No! No! You’re not supposed to agree with me.”

He stepped toward me again, and my heart raced.

“What do you want me to do then, Naomi? What will make you happy?” His voice was low.

My nostrils flared. “Stop,” I said, shaking my head and stepping toward him. “Stop!”

He tensed, and my wolf growled inside of me. Starving.

“What do you want me to stop?” He stepped closer to me, so we were about a foot away from each other.

I stared into those dangerous golden eyes. They were pools of gold, and I never wanted them to stop flowing. All my wolf wanted was for him to push me against the counter and take me.

“Stop it,” I said breathlessly. If he got any closer, I would break. “You know exactly what will make me happy,” I said, feeling the ache of my wolf. I wanted to stop him from moving closer; I needed to step back. This was supposed to be a serious moment. This was supposed to be just for talking, but I couldn’t help myself when he was close.

He stepped closer to me, so he was inches from me.

“Tell me, Naomi,” he said.

“Stop using my name,” I said. I wanted him closer.

“What do you want me to call you?” he asked, lips parting. His wolf was front and center, gold eyes dark and dangerous. “Answer me.”

“No,” I said. Heart pounding.

He howled lowly, breathing heavier. “Tell me, *Naomi*.”

I gazed right up at him and couldn’t stop myself. “No.”

He snatched my jaw in his hand and closed the distance between us, so our bodies were pressed against each other. “Now,” he growled.

“No,” I said. His fingers burned my skin, and I wanted more of him.

“What are you going to do about it?”

“What am I going to do?” he asked.

“What are you going to do with me?”

We stared at each other for a few moments, and suddenly, he pushed his lips onto mine. I wrapped my arms around his shoulders and pulled him closer to me, wanting—needing—to get him closer. He felt so good. His fingers were trailing down my body. My heart was beating against his chest. I loved this. I’d missed this.

I felt accepted—even if it was for a moment.

He drew his fingers down my body, roaming it like he had never roamed it before. His lips trailed down my neck, setting it ablaze. It was so wrong, but I couldn’t stop. I loved this and wanted more and more and more.

He backed me up and pressed me into the counter. Then, he lifted me up and sat me right on it. I wrapped my legs around his waist and pulled him closer as quickly as I could. He felt so right. So fucking right.

“Nai,” he said between kisses.

He kissed my mark, and I shivered. My hand traveled down his abdomen, making him tense, and I grasped him through his pants.

“Nai, we should stop.”

I nodded my head. “We should,” I said breathlessly. “We should definitely stop.”

He was hard. I trailed my fingers up his underwear, feeling his length, and clenching my pussy.

His fingers brushed up the insides of my thighs. “We need to talk,” he said, barely taking his lips off of mine.

I hated giving in to him so easily. “We do.”

His fingers dipped between my legs and pressed into me. I gripped his shoulders tightly.

“Oh, Moon Goddess, we should stop,” I said, furrowing my brows together. But it felt so fucking good.



## CHAPTER 48



NAOMI

“*W*hoa, whoa, whoa,” someone said from behind us.  
Noah pulled away from me and growled viciously. My eyes widened.

Ryan was standing there with a big grin on his face. “Get it, Naomi.”

I rolled my eyes and hopped off the counter, smoothing out my blue dress. Noah glared at Ryan.

“What are you doing here?” Noah asked.

“Needed to ask Naomi a question,” he said, pushing his hand into his pocket.

I raised a brow and stepped away from Noah, trying to think straight. “Have you heard of knocking?”

Ryan glanced between us, an amused smirk on his face. “No, not really.”

“Noah and I are busy right now,” I said, leading him to the kitchen door.

“I can see that,” he said.

“Noah and I really need to talk,” I said.

“*Talk*,” Ryan repeated. After I gave him my best death glare, he raised his hands in surrender. “Well, meet me at the bar tonight, and we can talk some more.”

“She’s not going to meet you anywhere,” Noah said possessively.

I rolled my eyes and placed my hand on Ryan’s shoulder. “Please leave. I’ll meet you there.”

Ryan walked out of the room, and I heard the living room door close.

I turned to Noah, regaining control of my body after my wolf took over. “We really have to talk, Noah.”

But neither of us said a word. So, I walked to the counter again, farther away from him, and peered out of the window at the snow. Ryan was

retreating through the forest and eventually disappeared behind the trees.

“You regret marking me,” I said quietly, heart aching. “I heard you say it, and it hurt so bad.”

The forest was dark, and I expected to see Ava again, but she wasn’t there.

After a long moment, he sighed softly. “Nai, I never meant it.”

I wanted to believe him, but a part of me still didn’t. I rested my hands on the counter, turning away. How could I believe him?

He grasped my hips gently from behind, and it was the most love that I had felt from him ever in those fingertips. “I’ll tell you about her, if you want me to.”

I paused. He wanted to tell me about Ava?

He rested his chin on my shoulder and gazed out of the window at me. And that was when Ava appeared from between the trees. She was staring right up at us.

Noah tensed, but he didn’t pull away. Just stood there behind me, curling me closer to him. I stared at Ava, trying to figure her out. What she had been like with him. What she had done to him that hurt him so bad.

“Tell me about her,” I said. I needed to know.

I turned in his embrace and drew my fingers down his cheek. He was still staring out the window at her.

“Tell me, Noah.”

He looked away, that intense stare falling to the ground. “I still think about Ava,” he said.

It broke my heart.

“I can’t get her out of my head because I don’t know what I did to make her hate me. I don’t know what I did to make her ... to make her ...” He sighed unsteadily. “I don’t know what I did to make me unlovable.”

My heart ached, and I wanted so badly to comfort him.

He dug his fingers into my hip. “All I keep thinking about after I marked

you was how, one day, you'll wake up and start hating me too. And ... and I'll be the fucking cause of it."

"You're the one pushing me away."

He didn't respond to me. Instead, he was caught in his own little world. "Everything I do, you'll call me stupid. If I make you lunch, give you a mate necklace, hug you—it'll all be wrong because I am the stupid fucking mate who just wants to make you happy. That's my fault."

"Don't compare me to her, Noah. Don't act as if we were the same person."

"You're just like her though," he said.

And it broke my heart even more. "You know nothing about me."

"You're always putting me down in front of my pack, always pushing me harder than you push Jax, hanging out with him more than you do with me."

"You're pushing me toward him."

I expected him to yell at me, but he didn't say anything because he knew I was right. Instead, he gripped me tighter. He was tense, and I could feel him shake.

"I don't want to feel like shit anymore," he said.

"You think I will treat you like shit?" My words came out harsh, and I had hoped they wouldn't.

"Do you think I'm weak, Naomi?" he asked. His voice was quiet and wavering.

My heart hurt because in some respects, I did think that he was weak, like letting someone who hurt him still run every aspect of his life.

When Dad had done that to Mom, I'd put up a barrier. Didn't let any guy in close enough to love me—except Oliver. And look where that had gotten me. I'd thought that it was the strong thing to do—let me hurt them before they could hurt me. But that hadn't made me stronger.

Dad had fucked me up so much that I wanted to forget about him entirely. I'd tried for so long.

I sighed quietly. “No, Noah.” I swallowed my pride. “I think that you’re hurting and that you’ve never healed from Ava.”

Everything was quiet.

“You know, I’m afraid to love too.” I stared up at the ceiling, and I hoped that telling him everything that had happened to me would make him trust me. “My dad cheated on my mom when I was younger. Every night, he came home with another woman’s perfume. And my mom wouldn’t leave him, no matter how much I begged her to. And one night ... one night, things turned violent. And ...” I said quietly. “And ... I couldn’t protect her.”

I didn’t even want to think of it. It was so disappointing, devastating.

“Don’t be afraid of loving me,” he said. “I won’t hurt you.”

I swallowed hard. “Neither will I.”

He stared back at me with those golden eyes, fingers trailing up the sides of my body, and gently grasped my face. “I’ll prove it to you.” He grabbed my waist and lifted me onto the counter again, stepping between my legs. “Let me prove it to you, *Nai*.”

## CHAPTER 49



NAOMI

In one heated moment, he pressed his lips on mine, ravenously claiming me like he had been starving himself for days, weeks, months, years. I rested my hands on the counter behind me, letting him press himself harder and harder against me. His lips trailed down my jaw, then down my neck, then down my chest until he reached my hips. His fingers wandered up my thighs, slowly pushing my dress higher up my legs.

I gazed at those golden eyes that were devouring me, hopped off of the counter, and took his hand. "Take me to your bed." I pulled him to the bedroom.

When we passed Jax's door, it was closed, and I didn't bother opening it. Noah was going to take me as his, and I only wanted him tonight.

Noah grabbed my hips as he guided me toward his room. His fingers dug into my sides.

When we walked in, I peeled the curtains open and stared out of the window. Waiting for her. She wouldn't miss this.

And after a few moments, she stalked over to the window outside of his window and stared up at me with pure hatred, baring her ugly teeth. Noah was waiting a few feet away, and I knew that he saw her too. But he made no move to close the curtains.

Ava was going to know that he was mine, that she couldn't hurt him any longer, that she had no more control of him.

Because the first rule of war was to know your enemy, and I knew that Noah might've gotten the brunt of her hurt, but he was her weakness. She couldn't leave him alone because he had given her power.

I walked over to him, placed two fingers on his chin, and kissed him. This gave her no power. Noah was mine.

He tensed for a brief moment but then relaxed as my fingers trailed down his abdomen and peeled off his shirt. I dragged my hand up the front of his pants and then unbuckled his belt, pulled it off, and pushed his pants down.

“Take off my dress,” I mumbled against his lips. “Make me yours. Be free.”

He groaned under his breath, hands dancing around my abdomen until they reached the zipper. He unzipped it so slowly, and I let the dress slip off my shoulders and fall to my sides.

Noah’s eyes were fixed on my body, devouring every inch of it. I grabbed his hand and placed it on my bare pussy, letting him feel how wet I was for him. He groaned again and pushed them harder into me, making small circles around my clit.

This was Noah. Pure. Raw. Real.

He pushed me against the bed and pressed his lips to my lips, kissing me hard. His cock was rubbing against my front side, and I just wanted him to ram it inside of me and fill me.

“You’re so wet,” he mumbled.

“Take off your pants,” I said. I couldn’t wait any longer. “Take them off now.”

He chuckled against me. “I want to take it slow with you.”

He picked me up and placed me right on his bed, kneeling between my legs. His breath was on my pussy, warming it with every breath. I curled my hands into the bedsheets and clenched, just waiting for him.

“Look at me, *Nai*.”

His golden eyes were so intense that they made me tighten again. He rested my legs on his shoulders, curled his arms around my legs, and trailed his fingers up and down my thighs, getting so close to my pussy each time. I furrowed my brows and whined softly.

“Please,” I said. “Please, Noah.”

Each time they nearly reached my wetness, I curled my toes. I could just



picture my pussy dripping my juices onto his lips. I wanted him on me, eating me out, tasting how wet I was for him.

“Please, Noah,” I said.

“No.”

I arched my back. “Please.”

“Enjoy this,” he said sternly.

He continued to trail his fingers up my thigh so lightly that I could barely even feel them. His breath was still on my bare pussy, making it hotter and hotter and hotter.

“Noah,” I whined. “Noah, please.”

His lips grazed against my clit, but he continued to tease me. So close yet so fucking far.

My pussy was pulsing. Heat was rushing to my core in waves.

I curled my hand in his hair. “Noah,” I said softly. “Please.”

He pressed his lips onto my wetness, and my legs immediately jerked off of the bed, the feeling more intense than anything I had ever felt before. He pushed his face onto my pussy and ate it like it was the only thing he was ever hungry for.

He held my hips down on the bed to keep me steady, pressing his tongue onto my clit and flicking it around in circles. I arched my back and gripped on to his hands, moaning out as pleasure coursed through me.

“Noah.”

One of his hands wandered up my body to my breast, and he took my nipple between his fingers, tugging on it. He pushed his other fingers inside of me slowly.

“Noah, please ...” I said.

He pressed his fingers all the way inside of me, and my eyes rolled to the back of my head. This was too much. The pressure was building higher and higher in my core, and all I wanted was for him to fill me. He pressed his lips harder into me, the small circles making me wetter and wetter.

My legs trembled violently in his hands. “Noah, I need you.”

He pulled his lips off of my clit and trailed them down my thighs, tasting every inch of me. Then, he stood slowly, taking his cock in his hand. He rubbed it against my wet, aching pussy and gazed at me. His eyes were completely gold, and I clenched, ready for him.

He slowly pushed it inside of me, and a wave of pleasure hit me hard. He pressed his lips to mine and began moving slowly in and out of me. I dug my nails into his shoulders.

At first, his thrusts were slow and long as he pulled all the way out and entered me so damn slowly. But each thrust built me higher and higher, and I never wanted it to stop. He rested his forehead against mine, breathing heavily.

I moved my head to the side, letting him see his mark. “Kiss me, Noah. Kiss me here.”

He lowered his mouth, tasting just below my ear. I tightened harder on him as he picked up his pace, pounding faster than before. I arched my back, knowing that I was just about to release myself.

I felt the urge to dig my teeth into his neck and claim his as my own. The pure rage of my wolf wanted him and only him at that moment.

He kissed my mark, and I threw my head back, coming.

## CHAPTER 50



NAOMI

He lay next to me, fingertips so very lightly brushing against my chin to move me closer to him. I pressed my lips to his in a slow, passionate open-mouthed kiss. His tongue on mine, our lips moved softly.

And when he pulled away, he rested his forehead against mine and took another deep breath. He didn't say anything to me. Instead, we just lay there in a calm kind of silence. Listening to each other's heartbeats, listening to the soft whistle of the wind outside. Goose bumps rose on my skin each time he trailed his fingers up and down my stomach.

Eventually, I found myself curled into his shoulder, eyes struggling to stay open. He pressed his lips to my forehead one last time.

Nothing could ruin this moment. Nothing at all.

I wanted to spend every night like this—curled up in his arms, thinking no thoughts of war or of *her*, completely calm.

My phone rang. Noah pulled me closer and nuzzled his head into my neck. By the ringtone, I could tell that it was Oliver, and I didn't want to answer it, but I had already ignored him once.

The phone continued to ring, and I pushed Noah's arm off of me.

He pulled me closer, mumbling into my hair, "Don't go. Let me enjoy you for tonight."

I paused, heart racing, wanting to enjoy him, too, for one night. But work was important, especially when I was thinking about threats to my mates and the Lycans. I couldn't just let this pass.

"I have to," I whispered softly to him.

He sighed deeply in my ear, and I felt terrible.

But I rolled out of bed anyway and picked up my phone. *Oliver.*

“What?” I asked, pulling one of Noah’s shirts over my head.

Noah was lying on the bed, head against the headboard, watching me.

I gazed out of the window, resting my forehead against it. “Hello?”

“Oh, hey, Naomi,” Oliver said.

I rubbed my forehead. “What do you want, Oliver?” I asked.

Noah got out of bed and stood behind me. I wasn’t sure if he was listening to my conversation or watching for Ava. He curled a hand up the front of my neck and pulled my head back, placing a kiss on my lips.

“Mine,” he said possessively—loud enough for Oliver to hear through the phone. Then, he walked out of the room and shut the door behind him.

“Man, he sounds *terrifying*,” he said.

“He’d kick your ass,” I said, knowing full well that Oliver was strong, but his strength was flirting, not fighting.

He chuckled. “Are you alone?”

“Yes. Now, will you tell me why you ruined my night?”

“Always so impatient,” he said. “Well, I need to tell you about Ava.” He paused for a long moment. “I believe that she cheated on the twins with Roger.”

My eyes widened. *Roger*? I should’ve known his stupid ass had fooled around with her.

“That’s not all,” he said. “She has a track record of killing women and has a very rogue-like nature. She doesn’t care who it is or how she does it, but she will kill. She’s a part of the Vixel Pack, up in the north. Her brother is the alpha.”

My eyes widened even more, and I pressed my lips together. This was a joke. It had to be. “The Vixel Pack,” I whispered. My heart was pounding against my chest.

“Naomi?” Oliver said, voice soft. “I know what—”

A woman from that pack had persuaded my father to kill Mom. I never found true evidence, but I had always known it in my heart. They had always

hung around our property, always had their noses in our business.

I parted my lips in disbelief. "I ... I can't ... I don't know what to say."

I shook my head, not seeing any trace of Ava in the woods. She was gone, but she'd be back. People from her pack always came back.

"I'm going to go. I'll see you soon." I hung up the phone without waiting for a response and walked out of the room, heart still racing.

The light was on in Jax's room a few doors down. I peeked my head in.

"Do you want to go to bed?" I said. I needed someone to hold me. Not because I was weak, but because this was bringing up memories that I didn't need to be brought up right before the Lycans came to visit.

My mind was almost in too much of a fog to notice Jax hiding something behind his back. The twins stopped talking suddenly and peered at each other for a few moments, probably talking through the mind link. I couldn't wait to turn into a wolf, just to be able to hear what was always so fascinating about their silent conversations.

I looked around his room and nodded. I now knew that there was a reason we never went to Jax's room. It was too much of a mess. I could barely see the bed.

"Sleep in Noah's room," I clarified.

"You and Noah go," Jax said. "I'll see you tomorrow when we take you out to breakfast."

Noah gave him one last look, grabbed my hand, and led me back to his bedroom.

## CHAPTER 51



NAOMI

The Night Raider's Café wasn't as busy as it had been the other day. It smelled like day-old coffee and sweet glazed doughnuts. We ordered a coffee—something quick before practice—and sat in one of the small booths in the corner of the café.

Jax smiled at Noah and me. "So, you two are good now?"

I gazed between him and Noah from across the table and kicked my legs back and forth, feeling like a teenage girl again, getting butterflies over the stupidest things. Other than Ava being from *that* pack, I honestly felt so much better than how I'd been feeling lately.

"Yes," I said. "You can say that."

Jax placed his hands behind his head, flexing his biceps. "Good, because I'm ready to take you. Right here. Right now. That sex in the bar was amazing." He smirked at his brother. "You need to try sex in public with this one. She's a huge fan."

My cheeks flamed, and I shook my head, gazing around the restaurant. Makayla waltzed her way in, running her hands through her hair on her shoulder, sucking in her bottom lip. I clenched my jaw when she looked over at us and changed her direction from going right over to the barista to us. She stared at Noah for a bit longer than I wanted her to, then at Jax, then at me again.

Noah and Jax were sitting across from me and hadn't seen her yet. I was hoping that she would turn back around and go sit by her damn self. But she didn't stop her leisurely stroll to us, even when I glared at her.

"Hey, guys!" she said, sitting down next to me, as if nothing had ever happened between us.

I didn't look at her, just watched Noah and Jax. Jax seemed



uncomfortable, but didn't say anything. Noah just sat there, like a deer in the headlights, completely shocked.

"I have something important to tell you," she started.

I closed my eyes and sighed deeply through my nose. I couldn't believe this. All I wanted to do was flip out again, tell her off, tell her to leave me and my mates alone.

She sat up taller in the seat next to me. "When I was on—"

"You need to leave," Noah said.

My eyes widened. Makayla paused suddenly, a shocked expression on her face.

"We're out with our mate," Noah said.

The corners of my lips lifted into a small smile. He was actually telling her to leave? He was actually recognizing me as his mate, actually respecting me for once.

"But I ..." she stuttered. "I just wanted ..."

"Go," Jax said. "You can talk to us later, before or after practice."

She quickly shuffled out of her seat and bowed her head. "Sorry, Alphas." Then, she turned to me. "Naomi ..."

I looked at her with a blank expression.

"Sorry." Her voice was soft and quiet. She turned on her heel and walked right toward the barista, ordered her drink, and left.

I turned back to my mates, who looked much tenser than they had before she'd come here. They were staring at each other with their sharp jaws tensed.

Two fine-ass alphas. My two fine-ass alphas.

"What's wrong with you guys?" I asked. "Why're you so nervous?" I clasped my hands on the table, feeling my phone buzz in my back pocket. It was Oliver calling again, and this time, it was during the day, which meant he was awake and that this was important.

But I didn't want to answer it now.

Noah and Jax looked at each other.

“*Should we give it to her?*” Noah asked.

“Should you give me what?” I asked, brows furrowed together.

They looked over at me with wide eyes.

“You could hear that?” Noah asked.

Jax sat up. “We said that through the mind link.”

“You did?”

This wolf thing was approaching faster than I’d realized. Soon, my eyes would be shifting, my nails turning into claws, my bones breaking. I peered out of the window, seeing only a glimpse of the white moon in the wintery sky. It was nearly full, only a few days to go. And although I was becoming more comfortable with the idea of shifting, there was something stirring in my stomach. A bad feeling that something would happen.

I was praying to the Moon Goddess that the *thing* wouldn’t be Ava.

My phone buzzed again, and I shut it off.

“Yes,” Noah said.

I pushed away my thoughts of Ava. I would worry about her closer to the full moon. Now, I wanted to spend time with them.

“What do you need to give me?” I asked.

Noah glanced over at Jax for another quick moment and then reached into his pocket. He placed his closed fist on the table between us.

Jax nodded at him. “Go ahead.”

Noah smiled warily at me, golden eyes wide and scared. “These,” he said. He opened his fist.

Two golden mate necklaces rested on the table in front of me. One had a red ruby pendant, and the other was an emerald green.

I gaped at the necklaces. “Mate necklaces?” I asked breathlessly. “For me?”

Noah’s jaw twitched. He was watching me intently. “Yes, if ... if you want them.”

## CHAPTER 52



NOAH

My heart was pounding against my chest. Each moment she was quiet made it harder and harder for me to breathe. I felt like I was suffocating. Maybe it was too early. Maybe we should've waited another day, another week, another month. Until she shifted. Until she claimed us too. Until she was a wolf, a true Lycan, more than us.

She parted her lips. "I ... I ..." Her cheeks flushed. "I don't know what to say." Her voice was quiet, and I couldn't erase the feeling of her lips on mine last time. Touching me so softly. Brushing against my ear. Pressing against my lips.

Jax leaned forward with a big grin on his face, one that I hadn't seen since Ava had said she wanted him more than anything else.

I shook my head. Enough with her. She had nothing on me anymore.

I sucked in a deep breath, nerves rushing through me like never before, and hoped to the Moon Goddess that she'd answer soon because I was about to pull my hand away, stick the necklaces back into my pocket, and act like none of this ever had happened.

Everything was on the table. I was vulnerable.

And I hated to be vulnerable.

It felt so wrong.

"Say yes," Jax whisper-yelled across the table.

She smiled widely, dimples forming on her cheeks, brows pulled together, eyes glowing dimly. Her wolf was nearly on the surface, like it had been last night. "Yes," she breathed. "Yes, please."

My heart stopped. I had sworn she was going to hand mine back. I couldn't sleep for hours after Jax asked me about the necklaces last night. I was tossing and turning, holding Naomi close to me and thinking about every

single situation that could happen. All of them had ended in Naomi handing the necklace back to me and taking Jax's. I had to keep reminding myself that Naomi was Naomi. No one else.

She slid out of the booth and grabbed our hands, pulling us to the exit of the café. "Put it on me out there." She gazed out the window, where the snow was falling lightly outside. "It's so beautiful outside."

It was snow, yes, but the view was perfect for this.

I grabbed the necklaces and followed my mate out of the café. I felt like I was walking on clouds. I had never felt so good.

We followed her to the middle of the woods, where all I saw were the trees, the snow, and our marks glowing on her thin neck.

She grabbed my hand, eyes glowing. "You first."

I grabbed my ruby-red pendant and gold chain and nervously walked around her. I unclasped it, feeling my heart pounding, and placed it around her neck. When the clasp fastened, my heart felt full. So fucking full.

Jax put on his, and I stood, gripping her hand the whole time. She smiled wide at us and then fixed her eyes on me.

"I'd wear anything that you put me in. I'll cherish my mate necklaces every single day. Wear your marks with so much pride."

NAOMI

I couldn't contain my excitement. I released Noah's hand and pushed my lips right onto Noah's, knowing that this was what he needed the most. He needed this assurance. He needed this necklace to be around my neck, for me to wear his mark with pride.

He rested his hands on my hips, digging his fingers into me lightly. The wind whipped around us, and snow blew into our faces. I could smell Noah's woodsy scent and sighed into him.

My wolf and I loved it.

Jax walked up behind me and pushed a piece of hair behind my ear, lips on my neck. "I say we celebrate," he said against me, chest rumbling softly.

I knew exactly how he wanted to celebrate.

Outside.

In the snow.

Naked.

Pounding into me.

I pulled away from Noah slightly. "We have to get to practice," I said against his lips, fingers moving down his abdomen.

He tensed under my touch, rubbing soothing circles on my hips.

Jax trailed his hands down my sides, fingers moving incredibly slow. "We have time." He peeled off my jacket, and I let him. "We always have time for you."

I unbuckled Noah's jeans and stuck my hand inside of them. The thought of getting it on in the middle of the woods was exhilarating. Just being thrust up against the tree, letting Noah and Jax take me.

Jax pulled up the back of my dress and grabbed my ass. Noah pushed a hand into my panties and rubbed my pussy.

"Wet," he said against my lips.

I clenched. His fingers traveled down my slit, and he pushed one inside of me.

“Mine,” he said.

I remembered last night when his breath had heated my pussy, when he had teased me with those fingers, when he had been soft and slow.

He shoved two fingers inside of me like we had only seconds together. Pounding them into my pussy, making me wetter each time.

Jax pulled the top of my shirt down, letting my breasts fall out of it. As soon as the coldness hit my breasts, my nipples were hard and poking against his palms. He growled lowly in my ear, lips on his mark, and placed a long kiss on it. I dug my fingers into Noah’s chest and whimpered.

He stepped away from me, behind a pine tree in the woods, and cocked his finger in my direction. “Come here, Little One.”

## CHAPTER 53





NAOMI

He pulled off his pants, his cock hard. I walked over to him, grabbed it, and stroked it slowly. He chuckled against my lips and picked me up off of the ground. His dick was pressed against my pussy, coating it in my juices. My breasts were pressed against his chest. He leaned against a tree, positioned his cock right at my opening, and slowly pushed himself inside of me.

He rested his forehead against mine, like he had done last night, groaning, “Nai,” softly against my lips.

I clenched hard around him, my toes curling in my shoes, and let him fill me all the way. Jax walked over from behind and rubbed my ass again. He positioned his cock against it and pushed it in, filling me too.

Jax reached around my body, one arm latching onto my shoulder, the other groping my bare breast. “Fuck, Naomi,” he said, letting it bounce in his hand.

He tugged on my nipple, and I tightened again on both of them.

They began to thrust themselves in and out of me, slowly at first. Each stroke long and too damn slow for me. All I wanted was to be pounded into, to be filled completely.

Jax groped both of my tits in his hands, and Noah latched on to one, tugging on my nipple with his teeth. I arched my back, leaning on Jax for support.

“Your tits are so nice, Little One,” he said in my ear. “The things I’d do to them if we were home.”

I moaned softly, the pressure building in my core. I dug my nails into Noah’s chest as he continued to suck on my nipple. Jax wrapped his arms under my thighs, holding me in the air instead of Noah, and pulled my legs

far apart, giving them both better access. Noah grasped my other breast in his hand, smacking it and watching it bounce. His eyes were a hazy mess of gold.

Jax picked up his pace, pounding harder and faster into my ass than before. My breasts bounced quickly in Noah's hands. I dug my fingers into Noah's chest again. He placed a hand around the back of my neck and pulled me to him, placing his lips onto mine in a heated kiss.

His hands tangled in my hair, his tongue tasting mine, fingers massaging lightly into my skin.

He began to drive harder into me, hand around my throat now, pulling me down onto them both.

The pressure rose in my core.

I curled my toes and furrowed my brows. And when Noah bit down on my nipple, I threw my head back and screamed out through the forest. Coming hard.

JAX

With our mate necklaces around her neck and our marks as scars on her body, she was ours and only ours. I grabbed my jeans and buttoned them up as Noah helped Naomi back into her coat.

The snow was drifting down in small flakes around us, nearly making the forest a winter wonderland. The snow, the scent of pine, Naomi. Except *her* scent was also drifting through the trees. I lifted my nose in the air and gazed around, catching a glimpse of her bright red coat.

She was standing about a quarter mile away, hiding behind a tree and just watching us. She had probably even watched us fuck.

I growled lowly under my breath. First, it was interrupting our breakfast, and now, Makayla was watching us. She was beginning to act like Ava. But worse, she was in our pack, and we couldn't just kick her out. As much as I wanted to since she'd started messing with him.

Once I buckled my jeans, I grabbed Naomi's chin and kissed her. "I have to take care of something," I said.

I gave Noah my best *I'm going to handle your mess* look without saying anything through the mind link and walked through the woods toward Makayla. I didn't trust Noah to handle her. She was manipulative, just like Ava, and used him, just like Ava had.

Naomi grabbed my hand before I made it far. "Don't be late for practice." She winked and walked away with Noah.

When she was gone, I turned back.

Makayla was still in the woods and didn't hear me approach her from behind. I snatched her neck and pulled her away from the tree. She yelped out and grabbed the back of her neck.

I lifted her into the air, growling lowly. "What are you doing? Why were you watching us?"

“Jax,” she said.

She batted her lashes at me, and I growled louder.

“Don’t think you can use that on me,” I said harshly. “I asked you a question. Don’t make me ask it again.”

“Can you put me down?” she said. “I’ll tell you, please.”

I placed her on the ground.

“I just ... I’m ...”

“Spit it out,” I said. “Stop stalling.”

“I keep seeing Ava in the woods, and I don’t want Noah to get hurt,” she said.

She looked completely innocent, like this was usual. But I didn’t know if I should believe her or not. She had always liked Noah more, and that was fine with me, but her obsession with him was almost too intense. She probably had a fucking shrine of him or something in her bedroom.

“Noah is fine,” I said. “We have Naomi. Ava is in our past.”

She shuffled back and forth. “I don’t want either of them to get hurt. Naomi is my friend, and she’s going to shift soon.”

I rubbed my forehead. So damn manipulative. I didn’t know whether to believe her or not.

I sighed deeply through my nose. “Stop watching him. Cut this obsession out of your life. He has a mate. He is not interested in you anymore.”

She parted her lips, eyes wide. “I know. I just don’t want—”

I growled and turned away. “Just stop, Makayla. Leave us alone. I will not tell you again. Next time, there will be punishment.”

## CHAPTER 54



NAOMI

“Decided to skip out on free beer and good conversation last night, babe?” Ryan peeled off his shirt, revealing his toned abdomen, before practice.

I raised a brow at him. “You know calling me that in front of the twins always gets you put into a bad situation, Ryan.”

He smirked and tossed his shirt on one of the wooden benches near the training area. “We can always make it a good situation,” he said, winking.

“And how will you do that?”

“I have my ways.”

He stepped closer to me, and I stepped back. Not out of fear, but out of wonder. Wonder as to how he had survived this long without getting on the twins’ nerves so badly that they hadn’t killed him yet.

The twins were walking out of the pack house toward the training area, chatting among themselves. I gazed back at Ryan as he picked up his training shoes.

“Don’t bother. You’ll be training in your wolf form today,” I said.

He dipped his thumbs into the waistband of his sweatpants. “So, that means—” He pulled them down, smirking as if I were going to be impressed by him.

Noah growled lowly, making Ryan wiggle his eyebrows at me.

I rolled my eyes and placed a hand on Noah’s chest to calm him down. “Take your clothes off too.”

“Lycan at her best,” Ryan said, slapping Noah on the shoulder.

I swore, this kid was going to really get it one of these days.

I cleared my throat and studied every one of the warriors standing in the training area. “The Lycans come to visit tomorrow. They will be training with

us. They will be tough. They will not hold back. You will get beat. But you've made improvements, so as a reward, we will be fighting in wolf form today." I gazed around. "Show me how well you can fight because you will be judged tomorrow."

My eyes landed on Makayla, and I pursed my lips together.

Everyone began stripping off their clothes and shifting into their wolves. Since I had been here, I had rarely seen Noah's and Jax's wolves. And I hadn't seen Makayla's wolf ever.

So, I sat back—like I used to do with Oliver—and watched as their bodies heaved over, hands posted on the ground, legs kicked back, bones lengthening, until a wolf emerged from them.

Absolutely beautiful, especially Makayla with her dark red fur.

I pressed my lips together and turned back toward everyone. "Five-mile run," I said. "I'll be timing you."

I sat on the bench, next to Ryan's stuff, and started the timer. Snow started falling from the sky, creating a dusting around me. I listened to the pounding of paws against the forest floor and sighed.

My body felt hot, my bones ached, and all I wanted to do was shift with them. To run with them. To be with the wolves.

I wouldn't shift for another few days, but hopefully, all of my fellow Lycans would be here when it happened. So, they'd help me through it if something went wrong. Isabella. Caleb. Addie. Oliver.

I groaned softly to myself, making a mental note to call him back. Goddess willing, the shift would happen before Ava made a move. Noah and Jax were terrified of her, and they thought I would be. They wanted me to stay out of it *for my safety*. But as a Lycan, that was something I wasn't accustomed to.

Ryan was the first one back. He shifted immediately, sweat dripping down his abdomen. I threw him his pants, but he took his sweet time, putting them on.

“So, have you put in any word with the Lycans for me yet?”

“That’s what you interrupted Noah and me for yesterday?”

He gave me half a smile. “Maybe.”

The rest of the wolves slowly came back, transforming into their humans as they approached the training center. We waited for a while, and I counted the wolves. One by one. Noah and Jax weren’t among them though, and neither was Makayla. I rubbed my sweaty palms together and sucked in my bottom lip.

Ryan bumped his hips with mine. “Worried about the twins, are we?”

I rolled my eyes. “No,” I said and walked toward the group.

They’d be back soon. They’d better be.

“Let’s start.” I watched the wolves start fighting, and when fifteen minutes passed and they hadn’t showed up, I began to watch the woods.

Something was wrong, and I swore if that something was Makayla, I was going to—

There was a vicious growl in the woods, and everyone stopped. I straightened my posture and walked over to where it had come from.

“Don’t stop fighting,” I said. “We have company tomorrow.”

Someone growled again, and I smelled blood. Jax suddenly emerged from the woods with blood on his snout, eyes black, fur soaked.



## CHAPTER 55



NAOMI

*H*e instantly shifted into his human, naked body covered in gory red blood. There was a deep scratch across his chest, and there was blood gushing out of it. But he had too much blood on him for this to only be his.

Stalking right over to me, he growled to the rest of the warriors, “Prepare.”

I stormed toward the woods with them, but Jax grabbed my wrist.

“No.” Without even trying, he pulled me toward the pack house. “Get inside.” His voice was tight.

I tried to pull away, but it didn’t even faze him. “What’s going on?” I asked, brows furrowed together. “Where’s Makayla? Where’s Noah?” I asked.

My heart was racing in my chest. I didn’t know why they’d both seemed to have disappeared so suddenly and why he was so angry. It was my wolf that was jealous, not me. I knew that this was more than them disappearing, but she couldn’t get the thought out of her head, especially because of how close Makayla and Noah had been in the past.

“Get inside,” Jax said again. His voice was pure anger. “Now.” He shoved me into the house and locked the door, and then he continued to his bedroom. When we reached his bedroom, he slammed the windows closed and pulled down the shades. “Don’t move.”

He hurried to the door, and I followed after him.

“What’s going on, Jax?”

His eyes glazed over for a moment, and I listened in.

*“Ryan, get your ass here now.”*

I furrowed my brows. “What is going on?” I asked again. “What aren’t

you telling me?”

“I have to deal with something,” he said, one hand plastered against the door to hold it closed, the other balled by his side. The vein in his neck was pulsing quickly. His muscles were flexed and swollen.

I placed a hand to his open wound, trying to stop the blood. “Where are they?”

He clenched his jaw, eyes still dark. “It’s none of your business.” His eyes glazed over again. “*Ryan*,” he growled through the link.

My wolf growled. I could feel my nails digging into skin. “Are they fucking each other?” my damn wolf asked. The words came out of my mouth before I could stop them.

“Naomi,” he said harshly, using my name instead of the nickname he had given me. “Stop.”

Another wolf howled deep into the night, and I ached to get out there and to see what was up. I tried to push past him again to follow the growls because they hadn’t stopped. They continued to howl through the cold winter day, only becoming louder and more vicious.

War. This was war.

Here, faster than I’d thought it would be.

And I wasn’t sure what this war was for. The war that Oliver had warned me of or the war that I had probably started with that *bitch*.

I listened to quick footsteps rushing up the stairs—two at a time, it seemed. And I growled at Jax, “Let me out.” It was my damn job to protect people, and that was what I had to do.

I should’ve answered Oliver’s call this morning. I shouldn’t have ignored it.

My fingers grazed against my two necklaces, and a pain split through my side. Then another through my shoulder. I clasped the necklaces tightly in my hand. Jax looked pained too.

“Tell me Noah is okay,” I said.

Ryan burst through the door.

Jax shook his head. "I can't do that," he said. He turned to Ryan, who was covered in blood, like Jax but worse. "I'm trusting you with my fucking life. Don't leave her side. And if you do, I will kill you."

I flared my nostrils, heart racing. "I'm coming with you."

He shook his head again and growled viciously at me. "You're staying right here, Naomi. You've been weakened by our marks. You will shift soon. Any day now, and you will not be able to fight to your full abilities like this. Stay until this is over. That's an order."

"I'm a Lycan. I fight."

He growled louder than I had heard anyone growl before, and my eyes widened.

"I said, no!"

"At least tell me what's going on."

"Makayla is gone, and Noah is going to find her."

And I didn't have to listen to the rest to know that wasn't all.

Ava was here. And by the sound of it, so was her whole pack.

## CHAPTER 56



NAOMI

Jax slammed the door, his bloody fingerprints left on the frame. I paced around the room, trying to come up with a plan. Makayla was gone, and I didn't trust her. Noah had gone to find Makayla, and I didn't completely trust him with her. Jax was angry beyond belief and obviously hadn't listened to me when I told him never to get angry in battle. And Ava was here, attacking with everything she had.

Ryan walked into Jax's attached bathroom and wiped the blood off of his face and hands. He dried his face with a towel and peeked behind the curtains. "They're going to be out there all night with Ava," he said. "Her brother and a few of the stronger warrior wolves are here."

"And their whole pack is close behind," I said.

He furrowed his brows at me. "How do you know?"

"Because that pack trains everyone—even pups—to fight, starting at the age of three," I said. "If one fights, they all do." I grabbed a coat from Jax's closet and threw it to Ryan. "And war is approaching."

If it was true that Roger was leaning toward the opposing side and he'd heard of this battle going on, his army would be here soon.

"We have to go," I said.

Ryan put on his coat. "Jax told me not to let you leave."

"No, he said to not let me out of your sight." I gazed at him and opened the door. "We're warriors, not people who sit back and watch people fight for us. The only thing I have known for the past sixteen years since my mom died is war, and I am finally going to get my revenge."

I walked out the door, and Ryan followed behind me quickly.

"I know you want to fight, but you've been weakened. You should wait until a few days after you shift."

“There is more to war than physically fighting, Ryan,” I said. “Information is always more valuable.” I tugged on my snow boots, grabbed a couple of bottles of wolfsbane that I always kept in my suitcase, and put all of my essentials in a small backpack, including a spare disposable phone that Oliver had given me for emergencies.

I scribbled on a piece of scrap paper and left the twins a note in Jax’s room, and then I nodded to Ryan. “Now, come on.”

“They should’ve just left Makayla out there,” Ryan said as we trudged through the snow, deeper into the woods.

We were near the fighting. I could smell the blood and hear the whimpers of wolves.

The wolf inside of me ached to run into battle full force, but I knew that I couldn’t. I couldn’t go in angry, and I was furious.

I raised a brow at him and hopped over a fallen tree. “Why’re you so calm about her being gone?”

He shook the snow from his hair and nodded toward a large hill toward the north, where we would be able to see everything for miles. “Why aren’t you? If I were with Noah and Jax and knew that the girl they used to fuck was captured by their ex-mate, I’d say, let her have her.”

My brows furrowed together. “What do you mean, they used to fuck?”

He stopped and stared at me, nose red. “Wait, you didn’t know?” he asked.

I pressed my lips together and continued the trek up the mountain.

“Makayla was with the twins when she met Roger. From what I heard, she ignored him for the longest time because she was with them. That’s why I think he rejected her when she finally came around, couldn’t trust her to be with two of the strongest alphas around, to be constantly under their noses, to be sleeping in their bed.”

“She ignored Roger when she met him?” I asked. “I thought he’d just rejected her because she wasn’t strong enough.”

Ryan shrugged his shoulders. “That’s what everyone thinks because that’s what Makayla tells them. She cries about it in the bars every night. I was so fucking annoyed with it one night, hearing her constantly crying, so I asked the twins about it. They told me that they tried to get her to leave with Roger, but she wouldn’t.” He rolled his eyes. “The amazing sex they gave her must’ve kept her here.”

I growled and slammed my fist into a tree, watching the snow shake off of it. My wolf was angry. I was angry. Listening to the things that my mates had done with Makayla. Letting her still get so close to them. Going after her to save that damn girl. I should’ve known from the beginning.

He continued up the hill. “You know, their whole situation is just a fucking mess. Noah is screwed up because of Ava and Makayla. Makayla is screwed up because she got rejected. Jax is screwed up because he hangs out with them both all the time and listens to it all. I’m surprised you got yourself into it.”

I glared at him.

“You really didn’t know about their relationship?” Ryan said. He had his hands stuffed into his pockets, and his hood was pulled up over his ears now.

“I had my suspicions,” I said. And I had, but just hearing it aloud hurt and made me furious.

They still hung out as if nothing had happened between them, as if their feelings toward each other were only friendly feelings—not romantic or sexual.

“I can’t believe that they wouldn’t tell me.” But I did.

They were so quiet about everything, and she was always too close for comfort, but with this Ava shit and war threatening to erupt at any minute, I hadn’t had time to figure her out yet. It was damn frustrating to find out this way.

Ryan took my hand, and my eyes snapped to him. I yanked myself away from him.



“What?” I snapped, suddenly overcome with rage.

“Are you okay?” he asked.

“No,” I said. Even in this cold, my eyes felt hot.

Ryan stepped back and lifted his hands. “You just look pale,” he said. “And your eyes are changing.”

I growled again, unable to stop myself. I dug my nails into my palms, letting them sink right through the skin. Then, in a sudden roar of pain, I cut my nails right through the tree in front of me and listened to the tree crack and fall, its sound like thunder throughout the forest.

Ryan stepped forward and pressed his hands against my shoulders. “It’s your wolf. You feel it inside of you, don’t you?”

“She wants out,” I said. “She wants to kill.”

“Let her out then,” Ryan said.

His eyes blazed gold, and I wanted to let my wolf out, too, and let myself go. Let her run free. Let her be that vicious creature I really was on the inside.

But I shook my head. “I can’t. Not when I’m angry. That doesn’t work in war.”

His eyes faded back to their normal color, and suddenly, I felt myself relaxing too. That rage burned inside of me still but dimmer.

I felt weak yet strong at the same time. I had one more question about Makayla and my mates that I needed answered before I made any rash decisions about hurting any one of them more than they’d hurt me in the past week. I was just terrified of the answer.

“Do you think they’ve been with her since I’ve been here?” My fingers trembled slightly, and I grabbed Ryan’s hand to steady them. “Do you think that either of them has slept with her?”

## CHAPTER 57



NAOMI

Ryan groaned softly and continued up the mountain, leaving me standing near the broken tree and waiting for an answer. I crossed my arms over my chest and gazed down at my feet to shield myself from the biting winter breeze.

“You’re just going to ignore me?” I asked.

“No, Naomi,” he said. “I’m not ignoring you.”

I raised my brows and caught up to him. “Well then, answer me.”

“How would you like me to answer?” he asked. “Honestly? With my opinion?”

I kicked some snow with the tip of my snow boot, listening to the howls through the forest. The sun was beginning to set over the mountain, and if we didn’t get up there soon, we wouldn’t know what was going on.

“Is your opinion not honest?”

“It is what I beli—”

I fell to the ground, clutching my neck, a piercing pain going right through it.

“Naomi,” he said, grabbing my arm and lifting me back up.

I dug my nails into my palm again, trying to make the pain disappear.

It felt like teeth were sinking into my neck, like the night that the twins had marked me. But it felt so much worse. They were digging deeper and deeper and deeper, wanting blood, wanting life. Noah or Jax was in trouble. They were hurting.

Ryan wrapped his arms under my legs and torso and picked me up, continuing the trek up the mountain.

I grasped my neck and squeezed my eyes shut. “Put me down.”

“No,” he said. “We’re going to make it up this mountain because if we go

back down now, Jax and Noah are going to have my ass for letting you come out here.”

Another shot of pain, and I whimpered. “It hurts so bad,” I said, tensing in his arms.

Moon Goddess, if either of the twins saw our position right now, they would have Ryan’s ass. The howls were becoming louder and louder, which meant that the battle was getting closer or that Ava’s pack was retreating for the night.

We were about three-fourths up the mountain, and I was hurting. Ryan began to jog a little faster. Snow began to pelt down on us, and I was terrified that if Ava’s pack was retreating, they would see our footsteps, and they would smell our scents. I glanced around the mountain, remembering it from when I had trained with the Lycans. Oliver and I used to stop near here to rest in a cave during the harsh winter months, when staying out all hours of the night was our thing.

I looked over Ryan’s shoulder and saw a wolf walking through the woods with bloodstained teeth. “Stop, Ryan,” I whispered. “Don’t move.”

Ryan froze in his spot, and the wolf stopped as well. He looked around, his eyes a piercing black. I swallowed hard. He was from Ava’s pack. From his burly frame to the scars all over his body, I could tell that he was one of the higher-ranked wolves. I dug my nails into Ryan’s chest.

The wolf pointed his snout to the sky, sniffed, and then looked directly at me. I showed him no fear. I stared right back, matching his intensity. But my heart was racing in my chest because I was still in pain, still clutching my neck, and I had Ryan to protect.

The wolf sprinted toward us. “Go, Ryan,” I said. “Run. Now.”

Ryan took off with me in his arms, trudging through the snow in his human form—much slower than the wolf, but it gave me enough time to pull the wolfsbane from my backpack.

“When I tell you to duck out of the way, let me go and duck.”

“No, I’m not going to—”

“Duck!”

I jumped out of his arms as the wolf leaped up, aiming for Ryan’s neck. I uncapped the wolfsbane and forced it down his throat, the bottle and the liquid. He attached himself onto my arm, slicing his teeth into my muscle, but as soon as the drink went down his throat, he stuck his snout to the air and whimpered loudly. I pressed my hand to his mouth.

Ryan stuck his claws into his neck, ending his life instantly.

The man shifted, and I gulped, realizing that it wasn’t just a higher-ranking wolf. It was Ava’s brother, the youngest sibling of the Vixel’s alpha.

“We have to get out of here—now.” I grabbed his hand, tugged the brother’s body over my shoulder, and ran up the mountain to the cave.

It looked like a boulder from the outside, just a huge piece of dark rock, but it had magical powers that the Moon Goddess herself had put on it. I walked right through the rock and tugged Ryan along, and then I collapsed.

“Goddamn,” I said. I pulled the medical equipment out of my backpack and wrapped my arm with gauze.

Ryan was standing near the edge of the cave, looking out upon everything.

“What do you see?” I asked, putting the equipment away.

“They’re retreating quite quickly, racing through the forest.” He furrowed his brows.

I listened to the thunderous pounding. They were gone.

“Wait, they’re not heading back to their pack,” he said. “They’re going around the mountain, and it looks like they’re just camping there.” He shook his head.

I leaned back on one of the cave walls and closed my eyes. We would rest here until midnight.

After a few moments of silence, I turned to him. I needed my question answered. “I want your honest opinion about the twins and Makayla.”

He sighed and stayed quiet for a long time. “My honest opinion is,” he said, “I don’t think they’ve done anything since you’ve been here.”

## CHAPTER 58



NAOMI

The moon was shining brightly above us. We were so close to the full moon that I could feel that innate urge inside of me to shift again. My wolf was clawing its way to the surface, begging for me to shift already. But I couldn't physically do it.

All of Ava's pack was back, and about an hour ago, they had sent a team to go find her brother through the woods. I didn't know why they were staying so close. It looked as if they had lost quite a few men and women. Completely destroyed, but Ava had been walking around as if she were the queen of the forest. Like nothing could hurt her.

She had long brown hair that went to her waist. A scar down her neck. Piercing eyes, even as a human. She was beautiful. Too bad she had an ugly heart.

"I'm going back with you," Ryan said from behind me. "You're not going back in that mess alone."

"If you go back with me, they're going to have your ass, remember?"

"If I don't go back with you, they're going to have my ass too."

"I'd rather you stay here to gain information from them than have Jax or Noah kill you," I said. "If you stay here, you can listen to whatever kind of plans they have. See if they have Makayla. You don't even have to leave the cave."

I gazed out of it to see only two warrior wolves standing guard at the bottom of the mountain. It would be an easy getaway for me. I had done it a million times before.

I handed him my backpack, only taking my phone with me. "Keep this here. There will be a Lycan here in the morning for you to work with. His name is Caleb," I said. "I'm sure you two will hit it off."



Ryan grabbed my non-bitten arm and looked at the one that had turned purple around my bandage. “Are you sure that you’re okay?”

I placed my hand on his. “I am fine, and I will be fine.” I hugged him. “Thank you for coming with me.”

Before I stepped out of the cave, he nodded. “Don’t let them scold you too much.”

I shook my head. “Not when I’ve learned that they were hiding their relationship with Makayla from me.” I stepped into the darkness, clutching the phone in my hand. All I had to do was make it close enough to the property where the guards from either side wouldn’t see me.

I knew that Jax and Noah were looking for me. I could feel their anger seeping in my veins. I could hear them through the mind link, saying every curse word in the book.

I easily snuck around the cave and walked down the other side of the mountain slowly, being careful to not step on any branches or twigs. And when I made it down safely, I opened my phone and dialed Oliver’s number.

“Naomi, Naomi, Naomi,” he said. “Finally calling me for a change. Do you miss me?”

“No,” I said. *Maybe*. “The twins were attacked this morning by Ava.”

He sighed through the phone. “I know. I’ve been busy all day, getting people prepared. Roman has offered to send warriors.”

“Roman?”

“Yeah, he and Roger don’t have a good relationship.” He sighed again, and I could hear the tiredness in his voice. He must’ve been up for nearly twenty-four hours. “We have people working to find safe places for others to stay because Ava’s brother’s pack will kill anyone and everyone in their wake unless they need them for something.”

I lowered my voice. “Ava and her pack have retreated to the mountain near the cave that we used to go to. They have lost many, but there are more in her pack. And I wouldn’t be surprised if people from Roger’s pack are

joining her. The twins and someone from their pack have really pissed Roger off,” I said, thinking back to Makayla. “I don’t know if any prisoners have been taken. I haven’t seen any, but they could’ve been taking them somewhere else. There is one woman who went missing as of this morning.” I jingled my mate necklaces and sighed. “I have a warrior posted in the cave. I need you to get Caleb to go down there and watch with him.”

I walked in the direction of the twins’ pack and sighed softly through my nose. My stare drifted around the forest to make sure that I wasn’t being watched.

“I will be at the twins’ pack early tomorrow morning,” he said.

“Good,” I said.

I really needed him to be here with me. I couldn’t do this alone, and I couldn’t do this when the twins didn’t trust me to get them information. Oliver wouldn’t force me to stay alone or lock me in a room during war.

“I can’t wait to see you,” he said.

He had more respect for me than that.

“I can’t wait to see you either,” I said.

## CHAPTER 59



JAX

One of the warrior wolves had his arm around Noah's waist, helping him toward our borders. Not one of us came out of the battle without an open wound that was spewing blood. Many of the warriors were still on the battleground, lying in the woods, and would have to be buried once this war was all over.

Noah had gotten it the hardest though. Fighting directly against Ava's brother and Ava herself. She had wanted nothing to do with me. Every time I tried to attack her, one of her peasants would attack me. But not Noah. They let him get to her, thinking that he wouldn't hurt her because he still loved her.

They didn't see Naomi as a threat, and that was their only mistake out of all the mistakes that they'd made today.

Letting anger get in the way. Letting the enemy get under our skin. We should've listened more to Naomi.

When they saw us, doctors from the hospital rushed out. Noah was bleeding profusely from his neck still, from that bite that had nearly killed him.

Two doctors immediately rushed to Noah's side, guiding him toward the building, but it seemed as if he didn't want to go.

He turned back to me. "Where is Naomi?" he asked.

"At the pack house with Ryan."

His eyes were glowing gold. "I'm going to go get her. I need to make sure."

The doctors tried to pull him back, but he jerked himself out of their grip.

I grasped his shoulder, pushing him in the direction of the hospital. "I'll go get her. You've lost too much blood."

He pushed against me. “I need to make sure she’s okay,” he said. There was pain evident in his eyes. “I need to tell her what happened. How to prepare. When to prepare.”

I squeezed his shoulder a bit harder. “I will bring her to you. Now, go get that cleaned up. You have all night to tell her whatever you need to. They won’t be back until the morning.”

He glared at me for a long time with his jaw clenched, and then he shook his head and walked toward the doctors. I waited until he was inside our hospital building to go back to the pack house, and when I got there, I clutched my stomach, my hand becoming wet with blood.

“Naomi!” I yelled from down the stairs.

Everything was aching. My head was spinning. All I wanted was to see my mate. She had been so angry with me for leaving her with Ryan in my room earlier, but it had been for her own safety.

Any day now, she would shift. The full moon was nights away, and some wolves shifted for the first time before the full moon.

If something happened to her, I would never forgive myself. So, I had done what was best, taken the burden away from Noah, and forced her into that room, whether she wanted to go or not.

“Naomi!”

No answer.

“Ryan!” I said, collapsing onto the couch and becoming light-headed. I closed my eyes for the briefest moment and tried the mind link. “*Ryan.*”

Nothing.

*Fuck.* I sucked in a deep breath and pushed myself off of the couch, leaving a stain of blood on it. Each step I took up the stairs was harder and harder. There was a splitting pain in my side, and the weight of Naomi not answering me was holding me down.

I pushed my door open. “Naomi, what are you—”

The room was empty.

*Oh no, no, no, no, no, no.* This couldn't be happening. This really couldn't be happening.

I looked everywhere. In my bathroom. Under my bed. Inside my closet. Tore apart every room, my blood getting on everything that she owned, ruining the carpets, tearing the closets to shreds.

"No," I growled, anger in my veins. "Fuck no!"

I hurried back in my room, trying to find anything that seemed to be out of place. Anything at all that would lead me to her. My thoughts were racing, but I didn't know what to think.

*Has she been taken? Did Ryan think there was a threat and leave with her? Why wouldn't he tell me?*

And then I saw it. A single scrap piece of paper resting on my bed with Naomi's handwriting.

Noah appeared at the door, eyes wide. His hand was pressed against his neck, and blood was reddening the bandage on it.

"Where is she?" he asked.

I handed him the note.

**Noah and Jax. Going to get information for you. Don't be angry with me. I'm just doing my job. Love, Naomi.**

I ran my hand through my hair and punched my fist straight through the wall. *Fuck.*

She'd left. She was gone. She was in danger.

A hundred different scenarios about where she could've gone rushed through my mind. *Maybe back to the Lycans. Maybe into the woods. Maybe right to Ava's damn camp.*

*Find mate*, my wolf growled inside of me. *Find mate before she is hurt.*

A pain pierced through my forearm, and I clutched it. It felt like a wolf was biting straight into it, piercing the skin until blood spewed out. But within a second, the pain vanished. It was too late. Naomi was already hurt.

I hurried out of the room, Noah on my heels. "More guards at the

perimeter,” I ordered the warriors getting healed. “Get bandaged up and then straight back out.”

I didn’t know what I was going to do. If I didn’t find her, then this would all be for nothing. This war that Ava had started would be for absolutely nothing. And if Ava got to her first, she would kill her. There was no doubt in my mind that Naomi’s head would end up on our doorstep, and our mate necklaces would be smashed to pieces in front of it.

## CHAPTER 60





NAOMI

When I approached the property border, I sighed deeply through my nose. There were guards all around the property, searching. I walked toward them, and when they saw me, they immediately ran toward me.

“Naomi,” one said. “Are you hurt?”

“No,” I said.

“The twins are—”

“Where the fuck have you been?” Jax said, storming from deep in the woods. “I told you not to leave my damn room.” He snatched my arm that was bandaged and dragged me to the pack house. “Huh?”

I clutched my arm, hoping that he would be easy on it but he wasn’t. Instead, he pulled me tighter and threw the door open.

“We have been looking for you for hours.”

I listened through the *mind link* as he contacted Noah. “*She’s in the pack house.*”

He pushed me down on one of the kitchen chairs. “Why don’t you listen? For once?” he growled loudly, jaw twitching.

His eyes were full of rage as he paced around the room. I could just feel his anger; it was more intense than before. There was a big bloodstain on his shirt, near his abdomen.

“I told you to stay here, where it was safe.”

The door flung open again, and Noah burst through it, his eyes a wild gold. “Where is he?” He stared at me. “Where is Ryan?”

There was a large bite mark on his neck—right where I’d felt it—and I winced, thinking back to it.

“Ryan is keeping watch for us.”

He slammed his fist on the table. “Where?!” He shook his head. “Can you even comprehend how much danger you were in by being on this property? That’s why we made sure you were with him, but you got him to leave, too, because that’s what Naomi does apparently. She tries to be the big girl, thinks she knows everything about how war fucking works.”

I narrowed my eyes at him. “What do you mean, *we*?” I stood up and met his gaze. “You were off, going to find your girl who you used to fuck all the time. Makayla. You were going out, trying to find her, because she went Moon Goddess knows where.”

I could feel my eyes changing, the wolf in me wanting to come out again. I was so done, so fucking done with being yelled at by them for no reason at all.

“Why do you have to make such a big fucking deal about this? She was before you. All I was doing was finding one of my pack members. I would’ve done it for any one of my pack members, Naomi.”

“Because you kept this from me.”

He rolled his eyes. “Here we go again.”

Jax stood off to the side, rage fading from his face.

“Yeah, here we go again, me having to yell at you because you can’t be honest with me. How many lies has this been now, Noah? Third, fourth, fiftieth?”

Jax placed a hand on my shoulder. “Naomi, calm down.”

“No!” I pulled myself away from him and slammed my hand down on the table. My God, this was too much drama.

“It was only sexual,” Jax said. “That was it.”

“You’re not helping, Jax,” Noah said, shaking his head. “You know what? You obviously don’t want our help because you think you have this all figured out by yourself. You keep going directly against our orders to keep you safe. Why don’t you leave?”

My eyes widened. *Leave?*

Jax hit his brother in the chest. "What the fuck, dude?"

My lips parted in disbelief. "You want me to leave?"

My eyes found his, and almost immediately, he shook his head.

"I didn't mean it."

"No, no, you did. You want me to leave, like Ava did," I said. It was spiteful, and I shouldn't have said it, but I did and couldn't take it back. "If I leave, I will never come back. I will be out of your life for good," I said. "Is that really what you want?"

I knew why Noah had said it. He was trying to protect himself from getting hurt again, but I was hurting now.

He clenched his jaw. There was so much confusion in his eyes.

Jax stepped forward, shaking his head. "No, that's not what he wants."

"Good, because I wouldn't have left anyway. I was placed here for business that hasn't been finished yet," I said.

I clutched the mate necklaces in my hand, and Noah inhaled sharply. I could hear his heart racing in his chest, could see his eyes widened with fear.

"I told you that I was going to stay, and I am. And I'm not giving you your damn necklace back either just because you're scared. I'm angry that you didn't tell me about her. Not about Ava. Not about war. This is about Makayla, and whether you like it or not, I will be helping you find her because this is going to be my fucking job to do too. So, we will wait for Oliver to get here with the rest of the Lycans tomorrow morning, and right now, you will sit down with Jax and think about the next words that you'll say to me."

There was a long pause, and I decided that I wasn't finished. "I'll leave the house tonight if you want me to, but you're not getting rid of me. Get this out of your system. Think about it. This isn't what you want." At least, I hoped it wasn't what they wanted.

I made a leave for the door, but Jax growled, "You are not leaving this damn house, Naomi."

I looked over at him and then at Noah. There was another struggle going on inside of him again, and I wasn't sure who or what was holding him back this time. He brushed a hand against his neck and nearly dug his claws into the bite mark.

"Who bit you?" I asked. "Which one of the wolves did you let bite you?"

I had taught him better than to get bitten so carelessly. He was stronger and smarter than to let someone bite him there.

"Naomi," he said, "don't start."

"No, I will start because I love you," I said before I could stop myself. "You're not going to let me go that easily. Now, tell me who did it because I'm going to kill them."

He stared at me for a few moments, then at Jax, and then back at me. "Ava."

## CHAPTER 61



## NAOMI

I sat down at the table, completely calm. So calm. Terrifyingly calm.

Ava had sunk her teeth into my mate, and he'd let her.

I intertwined my fingers on the table and smiled. "That's great," I said. *Wonderful*. "Of course, I should've known."

He took a deep breath and sat at the table with me. "Naomi," he said, grabbing for my hands, but I pulled them away. "Naomi."

"What?" I asked, face completely void of emotion. My wolf was bottled up somewhere deep inside of me, and I knew if I let her out, I would lose control. I would freak the fuck out, and I couldn't let that happen at a time like this.

"I was fighting her," he said.

I nodded. "Yeah, I know. And she bit you." *Perfect*. "I don't see anything wrong with that."

They both stared at me like I was crazy, and I didn't blame them. I felt like I was going crazy.

"Maybe the next time I'm fighting Oliver, I'll let him bite me." It was supposed to come out as a joke, but it came out with so much annoyance in my voice that it sounded like I was being petty. And I should've been petty, but I didn't know what to feel. "Why did you let her bite you?"

He was so much stronger than that. He knew how to fight and how to fight well.

"I didn't let her bite me," he said.

"Jax didn't get bitten," I said.

"Jax wasn't there," he said with spite.

"Oh, wow ... I'm sorry for offending you, Noah." I glared at him. "My

mate just came home with a mark on his neck from the mate who had rejected him years ago, who he still hasn't gotten over, apparently, even after he gave me his necklace to keep forever."

This was too much damn drama for me. I couldn't wait for Oliver to get here. Maybe I would be able to relax without constantly feeling like I was being pulled in a hundred different directions. Spend time with a man who didn't want to toy with my emotions at all.

He stared out the window.

I rolled my eyes, sighed, and stood. "I'm assuming that you didn't even find a trace of Makayla. Just went right for the woman you still love."

Neither of them said anything.

"All right, I'll be in my room. If you need me, don't knock, don't call for me, don't come in, just wait for me to come out. I just want one hour of peace without you guys."

I walked toward the door, and Noah stood.

"I let Ava get close because I was angry with her for everything that she's done," he said.

I paused.

"I let my anger get in the way instead of fighting the way that you'd taught us to do." He hung his head. "And now, I have her mark on my neck. I was reckless, and I'm paying for it." He grimaced. "I'm sorry."

I looked at him, tears welling up in my eyes. I grasped my arm, suddenly feeling pain in it. It was bruising a deeper purple color now.

He looked down at it and stood up. "What happened?"

"Nothing," I said. "It's fixable, but that mark on your neck isn't."

"It's not a mate's mark," Jax said, stepping forward. "You can't mark someone after you reject them as a wolf. The Moon Goddess doesn't allow it for this exact reason. It's just a bite mark."

I eyed the mark. It was like her teeth were taunting me. She'd had her teeth on the sensitive spot of my mate.

*Stupid fucking Ava.* When I found her, I would be the one to kill her. Werewolf or human form—it didn't matter. I was going to wrap my arms around her skinny little neck and snap it. She wouldn't be able to fuck with me if she was dead.

"He can't feel anything from Ava," Jax added.

"He's right," Noah said, staring into my eyes and being completely honest with me. "I can only feel your pain."

I shook my head. All I felt was pain now. Pain that wouldn't go away, no matter how hard I tried.

He turned his back to me and stared out of the window in the kitchen, leaning over the counter. "Moon Goddess, I feel like I can't do anything right with you, Naomi. I keep fucking things up." His voice wasn't angry, just sad.

I crossed my arms over my chest, wincing slightly.

"And I'm not trying to make you feel sorry for me, so don't think that." His back tensed. "I just honestly feel like you would be so much better off without me. You wouldn't have to deal with any of this fucked-up drama we have in our lives."

And the saddest thing was, I knew my life would be so much easier without them in it.

I could be with Oliver, doing what I loved, not in a committed relationship with two twin alphas who had two crazy women fawning over them at all times. One was trying to get with them. And the other was trying to kill me.



## CHAPTER 62



NAOMI

It was five a.m., and I hadn't slept all night. I had been listening to Noah toss and turn in his bed before eventually just getting up. Something wasn't right, and I couldn't shake the feeling that there would be another battle today. And that something would go terribly wrong.

When I walked out of my room, Noah was standing in the living room, gazing out the window and watching the heavily guarded woods.

When he heard me, he glanced over and gave me a hard smile. "Couldn't sleep?"

I frowned at him, seeing Ava's bite, and stood by the window near him. "No," I said softly.

I couldn't peel my eyes away from the bite. It was so fresh, yet he had taken the bandages off of it already. I brushed my fingers across it, and Noah flinched.

"Don't do that," he said. "It hurts."

"Can I touch you here?" I asked, brushing my fingers across the other side of his neck.

He grasped my wrist but didn't make any move to stop me. He looked down at me, eyes softening.

"Because this is where I want to mark you when I shift," I said.

He released my wrist and drew his fingers slowly down my forearm. "You can't shift if you're dead."

"Why don't you believe in me, Noah?" I asked.

The sunlight was just coming up over the trees.

"I do believe in you," he said. "But I also care about you, and I don't want to see you in danger."

I swallowed hard and pulled my hand away. I didn't agree. Was it okay

for him to put himself in danger, but for me to just stay hidden from anything, be absolutely useless to the pack that I had been selected to train to become stronger and chosen to protect?

“Naomi, I—” His eyes widened, and he clenched his jaw. “Someone’s here.”

I followed his gaze to see two people hurrying through the woods, coming straight toward the pack house.

“Jax!” Noah called. “Get up—now!”

We hurried out of the house to see Caleb and Ryan approaching. When Jax saw Ryan, he hurried to him, hands balled into fists, but Caleb pushed him back.

“Don’t touch him. We’re here with information. Not to fight.” Caleb looked at me and nodded. “Good morning, Naomi.”

“Morning, N,” Ryan said, winking.

I narrowed my eyes at him. What was his damn problem? Every single time I was with the twins, he just had to do something dumb, like try to flirt with me.

Caleb stepped closer and looked around. “Listen. This information can’t be told to anyone. It’s private Lycan information. Do you understand?”

Everyone nodded.

“You know that woman who was taken?” he asked. “Makayla?”

“What about her?” I asked.

Ryan pressed his lips together. “I saw her this morning at their camp.”

“They have her?” Noah’s jaw tightened, and I tried to calm down.

She was just a stupid wolf in their pack. Nothing more at the moment, and it was going to stay like that because if they didn’t kill her, I would.

“Yes, she’s there, but she’s not their prison—”

“Wolves approaching from the north,” one of the warrior wolves said, racing through the woods to the pack house.

In a moment, there was a swarm of warrior wolves rushing in all

directions. I stood toward the south and waited.

“Naomi,” Jax said toward me while looking straight ahead. “If anything happens, please do us a favor and keep yourself safe. Do you understand?”

“*Please*,” Noah said through the mind link.

I pressed my lips together and nodded. “Yes.” *Stupid alpha males.*

“Naomi! Look out!” someone yelled.

Everyone looked toward me. Noah’s eyes widened, and he immediately shifted into his wolf. Jax followed suit, and they both ran toward me. I turned around to see a familiar black wolf leaping right toward me.

When he collided with my chest, we both tumbled down to the ground. He shifted in the air, snaking an arm around my torso and curling me toward his chest. We fell into the thick mud with me landing on top of him.

“Oliver,” I said breathlessly.

There were three other wolves following after him, baring their teeth. Jax took one. Noah took the other. And Oliver shifted back into his wolf, let out a vicious growl, and sank his teeth into the last one’s neck, killing him instantly. Two more emerged from the woods, and Oliver went at them without waiting for help. One latched his teeth into his shoulder, and the other sank his claws into his underbelly. Oliver shook them off as if they were nothing and killed them both by swiping his claws across both of their necks in one swoop.

He shifted into his human, tanned and naked body glistening with sweat, and nodded to me. “Wolves approaching from the north, and one sexy Lycan approaching from the south,” he said.

I rolled my eyes and stood up from the mud.

“Off to a lovely morning, aren’t you, sweet thang?”

“You know, a simple, *Watch out, Naomi*, would have done the trick,” I said.

He chuckled, brown eyes becoming seas of gold in the sun. “I go big and bold for everything, babe. You should know that.”

His lip curled into a smirk, and I knew that he was talking about something more than just fighting. He stalked toward me with all that thick muscle that any woman would love to just sink her fingers into and curled his arm around me, pulling me to his chest.

“Miss me?” he said lowly in my ear.

“No,” I lied.

## CHAPTER 63



NAOMI

Noah and Jax were staring right at us, but it was like I didn't even see them. Oliver had always been too captivating—the way his hair was always a bit too long, the brightness in his smile, that dominant persona. I gazed at his eyes, at his face, at his lips, and then at himself for longer than I should've.

Everything was so much simpler with him by my side. We protected each other. We were honest with each other. We had loved each other.

“Lie,” he said, beautiful brown eyes rolling playfully at me. “But I’ll let it pass.”

No jealousy. No drama. Just Ollie.

“Why would I miss your goofy ass?” I asked, shaking my head. There were a thousand reasons why I did.

Oliver brushed his fingers against mine ever so lightly. “Well, I missed your goofy ass.”

He smelled good, so good. But my wolf was repulsed, growling at me to stay away from him. He wasn't either of our mates.

Noah growled lowly, and Oliver looked him directly in the eyes and grabbed my hand.

“Which one is this, Naomi?” he asked. “The asshole or the idiot?”

I loved Oliver, but it wasn't true love. It didn't make me feel the things that I felt with Noah and Jax. It wasn't intense. It was just safe.

“Oliver,” I said, pulling my hand away from his but not wanting to, “don't do this.”

“Guys—” Ryan started.

Oliver looked Noah up and down, a smirk stretching across his face. Noah's eyes were gold, his canines appearing under his lips.

Oliver brushed his hand against my shoulder, but didn't look away from Noah. "Naomi, you wouldn't happen to have a spare T-shirt of mine? Maybe my sweatpants from our trip to Colorado?"

I knew exactly what he was doing—trying to get them riled up to see if they had learned anything from me training them.

Jax stepped forward and harshly pushed his arm off of me, pulling me behind him.

Oliver's smirk widened as his gaze shifted to Jax. "Rough," he said sarcastically. "Naomi's favorite way to get—"

Noah growled louder than I had ever heard him growl before, eyes pure gold. So dominant and undeniably alluring. "Talk about her like that again, and I'll—"

"Guys, we have a pro—" Ryan started again.

Oliver chuckled, as if his threat meant nothing, and stepped toward Noah. "You're the asshole, aren't you? The man protecting Ava, the man hiding secret after secret from *my* precious Naomi."

Well, that was Oliver for you. Calling people out on their bullshit—the way I should've, especially with the twins.

Oliver was right. He was the asshole I kept forgiving because of their marks.

"Guys—" Caleb said.

The twins glared at Oliver, ready to rip his head off, and he glared back and arched a brow. Oliver wasn't angry; it was more of a playful kind of glare. I stepped between the three men, wanting to calm my mates down.

Sure, I believed that Oliver could kill them before they could kill him, but there was no saying what two notoriously strong alphas could do to a man who was flirting with their mate.

"Will you not do this right now?" I asked, placing one hand on Noah's chest and the other on Jax's, hoping that it would calm them down.

"Stop it!" Ryan yelled, stepping toward us threateningly. "Will you stop



fighting over the woman who will probably not want any of you by the time this is over and listen?”

We all looked over at him.

He was clenching his jaw, gaze flickering between us all and frowning. “We have a problem,” he said calmly.

Jax growled lowly, “What?” He was seething, canines sharp and ready to pierce skin.

“Your ex.”

I blew a breath harshly out of my nose. “Which one?” I looked through the forest, looking for any other sign of approaching wolves but there was none. The forest seemed eerily quiet—too quiet.

Ava was out there, watching; she had to be. And if she wasn’t, she was looking for her brother—the man I’d killed yesterday that I still hadn’t told anyone about.

Ryan looked at me, lips pressed together. “Makayla.”

“What about that—” I stopped myself short. I couldn’t get angry with her. This was exactly what Ava would thrive off of. Getting angry during war never ended well.

“She is at their hideout,” he said.

“Tell us something that we don’t know already,” Jax said.

“She is at their hideout, and she’s there willingly.”

## CHAPTER 64



NAOMI

“*W*hat do you mean, she is there willingly?” I asked.

“She is walking around without chains, without a guard, talking to Ava as if it were nothing.”

I gazed at Noah, brows furrowed together. “Why?” I asked. “Ava had to know that you and Makayla were together—because I fucking knew and I hadn’t been stalking you. She knew, and she’s not killing her. I thought you said that she was dangerous. I thought you said that Ava would kill me because I was with you guys?” I stepped closer. “What are you not telling me still? Why isn’t Makayla a damn prisoner or dead right now?!”

I could feel my whole body shaking with anger. What was with all of these secrets, honestly? Who could I believe? Could I believe the twins, or were they just leading me somewhere to get hurt?

Noah shook his head. “I’m not keeping anything from you. I honestly don’t know—”

“Don’t give me that shit!” I said. I was so damn tired of this happening. Him not telling me anything. Keeping secrets that would hurt all of us. “Tell me, Noah. And I’m not asking you that as your mate. I’m telling you that as a Lycan who is here to protect you and your whole pack.”

He looked at me with sincere golden eyes. “I don’t know.” He shook his head, analyzing. “She must be using her.”

“Or you’re using me,” I said before I could stop myself. I didn’t know where it had come from. It’d just come out, and I couldn’t stop it. I was unsure of everything, and I really didn’t want to get hurt.

“Are you serious, Naomi?” Noah said. “Why would I use you? I love you more than anything I have ever loved before. More than Ava.” He shook his head, swallowing hard. “So much fucking more than Ava.”

Oliver stepped toward me and placed a hand on my lower back. “All right. That’s enough. We’re not going to get anywhere with you fighting.”

We weren’t going to get anywhere anyway. Too many lies. Too many secrets. I didn’t know what was real and what was fake anymore.

Oliver brushed his fingers against mine, like he used to—when it was okay for him to touch me. And I let him. “You don’t have to calm down. Just remember, business before pleasure.”

The sound of paws hitting the ground echoed through the forest. Great. One problem after another. Everyone tensely turned in the direction. Nobody knew who or what was going to emerge. Maybe it was Makayla, trying to inch her way back into Noah’s life. Maybe it was Ava, trying to hurt us more.

One set of paws.

I flared my nostrils in the direction and stepped forward. Whichever wolf it was, I would destroy them. No, it wasn’t good to fight with anger, but I needed to get this all out somehow.

Isabella emerged from the trees and immediately shifted into her human. A large cut glistened with blood across her chest. She was supposed to show up with the rest of the Lycans, not alone, to evaluate the pack. They were all supposed to be here.

After a few moments, some of the other Lycans appeared through the woods, but they didn’t shift, just stayed alert. Scanning the woods around us like guards.

Isabella walked right toward the door to the pack house. “We need to talk,” she said, staring at all of us. “Roman’s pack was just attacked.”

I grabbed a change of clothes from Jax’s room for Oliver and gave Isabella a T-shirt and a pair of shorts from my closet. Then, I grabbed my phone and walked to the twins’ office. Noah was already there, standing over his desk and shuffling through papers. He looked up when he saw me and placed the papers down.

“What?” I said.

“Oliver,” he said.

“What about Oliver?”

He stepped closer to me, and my heart raced. “You know exactly what I’m talking about, Naomi.”

I tilted my head and narrowed my eyes. “If you have something to say about my partner, tell me.”

He growled lowly and took another step. “Your partner?” His voice was vicious. “He looks more like your boyfriend to me.” Another step.

I pressed my lips together and stared right up at him. “Well, maybe he is —”

My phone buzzed.

Addie.

The screen was lit up with eighteen text messages from her and five voicemails.

I sucked in a breath. “Oh my God,” I said to myself. How could I not remember Addie? I had been so caught up in all this drama that I almost forgot about my damn sister, whom I loved the most out of all of these fools.

I picked up the phone, ignoring Oliver, Isabella, and Jax as they walked in. Everyone fell silent.

“Addie,” I said. “Where are you? What’s going on? Are you safe?”

She was sobbing on the other end, and all I could imagine were just big, fat tears running down her cheeks. I clutched the phone tighter in my hand and stared at Isabella with tears in my eyes.

“Where is my sister?” I whispered.

She parted her lips, brows drawn together, yet she didn’t say anything. She looked like she was trying to form words, but she couldn’t think of anything to say.

I shook my head and turned away, trying to clear my head and think straight.

“I ... I’m fine,” Addie finally said.

I rested my forehead against the door, body heaving back and forth. Oliver placed a hand on my shoulder, but I pulled myself away from him.

“Where are you?” I asked. “I need you to get to somewhere safe.”

“Isabella’s pack house. She brought me here earlier.” Her voice was very quiet. “Naomi,” she said, “I’m scared.”

“What are you scared of?” I asked. “What’s wrong, Addie? Tell me.”

“It’s ... it’s Derek ...”

## CHAPTER 65



NAOMI

“What do you mean?” I asked, brows furrowing together.

I looked back at Isabella, who was rubbing her hands together. There were dark circles under her eyes and a large open wound across her chest still.

“Derek has been taken.”

“What?!”

“Naomi,” she cried. “Everything hurts. My heart. My body. I don’t know what to do. I want to go find him, but I don’t want to risk ... I don’t want to risk ...”

“Risk what?” I asked. My heart was pumping in my chest, and I didn’t know what to say.

She got really quiet for a minute, and Isabella tried to catch my attention, but I was too focused on my sister, trying to figure out why she was crying and wanting to keep her as safe as I could.

“I’m pregnant,” she said quietly.

My eyes widened. “You’re pregnant?” I asked.

So many emotions were rushing through me. Surprise. Excitement. Anger. I had a strong urge to hold her, stroke her hair softly, like I used to whenever she was hurt.

“That’s ... great,” I said with no emotion in my voice.

Yes, it was great, but her mate was gone. I glanced over at the twins. Even though they were annoying as hell and didn’t believe in me, I would do anything to protect them. And I knew that was how she was feeling right now, but she couldn’t. And I could feel her heart breaking so hard.

“I want to go out to find him. I need him here. He can’t die. He can’t. Not when we have a pup on the way. He doesn’t even know about it yet. I just



found out minutes before we were attacked, and I just don't know what to do or how to—"

"Addie," I said quietly, "I will find him. Do not put yourself in danger."

"But, Naomi—"

"Don't," I said harshly. "You and your pup had better stay safe. I will find him and return him to you safely. I have to go." I heard her whimper. "I love you."

"I love you too, Naomi." Her voice was soft. "Be safe, please. Roger is dangerous."

When I clicked off the phone, I nearly hurled it into the corner of the room. My eyes were wide. My heart was racing. I was pure adrenaline.

I turned to Isabella. "Where is he?" I asked.

I knew that she would know. Derek was her best friend.

"There is a standoff right now," she said.

"Where?" I asked, brows furrowed together.

I hurried to the door, but Isabella stepped in front of it.

"At Roman's pack." She swallowed. "Neither of them is fighting. Derek has been taken as Roger's prisoner and will be released if ..." She looked at me and swallowed hard. "If Roger is able to talk to you."

"Me?" I asked. "Why does he want to talk to me?" I turned to Oliver. "I thought you said you couldn't stop him from war."

"Yeah, *I* couldn't," Oliver said. "But that doesn't mean that you can't."

"He's already at war," Jax said. "Already attacked Roman's pack, didn't he?"

Oliver paused, gaze lingering on me. "Yes, but Naomi has a way with him. She has the kind of effect Makayla, I'm assuming, has on you." He looked directly at Noah, and I could just feel the regret coming off of Noah in waves.

"It's Ava," Noah said finally. "It's not Roger." He clenched his jaw. "It's Ava trying to get her." He looked at Jax for him to agree.

I headed toward the door again. “Well, I’m going to go get him back.”

Isabella placed a hand on my shoulder. “Yes, you are, but not now.”

I pushed her out of the way, and she growled.

“What do you mean? My sister is hurting because Roger took her mate. Derek is going to be a father. He’s your own damn best friend. He’s a better wolf than half of the wolves around, and I will not let him die in Roger’s hands.”

She pushed me back again and sternly told me to sit. “Naomi, calm down.”

I sat on the damn chair, fingers digging into the armrests. Derek was gone. Addie was hurting. Oliver was pissing off the twins. And I wanted to kill Makayla and Ava and now Roger, too.

“What is the plan then?”

“We negotiated,” she said.

“Negotiated what?”

“You will leave tonight. We meet Roger at five a.m. at Roman’s pack. A talk with a Lycan for Derek’s life.”

“Why not now?” I asked.

She pursed her lips. “Because we need to figure out what exactly he wants from you.”

## CHAPTER 66



JAX

“*N*o.” I shook my head and stormed out of our office after the meeting was over. “Absolutely not.” I balled my fists tightly and stopped myself from hurling them right into my kitchen table and breaking it to pieces.

This was not happening. Naomi was not going to be a pawn. There was no way that I was going to let her out of my sight. It was bad enough that she’d left and risked her life yesterday for us, especially when she was going to shift tomorrow during the full moon.

Noah followed me out, grimacing, and shut the kitchen door behind us. “Jax,” he said.

“What, Noah?” I said harshly. I turned to see him leaning against the door, gaze fixed on the ground, jaw tight. “What? Do you think she should be a pawn too? Do you think she should risk her own life for Makayla?” I shook my head. “If you do, we’re not brothers anymore. I’m not dealing with another day of you valuing Makayla and Ava over Naomi.”

Naomi was our mate. Makayla wasn’t. Ava wasn’t anymore. It was Naomi, and if he thought that she should just prance her way into Ava’s camp—because that was where Roger would be—I would kill him. I didn’t care that he was my brother. I was done with him hurting our mate.

“Why would you think that?” he said harshly. “This is exactly what Ava wants. She wants to tear us apart, to drive us in different directions, so we are weak enough to kill.” He pressed his lips together, and I could see the tears in his eyes. “No, I don’t want Naomi to go, but we both know that she will find a way to leave us, no matter what we do.” He shook his head. “No matter how hard we try to protect her.”

The door opened, and her bastard ex-boyfriend waltzed right in, smirking.

“That’s your problem,” he said. “You *boys* keep trying to protect her when all you should be doing is letting her protect you.”

I growled lowly. This guy was the problem.

All throughout the meeting, he had flirted with her, touched her, inching closer and closer to her. And she had let him get close, as if she had no respect for *us*.

Noah clenched his jaw and stepped forward. “What do you want?”

NOAH

Oliver cocked his brow at me with that dumb fucking smirk on his face. “You guys might be her mates, but she trusts me more than both of you combined.” He leaned against the counter and smirked. “Ava ... Makayla ... I wonder how many other secrets you’re keeping from her.”

“That’s it,” I said. There was nothing else. Nothing at all.

I hadn’t slept with Makayla since I’d met Naomi; I would never.

He turned around. “That’s not what she thinks. Hell ...” He faced us, and Jax growled. But Oliver wasn’t fazed by it. He had the fucking audacity to laugh, as if Jax wouldn’t do anything to him. “I don’t believe it either. You’ve lied so many times to her. You’ve hurt her so much. You’ve turned her into a wolf—the one thing she never wanted to be.”

He took a threatening step forward, rolling his sleeves up his arms. They were covered in moonflower tattoos, barely any skin visible. He had killed hundreds of rogues that had terrorized our lands. And for a split moment, I thought that Naomi deserved him. He was stronger than I would ever be. A better mate than I would ever be.

“And the shittiest part about you two as her mates is that you don’t believe in her. She was bred to fight, to gain information, to stay safe, and to protect people. Yet all you want to do is protect her.”

“She’s our mate,” Jax said, seething.

“No,” Oliver said, as if she didn’t wear our marks. “She’s a Lycan.”

“She wears our marks,” Jax said. “She’s our mate.”

“She wears over fifty marks of all the rogues she’s killed—as a human. She wears each moonflower with pride. She’s stronger than you two combined, faster than your fastest man, smarter than Ava. And you two don’t believe in her.”

Jax didn’t say anything for the longest time, and I didn’t either. Oliver

was standing at the door, completely calm.

But what he was saying was a lie. I did believe in her. Jax believed in her too. But Ava was dangerous, and I knew that she would kill Naomi. One swoop, and Ava would take her away from us. We would be empty again, and this time, I didn't know if I would survive that heartbreak.

The smallest things she did got me. She cared about me, had taken me back, and respected me every time I fucked up. The least I could've done was told her about Makayla, given her that much fucking respect. But I was a coward, a fucking coward, and she deserved better than me. So much better.

He reached for the door handle. "I suggest you guys stop being idiots because I want her back. And I'm a far better fit for her than you two."

## CHAPTER 67





NAOMI

“*N*aomi,” Oliver said from the hallway.  
“In here!” I said from my bedroom.

I placed everything that I needed in my backpack. Tomorrow was the full moon, which meant that I was going to shift tomorrow night. I didn’t know if I’d be back in time, and I wanted to be sure that I had everything that I needed to get Derek back, to find Makayla, to kill Ava, and to shift without a problem.

It was damn hard, being a Lycan sometimes, especially when I had two possessive mates who seemed to not respect me.

He walked into the room and peered around at the decor. “Not what I was expecting,” he said. “I pictured something more ... you.”

I glanced up at him, smiling softly. “Well, truth is, I haven’t slept much in this room since I’ve been here.”

“You’ve been sleeping with the twins?” He drew his fingers across my dresser, opened the top drawer, and chuckled. He looked in it and shook his head. “Didn’t even try to hide the sex toys from them, huh?” He pulled out the pink vibrator I had used so many times when he was on solo missions and I was stuck back at our apartment alone.

I snatched it from him. “Don’t touch that.”

He tilted his head and leaned against the dresser. “It’s not like I haven’t touched it before,” he said.

I rolled my eyes and stuffed it in my backpack.

He raised an eyebrow. “Are you going to beat Ava to death with your vibrator?”

I narrowed my eyes at him and pushed him playfully. “No, but I can beat you to death with it, if you’d like.”

“I’ll think about it and let you know tomorrow,” he said, winking down at me. He paused for a long moment and brushed a strand of hair out of my face, and then he smiled softly. It was cliché, yes, but his smile was absolutely breathtaking. “I’m coming with you tomorrow. I’m going to see you shift, help you fight Roger if you have to.”

My gaze followed his lips as he said each word.

I shook my head and pulled away from him. We were too close, too damn close. If we got any closer, I’d want to pull him toward me.

He felt safe.

Someone growled, and I jumped away. My heart was beating in my chest. Noah and Jax were standing in the doorway, looking even angrier than they had before.

Oliver nodded back to them. “Guess that’s my sign to leave you alone tonight. Get some sleep.” He took my face in his hands and pressed his lips to my forehead. “You’re going to need it.”

Oliver pulled away and walked past the guys, who just let him leave. No aggressive growl. No putting their hands on him or trying to rip his head off. And a part of me wondered why.

They walked into my room without an invite, and I turned back around.

“You have no right to get angry,” I said with my arms crossed over my chest.

“You’re our mate,” Noah said.

“And he’s flirting with you,” Jax finished.

“He’s my partner,” I said, tossing a spare change of clothes in my backpack.

“Who wants you back,” Noah said. “Who wants to take you away from us.”

“At least you knew that we’d fucked and had a relationship prior to him coming here.” I walked toward my closet. “At least you weren’t kept in the dark about our whole relationship. At least I had respect for you.”

“We respect you,” Jax said.

I turned on my heel, growling, “No, you don’t. You didn’t respect me enough to tell me about Makayla.”

“I’m sorry,” Noah said, sincerity in his eyes.

“I know. You’re always sorry,” I said. “You’re always terrified, always afraid that I’m going to hurt you or that I’m going to get hurt. But you never believe in me and my abilities. I am strong, whether you like it or not. And ... I told you that I was going to kill the wolf who bit you ...” I looked at the bite mark on Noah’s neck—Ava’s mark—and frowned. “And I’m going to do that. You’re my mates. Respect me and my abilities.”

“We—”

I shook my head, not wanting to listen to a word that they were going to say. I was sick of hearing it. “Even after I killed Ava’s brother yesterday, you still don’t believe in me.”

Jax placed a hand on my wrist, brows furrowed together. “Ava’s brother? The alpha?”

“No, her younger brother,” I growled lowly, thinking back to me and Ryan climbing up that hill, thrusting a bottle of wolfsbane down his throat, and watching him die a slow death. “But my dumbass will kill him, too, if it keeps you both safe.”

Jax’s eyes widened. “You killed her brother? One of the strongest warriors in her pack?” he asked again in disbelief. “As a human?”

I nodded my head and parted my lips, about to say something else, when he took my face in his and pressed his lips to mine. So softly, as if I would disappear if it were any harder.

“I’m sorry,” he said, finally pulling away. “We’re sorry for not believing in you.”

It was so sudden that I didn’t know what to do.

Noah intertwined my fingers with his and gently pressed his lips on my forehead. “We should’ve believed in you from the start. Jax was just angry

that I had brought someone in to help the pack.”

“And Noah was just hurt,” Jax said.

The moonlight flooded in through the sheer curtains in my bedroom, illuminating their faces.

“We love you. We should’ve treated you better from the start. Give us one last chance,” Jax said.

“And if we fuck it up, you can leave with Oliver, spend your life with him,” Noah said.

Jax cut him a sharp look. I paused for a moment, a thousand thoughts racing in my head. There was only one thing that I wanted to do. One thing that I had wanted from them, that my wolf was craving. And since tonight was the last night that I would see them before I shifted, I wanted to enjoy them.

I pushed Jax down on the vanity seat and crawled on top of him. “Shut up,” I said, pressing my lips to his. “Shut up and love me.”

I grabbed Noah’s collar and pulled him closer. “You too.”

## CHAPTER 68



NAOMI

Jax placed his hands on my hips and pulled me closer to him. I wrapped my arms around his neck and let him kiss me hard. I wanted this with them. Noah was behind me, gently pulling my hair out of my face, drawing his fingers across my cheek so lightly that I smiled. He grabbed the ends of my shirt and tugged it over my head, and then he undid my bra. I let it slip off of my body, between Jax and me.

Jax groped one of my breasts hard in his hand, dragging my nipple against his palm. I moaned out softly and threw my head back. I wanted to savor the moment forever because I didn't know when I'd see them next.

Noah pressed a passionate kiss on my lips. It was so slow at first, our lips moving in sync, but with each passing moment, things got hotter and hotter. His lips began devouring mine like they never would again.

My wolf purred, and I could already tell that she wanted out. That she wanted to be devoured by my mates, taken to bed, have my bottoms ripped off, and be filled with their dicks.

Noah squatted behind me, drawing his fingers down the middle of my back, against my spine. I shivered. He brushed his fingers against my waistband and tugged on them, letting the band slap against my skin lightly, and then he pushed his hand underneath the fabric and brushed a single finger against my folds.

He pushed two fingers between my pussy lips so agonizingly slow. Brushing them against my clit and rubbing gently. I slowly rocked my hips back and forth against Jax's hardness, which was pressing into me, whimpering softly against his lips.

Noah's fingers were rubbing circles, faster and harsher, sending me into a heaven of pleasure. My pussy clenched.

“Be gentle with me tonight,” I said.

It could be so long before I saw them next. Days. Weeks. Months. Sure, Roger just wanted to talk, but I didn’t know what he was planning to say.

And if something went wrong, I wanted them, and I wanted myself to remember this night. So gentle. No heartbreak. No rough fucking—we could save that for later. Right now, I just wanted to be loved.

Jax picked me up and placed me down on the bed, resting my head against the pillow. He tugged off my pants, threw them to the side of the room, and lay next to me. Fingers drawing up and down the center of my abdomen. I wanted them to touch my breasts.

Noah crawled onto the bed and between my legs. He pulled his shirt over his head, his thick muscles flexing. All I wanted to do was touch every single inch of him, dig my nails into his back, feel his abs against mine.

He crawled between my legs and placed a kiss on my lips, and then he left soft kisses down the center of my body, all the way to my bare pussy.

The heat from his breath warmed my core. He was so close yet so far. I wanted him closer, so much closer, until his lips were devouring mine, until his lips were pressing so hard against me, circling around my clit, torturing me.

He grasped my hips in his hand and pulled me closer to him. “Look at me, Nai,” he said.

I furrowed my brows and looked down at him. His lips brushed against my folds, and I tightened.

“Please, Noah.”

“Say my name again,” he said against me. His fingers brushed down the inside of my thigh.

“Noah,” I said, arching my back slightly. He felt so good.

He closed his eyes for a moment and pulled my folds apart with his fingers, and then he pressed his lips to my clit. My body immediately jerked up, and I cried out. The pleasure, the need, the pure desire hitting me all at

once.

“Look at him, Little One,” Jax said against my ear.

I gazed back down at Noah, trying to keep my eyes trained on his golden ones. He pressed his lips harder against me, holding me apart, pinning my thighs lightly to the bed, and eating my pussy. His tongue rubbed small circles around my clit. He brushed a finger against my wetness, and when he pushed it inside of me, I clenched around it as tightly as I could.

Jax trailed his fingers to my breasts and pulled gently on one of my nipples. He placed his mouth on the other, sucking it between his lips and tugging on it. I laced a hand in his hair and curled my fingers into it, holding him in place.

Pleasure rolled through my body again. It felt so good.

Noah closed his eyes, groaning. “You taste like fucking honey, Nai,” he mumbled against me. He inserted another finger.

“Please give it to me,” I said, desperately. “I want you inside of me.”

I reached for Jax’s cock, feeling his hardness underneath his shorts, and grasped it, but he pushed it away.

“No,” Jax mumbled. “Be patient, Little One.”

Noah continued to massage my clit with his tongue. He sucked it between his lips lightly and groaned again. He made a come-hither motion inside of my pussy with his two fingers while Jax bit down a bit harsher on my nipple.

My body jerked up again, heart racing in my chest, and I cried out for them. I dug my fingers into the bedsheets and moaned out, “Please don’t stop.”

Noah continued to eat my pussy, fingers pushing in and out of me much quicker than they had been. I was squirming in his grip, but he didn’t stop. Every time I moved, he moved with me. Lips never leaving my clit, fingers never pulling all the way out of my pussy.

“Noah,” I said, fingers curling into his hair. “Oh my God.” I stared right into his golden eyes, which hadn’t left mine. He had my thighs on his



shoulders, trying to hold me steady, eating me out like I was the only thing he had ever been hungry for.

Jax brushed his lips up the side of my neck and softly kissed his mark, and my body jerked up again.

Wave after wave after wave of pleasure rushed through me. My body felt like it was tingling. I was in pure heaven, and I didn't want to come down.

## CHAPTER 69



NAOMI

Noah sat up, his eyes gold, and wiped his mouth with the back of his hand. His cock looked hard through his pants, and all I wanted was him and Jax inside of me.

Jax grabbed my hips and pulled me onto him. He pushed off his pants, pressing his cock into my backside. “Little One,” he mumbled against my ear.

He wrapped his arms underneath my thighs and pulled my legs apart so that I was spread for him and Noah. He pressed himself against my pussy, rubbing his cock up and down its wetness. I moved my hips with his, trying to keep the same pace. It felt so damn good. I just needed something inside of me.

Noah stared at my tits, watching them bounce each time that I moved against Jax, and stroked his hard cock.

“Please, Jax,” I said. “Put it inside of me—now.”

He chuckled lowly against my ear. “I thought that you wanted us to be gentle with you?”

No. God, no. I just wanted them inside of me now.

“Please.” My pussy pulsed. “I just need it.”

Noah chuckled and drew a finger down my lips. “So needy, Nai.”

He placed his lips to his mark, and Jax thrust himself inside of me at the same time. I parted my lips, brows furrowing together. Holy—

He pushed it all the way down inside of me, burying it so deep that I never wanted him to pull out. I wanted him to come inside of me until his cum was just dripping out of my pussy and running down my thighs.

Noah pressed his fingers against my sensitive clit and rubbed small circles again. So much damn torture. I kissed him hard and with so much

passion.

And in that moment, I could feel everything. His stubble against my cheek. His fingers brushing against my skin, the way the scar on his chest was rigid under my fingers.

I pulled away ever so slightly and mumbled against his lips, “I want you inside of me too.”

He growled lowly, his hazel eyes turning gold. My wolf purred.

He pulled away from me and crawled between my legs. Jax pulled his cock out of my pussy and rested it near my ass.

Noah’s head was swollen and pressing against the entrance to my pussy. He rubbed it against my core, getting it wet with my juices. Then, together, they pushed themselves inside of me, filling me completely.

I threw my head back, clenching on both of them, and groaned. They moved so slowly inside of me. In and out, and in and out.

I dug my nails into Noah’s chest. “Please, faster.”

They began ramming into me faster. Noah’s lips were on my nipple, tugging it into his mouth, grazing his teeth against it. Jax had his arm around my waist, rubbing my clit in small, torturous circles.

My toes curled, my legs shook, and I cried out.

God, this felt too good. Too fucking good.

“Faster,” I said. “My God, I’m going to come again already.”

My wolf purred inside of me as they filled us. Harder and faster. Noah bit down harshly on my nipple, and Jax slapped my clit softly at the same time.

And I came—hard—on both of them. My arms felt limply at my sides, and my head was in a daze. My wolf was at the forefront, ready to take over. She was begging for me to release her, growling inside of me. I could see my reflection in Noah’s eyes, piercing hazel eyes staring back at me. My pussy tightened, and I dug my nails into his shoulders. I flipped us over, so I was on top and stared down at him.

My fingers brushed against his neck, and I could feel his vein pulsing

underneath my fingers. I growled lowly and kissed his lips, then down his jaw, and then to his neck. And in a moment, my wolf took full control.

Noah and Jax were mine.

I sank my canines into his neck.

Right over Ava's love bite.

Noah was mine, and Jax was about to be too.

## CHAPTER 70



NAOMI

Noah moved his head to the side, giving me more access to his neck. I sank my teeth deeper into him and felt him shudder in pure ecstasy under me. He groaned deeply in my ear, and I stilled. The vibration of his groan pumped through me, connecting us, binding us, bonding us.

My wolf felt more connected to him than ever before. I could hear all of his doubts and insecurities, could see all of the things that he regretted, could feel the way he'd felt when Ava left him, and could feel the way he felt now—scared that I would shatter him, too, but happy for once in his life.

It felt so damn good, the sensations pulsing through my veins, the thoughts—his thoughts—clear in my mind.

And I understood him.

He wanted to be more than loved by someone. He wanted to be valued and respected and cared for—by *me*.

I began to pull my teeth from his neck, but he stopped me by placing his hand on the back of my head and said, “One more moment, Nai, please.”

So, I stopped and let him enjoy what I could offer him. My feelings. My thoughts. Myself.

When he took his hand off the back of my head, I slowly pulled my teeth out of him and stared into his eyes. They were a glistening gold, almost a godly color. And they looked so ... complete.

He didn't say anything to me, just stared into my eyes, and then he slowly lowered his gaze to his mark on my neck. He brushed his fingers against it and curled his lips into a smile. “Mine,” he said.

“Yo—”

Jax cleared his throat and tugged on my hand. “Actually,” he said, “she’s

ours.” He smirked widely at me.

I playfully rolled my eyes at him and drew a finger up the column of his neck. “Jealous, Jax?” I placed a lingering kiss on Noah’s lips, keeping my eyes on Jax. My wolf purred at the lustful expression that Jax gave me. So, I crawled off of Noah and onto Jax, letting his cock press against my entrance. “Do you want me to mark you too?”

He placed his hands on my hips, digging his fingers into my flesh, and shrugged his shoulders. “No, not really.”

My nails lightly dug into his chest. “No?” I asked, brow cocked.

“I like this side of you, Little One. Commanding. Assertive.” He wrapped his hand around the front of my throat and pulled me down to him to whisper in my ear, “I don’t want you to ask to mark me. I want you to take what has been yours since the day we met you.”

I inhaled his strong scent, feeling my wolf’s canines puncture skin. She didn’t sink them into him, just stayed there for a moment. We could feel his vein pulsing against our teeth. We wanted him, too, as much as we had wanted Noah.

“Do it, Little One,” Jax said in my ear, squeezing just a bit harder. “I want to feel your teeth sink into me, want to feel your wolf, hear your thoughts, be with you, Naomi.”

When he said my name, I sank my teeth completely into him. Claiming him as my own.

Instead of him shuddering, like Noah had, I trembled on top of him, trying to keep my teeth in his flesh so he could feel me. But the pleasure was almost too much to handle. My wolf was howling inside of my head—in victory. She had marked our mates, made both of them ours, and was bonded completely to them.

They were hers, and they were mine.

“How does that make you feel?” Jax asked while I kept my teeth inside of him, riding out the pleasure that was coursing through my veins and making



my body tingle.

I furrowed my brows together and groaned. He pressed a hand to my head, like Noah had done, but instead of lightly pushing me down again, he scratched the top of my head.

“Enjoy it, Naomi. Enjoy how you’re feeling right now. Ride it out, feel the pleasure inside of you. Pumping through you.” He lifted his hips, pushing his hardness against my entrance again. “Feel it, Little One. It’s what you’ve wanted since you met us, isn’t it?” he asked.

I went to pull my teeth out of him again, but he held me down.

“Tell us that this is what you wanted,” he mumbled against my ear.

I nodded my head and whined, my core aching. It felt good. So fucking good. I didn’t want to pull my teeth out of him because he was right. This was what I had wanted from them. Acceptance. Want. Desire. To know that they loved me.

Jax pushed himself into me slowly, and I moaned on him, immediately coming. My body was shaking in pure delight. My eyes rolled to the back of my head, and my jaw loosened. I pulled my teeth out of him and collapsed on Jax’s chest, clutching on to him for dear life.

Wave after wave of pleasure coursed through my body. I felt whole. I felt loved—for the first time in a long time. I was complete.

After I rode out the rest of my orgasm, I rolled off of Jax and onto the bed between my mates. I curled between them and felt their arms around me, holding me for the last time before I would leave them to kill the wolves I needed to kill to keep everyone safe.

At the time—while I was lying there in their arms—I was so naive, thinking that nothing could ever go wrong again, thinking that because we were mates, everything would go smoothly, that all of us would survive this and come out being whole again.

Boy, was I wrong.

Nothing would go as I planned.

## CHAPTER 71



NOAH

“We’re just going to let her go after last night?” Jax asked me the next morning.

There were dark circles under his eyes from not sleeping. Hell, I hadn’t either. We had both been up all night, talking about letting Naomi leave us this morning, thinking about everything that could possibly go wrong, wondering if this morning would be the last morning that she would be here. Alive.

“Yes,” I said, but I didn’t want to. Just saying that single word tore me apart on the inside.

But we had to trust her. We had to believe in our mate. Or else we would drive her away and right into Oliver’s arms. Oliver would stop at absolutely nothing to get with her again. He wanted us to fuck up, and I was terrified that I would be the one to ruin it for us.

Last night, I’d thought up almost every single thing I needed to do to keep Naomi. Not be too overbearing. To trust her. To believe in her strength.

And I did, but it was killing me on the inside.

I watched Naomi pack the last of her essentials in a small backpack and gulped.

Jax stood next to me, jaw tightening. Together, we watched Oliver lean next to her and talk to her.

“Don’t worry, babe. I have some extra stuff with me.”

Then, “No need to pack that. Pack light.”

Later, “Make sure you don’t forget—”

I averted my gaze to the window. It was still too dark outside. It was nearly five a.m. They had insisted we get up early because they had a long drive ahead of them.

When Naomi was finished packing everything, she tossed her bag over her shoulder and walked up to a groggy Ryan, who was standing in the middle of our living room in his plaid pajama bottoms. “You know what you have to do, right?” she asked.

He nodded his head. “I do.” He looked over at Isabella. “I won’t let you two down.” He turned back to us. “Because Naomi scares me shitless, especially after that kill.” He raised his brow. “You should’ve seen her kill Ava’s brother. Never thought I’d witness anything like that in my entire life.”

Naomi smiled at him, and then she looked at us and smiled wider, a sparkle in her eye. She walked over and wrapped her arms around us, tucking her head into our chests. I curled my arms around her shoulders and pulled her to me.

“I’ll be back tonight,” she said against us.

She said those words with so much strength and confidence that for a split moment, I believed her, but when she pulled away and stared up at us, her marks glowing as brightly as her eyes did, I could see her confidence falter.

“You’re going to shift tonight,” I said.

My heart was racing in my chest. She would be the weakest tonight, and I wouldn’t be there to see her beauty, wouldn’t be there to protect her from Ava.

She fingered her mate necklaces. “You’ll be there with me,” she said, reading my mind. “You’re always with me.” She looked at Jax, who tried his hardest to be happy for her even though it was killing him on the inside. “You too,” she said.

Isabella cleared her throat and nodded to the car. “Naomi, it’s time to go.”

Naomi nodded, looked down, and clenched her twitching jaw, and then she looked up at us with teary eyes. “I love you both.” Her lips trembled. “I really do. And I don’t know what will really happen with Roger today, but I just wanted to tell you that I love you.”

She pecked us on the lips, and we watched her walk out the door, get into

the car, and drive down the road.

I wanted to run after her, to stop her, to tell her to never leave me because I loved her. But I didn't. Neither of us did.

We had a job to do.

As soon as Oliver, Isabella, and Nai left, Jax rounded up all of the warrior wolves, and I grabbed what I needed from my office and then met them outside. I gazed at my pack—the pack that Naomi had made stronger.

Ryan was still here, waiting for our orders.

I raised my brow at him. "I thought Naomi ordered you to—"

He nodded. "She did."

"So, why are you still here?" Jax asked.

"I have a better idea," Ryan said. "I think we should—"

"No," I said. "Stick to her plan."

"Just hear me out," he said.

Jax looked at me, and I looked back.

"What?" Jax said.

Ryan explained his oh-so-great plan. "... and with my plan, Oliver gets taken out of the equation," he said. "Naomi would trust you more than anything. Ava will be blindsided."

Overall, the plan was ridiculous. It put everyone in so much more danger—especially Naomi—but it made so much more sense with Ava. Ava wouldn't be distracted so easily by mere tricks of war. She was using Roger to get what she wanted—Naomi. Naomi's plan led herself straight to Ava.

That might've been what she wanted, but it wasn't what either of us wanted.

As much as I hated to admit it, Ryan's plan—in my eyes—was much better than Naomi's. Ava would believe it to be real instead of a trick. After all, one of the rules of war was to be one step ahead of your opponent. Ryan's plan was three steps ahead.

"*Do you think it will work?*" Jax asked through the mind link.

*“I think it will anger Ava,” I said. “I don’t know if it will work.”*

I stared at Ryan. “Let’s do it.”

He raised his brows at me. “Are you serious?”

I nodded my head, but I shouldn’t have. At the time, it seemed like such a better plan, but looking back at it now ... it was the stupidest fucking thing that I could’ve agreed to.

## CHAPTER 72



NAOMI

As soon as we pulled onto Roman's property, I could feel the tense atmosphere around me. It penetrated through the car, leaving me ready for whatever it was that needed to be done to keep everyone safe.

The warrior wolves who were guarding the borders promptly ran through the woods to the pack house, probably to inform Roman that we were here. I scanned the forest, my wolf whining inside of me that we weren't with our mates. She knew that we weren't going to be with our mates until we finished this, and she also knew that we weren't going to be finishing this tonight.

I would shift without them with me.

Isabella parked my car in Roman's driveway, and we all hopped out. "Where is Roman?" she said almost immediately to the wolves who greeted us. Her eyes were glowing their beautiful wolf color.

"Awaiting your arrival," one said.

I could only imagine that my eyes looked the same way. The warriors shifted, threw on a pair of shorts, and led us through the woods. Every wolf that we passed was tenser than I had ever seen them. There were even some Lycans scattered through the woods that looked over and nodded to me. My heart was racing in my chest harder than it ever had.

We walked up a hill, Isabella hurrying in front of us. Each step up, Roger's scent became sharper and sharper and so much more intense. It actually didn't repulse me like it should've. Maybe it was because I'd had a relationship with him beforehand. Maybe it was because Oliver was right by my side, willingly going to protect me if something went totally wrong.

As soon as we made it over the top of the hill, I saw Roger's shaggy head of hair. He was standing about a hundred feet away, holding Derek too close to him. His claws were at his neck, threatening to pierce through it at any



moment.

My heart dropped for Addie's mate, bound to die at any time. Roman didn't look back when he heard us approach; instead, he tensed even more.

Isabella placed her hand on his back and scratched lightly. "Roger," she said.

I could only imagine how shitty she was feeling right now. Her best friend was in the hands of a killer who could break at any moment.

Roger gazed at me, and I sucked in a breath. My wolf was stirring inside of me, and I didn't know if it was a good or bad feeling. It kind of seemed like both, especially when Roger's eyes began to glow the dark color of his wolf's.

Oliver stepped close to me. "I am not going to let you out of my sight," he said.

I placed my hand on his shoulder, staring at Roger to see how he'd react, and then leaned close. Roger looked at both of us, his eyes flashing between us, and I knew what he was thinking about—all of those late nights we had all spent with each other. I had listened to so much of his complaining, his feelings, his vulnerability. And just like Noah, he just wanted someone to love him.

That was why Oliver and I'd connected so well with him while we were at his pack so long ago.

"Naomi," he said. He didn't loosen his hold on Derek. "Come here."

I raised my hands and stepped forward. "Let Derek go."

"Come here," he said again, using the alpha tone that he knew never worked on me.

I looked at Oliver and Isabella.

"Are you here to kill me?" I asked, eyeing the warrior wolves from his pack. "Is that why you want me to come to you? Is that why you won't talk to anyone else?"

He growled lowly, "I would never lay a hand on you. You know that."

My wolf leaped in my chest. What was her damn problem? She was so antsy right now.

“Come here, Naomi,” he said, softer this time.

“Tell your warriors to stand down then,” I said.

He smirked. “Are you afraid of them? The great Naomi afraid of some wolves?” he asked.

When I didn’t dare move, he sighed and nodded to the wolves. They shifted into their humans, standing naked and vulnerable in the woods. I nodded my head and walked toward him, brushing my fingers through my hair and having it cover the marks on my neck. Oliver walked with me to him.

Roger watched me the whole time I walked to him, never peeling his gaze away from mine. When I reached him, my eyes softened. There was so much hurt in him, just like there had always been, yet so much wrath, so much rage. Compared to everyone that I had ever known—besides the twins—his emotions were always so raw, yet he covered it up and pretended to be okay.

I stopped about five feet away from him.

“Come here,” he said, dominance dripping from his words. He was giving me those hard alpha eyes, the eyes that he had given me when we used to fuck. Immense, commanding eyes.

I raised a single brow at him. “Release Derek,” I said.

He stared at me for a few moments and clenched his jaw. Then, he pushed Derek away, letting him stumble to the ground. Derek immediately got up, turned around, and was about to shift when I held my hand up and pointed to Isabella.

“This isn’t your fight, Derek. You have a mate waiting for you. I suggest that you go find her.”

Derek looked at me with angry eyes for a moment, and I knew he was going to try to fight with me, so I narrowed my eyes and said, “Go.”

Derek stormed away to Roman, said something to him, and Roman glared

hard at Roger.

I stared at Roman. “You too. In fact, all of you need to leave.”

Roger wanted to talk to me for a reason, and I didn’t need anyone else here, listening to our conversation, especially wolves who were hung up with so much anger that they couldn’t think straight.

When Isabella led them away, it was just us on top of the hill.

Me. Oliver. Roger.

Together, like we used to be.

## CHAPTER 73



NAOMI

“*W*hat do you want, Roger?” I asked when everyone was gone from the woods. I knew they were all still hiding out somewhere deep in the forest, ready to attack at any moment.

“You’re marked,” he said without even looking at my neck.

My marks were covered up, but I knew that he knew. And that fact wasn’t sitting well with him.

“Oliver,” I said. “Oliver’s marks.”

“No,” he said, shaking his head. “The twins.” His jaw was tensed. “Those fucking twins.”

“What do you want, Roger?” I asked again.

He paused for a long moment and then shook his head. “You,” he said. I tilted my head and arched a brow when he took my hand. “Don’t you remember the nights we spent together?”

“With Oliver,” I said. “It wasn’t just us.”

He looked over at Oliver, teeth bared, and then back at me. “Oliver and I didn’t work out. We tried.”

Oliver looked at me and grimaced. A few months ago, when Isabella had assigned Oliver to stay with Roger, his mission was to try to calm Roger down again, like we had after Makayla hurt him, but he had failed. He’d failed at calming him down, at making him not want us, at stopping him from falling off the edge again, stopping him from sleeping around again, stopping him from wanting someone like me again.

Someone strong for his pack. Someone who could be a luna to a vicious pack led by a halfway insane alpha who would do anything for the person he loved—Makayla.

To be simple, Roger was unstable. Could snap at any second. I could see

it in his eyes.

I'd thought that we had brought him back to reality all those months ago, but we failed. Then, Oliver had failed again.

"You don't want me, Roger," I said, remembering what Ryan had told me about Makayla being obsessed with the twins when she met Roger. "You want to hurt the twins."

Roger's jaw twitched violently. "No," he said, "I don't."

I stepped forward, testing him. "You want to see them hurt when you take me away from them. You want them to hurt just like they did when they took Makayla away from you. But all the pain won't make you feel better."

He paused for a moment, and then his lips turned into a smirk. He was so bipolar, so easily broken, so intense. "You're right, Naomi. You figured me out. I do. I want to see them hurt. I want to see them feel pure terror when they see you with me. But I also want you. We had such a great time together. And Ava, she—"

"Ava?" I said. "What about her?"

He looked at me, studying me for the longest time, and then nodded. "You feel the same way about her, huh? The same way I feel about the twins? You want her to hurt?"

"No," I said. I wanted to kill her. There was a difference.

He pushed a piece of hair out of my face. Man, he was so breakable. "You know that she doesn't want to hurt you," he said.

I furrowed my brows at him. "Yes, she does."

"No, Naomi." He shook his head and ran a finger down my jaw. "She doesn't want to hurt you. She promised that she wouldn't—as long as you're with me and not them."

"Where is she?" I asked. "Bring me to her." My wolf was jumping inside of me, filled with so much rage just at the sound of her name on Roger's tongue.

"If she wanted to hurt you, she would've done it by now," he said.

She would have, and she had. Maybe not physically, but emotionally. With that mark on Noah's neck. That hurt me enough. All the lies that Noah told because of her. It'd hurt more than anything she could physically do to me.

I nodded my head. "You're right," I said. "She could've hurt me, but she hasn't."

"All she wants is for the twins to hurt because of what they did to her," he said.

"What did they do to her?" I asked, brows knitted together to get him to trust me. "Did they hurt her?"

Man, she'd really told him lie after lie to get him to trust her.

"Makayla," he said, eyes glowing. "Noah was sleeping with Makayla when he and Ava were together."

"What?" I asked between gritted teeth. I stepped closer to Roger, brushing my fingers against his chest. "Makayla slept with Noah while they were together?" I shook my head, faking tears in my eyes. "He really did?"

Roger nodded his head. "He did, Naomi. Imagine what he was doing with her when you two were together." He cupped my face in his hands. Damn, he was almost more fucked up than Noah. "I would never do that to you. Never, ever." He smiled, and my wolf growled. "I would love you like you deserve to be loved."

I looked down and pushed a fake tear from my cheek. "You're right, Roger." I hated lying to him, but I had to. Ava had messed with his head, made him think things that weren't true—at least, I hoped that they weren't true. "I can't be with someone like that." I pulled away from him. "But how am I sure that he's cheated on *me* with Makayla? You know that I don't make blind judgments."

He took my hand, pulling me close. "Ava has proof, and she wants to show you. She has been wanting to talk to you, but she couldn't get you alone without alerting the twins."

This was my chance to get her alone. To finally kill her.

“Take me to her,” I said.

He nodded his head, grinned, and took my hand, leading me north. Oliver followed us, but Roger stopped him. “She didn’t invite you,” he said.

Oliver placed his hand on Roger’s bicep, about to push him away. “I don’t need an invite.”

My wolf was doing flips again in my stomach. I could feel every part of her, aching to come out. I glimpsed at the full moon above us in the light-blue sky, and pain pierced through my side. I clutched it, stumbling slightly, and then steadied myself.

The pain passed fairly quickly.

“You’re not going, Oliver,” he said. “Just me and Naomi.” He looked at me and brushed his fingers against my chin so softly. The look in his eyes—soft yet teetering on pure rage—told me that this wasn’t the Roger that I used to know. This was the Roger that had formed after Makayla left him—when I had to mend his pieces back together to keep him stable, to keep him from starting a war to get Makayla back.

He was unstable. So freaking unstable.

Could break at any moment.

Another pain pierced through my stomach. My wolf wanted out. She was getting ready, preparing for tonight. It was going to be painful, and it scared me to think that this pain was just the start of it. It was bound to get much, much worse.

I placed a hand on Oliver’s chest. “I will be okay,” I said.

Roger took my hand, and we left with his pack. I gazed back at Oliver, who was watching me intently.

It would be hard, but this was my chance to kill Ava. To kill her and take my mates back.



## CHAPTER 74



NAOMI

O liver was following us. I didn't have to see him to know that he wouldn't let me out of his sight. I couldn't smell his scent—he'd probably covered it up with mud and leaves, any foul odor so that Roger wouldn't smell him. But I knew that he was there. Somewhere.

We walked through the woods for hours, almost the entire day. I watched the sun overhead, slowly setting over the trees. I tried to flirt with Roger, to get him to believe that I was truly angry with the twins for whatever they had done again. And while I knew that it was Ava who was trying to hurt me, I started to wonder if Noah had actually slept with Makayla while they were together.

He seemed to be really screwed up over Ava, but I didn't think that he would be able to cheat on his own mate. He loved her, though he shouldn't have. She was a bitch who liked fucking with the minds of men, getting them into a position where she could bend them at her will, where she could make them do anything just by lifting her finger. She was manipulative and so damn frustrating.

I hadn't even talked to her, but she was in my damn mind. Screwing with it. Screwing with me.

A sudden pain split through my leg. I stumbled a bit, grasping on to a tree to steady myself. Roger stopped and looked over. The rest of his warrior wolves surrounded us, looks of worry on their faces. Like I was their luna already, their hurt luna.

I grasped my shin, the pain not going away. My brows furrowed. The pain was getting worse. Each hour, I'd had to pause. I clenched my jaw to stop myself from trembling, hoping it would make the pain go away. But it didn't.

Roger knelt in front of me and brushed his hand over my knee. “You’re going to shift soon,” he said.

I nodded my head. I was going to shift, and I didn’t know what was going to happen. Sure, I had watched people shift for the first time before, but they were usually already werewolves, coming-of-age werewolves.

Not humans shifting into werewolves.

Except for Addie, and she’d had a terrible time with the shift. I could see the pain on her face. She had wanted to surrender to death so many times that night.

I knew I was strong enough to get through it, but this pain was almost unbearable.

“It hurts,” I said, leaning onto the tree for support.

I could feel the vein in my neck pulsing violently, and I was terrified that I would shift now. My wolf was craving to come out, to run free, to kill two manipulative females that wanted to get with my mates.

*My mates.* My wolf whimpered inside of me. She missed them already, and it hadn’t even been a day yet. She wanted to see them, wanted them to be here for her shift. She wanted to show them that she was a good luna, a strong luna, their luna.

Roger grasped the straps of my backpack and tugged them down my arms. “Do you have something in here to help you?” he asked. “I know you’re always prepared for the worst.”

I pulled the straps back up my shoulders. I did have medication in there, but I didn’t want Roger to look for it. I didn’t want him to see the other *things* that I had packed in order to take care of Ava and Makayla. Like the bottles of wolfsbane or the heavy silver chains that felt like they were about to weigh me down.

“I’m fine,” I said through gritted teeth. “I will take something for it later.”

I needed to be on full alert. Ava could be anywhere now. We were close to her hideout—I could feel it.

We continued to walk along a path until we came to what looked like a fork, two diverging paths that we could take. One side was completely empty, and the other had Ava's pack's warrior wolves standing at the entrance. They were staring at me tensely, so full of hatred that I thought they would try to kill me right then and there. I didn't know why they were so angry with me in particular. I had done nothing to them.

Absolutely nothing that they knew about.

Sure, I'd killed their alpha's brother, but they didn't know about that yet. Maybe Ava had told them some stupid lie about me that made them furious.

A pain split through my left arm, and I clutched it but continued to walk. I wasn't going to stop here. I had someone to kill.

Roger took my hand and pulled me in the direction of the empty path.

"Where are we going?" I asked quizzically, nodding to the guards. "Ava's campout is that way."

He nodded tensely. "It is, but just because I brought you here doesn't mean that I trust you yet. Neither does Ava."

A sudden pang of nerves rushed through me. This wasn't a part of the plan that I had thought up on the way here. There was no detour. There were no angry guards. There was no walking down an empty and dark path with an unstable alpha.

But I couldn't think up another plan. This hurt was fogging my mind.

After about ten minutes of walking, my legs were about to give out, and Roger stopped. "To prove your loyalty to me, you have to do something."

"What?" I asked tensely. "What do you want me to do?"

He pulled me through the forest, and we walked into an overgrown woodland. The moon was blazing brightly above us, letting me finally see everything around me.

"Wait here," he said. He jogged to the other side of the field and through the woods.

Even if I wanted to run, I couldn't. His warrior wolves surrounded us.

When he emerged from the woods again, he was pushing someone smaller than him. Her bright eyes pierced through the darkness.

“Makayla,” I whispered under my breath.

He brought me Makayla in chains and with a gag in her mouth.

He looked at me and smiled. “Kill her,” he said.

I furrowed my brows at her and then at him. He wanted me to kill his ex-mate because he couldn’t do it.

Or maybe this wasn’t his plan at all. Maybe Ava was making him do this to fuck with my head. This was all a part of her plan. It had to be. Make me angry. Make me want to kill Makayla. Make me kill her while I was shifting.

“Kill her, Naomi,” Roger said again. “Or I will release her.”

Makayla looked at me, and I stepped back. She didn’t look like herself. Her eyes were trained on me with so much rage that I didn’t know who she really was. She looked like she was high on something—adrenaline maybe.

She looked so wrathful that a part of me was actually terrified.

I shook my head. “No,” I said. “I’m not going to kill her because you want me to.”

Roger shrugged and unlocked her chains. “Show me who the stronger woman is. The stronger woman to lead my pack.”

He chuckled, and I shook my head.

He was a sicko. Purely unstable. Terrifyingly unstable.

## CHAPTER 75



NAOMI

Makayla lurched at me, eyes glowing as brightly as the moon above us. I stepped out of the way easily. When she turned back in my direction, I backed away slowly with my hands raised.

“Makayla,” I said. “I know you’re feeling really angry with me.” *For some damn reason.* “But please, calm down. Think about what you’re—”

I lunged out of the way when she tried to attack me again. She was better trained at fighting. Stronger and faster than she had been before. And it sucked for me.

“What did you do to her?” I asked Roger, eyes wide.

I wanted to hurt her so bad. I wanted to kill her. Rip her apart with my teeth until she was unrecognizable. Do terrible, terrible things to her. She deserved it after what she did with my mates behind my back, after flirting with Noah and trying to get with him again. She should be in the ground.

“I did nothing to her,” he said. “This is how she has always been, how she always will be. And you’re the one who created her as she is. Made her stronger. Taught her how to fight. Kill her, Naomi.” His voice rose with every word.

But I couldn’t kill her. Not like this. She wasn’t in her right mind. She was high off of something that I couldn’t quite figure out. Maybe it was Ava’s mind control. Maybe Ava had done this to her. Told her that I was nothing, that I needed to be eliminated in order to get Noah to like her.

Ava was trying to get rid of me. She just couldn’t do it herself.

She lunged at me again, and I ducked out of the way. Her claws caught my forearm, and blood started spewing from it almost instantly. It was a deep cut, so damn deep.

A pain split through my side, and I doubled over. Clutching my arm and

clutching my stomach. God, I was about to turn. This wasn't good. This was one of the worst situations that I could've been in.

Makayla ran toward me and tackled me, pinning me to the ground. Every part of my body hurt like hell. Worse than it had ever felt before.

She bared her teeth at me, eyes focused on my mates' marks. Her eyes were the color of the moon with darkness woven inside of them. I struggled under her, tears in my eyes from the pain.

"Makayla," I said, dodging her teeth as they came down dangerously close to my neck to kill me. "Makayla, listen to me. I don't know what they told you, but I don't want to hurt you. I don't want to kill—" I dodged another attack just barely and pulled my arms out of her grip. As quickly as I could, I wrapped them around her neck. "Please ... please don't make me do this to you."

God, I wanted to. So badly.

"You took them away from me, Naomi. You took the twins away from me," she said, completely and utterly manipulated. I wasn't sure what Ava had said to her, but she had lied. Or maybe... maybe Makayla had always been this insane, and I just hadn't noticed it. "Ava told me everything that you've done. You're disgusting."

I gazed up at Roger, who was standing near us. He was running through a variety of emotions—pain, happiness, heartbreak, uneasiness.

He clenched his jaw, tears in his eyes. "Kill her!"

I didn't know if he was talking to me or to Makayla, didn't know who he really wanted to come out victorious.

Makayla latched her teeth down into my shoulder muscle, and I howled out in pain. My wolf was raging in me, banging on my insides for her to be released. But I didn't want my wolf to lose control.

"Makayla," I said again, squeezing her neck tighter. "Makayla, this isn't you."

She pulled her teeth out of my shoulder, taking a chunk of my muscle



with it. The meat fell out of her mouth and onto my face. Blood was dripping off of her lips. She went to bite me again, and I closed my eyes and squeezed as tightly as I could.

More pain shot up my side. My shoulder was now pulsing. I gathered all of the energy that I had left, let my canines grow, and surrendered full control to my wolf. She growled viciously, staring up at the moon and letting it give her strength.

Then, together, we rolled Makayla onto her back and dug our claws into her neck until she was grasping my hands. Tears were streaming down her cheeks. Tears were streaming down *my* cheeks.

I didn't want to kill her like this, but I had to. She was out of control, and I couldn't stay in control.

Her grip on me loosened. I could see life slowly leaving her eyes.

"I'm sorry," I whispered. "I'm sorry."

## CHAPTER 76



NAOMI

Makayla's eyes glazed over with a white film, and her body fell limp underneath me. I removed my hands from her neck, breathing deeply. I'd killed her with my bare hands. I had killed before, but nobody that I had known so personally. Nobody that I had actually liked at one point.

Roger was doubled over in the field about fifty yards away with his head in his hands. His body was heaving up and down.

Was he feeling free? Sad? Angry with me? God, I didn't know.

Suddenly, pain shot through my sides. I doubled over Makayla and gasped for breath. I dug my fingers into the dirt and screamed out into the night, letting my voice echo through the forest. I needed to get out of here. Now.

This was not how tonight was supposed to go. I shouldn't have been shifting for the first time while so close to Ava.

I posted my hand on the ground and used all of my energy to stand. I staggered a few feet to my left. My only thoughts were of Noah and Jax. How I needed to get to them. How terrified I was of shifting alone.

I was alone. So damn alone. Without my mates. Without Oliver. Without Addie.

I fell to my knees, unable to hold myself up anymore from the pain. My wolf was taking control—*had* taken control.

My arms were so weak that I couldn't even keep myself upright. I face-planted right into the dirt and curled into a ball. Everything hurt. My bones were snapping, their sounds echoing through the forest. I screamed at the top of my lungs.

Too much pressure. Too much pressure. Pain. Too much pain.

My hands trembled as my nails turned to sharp claws. My head snapped to the side as my canines emerged, larger than they had been when I marked my mates.

I squeezed my eyes closed, hoping that it would stop. I needed it to stop. It was too much.

I just wanted to be in my mates' arms, having them hold me, telling me that it would be okay, telling me that we would all be okay. Nothing was going to happen to me in Roger's hands. He wouldn't hand me over to Ava. I needed something to believe, but I couldn't believe anything.

I hadn't expected to be in this much pain while I shifted. I hadn't expected my shoulder to be half-bitten off while I shifted. I hadn't expected to be alone while I shifted. It was the worst feeling in the world.

My clothes ripped at their seams, and suddenly, I was naked. My body expanded. More of my bones snapped and lengthened.

*Fuck. Fuck. Fuck. Fuck. Fuck.* It hurt so bad.

Before I could howl out in more pain, I had shifted fully into a wolf. Lying on my side. Blood coating my fur. My wolf made me stand on all four feet and look up at the moon. I stared up at it, thinking that it was over. I'd shifted. I could go back to being human now.

Then, I closed my eyes, fell to the ground, and passed out.

\* \* \*

WHEN I WOKE UP, I was lying in a soft bed. I could smell Noah on the bedsheets—had smelled his scent a thousand times that I could recognize it anywhere. It was so damn sweet. I grinned. He'd found me. My mates had found me. I was back at their pack house, had talked Roger out of taking Derek, had—

Someone cleared their throat, and I opened my eyes. I was staring up at a concrete ceiling. Noah's room didn't have a concrete ceiling.

Whoever it was cleared their throat again, and I looked over. My heart dropped in my chest, and my breathing hitched. I tried to leap out of bed, but my wrists got caught on the chains around them.

Ava stood near the door, one hand on her hip, wearing one of Noah's hoodies. "Naomi, Naomi, Naomi."

## CHAPTER 77



NAOMI

I lunged at Ava, wanting nothing more than to wrap my hands around her throat and snap her neck for what she had done to Noah, to Jax, and to me. But the chains yanked me back and cut into my wrists. They seared my skin, and I could smell the flesh melting away.

*Damn silver. Damn being a wolf.*

She smiled almost sadistically at me, strands of her hair falling into her face, and sat on the bed mere feet away.

I gritted my teeth together and shifted in the bed, so the silver cuffs weren't touching as much of my skin. There were small burn marks already forming on my wrists that I knew would just get worse and worse the longer that I was chained. "What do you want?"

She brushed her fingers over my cheek, like she was admiring me. "I just want to talk."

"About what?" I asked, pulling myself away from her.

"Noah."

I pressed my lips together.

About the man she had tortured for years. About the man she had fucked up and left for me to fix. About the man who might've actually cheated on her.

"What about him?"

She stood from the bed and walked around the room, her fingers gliding against the gray concrete walls. She was quiet for a long time. "He is a sadist, you know."

*Oh, dear Moon Goddess. Here we go. Already starting with lies.*

She spun on her heel and looked at me, frowning. Tears filled her big, bright eyes. "You don't know at first. Everything seems so normal. You love

him; he pretends. You let him mark you; he pretends some more. Until one day ... one day, he just snaps.”

I arched a brow as a tear rolled down her cheek.

“You don’t believe me?” she asked, and I shook my head. “You know how he likes to fuck rough? To wrap his hand around your neck? To torture you in all the right ways? He liked to do that to me too. I loved it, but one night ... one night, it was just him and me. He took it too far. Too fucking far. Choked me until I passed out, and the next morning, I woke up with silver chains wrapped around my wrists.”

My brows furrowed together. “Silver chains?”

“Yes.”

“They must’ve burned,” I said, trying to sympathize with her so she’d let me out of these damn cuffs. “These burn me.”

She nodded her head and turned away. “They did. He kept them on until Jax came back home.” She pulled her sleeves up just barely for me to see her wrists.

There were scars there, just like the ones that were forming on *my* wrists. Deep and red. Bright red. *Fresh* scars. Not scars from months ago.

I peered back up at her before she could see me gawking at them. “He—he really did that to you?”

She crouched in front of me, hands on my knees, and all I wanted to do was push her away. “He’s fucked up, Naomi.” She shook her head. “I just wanted to protect you, wanted to try to get you away from him. But once he sinks his teeth into you, he will not let you out of his sight. I don’t want you to fall into the same relationship that I did, the same abusive relationship that killed me on the inside.”

*What a damn good manipulator.*

I gazed down at my knees and frowned. “I-I didn’t know that he did that to you.” I shook my head. “Roger said that—that it was so tough for you. That you suffered for years, but I didn’t believe him. Especially when he said



that Makayla was your only support system at the time. The twins told me that you hated her.” I pressed my lips together, making sure my voice shook with every word. “I thought that you really did hate her.”

She looked away from me. “She was my only support system, my greatest friend,” she said, going along with the lie I’d told her. “She and Jax were the only people that I had. And when I did tell Jax about Noah, he didn’t believe me.” She drew a finger across the marks on her neck. “Makayla knew that he’d kill me. So, she did the one selfless thing she could do for me to escape. When I left, she took my place for me. Was with them just like I had been, so I wouldn’t hurt anymore.” She turned to me, tears in her eyes. But no tears fell. “Then, you killed her.”

My eyes widened. “I—I didn’t want to.”

She stood up. “Yes, you did. You wanted to hurt her because she had been flirting with Jax and Noah behind your back.” She cupped my face in her hands. “But, Naomi, she was just trying to protect you from them.” She pulled me into a hug. “That’s all. I know it’s hard to see the bad in them because they’re your mates, but it’s true.”

I let her hug me and inhaled Noah’s scent. I didn’t know what she was trying to do. Was she trying to hurt me? Trying to manipulate me? Trying to gain my trust? She knew that I was smarter than the front she was trying to put on.

“Why’re you still wearing his sweatshirt then?” I whispered.

She patted my head and stood up with that sinister look in her eyes. “Because I want you to smell his scent, want you to think about all the fucked up things that he has ever done to you. I know he’s hurt you a lot more than you’re showing. I have watched him hurt you every night with his lies. You cried in your bedroom. Cried out on the porch. Talked to your friend *Oliver* about how fucked up he was.” Her fingers brushed against my cheeks again, and she made me look into her eyes. “But all the pain, all the heartbreak ends tonight. Won’t that be so nice for you?” she asked. “You won’t have to suffer

again.”

I nodded my head. “It would be nice.”

Moon Goddess, she really was crazy.

“I know,” she said, stroking my hair. “That’s why, together, we’re going to kill him when they come to save you.”

## CHAPTER 78



JAX

“*Y*ou really think this is going to work?” I asked Noah.

I didn’t believe this plan would work one bit. Sure, Ava was crazy enough to believe it—but she was smart enough not to believe it.

Noah gave me a look that said, *No, I don’t think it will, but it’s the only way.* “It will work.”

“Naomi isn’t going to like this,” I said again.

She would hurt so much emotionally from it. And she didn’t deserve it. She didn’t deserve to get hurt again. I missed her so much already.

When I’d felt her shift last night—lying in my bed, hurting, because she was—all I could think about was her and how I wanted to spend the rest of my life making her happy. I’d wondered what she looked like and when I would be able to see her beautiful wolf for the first time.

“Exactly,” Ryan said. “She won’t like it, so her actions will be believable. Ava will be able to smell her fear, to believe that she thinks this is really happening.”

I growled at Ryan. This was all his fault for putting this stupid plan in Noah’s head. Now, Noah thought that this plan would work because Ava was crazy and because she still loved him. It was so damn obvious that she did. But who knew how far she would take it? Who knew how far Noah would take things?

“It will work,” Noah said, following Ryan out of the room.

Before he could leave, I grabbed him by the shoulder and pushed him against the doorframe.

“You realize that if you’re wrong, Naomi will die.”

“Ava won’t kill her. I won’t let her.”

“Yeah, that’s because Ava will make *you* do it.” I shoved him. “Think this fucking plan through, Noah, because I’m not letting my mate die. Even if I have to kill Ava myself, because you won’t be able to do it”—I knew that he wouldn’t be able to do it—“I will kill her.” I stepped closer to him, lowering my voice. “And you’re my brother, but if you get in the way, I’ll have to kill you too.”

Noah’s brows furrowed together, and he glared at me. “You really think that I still love her, don’t you?”

The words hurt me more than they hurt him. Ava had dragged him through hell and back, hurt him in the worst ways possible, degraded him every single day. And he never stopped loving her the whole time we were together. He’d have walked to the ends of the earth for her, worshiped her at her feet, killed for her.

And by the way that he’d let her bite him—right where Naomi was going to—it made me think Noah wanted to feel her touch again. He wanted to be with her again. It was him choosing Ava over Naomi.

For the first time, I didn’t know who he wanted anymore. And that scared me shitless.

I pressed my lips together, and his glare hardened.

“You really think that I’m a piece of shit, don’t you?”

“Noah, I—”

“No, don’t deny it. Everyone always thinks the wor—”

Suddenly, he froze and clutched his wrist. A pained expression crossed his face.

After a few moments, I felt it too. A searing pain on my right wrist, like the skin was melting right off.

I clutched my arm and took a deep breath.

“Naomi,” Noah said before I could. “Naomi is hurt. Our mate is hurt.” His eyes glowed gold, and I could tell that his wolf wanted nothing more than to ease her pain.

I closed my eyes and swore under my breath. This was happening faster than I'd thought it would. I stormed out of the room to the living room to find Oliver pacing back and forth.

"There you fucking are," he said to me. "Where's Noah?" He rubbed his hands together, fear evident in his eyes.

Noah walked out behind me, his jaw tight. "Where is she?" Noah said. "You weren't supposed to leave her side."

Oliver looked between us. "At Ava's pack. Hidden in the alpha's prison, where he tortures his captives." He stepped back. "And before you get angry with me, this was Naomi's idea." He looked to the ground and then at us. He was quiet for more than a few moments, and I could feel his fear. "You do know what he does to the women there too, don't you?"

I pressed my lips together, heart aching. "Naomi won't allow it. She is strong. She'll push Ava's brother away."

"Not when she's in silver chains," Noah said quietly, his chin trembling. "Not when she's helpless. He's going to make a claim on her. The first claim since she's shifted. And our bond... our bond will be tainted."

## CHAPTER 79



NAOMI

She patted my knee and stood up. “But don’t worry. I have someone here to replace him for you. Someone that I know a strong woman like you will enjoy.” She opened the door, stuck her head out of it, and said, “Brother.”

There was a long pause, and then Bryan, the alpha, appeared at the door. His eyes were a hazy mix of human and werewolf. His hair was disheveled. He stepped into the room, and I sucked in a breath.

“No,” I whispered to myself.

I knew what she was trying to do. Had heard the rumors about women in the alpha’s torture chambers. She wanted me to get with her brother, to fuck him so she could destroy Noah and Jax with the news.

She was beyond crazy, but I was bound and couldn’t get out, no matter how hard I tried.

So, I had to be a little crazy too. I needed to gain her trust, so she would let me out of these damn chains.

Bryan walked up to me. This felt so disgusting, so absolutely disgusting. But I had to try.

As hard as I tried to look calm, I knew that I was tense. My brows were furrowed together, my jaw was clenched, and my heart was pounding.

Ava smiled. “Don’t worry, *Nai*. My brother doesn’t bite.” She placed a hand on his shoulder. “He’s much gentler than the twins as well. A fragile body like yours is going to need it.”

Bryan looked me up and down, eyes growing wide when they lingered on my nearly bare breasts.

Ava leaned against the door, head on the frame, and smiled. “Do you like her?” she said.



Psychotic. Absolutely psychotic.

He sat next to me and leaned in close, placing his hand on my thigh. I tensed when he dipped his nose into my hair and inhaled. After a few moments of silence, he stood up and smirked. “Yes,” he said. He walked to the door, grabbed the handle from her, and said, “I’ll let you know when I’m finished with her.”

Moon Goddess, the whole fucking family was nuts.

The door closed. I gathered all the strength I had and tried to come up with the smartest plan on how to get out of this. I eyed my backpack, sitting mere feet away from the bed, and sighed. The only logical thing that I could think of was to go along with it, no matter how much it was going to hurt the twins. I needed to go along with it, so *I* would survive.

He walked over to me, taking his time with each step. I gazed at his feet until he reached the bed. Then, he placed a finger under my chin and lifted until I was looking at him.

“Naomi,” he said. “We meet again.”

“I haven’t forgotten about last time,” I said. I needed to stop being such a ho.

He sat down on the bed with me, hand running up the inside of my thigh. “I missed you. None of the *whores* I found compare to you. Even if your boss sent you here to spy on us all those years ago, you’ve been the most memorable. I loved devouring every inch of you.” He brushed his lips against my bare shoulder. “Loved touching you in places that only your mates should.” He pushed a hand between my legs and touched me.

All I wanted to do was move, but if I moved an inch, these chains would burn my skin again.

“Noah and Jax,” I said quietly and closed my eyes, “are nothing compared to how good you used to fuck me.” I leaned my head against his shoulder. Damn, I needed a way to get out of this. I really needed to find a way to get out of this.

He continued to touch me, and I continued to pretend like I liked it.

“You never told Ava about us?” I asked.

“No,” he said against my ear. “I wanted to keep us a secret, and then Ava brought you to me.”

I mentally slapped myself.

“Release me from the chains,” I said. “And we can pick up right where we left off.”

He pulled his hand away and arched a brow. “You know that I can’t do that.”

“They hurt,” I whimpered.

He grabbed the silver in his bare hand, letting it sear his skin. “I know,” he said. “It hurts, but now, we’re both hurting.”

*This fucking pack is crazy.*

I sighed and brushed my nose against his. “What’s bothering you?” I asked. “If you’re not going to unchain me, why’d you stop?”

He smirked ever so lightly. “The same desperate Naomi,” he mumbled against my lips, drawing a finger down my jaw. “I missed you begging for me.”

He placed his lips on mine and kissed me. I squeezed my eyes shut and kissed him back.

*Hate myself. Hate myself. Hate myself.*

I pulled away slightly when I realized that he was still tense. “You’re holding back,” I said.

He paused for a few moments, his hands in my hair. “I just have a lot on my mind,” he said.

I paused and waited for him. I knew how much he always hated the silence.

“I haven’t seen my brother in a few days. Ava wants to kill two of the most powerful people in the world. The Lycans—your boss—is on my ass.”

“You need a release,” I said. “Let me help you.”

He smirked against my lips. “How are you going to—”

I pressed my lips to his, sucked up the pain, and pushed him down onto the bed next to me, the chains searing my skin. I crawled on top of him. “Like this.”

## CHAPTER 80



NOAH

I didn't think this was going to work. I didn't think I would be able to kill Ava. Not because I still loved her—I didn't. No matter what Jax thought, I knew deep down that Naomi was the woman I loved. She was my mate, and I truly did love her. It wasn't infatuation like it had been with Ava.

I didn't think I would be able to kill Ava because I knew she had something up her sleeve. Ava was smart. I just hoped that Ryan's plan would outsmart her.

Every step I took toward Ava's pack, my gut was telling me that something was wrong. Something didn't feel good mentally, physically, or emotionally.

Thanks to Naomi's mark on my neck, I could feel her hurting. The pain was deep inside of me—an emotional kind of pain. And I wondered if Ava's asshole of a brother was actually doing to her what he had done to all of the she-wolves that ended up in his prison. I had thought up a hundred different ways to kill him after Ava was dead. Rip him limb by limb. Cut him so deep and just watch him bleed out. Torture him for days. Show up with his dead brother.

When we finally made it to Ava's pack borders, it was only me and Jax. Ryan and Oliver had stayed behind along with the rest of my pack. They were in the woods, waiting for us to signal for them to come in.

All going in at once would have been suspicious.

As soon as the first guards saw us, he watched us intently but didn't stop us. It was like Ava had planned for us to show up, like she had planned for us to come here to save Naomi. The guard followed us from behind, about ten feet away. As we passed more and more people, they followed as well until

we were standing in front of the pack house.

Good, they wouldn't be guarding the property.

There was a group of warriors being yelled at by the beta. It sounded like they planned on attacking someone else sometime soon, but they stopped and stared when we walked up.

Jax stepped forward and decided to break the silence. "We're here for Ava."

Almost as if on cue, Ava stepped out of the back door of the pack house. She was wearing one of my sweatshirts—one of my sweatshirts from my room. She must've broken in and stolen it recently.

"Noah ... Jax ..." She smiled and walked closer to us.

My heart raced. She hadn't talked to me in months. I hadn't heard her voice in fucking months.

"How's that love bite on your neck feeling?" she asked me.

She brushed her fingers against my forearm, and I resisted the urge to pull back.

"It's ..." I looked down, ashamed. "It's good." I took a deep breath. "Great."

"I see Naomi marked you over it," she said.

I stared down at her lips, watching them move. So plump.

She noticed me staring and puckered them. "Are you here for her?"

"Yes," Jax said. "Where—"

"No," I cut him off.

"No?" Ava asked, paying no attention to Jax. "Don't you want to see your mate?"

"Ye—" Jax started again.

I stepped forward and gulped. She smelled so good. I told myself that I still enjoyed her scent.

"You smell good." I inhaled and closed my eyes.

Ava furrowed her brows, as if she didn't know what to think, and then

she pushed out her chest ever so slightly. “Naomi is with my brother.” She smirked, trying to get a rise out of me.

I bit back my anger and parted my lips, still staring at her like she was the only thing that mattered.

“Last time I saw them, they were in bed together.” Ava looked behind me and smiled wide. “There they are.”

She was such a good manipulator. Made me feel things that I’d never felt before.

I swallowed hard, almost afraid to look back, but I did. Naomi and Bryan were walking out of the prison. His hand was around her waist, and she was smiling and gazing up at him like he was perfect.

Yet her hands were in chains.

She was wearing a thin little shirt, one that everyone could see right through, and a short skirt that I knew Jax would want to rip right off. Hell, I did too.

“There you are,” Ava said, smiling at my mate like they were best friends.

Naomi looked up, and her gaze met mine. I nearly fell to my knees right there to ask her for her forgiveness for what I was about to do.

Emotion after emotion crossed her face. Then, she looked at me with those damn guilty eyes of hers. She had done something with Bryan—I just knew it. And that made me hate him even more.

I tried to talk to her through the mind link, but she didn’t let me. Rejected.

Bryan curled his fingers around her waist, and Naomi smiled. He leaned down to say something in her ear, and she blushed a deep red.

Then, as if she was taunting me, she looked up at me through her lashes, stared at me right in the eyes, and placed her lips on Bryan.

Jax growled from behind me and went to leap forward. Hell, I wanted to do it, too, but I couldn’t. I needed to keep my cool. I needed to do this for all of us.

Some of the warriors grabbed Jax and held him back. I had to trust Naomi. I had to.



## CHAPTER 81



NAOMI

*A*shamed. That was how I felt when I crawled off Ava's brother and sat on the bed next to him. Noah and Jax would never forgive me. Ever. And I didn't want them to. I was pure trash. Pure and utter trash.

Before Ava's brother finally came back to his senses, I kicked my backpack, which Ava had stupidly left just in my reach, under the bed, making sure to kick the bottle of wolfsbane under there too.

It had taken a lot to do what I just did—to pretend to want him, to actually ... to actually let him touch me, and to touch him in order to sneak that bottle out and rub a dab seductively on his lips. Just enough to make him sleepy for a bit.

When he finally opened his eyes, I smiled at him. My shirt and pants and underwear were still lying on the ground near the door. He had torn them off of me and thrown them across the room. I felt so violated.

He gazed up at me and smiled back. So fucking ugly. Then, without speaking a word, he left the room, brought me a pair of Ava's clothes, and took my hand. "It's late. Ava will be waiting for us."

He undid the chains yet left the cuffs on my hands. We walked together out of the prison. Noah's and Jax's scents were so faint in the air. I knew that at this time, they should be enacting our plan. They had to be. March on Ava's territory while I was distracting Roger.

At least, that had been the plan to begin with. They didn't know I wasn't distracting Roger anymore. I had been distracting Ava's brother to stay alive.

When we walked outside, I just saw Noah and Jax. There was no army. No Oliver. No Lycans.

Ava was standing there with them. She brushed a finger against Noah's forearm, and he didn't pull away. He just stood there and stared down at her

like she was his mate. And she fucking had been.

Noah brushed his finger against the mark on his neck—Ava's mark, not mine. "It's ..." he said. "It's good." He took a deep breath. "Great."

"I see Naomi marked you over it," Ava said.

All I wanted to do was hit her over the head and stop this fucking madness. She still had so much power over him.

He was still into her. And that hurt so fucking bad. I felt betrayed. I felt like I was being kicked over and over and over for falling for him and his stupid-ass lies. He stared down at her lips like he used to do with me.

"Are you here for her?" Ava asked.

"Yes," Jax said, stepping forward. "Where—"

"No," Noah said.

"No?" Ava asked. "Don't you want to see your mate?"

"Ye—" Jax started again.

Noah stepped forward and gulped. "You smell good." He inhaled and closed his eyes.

My heart ached. My wolf was howling in my stomach, wanting to cry to the moon. She wanted him so damn bad, and he was completely infatuated with his old mate still.

Was I not enough for him?

I tried to think clearly, but I couldn't. I was a mess. He wasn't here for me. Maybe Jax was, but not Noah. They hadn't even come with the army like we had planned. They had come by themselves. To do whatever it was that they were going to do. And by the way Ava was dressed, it looked like she had been waiting for them to come. Dressed in his sweatshirt still with no pants on. It was long enough to cover her ass, just nothing else.

Bryan pressed a hand into my lower back when I stopped dead in my tracks. My wolf didn't want to see them. She didn't want to see them ever again. She wanted to go hide somewhere and never come out. She wanted Oliver to comfort us.

Ava furrowed her brows and then pushed out her chest ever so slightly, making herself seem bigger than she actually was. And I swore I saw Noah glance down at her chest.

“Naomi is with my brother.” Ava smiled. “Last time I saw them, they were in bed together.” Ava looked behind Noah and saw us. “There they are.”

I swallowed hard and put the best fake smile on my face despite how shitty I was feeling right now. If I ran, Bryan would lock me in that cell again. If I moved, the silver would burn my skin again. If I didn’t act like I’d just fucked Ava’s brother and had the time of my fucking life, I had no doubt that they would try to kill me. Hell, I thought that they would kill me anyway.

My only hope was for Oliver to come and save the day, the way he always did.

Bryan’s arm curled around my waist. I looked up at him through my lashes like he was perfect.

“There you are,” Ava said, grinning at me.

Noah tried to talk to me through the mind link, but I didn’t respond. I didn’t want to hear his stupid fucking lies.

Bryan leaned down. “Kiss me,” he said. “Kiss me here.”

And in that moment, I realized that I was only there to hurt Noah. This was to hurt Noah. Of course, Ava wanted me to kill him because she didn’t have the guts to. Bryan wanted to hurt him because he wasn’t as strong as the twins were.

They’d both had the chance to kill them during the battle, but they had failed.

Ava could’ve killed him the other day since she had her teeth in his neck. She could’ve done it, but she hadn’t. She wasn’t emotionally strong enough.

So, she was giving that job to me. And I knew exactly what would hurt him.

I looked right at Noah, smiled, and placed a kiss on Bryan’s lips. I pushed

some hair behind my shoulder and brushed my fingers against Noah's mark.  
And when I did, all I heard was, "*Trust me, Nai.*"

## CHAPTER 82



NAOMI

“*T*rust me, Nai.”

I pulled away from Ava's brother, wiped a finger across the corner of my lip, and took a deep breath. Moon Goddess, he still tasted like rotten eggs.

Jax growled loudly, the sound echoing through the forest. I gulped when I saw the hurt in his eyes. The hurt in his eyes and not Noah's.

But Noah wanted me to trust him.

Ava laughed. “Jax ... Jax ... Jax ... you were never so possessive of me.”

One of Ava's warriors grabbed Jax's arms and held him back. His muscles rippled against his shirt.

He snarled at Ava's brother and said, “I'm going to fucking kill you.”

Ava giggled and smiled widely. “No, you won't, Jax.” Then, she turned to Noah and brushed another finger across his forearm. “So, why're you here again?”

I pressed my lips together, just watching her touch him.

He tensed and sucked in a deep breath. “For you.”

Jax's eyes were wide. “No, we aren't, Noah,” he growled. “I fucking knew I shouldn't have brought you. You're still too much in love with her.” He shook his head, claws digging into his palms. The vein in his neck was pulsing violently.

Ava tilted her head, eyes viciously wild. “You're not here for me, Noah. Don't try to fool me,” she said. “I know that you're here for her. Your mate who doesn't love you.” She looked at me. “Isn't that right, Naomi?”

I tensed. Sure, I was good at flirting, but this just wasn't believable. It wasn't believable that I wanted to love her brother after a few short hours. I stepped forward and narrowed my eyes at Noah. It wasn't believable, but I

knew what would be.

“No,” I said to Ava. “I still love Noah. I always will. He’s my mate.” Then, I turned to Noah. “But I will never forgive you after what you did to Ava and what you’ve done to me.”

Noah’s eyes widened.

I stepped closer to him, fuming. “You lied to me, even after you told me that the lies were done. You told me all the shitty things that Ava did to you, but you didn’t tell me how you used to hurt her. How you used to tie her up, choke her until she passed out.”

“Naomi,” Jax said, “he didn’t—”

Ava rolled her eyes. “Don’t lie, Jax.” She pulled up her sleeves. “I have scars to prove it.”

“Don’t protect him either, Jax,” I said, channeling my inner Ava. “You didn’t believe your own mate when she told you that Noah had been abusing her for years.” I shook my head in disgust and turned away from them, walking back to Bryan.

“Naomi, she’s manipulating you,” Jax said again. But I’d already known that. “Like she does with everyone.”

Ava walked up to me. “All this time, I’ve been waiting to talk to her, to warn her.”

“I am not going to spend the rest of my life in fear that one day, you’ll snap and hurt me too,” I said to Noah.

Ava was standing right next to me, and I could tell that she was grinning from ear to ear. She thought that I actually believed her. I’d passed her test.

Noah ignored me. “You don’t have to lie to her to get her out of my life. You know the real reason I brought her over, Ava,” Noah said. “I never wanted her. I just wanted to make you jealous. Wanted you to love me again. Don’t you remember that I used to wait up for you every night? I’d watch out the window for you to come. We’d stare at each other for hours. It’s fucking crazy. We’re fucking crazy. This is fucking crazy. But I love you.”



The words hurt so fucking bad. But I had to trust him.

Ava shook her head. “No, you don’t.” She shook her head again and again. “No. You can’t.”

Noah grabbed her face, brushing his thumbs against her cheeks. “How do I prove it to you? Do you want me to take you to bed? Want me to make love to you the way I used to? Give you your necklace back?” He pulled a mate necklace similar to the one that I had from his pocket and handed it to her. “I fixed it for you.”

Ava stared at it with so much love, and my heart sank.

*Trust him. Trust him. Trust him.* I had to trust him. Even if he brought her to bed and loved her like he loved me.

Ava grabbed the necklace and broke it apart in her fingers—the true Ava finally coming out. She let the pieces drop one by one onto the ground, and they disappeared under the thick layer of snow. Noah’s face dropped, and my heart hurt for him.

I could feel all of his emotions. It was like he was reliving this moment all over again. And it was soul-crushing.

Ava pressed her lips together. I didn’t use the word *crazy* a lot, but I thought that she fit it perfectly.

“Destroy Naomi’s necklace.”

Noah looked at my necklace, a brief moment of fear flashing across his face. “That will prove it to you?” he asked, his voice shaky.

Jax shook his head. “Don’t do it, Noah.”

He brushed his fingers across her jaw and looked at her with so much love. “Anything for you.”

He walked up to me so slowly. Then, he trailed a finger against my mark, grabbing the necklace in his fist.

“Sorry,” he said through the mind link.

“Jax’s too,” Ava said.

“Noah!” Jax growled. “Stop.”

Noah looked down at me, and I didn't know what to think. He also took Jax's necklace in his hand and snapped them both off of my neck. They broke to pieces and vanished into the blanket of snow.

## CHAPTER 83



NAOMI

My wolf howled inside of me, and I told her to shut the hell up. I didn't know what to feel. Hurt, betrayal, proud, free. I was so confused about my feelings and about what was happening.

Noah let the strings fall from his hand, and Jax broke out of the warrior's grip.

He growled again at his brother and shoved him into the snow. "I'm tired of this shit," he said.

Ava howled and pulled Jax off of Noah and then helped him up. I was so confused about what she really wanted.

She wanted me to kill him; she wanted him alive. She wanted him to hurt; she wanted to be his lover. Moon Goddess, this pack was driving me crazy.

Ava cupped Noah's face, brushing her fingers against his cheek. "Mate," she said. "I missed you."

Noah wrapped his hands around the back of her neck, pulled her closer, and pressed his lips to hers. Fuck, I hated it.

He kissed her for longer than I wished he had. One moment passed, then another, and then she placed her hands on top of his, pulling on them slightly. But he just pressed his lips harder against hers. She began yanking on his wrists, wanting him to let go. Another few moments passed, and her eyes widened.

Noah's hands tightened around her throat until I heard a crack. A shiver ran through me when he released her, and she fell limply to the ground. I stared at them in complete shock.

Noah had killed her. He'd killed Ava.

My heart pounded against my chest.

Everything after that happened so fast.

Bryan's eyes turned pure black, and his nails lengthened into claws. He leaped toward Noah, shifting midair. Jax pulled him out of the way just in time. I growled at them, my wolf forcing me to shred my clothes and shift. I needed to protect my mates. To protect them with my life.

I latched my teeth into Bryan's neck and pulled out his throat, killing him instantly.

Bryan's warriors quickly surrounded us from every direction. They wanted revenge and blood for killing the alpha's family. But I wanted revenge for them trying to ruin mine—both while I was younger and the one I had now.

Jax and Noah shifted into their wolves, and Noah lifted his nose to the sky, howling. Suddenly, I heard a thunderous pounding through the woods. His pack and the Lycans appeared in the forest.

My thoughts were racing at the sight. So many strong warriors, so many wolves who had followed all of us. About to kill under the moonlight. My heart swelled, and I felt so good. But the feeling didn't last long.

Before I knew it, warriors were charging at each other, ripping each other apart limb by limb.

And for the first time, I joined as a wolf. Not as a human.

The battle didn't last long either.

After a good fifteen minutes, the three warriors who were left surrendered to Isabella. Among the hundreds of warrior wolves and Lycans, I pushed my way through the crowd, trying to find my mates.

As I finally pushed all the way through the crowd, I heard a low howl. I turned around and looked at the twins standing a few feet away from me, their golden eyes like suns staring at me. They ran toward me, leaping playfully at me and tackling me to the ground. Jax stood over me and licked my neck, where his mark was.

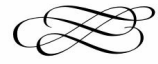
This was it. We were finally free of Ava.

I smiled and pushed him away, standing up on all fours. Noah looked at

me and then walked over. He looked so guilty yet so happy to see me. He placed his forehead on mine, and I rested mine against his.

*Mate.*

## CHAPTER 84



## NAOMI

Addie smiled wide at me from my living room at her baby shower.  
“Naomi, you did not!”

She pulled one of our old rocking chairs from the big box I had wrapped for her. The wood was dirty, and it wasn’t in the best condition, but it had been a gift from Mom and Dad when we were just children—before things got bad.

She hobbled over to me, cradling her huge baby bump, and pulled me into a side hug. Tears welled up in her eyes. “Where did you find this?”

I shrugged my shoulders and looked over at the twins. “We did some searching.”

Ryan stood next to Oliver, cleared his throat, and handed her a small gift. “Mine next.”

Addie sat down and tore open the present. She held up a small onesie that said, *I get all the chicks*.

I rolled my eyes at Ryan and shook my head.

Oliver nudged me slightly. “If you think that’s bad, you should see him on missions with me. God, he has to flirt with everyone.”

I smiled back at him. “Hating him already?”

Ryan grinned at the shirt he’d bought for Addie.

“He’s not too bad. Definitely not you, but easy to get along with.”

Addie stood up and grabbed Derek’s hand. “Okay! Mama’s hungry. Let’s have some cake.”

She and Derek cut the cake, and I smiled at them, finally feeling content.

After Noah had killed Ava and we ended up wiping out their whole pack, it had taken a while for things to get back to normal. There was still some drama and some heartbreak. Noah had had a hard time, reliving those



memories again. He apologized every day for breaking his and Jax's necklaces, even after he replaced them. But now, things were finally ... *normal*.

And I was enjoying it.

Jax took my hand. "Little One," he said, "come here. We have a surprise for you in our room."

"Can't this wait until—"

He pulled me down the hall and pressed his lips to mine just as we made it to our room.

"Jax," I said between kisses, "we can't right now." I whimpered softly when he slid a hand under my dress and pressed his fingers against my bare clit. How had I known that this was exactly the surprise he had for me? "We ... have ... visitors."

He closed our bedroom door and pushed me against the bed.

The door opened, and I pushed Jax away, startled. Noah walked in, his golden eyes on me, and chuckled. He walked behind me, pushed some hair behind my shoulder, and kissed his mark.

"They're busy," he said, unbuttoning my shirt and pulling it off of me. "Won't suspect a thing," he mumbled against my skin. He picked me up from behind and threw me onto the bed.

"Noah," I said.

He pressed a finger into me and moved it slowly. My pussy clenched around him, and I arched my back.

Jax tugged off his pants and crawled onto the bed with me. He rubbed my clit roughly and pressed his lips to mine. Noah ground his cock against my entrance.

"We have to make it quick," I said. "Quick. Very ... quick."

"Quick," Jax said. "We can make it quick. You just have to make it quiet."

He smirked against my lips, and I suddenly felt Noah's bare cock poke at

my entrance. Before I could react, he pressed himself into me, filling me completely. My eyes widened, and I moaned into Jax's mouth.

Moon Goddess, I still hadn't gotten used to his size.

He pushed into me slowly at first, and I stroked Jax's cock, keeping the same pace. His fingers circled around my clit again, and I tightened. Pressure.

Noah tugged on my nipples, making my breasts bounce as he fucked me. A wave of pleasure rolled over me, and I arched my back again. My whole body was tingling.

"Jax," I said, whimpering his name. "I want you to be inside of me too, please."

Noah pulled out of me, and Jax smirked against my lips and pulled me on top of him, so my back was against his chest. His breath warmed his mark on my neck. His cock was hard and pressing against my backside.

"I want to hear you beg, Little One."

He pushed himself harder against my entrance, and I parted my lips, eyes closing in pure delight. Noah rubbed himself against my folds, teasing my clit with his dick.

"Please," I said under my breath.

"What was that?" Jax said.

My pussy clenched. "Please."

"One more time," Noah said.

"Please!"

They both pushed themselves into me at once, and I moaned so loudly that everyone at the whole party must've heard me. They pumped in and out of my pussy at the same time. Filling me completely and then pulling all the way out. My pussy tightened on them, and I inhaled their scents.

I dragged my nails down Noah's chest, my heart racing. Wave after wave of pleasure was rushing to my core, warming it.

"More," I said.

Jax placed a lingering kiss on my ear and lightly tugged on my earlobe.

His hand slipped to my clit, and he rubbed small circles around it. I clenched on them as they pumped faster and harder into me.

Noah grasped my thighs, pulling me closer with each thrust. He leaned down and pressed his lips to mine. “Come for us, Nai,” he mumbled against me.

My legs shook in his hands as I shattered. They continued to pound into me. I felt like I was on top of the world, floating in the clouds. I sank into Jax’s arms, feeling nothing but absolute pleasure.

After a few moments, they stilled. Noah pulled out first, his cum immediately dripping down my folds. I rolled off of Jax and onto the bed next to him, my breathing ragged. Noah stood between my legs and curled up on me.

“Everything’s the way that it should be,” Noah said. “You’re here with us, lying in our bed, wearing our new mate necklaces, and”—he kissed my stomach—“*this*.”

Jax ran his fingers over the small bump and smiled at me. “We can’t wait.”

I couldn’t wait either. Life with my new mates was just starting, and I was set on no more drama. My life with them—I ran a hand over my stomach—and with her would be so much better than the family I had grown up in.

We were in love, we didn’t have any drama, and we were happy. So damn happy.

**THE END**

**WANT to read two steamy one-shots about Naomi, Jax, and Noah’s life after this book? Sign up for my newsletter today and you’ll receive them in your inbox > <https://www.subscribepage.com/the-twins-epilogue>**

## ALSO BY EMILIA ROSE

### Paranormal Romance

Submitting to the Alpha: <https://books2read.com/u/4N9Bd6>

Come Here, Kitten: <https://books2read.com/u/b55dol>

Alpha Maddox: <https://books2read.com/u/bPXP8l>

My Werewolf Professor: <https://books2read.com/my-werewolf-professor>

### Contemporary Romance

Poison: <https://books2read.com/Poison-Redwood-Academy>

Stepbrother: <https://books2read.com/Stepbrother-Redwood-Academy>

Excite Me: <https://books2read.com/excite-me>

### Erotica

Climax: <https://books2read.com/u/4XrBka>

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Emilia Rose is an international best-selling author of steamy paranormal romance. Highly inspired by her study abroad trip to Greece in 2019, Emilia loves to include Greek and Roman mythology in her writing.

She graduated from the University of Pittsburgh with a degree in psychology and a minor in creative writing in 2020 and now writes novels as her day-job.

With over 18 million combined story views online and a growing presence on reading apps, she hopes to inspire other young novelists with her story of growth and imagination, so they go on to write the stories that need to be told.

## STAY CONNECTED

Join Emilia's newsletter for exclusive news > <https://www.emiliarosewriting.com/>