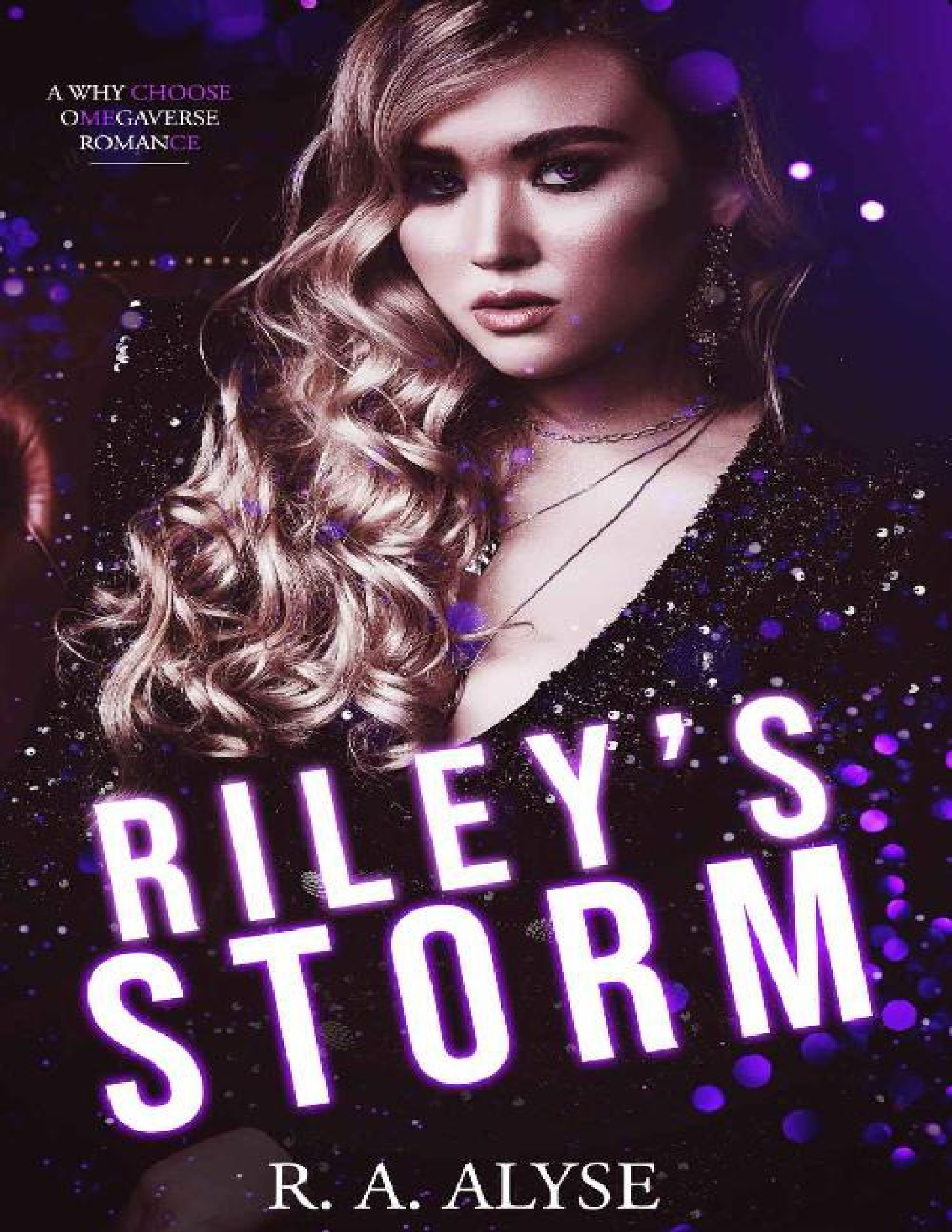


A WHY CHOOSE  
OMEGaverse  
ROMANCE



RILEY'S  
STORM

R. A. ALYSE

# RILEY'S STORM

R. A. ALYSE

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# CONTENTS

[Author's Note:](#)

[Trigger/Content Warnings:](#)

[Omega World](#)

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

36. [Ryan](#)
37. [Storm](#)
38. [Riley](#)
39. [Ryan](#)
40. [Storm](#)
41. [Declan](#)
42. [Riley](#)
43. [Ryan](#)
44. [Victor](#)
45. [Riley](#)
46. [Storm](#)
47. [Riley](#)
48. [Ryan](#)
49. [Storm](#)
50. [Riley](#)

[Epilogue - Riley](#)

[Coming Soon - Run, Omega, Run](#)

[About the Author](#)

[Acknowledgments](#)

[More Books By R.A. Alyse](#)

## AUTHOR'S NOTE:

Hello Dear Readers,

This is my first ever omegaverse and I am thrilled that you picked it up. I absolutely love OVs and this idea struck me one day and I just had to get it out there. Riley and Storm are my absolute favorite couple I have ever written. I hope you enjoy reading this, as much as I enjoyed writing it.

Love you all,  
R.A. Alyse

# TRIGGER/CONTENT WARNINGS:

- ~ Kidnapping
- ~ Depression
- ~ Suicidal Thoughts/Language
  - ~ Child Abuse (past)
  - ~ Domestic Violence (past)
  - ~ Death (past)
- ~ On Page Bloodshed/Violence~ Explicit Sexual Scenes
  - ~ DVP
  - ~ Fisting
  - ~ Toy play
  - ~ Knotting
  - ~ Anal play/sex
  - ~ Somnophilia



*To those that don't believe in me.  
Keep doing that. It fuels me.  
I'll show you.*

# OMEGA WORLD

This is a brief description of my omegaverse, as they are all a bit different. I tried to make this as concise and easy to understand as possible, as the bigger points will come out during the book (I think).

Alphas are the biggest, strongest, most dominant of the designations. They are typically in charge of higher-class jobs. Males have a knot and females have a lock that they use to hold an omega to them during intercourse. Most are members of a pack, although there are some that prefer to be without a pack of their own. They will bite and claim the other designation (other than their own) to tie a pack together, with one important caveat: omegas must choose them, not the other way around. Omegas will typically bite first, and they must be agreeable to taking the alpha's bite or the bond they are trying to form might never complete.

Omegas are the sweetest, most nurturing designation. They crave the protection and security that they feel an alpha can provide. Omegas are typically shorter than betas or alphas. They love soft, cuddly things and building nests. They are very particular, and what is good for one omega might not be for the other. Omegas can be needy and clingy, but they are loyal to a fault to those they love or claim as their pack.

Typically, there is one omega per pack, as omegas are the rarest of the designations. They release a "perfume," a blast of their unique scent when they are near someone that they may be compatible with or if turned on. They can take an alpha's knot, no training necessary. In fact, they crave that and need it often, especially during a heat.

Omegas have sensitive noses. They want to be surrounded by the smells that they like, typically those of their chosen pack. They will take clothing,

bedding, anything they can find that belongs to their pack and use that to build their nests.

Omegas in this world go into heat quarterly, starting at age twenty-five. They last three to five days, depending on the omega. When in the throes of a heat, they become almost lost to a foggy state. They don't know what time it is, what day it is, or how much time has passed, just that they need their alphas/pack to help them through the growing urge to reach climax.

Bonding to a pack is normally done during a heat, although it is not necessary and some packs will bond outside of a normal heat cycle. Claiming bites are typically given around scent glands. There are some on the wrists, neck, and inner thighs. Biting near these marks helps a pack's fragrances begin to blend. A bite given to an alpha from an omega, or vice versa, will never fade.

At the age of eighteen, a person's designation will become clear. Scents change, growth spurts happen for alphas, and perfuming happens for omegas. If nothing changes, the person will remain what everyone starts out as: a beta. This is the most common designation. Betas are average-sized and less dominant, but not nearly as submissive as an omega. They can be trained to take a knot from an alpha, and most, if in a pack, want to. An alpha's bite will solidify them into the pack, with or without an omega. Omegas can claim them as well. However, that bite will fade and they will need to be bitten again. Betas do not have a claiming bite of their own.

The goal for most alphas and omegas is to make a pack, preferably one they are scent matched to. Matches like that play a major role in making packs, especially to omegas that have such sensitive noses. Betas' scents are less strong and usually, they come into a pack due to a preexisting relationship with either an omega or an alpha.

Scent matches usually do not occur before age twenty-five for omegas. Prior to that, they may like and enjoy a particular person's smell, but they won't feel the pull or draw of a match. While it is possible that if a scent is a strong enough match, alphas or omegas may react sooner, but this is very rare.

All alphas and omegas in this omegaverse will attend an academy or school where they will learn about what their designations mean. Omegas start school at twenty and attend for four years, graduating the year prior to their heat starting. Alphas will attend as soon as they show their designation and go for two years, as they do not have heats to prepare for. The schools

they attend are separate.

Regarding omegas, there are local schools in every town that have an omega population. There are also several schools spread throughout the country that parents can choose to send their omega to if they have the funds.

The “best” omega academy is the ORA, Omega Rising Academy. It is very expensive, so typically only the richest omegas attend. Male and female omegas attend the same school. The goal of the ORA is that upon graduation, all their omegas will be matched up and bonded to a pack.

Right before graduation, the ORA holds a mixer, where alphas are invited to come meet the omegas that are finishing school. They mingle, chat, and they are allowed the opportunity to scent one another. It is very expensive to attend these mixers. Due to that, the ORA feels confident in extending a guarantee that all their graduating omegas will leave school with a “good match.” So far, they have never failed at this goal.

Some omegas will attend the ORA through a sponsorship. This means that a pack and the omega have come to an agreement of sorts. They pay the omega’s way through school with the understanding that after graduation, he or she will join their pack. The omega can always choose not to, and it’s not a requirement, but there has never been a case where the omega has not chosen that pack as theirs. An omega that secures sponsorship is viewed as privileged because they already have a pack lined up for graduation.

# CHAPTER I

# RILEY



*I* f only I were twenty-five and bonded, then I could help my parents, I thought as my feet traveled the long but well-known path home from the market. I shivered in the cold December air wrapping my arms around myself and pulling my basket close to my chest, protecting the contents. Our food budget wasn't stretching as far as it had in previous weeks. There was hardly enough in here to feed Dell. How were the rest of us going to make enough meals to last the week?

Mom and Dad would most likely go without, again, making sure my brother and I got fed. It always made me feel so guilty when I was eating and my parents would say they were fine and needed nothing. The only slight silver lining right now was that my older brother, Drew, had possibly found his pack recently. He was off visiting them while they all got to know one another. That was one less mouth to feed.

As it was, there was very little I could do now. Someday, I'd have a pack and they'd be strong, powerful. They'd protect me, like Drew's pack would for him. Even as a beta, there was someone out there for him, so surely there would be someone for me as well.

Not around here, though. That was for sure. I picked up my pace as I passed the pub. Alpha Brown was sitting outside with a beer in hand. He made me feel gross. He always gawked at me for too long. Today was no exception. He licked his lips and stared right at me as I walked by. His eyes were never higher than chest level.

That couldn't be how they all were, right? I mean, my younger brother Dell wasn't like that. He was an alpha and talked highly of how he would treat his omega when he found them. How he planned to keep them in

comfort for the rest of their life.

The alphas in this town didn't hold his ideals. They all seemed to think that it should honor me that they graced me with a wave or a smile. The alphas around here expected their omegas to all but bow down to them. It was clear the omega they had in mind would be meek and obey their every whim without question.

To heck with that!

I wanted love, acceptance, family, and cuddles. So many cuddles. When I thought of my perfect pack, I didn't see their faces. All I was concerned with was what their personalities would be. I couldn't care less what they looked like or even what their genders were. I just wanted them to love me for who I was.

I wanted someone to cherish me.

In my daydreaming, I'd completely missed that I was home. My family's small, quaint house stood in front of me. A gate hung on by a single hinge, keeping the yard separate from the street. Sighing, I opened the mailbox and gathered up the stack inside.

Flipping through the letters absently, I saw there were double the amount of brightly colored envelopes this time. I grimaced in sympathy for my parents. So many overdue bills. Why the companies thought it was appropriate to send past due bills in these envelopes to further embarrass families was beyond me.

Behind the junk mail and a brochure from my local omega school—where I had been attending the last two years—there was one large, thick envelope.

Scarcely daring to breathe, I shuffled the papers carefully and pulled that letter forward. Emblazoned on the front, in a fancy calligraphy font, was my name. I read it four times until I believed it.

"It can't be," I said out loud to no one. "Did I get it?"

Dazed, I stumbled through the gate, forgetting to latch it—not like it really mattered—and made my way into the house. When I got to the kitchen, I tossed my basket on the counter with the mail. I heard a distinctive *crack* and winced. One of the five eggs I bought today had just broken.

Making my way over to the nearest mismatched chair, I sank onto the seat. I held the letter in front of me, unable to open it. I couldn't get the thought out of my head that it wasn't what I thought it was. Beside me, a throat cleared, and I looked up, blinking.

Dell, my alpha brother, stood in the doorway, his brows raised. "What's the matter, pipsqueak?"

Words failed me. I wasn't sure what to say. My mouth opened and closed several times as I floundered. Dell's face fell, and he ate up the distance between him and me in two strides. He knelt next to me.

"Tell me what's wrong? Who upset you? Was it Brown again? I'll kill him!" He rose to his feet with a growl and turned as if he were about to go do that.

I reached out and grabbed his arm to stop him. His reaction was immediate and he calmed down, turning back to face me. I shook my head no and handed him the letter in my hand. He gave me a confused look but took it from me, then he read the front. His eyes widened.

"Do you know what this is?"

I nodded.

"Do Mom and Dad know about this?"

When I rolled my lips in, he read my expression. No.

"Well, are you gonna open it?"

He held it out to me. My fingers reached for it, then I snatched them back. Barely able to meet his eye, I shook my head. I was too nervous; my stomach was tied in knots.

"Hey, hey, it's okay. Calm down. It's just a letter, right? Don't panic. We'll open it together, yeah?"

I felt my eyes widen, and I thanked him silently. Dell pushed out a chair beside me and sat down. My nerves were swamping me. I nibbled on the tip of my fingernail. What if it wasn't what I thought? What if it was a denial? I'd be heartbroken.

Dell reached over and calmly pulled my nail from my teeth. He slipped his hand around mine, holding it in front of us. He patted my hand and then turned over the envelope, the seal shining at us from the back. A lump formed in my throat, and I struggled to swallow.

Just then, Mom and Dad came into the room. Mom hurried over to the abandoned basket of food, tutting under her breath, and started putting everything away. My dad, however, knew something was up. His gaze bounced between Dell and me.

"What's going on?" he addressed us.

Dell looked at me. "Riley? You want to tell him?"

Words still wouldn't come. Dell took pity on me and held out the still



unopened envelope to our father. His brows dipped, but he took it from Dell's hand. His gaze ran over the seal on the back, and then he flipped it to the front to see the return address and my name in gold, swirling font.

"Riles . . . is this what I think it is?" he asked.

"What? What is it?" my mom added, coming over to look as well. "How did you . . . ? When did you . . . ? I mean, why?"

Finally, my throat seemed to unstick and I spoke. "I knew we couldn't afford to send me, but I got a notification that they had scholarships opening. So, I applied."

"A scholarship?"

"Yes . . . fully paid, all-inclusive."

My mom looked at my dad, their expressions indecipherable.

"Well, go on, peanut. Open it," my dad said, holding it out to me.

Dell took it back and placed it on the table in front of me. With shaking fingers, I broke the seal and opened the envelope. Reaching in, I drew out a long letter and read it out loud.

"Congratulations, Riley Druman! We are pleased to inform you we have accepted your application for a scholarship to Omega Rising Academy. Classes for your junior year will begin January fifteenth and will run until November fifteenth. We will provide everything for you. All you need to bring are your comfort items. Please arrive two days early to allow time to settle in and . . ."

Tears blurred my vision and I stopped reading. I put the letter down and looked around at my family. "I got in. I really got in!"

Dell let out a *whoop* and leapt from his chair. He grabbed me around my waist and lifted me from my chair. He swung me around while I curled as tight as I could to avoid knocking anything over.

"Congratulations, big sis! You deserve this! I'm so excited for you. You're going to get the best education and come back to us full of knowledge! I'm so very proud of you!"

"Thank you, Dell," I said sincerely.

He placed me back down on my feet, and I looked over at our parents. They didn't seem as enthusiastic about it, but they gave me big smiles and congratulations. Then, they asked us to help with dinner as if it were any other night.

I didn't care. Nothing was going to wipe the smile off my face. I'd still be grinning at the front doors of Omega Rising Academy in January. I was

having trouble wrapping my head around it. That I, Riley Druman, had gotten a scholarship to the *best* omega school in the country. The one that had a one hundred percent success rate of graduates finding a pack before they left the academy. I would have a pack in just two short years.

Nothing was going to rain on my parade today.

## CHAPTER 2

# RILEY



I was going to throw up. Nothing could have prepared me for this. The shuttle bus I rode to Omega Rising Academy—or the ORA, as I heard the other students call it—slowed to a stop in front of an enormous building. It was a brisk morning but thankfully, there was no snow to contend with. I had left that all at home.

I swallowed thickly past the tightening of my throat and got out of the shuttle. I collected my bags, my shoulders hunched up around my ears. Behind me, I could hear the excited squeals of my new classmates as they greeted one another.

Steeling my spine, I turned around and faced the chaos. All around me, I could see families kissing and hugging their sons and daughters goodbye. They wished them luck and let them know they would see them for spring break.

A pang went through me. No one was here to see me off and I wouldn't be seeing my family until the long winter break. It had taken every penny we had to get me here today. My parents didn't have the money for me to come home and back to school multiple times a year. That had actually been the reason they were so hesitant to celebrate with me. They were worried about where the travel funds would come from. Thankfully, the ORA didn't close during breaks, so I could stay here.

I wanted to move toward the buildings, but I wasn't sure which one my dorm was in. I readjusted my duffle on my shoulder and tried to see where I should be heading. It also became apparent rather quickly that while I had one duffle to carry, all the other omegas here had heaps of bags and belongings. My face flushed with embarrassment again. Apparently, no one

else was going to be banking on the academy providing everything.

That didn't get me down. I was here to learn, to get the best education an omega could. And hopefully, I would find myself a pack at graduation.

A smile tugged at the corners of my mouth, and I took my first step toward my new life. And immediately got knocked down a peg. My bulky bag bumped into an omega talking to her friends. With a gasp, I turned to apologize, but I didn't get anything out before she sneered at me.

"Watch where you're going! You almost stepped on my Valentino sneakers!"

"Oh, I'm sorry—"

"You should be, charity."

"My name's not—"

The girl sniffed haughtily, cutting me off, and turned back to her friends, dismissing me. My shoulders curled up around my ears, and I kept my head lowered. Making sure not to bump into anyone else, I moved toward what I hoped was the admin building. I crossed my fingers that there would be an office or a staff member there that could help me figure out where to go.

I climbed the steep stone stairs, passing by the large griffin statues on either side, and pushed open the glass door. The light inside was much duller than outside. I blinked several times, trying to adjust. I turned my head to the right, finding a large sign labeled "Main Office & Registration." Exhaling in relief, I entered the room.

Behind the desk, a beta woman sat, typing away at her keyboard. A severe bun, that looked like it was pulling her skin upward to her hairline, tied back her graying hair. I noticed her eyes flick toward me momentarily, but she didn't acknowledge my presence.

She knew I was there and I didn't want to be rude, so I shuffled my feet anxiously and waited. Above the office door, there was an analog clock that ticked the seconds loudly. I stepped forward two paces and when she still didn't look up, I coughed lightly into my arm.

Her eyes closed as if she were frustrated, and she let out a deep sigh of irritation. She pinned me with a glare and said, "Yes?"

"Oh, um, hi. I'm Riley, uh Druman, Riley Druman." I cleared my throat. The woman raised her eyebrows as if to say, *And?* but remained silent. "I-I was wondering if someone could tell me where my room is?"

Her gaze raked me up and down, and then she snipped, "Wasn't it in your welcome packet?"

“Oh. Maybe? I’m sorry. I’m just really overwhelmed right now and . . .”

The woman huffed. “I’ll check, hold on.”

I swallowed past the lump in my throat as she turned back to her computer and clicked away at the keys. Then, without even looking at me, she gave me the information.

“You are in the Dunning Building. Top floor, room 534.”

“Okay, thank you.”

I turned to leave and she scoffed, stopping me. “Don’t you want to know how to get into the room?”

“Oh, yes, please.”

“Your fingerprint is your key. Come here and put it on this pad.”

She thrust out a black rectangle at me and I hurried over awkwardly. I placed my pointer finger on the pad, and it whirled once and then lit up under my digit. On the woman’s computer screen, I could see my fingerprint registering as it showed up on my file.

I flushed bright red when I saw my name because written in bold red lettering were the words “Scholarship Student.” When the receptionist pulled the device back to her, I stuffed my hands into my pockets, embarrassed.

“Was there anything else?”

“Oh. Um, yes. Where is the Dunning Building exactly?”

Rolling her eyes, the woman answered, “Look at your map. I can’t do everything for you.”

“Right, okay. Um, sorry.”

I scrambled to leave the office and her odious presence. Outside the stifling room, I took a minute to calm my thundering heart. Then, I pulled my duffle to my front and dug through my few belongings, looking for the welcome packet I had shoved in there.

I found it squashed at the bottom of the bag. I opened it and located the crumbled paper map, my eyes running around it, looking for the building I needed. There it was, the farthest one from me, go figure.

At least I didn’t have a ton of bags to carry there. I clutched my map in my hand and rushed outside. I hurried in the direction I hoped was right. On the way there, I couldn’t help but think, *If they needed my fingerprint for the door and I had to go there to give it to them, why was she such a bitch to me about coming for help?*

## CHAPTER 3

# STORM



**M**ove-in day was the worst. People were everywhere, and their scents plugged up my nose and leaked into my room, my sanctuary. My nose wrinkled, and I went to the en suite to grab one of the academy-provided towels. They were much too rough for my skin, but it would work well as a smell blocker.

I knelt and jammed the towel at the bottom of the door, blocking the gap between the wood and the floor. Suddenly, I heard screaming in the hallway. Someone was getting the riot act. Damn my omega curiosity. I rose and kicked the towel out of the way just enough to crack open my door and see what was happening. When I saw who was causing the racket, I rolled my eyes so hard, I swore I saw my brain.

Hilary. Of course. We'd barely been back ten minutes and she had already started her normal crap. I wondered who the unfortunate victim of Hilary's wrath was this time.

I opened my door the rest of the way and stepped into the hallway. I wasn't the only one watching the spectacle. Hilary didn't seem to mind. In fact, it looked like she enjoyed the attention. Her hair was flying around her head, giving her a wild, crazed look. She yelled at the top of her lungs at a poor beta staffer who looked utterly flustered and terrified. The staff member didn't know how to handle Hilary.

I leaned against my doorframe. It was only a matter of time until I stepped in to help, but I wanted a little more information first. What could have possibly gotten Hilary so worked up already? A flicker of movement behind the staffer caught my eye. Standing half-hidden behind the beta was a short omega.



An absolutely exquisite omega.

She had her long blonde curls tied into a ponytail, accentuating her cheekbones and gorgeous violet eyes. Eyes that looked on the verge of tears. She should be proud, sure of herself. Unfortunately, it looked like something had chewed this omega up and spat her out. Her posture screamed for help.

It was obvious she didn't want to be the center of all the attention. She kept her head bowed, though her eyes flicked up. The omega didn't meet anyone's gaze before she returned hers to the wooden floorboards beneath her feet. That wasn't right. I perked up my ears and listened to what Hilary's tantrum was about.

"I'm not sharing my room with a scholarship student. Forget it. My sponsors paid a large amount of money to send me here, and I shouldn't have to share my space with anyone else. This is ridiculous. I refuse. You cannot bring her in here. Find her somewhere else to stay. This is my room, *my* nest. Not anyone else's, and especially not *hers*. Who knows what diseases she has?"

The short omega flinched at Hilary's words, and my eyes narrowed. What the hell was wrong with Hilary? Treating another omega like that? In the next minute, I mentally chastised myself. Hilary would be the one to treat her that way. Anyone without money or power was beneath her as far as she was concerned. It didn't matter if they had the same designation as her.

The staff member stammered out an apology. "There must have been a mistake, Ms. Lawrence. Just one moment, let me see what I can do."

"Mistake?!" Hilary screeched, causing more than one person to plug their ears from the shrill pitch. "You get paid enough to assure that there won't be any *mistakes*. Just wait until my father hears about this. I'm appalled, absolutely appalled."

The worker was typing furiously on her tablet, but the look in her eyes let me know that what she was going to say next wasn't going to go over very well.

"I-I'm really sorry, miss. It looks like we had an uneven number of scholarship approvals this year. Ms. Druman got placed in with you because we are short a room—"

"SHORT A ROOM?" Hilary stamped her foot like a child as she bellowed her indignation. "I won't stand for this. Do you know who my parents are? Who my sponsors are? How much they donate to this school? You cannot force me to share a room with this . . . this . . . disgusting *broke*

omega.”

I had heard enough. I stomped over loudly, proclaiming, “Hilary, you are right. No one should be forced to live with such a disgrace to the omega designation.”

Hilary preened under my words and from the corner of my eye, I saw the other omega curl into herself farther. I turned my attention to her. Her honey-and-green-tea scent tickled my nose, and I found it quite pleasant. That was a good thing.

“Ms. Druman, I apologize that she acted like the spoiled brat she is. I promise you that we are not all like this. Why don’t you move in with me? After all, my room is plenty big and *I* don’t mind sharing.”

I could see that I had stunned the omega when she looked up from the floor, her violet eyes wide with shock. Her mouth gaped open as she stared at me in wonder. Behind me, I heard Hilary’s affronted gasp. She realized I had been insulting her, not the newcomer. The staffer appeared relieved and almost worshipful that I had offered a solution.

“Do you mean it, Ms. Vareth? You would allow, um, someone from the scholarship program to room with you?”

I was about the same height as the worker, but I still looked down my nose at her. “And what is wrong with being here on scholarship? Yes, I am sure. I would hate for anyone to be subjected to that one’s vitriol all year. Please, Ms. Druman, come with me.”

I turned and strode toward my room without waiting for a response from any of them. Just as I was about to reach my door, I heard the pitter-patter sound of the omega running to join me. A small, pleased smile stretched across my face and morphed into a wide, victorious one when I heard Hilary shriek behind us.

Pressing my finger to the pad outside the door, I pushed it open after the quiet click let me know it was unlocked. I held the door open and motioned for the frightened omega to precede me inside. She glanced at me, as if seeking additional clarification, and I raised an eyebrow at her. She rushed past me and into the room.

Right before I entered, I lifted my eyes to meet Hilary’s. I tossed my hair over my shoulder and smirked as I mockingly saluted her. My door closed on her outraged screaming of how insulted she was. I could hear her demanding “compensation for her emotional damage.”

“Fuck, I hate that woman,” I said aloud.

Ms. Druman jumped and spun to face me. I really needed to learn her first name.

“I-I’m sorry,” she mumbled.

“Sorry?” I asked, confused. “Why are you sorry? You didn’t ask for that out there.”

“Well, no . . . but you didn’t expect to share your room with . . . well, with anyone. And now you got saddled with *me*.”

“Are you a serial killer? Going to murder me in my dreams?”

“What? No!”

“Okay then. I fail to see the issue.” At her slack-jawed expression, I continued, “Look, if I didn’t want to share with you, I wouldn’t have offered. No one makes me do anything *I* don’t want to. Now, let’s get your things situated then we can go see about getting you some furniture.”

I marched over to my—*our*—closet and swung the door open. I had it crammed full of my outfits and uniforms. If I was honest, I wasn’t sure how I had gotten so much inside there.

“Hmm,” I said, chuckling. “Well, this is embarrassing. Let me just make some room.”

I shifted the hangers around, trying to find a few extra inches somewhere.

“Oh, it’s okay. I don’t need the closet. Just, um, a drawer will be fine?” She said it like a question, not a statement. “I mean, if that’s okay?”

I turned to her, my brow furrowed. “A drawer? One drawer for the entire school year?”

She shrugged, her face beet red, her eyes cast to the floor. “I-I didn’t bring a lot. I planned on using the laundry service. It’s just this bag.”

If the poor thing hadn’t seemed so embarrassed, I might have made another comment. But I could tell it had taken her a great deal of bravery to even say that to me. “Well, alright. For now, I can clear out a drawer for you. I don’t need separate ones for my socks and underwear. We’ll have to go shopping soon, however. Get you some more things for the year.”

## CHAPTER 4

# RILEY



What was my life right now? When I opened the door to room 534 and saw the rude omega from outside, I had almost fainted. What were the odds? I vaguely remembered reading in the welcome packet that scholarship students would share a room, but I never in a million years thought it would be with anyone other than another scholarship recipient.

I had seriously been contemplating finding a phone and begging my family to bring me home. I would just go back to attending the local omega school. It would be worth it to not hear Hilary screeching some of the worst insults I had ever gotten called. It wasn't a secret my family wasn't as rich as the others here at the ORA, but to hear someone spitting with anger over that fact had thrown me for a loop.

When the beautiful omega in front of me stormed out of her room, I was terrified. I had tried to make myself even smaller behind the staff worker, but she'd still seen me. She had come charging over, her hair flying out behind her, eyes blazing. It obviously displeased her that the quiet of the school was being disrupted. I had felt so guilty, and it wasn't even me that was screaming. Then, she had completely decimated Hilary in a few choice words and left me in awe.

Now, here I was, in her room, where she was cleaning out a drawer. For me. While she rearranged her items, I took the time to look around, taking everything in. This room could have easily held the entire lower floor of my family's home, it was that big.

To my left there was a small kitchenette, a mini fridge, hot plates,

microwave, and sink dominating a small section. Set up nearby was a bar table with two chairs for any meal that was eaten in the room. To my right, I saw a door that led to what looked like a large en suite bathroom. I could just make out the corner of what looked like a Jacuzzi tub.

In the main area of the room, the dominant feature was the enormous bed that took up the center of the dorm. It had to be king-sized at least, although I had never seen a bed bigger than my parents' full-size so I couldn't be sure. The comforter looked thicker than all my blankets at home combined. Softer, too. The omega had what looked like hundreds of pillows thrown on it, making it even more inviting.

Between the bathroom door and the walk-in closet was another set of wardrobe doors. They were closed so I couldn't be sure, but if I had to guess, that led to the nest room. I wondered what it looked like. I'd never had a designated room for nesting. My heat wasn't due for another three years—and we didn't have the space for a nest back home—so I had to make do with trying to make practice nests on my twin bed. It wasn't ideal, but it was what I had available to me. If it could have, I thought my stare would incinerate the doors. I was so curious about what could be inside.

But then my attention broke as the omega stepped back from the lone dresser and shut the top drawer, leaving the one below it hanging open slightly.

"There you go!" she said happily.

"Um, thanks."

I cringed at my voice. Why was I so awkward? I ducked my head and let my bangs fall in front of my eyes as I moved toward the dresser. There, I unzipped my meager duffle and quickly started shoving items in. No rhyme. No reason. Just packing it in as fast as I could so she didn't see how little I really had. It barely fit half the drawer and I slammed it shut, hoping she hadn't noticed.

I turned to face her, peeking up through my lashes. Gods, she was gorgeous. Her hair hung in shiny black waves down her back. She had a natural beauty to her. She wore light makeup, a pink, shiny gloss on her lips, and her lids sparkled with glitter shadow. The clearest, kindest green eyes stared back at me and I flushed, having gotten caught checking her out.

"I'm Storm, by the way. What's your name?"

"Oh, um, I'm Riley."

"Riley." She rolled my name around like she was tasting it. "It suits you."

Cute name for a cute omega."

Another blush stained my cheeks at her words. She chuckled when she saw it and winked. I couldn't figure out this omega in front of me. She was nothing like I expected. Certainly not like any other omega I had met, in fact. For starters, that she could withstand my scent, in a room that smelled so strongly of her, was astounding to me.

From what I knew from my previous school, omegas shouldn't like each other's smells. Something about our designation made us despise other omegas so we would want to be the only one in our pack. I had yet to be near an omega for any extended period of time and not hate the smell of them. How were we supposed to make this work? What if we didn't get along?

I was under no illusion on who would have to leave if that were the case.

I sniffed as discreetly as I could, trying to draw more of her into my lungs. Cinnamon and ginger wrapped around pine. Delicious.

*What the hell? Delicious?* What was wrong with me? She was an omega, not an alpha.

I was becoming overwhelmed again. It must have been obvious on my face because Storm's smile dropped slightly as she watched me. She took a step toward me and I involuntarily flinched. Her lips twisted to the side.

"Hey, it's okay, Riley. Everything is going to work out, I promise."

I wished I had her confidence.

"Can I give you a hug? It looks like you really need one."

My eyes shot up to meet hers. I saw no deception there. Not that it surprised me. So far, Storm had been nothing but kind and sweet toward me. I bit my lip for a moment before nodding emphatically. I really could use a hug right now.

Storm grinned and came to me, arms outstretched. She wrapped them around me, pulling me close to her. I barely reached her shoulder, and she wasn't that tall either. My head nestled into her neck, almost subconsciously. She buried her nose in my hair, and I heard her breathing deep, scenting me. Taking that as my cue that it was alright, I did the same.

My eyes fluttered shut. This omega smelled like she was mine. *What the fuck?* Perturbed, I released her and stepped back. Her eyes were unreadable as she searched my face. I knew I was blushing, yet again, but it was my curse. I wouldn't be able to stop that if I tried.

"Hey, what do you say we head down for dinner?" Storm asked me. "Maybe by the time we are done, they will have had time to get your

furniture up here. Then we can work on rearranging the room to suit us."

"Oh, you don't have to rearrange anything. I'm fine with however you want it!" I protested.

"Nonsense. This is your room, too, now. We both need to be comfortable in it." Her eyes darted over to the nest room and she frowned. "We'll figure that out later, too. Come on, I'm starving."

Storm tossed her arm around my shoulders and drew the empty duffel from my arms, where I had it pressed against my stomach. She threw it under the dresser, out of the way, and guided me out of the room. I heard the door's lock click behind us. Her brow furrowed.

"Remind me while we're down there to get your fingerprint added to that pad."

I nodded lamely and stumbled along beside her as we headed to the cafeteria.



## CHAPTER 5

# RILEY



Why was it so loud here? How could anyone think?

We were standing in line at the cafeteria, waiting to get food. Storm was chatting away to the other omegas around us; clearly, she had a lot of friends. My nose was twitching from all the conflicting scents in one room. How was I going to make it through the school year if it was this bad every mealtime?

"This is Riley," I heard Storm say, introducing me to one of her friends. "We're sharing a room this year."

She said it so matter-of-factly, it took me back a little. She had already accepted that we would be together, even if another option presented itself. The omega she was talking to raised her brows as she looked me over. I could tell she hadn't heard the story of what had gone down on the top floor of Dunning yet. Storm ignored her questioning look, apparently trying to save me from further embarrassment. I could have kissed her for that small kindness.

"Riley, this is Olivia. She's in the same year as us."

"Hello," I said in a voice barely above a whisper.

"Hello, Riley. You have a good roommate here," she said, smiling at Storm. "She won't steer you wrong."

I glanced up and saw Storm smirking. Not in a teasing way. It was more like Olivia's words had pleased her. Before I could say anything in return, it was our turn at the order station. Storm and Olivia rattled off their requests, obviously well versed in what they wanted. Then it was my turn. I swallowed, my mouth suddenly dry as dust. What were the choices? How did

I choose?

Storm saw my terrified expression and took over once more. "She'll have the same as me."

Then, she leaned down to whisper in my ear, "If you don't like anything, just leave it on the tray. I'll show you where to find the menu for the next meal."

I nodded gratefully and held out my hand to accept the tray from the cafeteria worker, then the three of us walked over to the cashier. Olivia and Storm pressed their fingertips to the pad on the counter and I did the same. The pad accepted our prints with a chime. Storm led our little group over to an empty table.

When I slid into my seat, I looked at my tray for the first time. On it there was an apple, carrots with ranch dressing, multi-colored pasta, and what I thought was a lamb shank. My nose wrinkled as I looked at it. This was more food than I had ever had at one meal. How was I going to eat all this?

Storm and Olivia didn't seem to have the same worries. They tucked into their meals quickly, chewing and talking between bites. Storm sat next to me, and I thanked whoever was watching out for me today. Her scent was strong enough that it was overpowering all the others around me. Every so often, I ducked my head and inhaled a whiff of her, clearing out my sensitive nose.

Olivia and Storm chatted about the classes we had, starting in just a few days. They compared their schedules and discovered which ones we all had together.

As we wrapped up our meal, I still had an apple and some of the pasta left. I watched as other omegas casually walked their trays to the trash can, dumping in several uneaten items. Each time they did, I flinched a little. It was so wasteful.

I grabbed my apple and tucked it into my pocket. At Storm's look, I shrugged and gave the excuse of wanting to save it for a snack later. After we turned our trays into the wash line, Olivia excused herself to head back to her room. Storm and I went off in the other direction, looking for the office.

I hoped that the same receptionist wouldn't be there this time, but when I opened the door and stepped inside, I was disappointed to find her seated there. She was still typing away on her keyboard and ignoring me. This time, I didn't stand there waiting for her acknowledgement. I cleared my throat right away.

The woman let out a long-suffering sigh and looked toward the ceiling

like she couldn't believe I was interrupting her. My face flamed hot.

"What do you need now?" she practically snapped, barely turning her head in my direction.

I stumbled over my words but finally got out, "I need to have a bed sent up to my new room?"

I phrased it like a question, though it wasn't. This woman had me so flustered, I didn't know which way was up. I could feel my heart racing, and my hands fluttered at my sides nervously.

"There is a bed in your room. Why would we send a new one?"

"Oh, um, well, I moved rooms and there is—"

"Who said you could move rooms?" the woman snarled, finally facing me. "I'm not sure how things were done where you're from, but that's not how it's done at the ORA. We gave you a room, and that's the room you're to stay in."

I swallowed. "Well, you see, the room I was assigned—"

"Is *your* room. You cannot just decide to change it because you wanted something else, missy."

My mouth gaped open, but I said nothing else. What would be the point? She just kept cutting off my explanations. Behind me, I felt, more than heard, Storm step up. She placed her hand on my shoulder, squeezing lightly.

"Is there a problem here, Caryn?"

As soon as she heard Storm's voice, her entire demeanor changed. She went from a snapping, snarling witch to a simpering, cooing sweetheart.

"Oh! Ms. Vareth, I didn't see you there. I apologize you had to witness this. This omega here was just causing some trouble about switching her room. Nothing for you to worry about."

She curved her lips upwards in what I thought was supposed to be a grin, but she just looked goofy. I blinked as I processed what she was saying. She was blaming everything on me, but she hadn't given me the opportunity to explain myself. I went to say something, but Storm's voice drowned mine out.

"I heard exactly what happened, Caryn. My roommate came in here seeking help to have a bed sent up to our room and *you* wouldn't listen. Every time she tried to explain the situation, you cut her off or talked over her."

Storm crossed her arms and glared at the receptionist. Caryn stuttered and stumbled over her words as she tried to talk her way out of Storm's wrath.

“Oh, but, no . . . she wasn’t your roommate. Ms. Vareth, we would never expect you to share a room, much less with, um, well, with her. There must have been a mistake. Let me take care of that right now for you!”

She spun to her computer and began furiously typing on it, presumably to fix the “mistake.”

“There was no mistake, Caryn. She is rooming with me. Fix whatever you have to on the records, but Riley Druman is *my* roommate this year. When can we expect a bed to arrive for her? Oh, and her fingerprint will need to be added to the pad so she can access the room.”

Caryn practically tripped over herself in her hurry to follow Storm’s commands. Her fingers were flying over the keyboard, entering whatever it was she needed to in order to note that I was staying with Storm. She turned back and addressed her with a slight grimace.

“Unfortunately, Ms. Druman, we do not have any extra beds available. We do, however, have a rollaway twin cot that I could have sent to Ms. Vareth’s room, if that will suffice?”

“Oh, that would be—”

Storm cut me off. “A cot? You are going to provide a student—at this academy—with a cot? Are you serious right now, Caryn? You’re saying there aren’t enough beds for everyone that was granted admission and your solution is to give Riley a cot?”

“I’m sorry, Ms. Vareth. That’s all I can offer right now.”

“What about the bed that was put in her original room before she switched to mine?”

Caryn seemed at a loss for words. From the brief glimpse I had gotten into Hilary’s room earlier, there had only been one bed. If I had to take a guess, they were hoping Hilary would fly off the handle when she was told I was to room with her and that I would pack up and leave.

Storm seemed to have finally had enough. “You know what? Forget it. My bed is plenty big enough. We can share.”

“Oh, no! You shouldn’t have to do that,” Caryn exclaimed, stricken at the idea. “We will rectify this as soon as possible to accommodate you, Ms. Vareth. I promise!”

Storm arched one perfectly sculpted brow. “You meant to say accommodate Ms. Druman, correct? Seeing as it is her that is being negatively affected by this whole mess.”

Caryn slammed her mouth shut and then licked her lips. “R-right, of

course . . .”

Rolling her eyes, Storm snapped, “Forget it. We’ll be fine. I’ll have my dads bring appropriate supplies, seeing that this school cannot provide them.”

I watched Caryn’s face go from beet red at her reprimand to stark white as she paled at Storm’s words. She scrambled to say something, but Storm had apparently heard enough. Her legs ate up the distance from where we stood to the office door in seconds, and she wrenched it open.

“Come along, Riley. It’s clear they cannot help us here.”

“Oh, uh, alright.”

I glanced back at Caryn, who still looked terrified, and then scampered out of the office after Storm. She was furiously typing on her cell phone already, and I could feel the waves of frustration and anger rolling off her. The force of her emotions made me curl into myself even more than usual.

“I’m sorry,” I said, my voice barely above a whisper.

Storm stopped and looked at me, shock clear on her features. “Why ever are *you* sorry?”

“Because I’m creating problems.”

“You did not create a single fucking problem, Riles. This school has created every one. They offered the scholarships and said that they would provide all supplies. And they didn’t. *They* are the ones who should apologize to *you*.”

“Oh, okay.”

Storm studied my face for several long moments, then she sighed. “Come on, let’s head back to our room. We might not have extra furniture, but we sure as shit can try to get everything situated to appeal to both our omega natures.”

She held out her arm, and nervously, I slipped mine through it. Patting my hand, she grinned and tucked her phone back into her pocket, then she strode off toward our room at a brisk pace that had me practically jogging to keep up.

It wasn’t until we were halfway back to the dorm when I remembered Caryn hadn’t put my fingerprint on the pad.

## CHAPTER 6

# STORM



**T** *he nerve of some people!*

I couldn't believe how Caryn had talked down to Riley just because she had gotten into the academy on merit and not because of money. Disgusting. In my pocket, I could feel my phone buzzing incessantly as the family group chat popped off. I had sent a few quick texts to the group about what had happened, and they were as furious as I was.

I glanced beside me at Riley and noticed how she was almost galloping to keep up with my angry walking speed. Grimacing, I slowed down and watched her puff out a breath of relief. The poor thing. I couldn't imagine how she must be feeling right now. I felt horrid on her behalf.

She deserved the same education as everyone else here. All omegas did. I wasn't naïve enough to think that the other schools offered even a degree of the knowledge we got here. That was such a disproportionate state of affairs, but I couldn't take that on today. I needed to focus on my new friend and how I could show her she belonged here.

Riley had not let go of my arm yet. I had a feeling that she was desperate for a little human contact; I certainly didn't mind holding the adorable omega's hand. As for why that was . . . ? Well, that was something to tackle another time.

We got back to our room and on instinct, I opened the door using my fingerprint. Riley dropped my hand so we could enter, and I felt a frown tug at my lips at the loss of contact. Then I forgot about it because someone had delivered a dresser and desk while we were out, dumping in the middle of the room. There had been no effort to put them against the wall or anywhere aesthetically pleasing.



I rolled my eyes at the obvious attempt at a slight. “At least they brought you something. Come on, we can move these around to where they fit better.”

Riley nodded, and we got to work right away. It might have seemed silly to anyone other than an omega, but there was a specific way these bits of furniture would need to be arranged. I knew that if we didn’t both find it appealing, neither of us would be comfortable in our own space.

It took us over an hour until we were happy with the new layout. Our desks were next to each other on the back wall. We lined both dressers up along the wall where the door was. When Riley moved her few belongings over to her dresser, I was shocked. I mean, I knew that she had very little, having seen her shove the small bundle into the drawer before, but I didn’t know just how little she had.

She had a whole dresser and barely took up half of one drawer. I made a vow that I would take her shopping the following day. While the ORA granted their omegas an allowance for nesting things at the local mall, I wanted to treat her to some new clothing as well.

The last thing we moved was the bed. It was a huge undertaking because of how much it weighed. Somehow, we managed to tug and shove it over so that now it was right in front of the doors to the nest room. We could crawl from the bed and into the nest if we wanted.

Stepping back, I surveyed the room. From the corner of my eye, I noticed Riley doing the same. She had a small smile on her face that told me she was pleased. Taking it all in, I found I was as well. This was perfect. Everything felt right.

Just as I opened my mouth to say that to Riley, my phone went off. It had been buzzing incessantly the entire time we worked, but I’d ignored it. Now, I figured I’d better answer before they showed up at the school.

“Sorry, Riles, I gotta get this.” I grabbed my phone and hit the answer button, realizing a second too late that it was FaceTime.

“STORM! We have been trying to reach you for ages!” Papa Corey exclaimed.

I gritted my teeth in a grimace. “Sorry PC, I got busy sorting out our room.”

“Sorting it out? Did they miraculously find another room after being so callous about it?” my other father, Greg, piped up from the background.

“No, they delivered a dresser and desk for Riley, and we were moving it

around. Besides, even if they somehow unearthed another room, I don't think I'd want her to have to switch again. Besides the fact that this is a lot of upheaval to begin with, I like her here. I think it will be fun to be roomies!"

I looked over to where Riley was standing, nervously wringing her hands. I caught her eye and grinned at her. She returned it, albeit slightly less enthusiastically.

"Unless, Riley, do you want your own room?"

"What? Oh no, this is fine. I would have to share anyway because of, um . . . Anyway, no, I'm fine sharing with you."

I knew she had cut herself off from claiming her scholarship status, probably from embarrassment. I pursed my lips. Hopefully, I could undo all the harm that this school had caused already to her fragile self-esteem. I turned my face back to my phone to see all three of my fathers trying to vie for screen space.

"See? We're good. I just wish the school had a bed to offer her. Did I tell you what they were going to send up here?" I raged, my eyes shooting fire at the memory. "A cot. What the hell is this? Camp? There is no reason they don't have an actual bed here for her. They are just too lazy to work out getting it to my room."

"We can get a bed sent there, no worries. Do you think a second king will fit?" Papa Greg asked.

"Mmm, I'm not sure, to be honest. Maybe send us two fulls? I don't mind going smaller so that we can fit it all in."

"That might be a good idea. Better safe than sorry!" my last papa, Tony, said. "We can have it all figured out and delivered by week's end. Make sure you take her shopping for better linens. The stuff the academy provides is much too scratchy."

"Better fabric softener. Maybe we should look into getting some . . ."

Papa Corey trailed off, and I knew we lost him to working out the logistics of getting the academy better soap for the laundry. I smiled at everyone else, thanked them, sent my love to mom, and disconnected the call. I tossed my phone carelessly onto the bed, spinning to face Riley.

"You seem close," she observed in her quiet way.

"Oh, we are. They are the best dads ever."

"They treat your momma okay?"

I chuckled. "Oh yeah. It's almost sickening how much they love and dote on her. She's the center of their world."

“Is she an omega too?”

“She sure is. But she’s like me. Never let her designation decide what her temperament is going to be. My momma is a firecracker.”

Riley grinned. “I could see that. Are all your fathers alphas?”

“No, only Papa Tony and Papa Greg are. Papa Corey is a beta. PC and PT bonded before they met PG and my mom. To hear them tell it, it was like a fairy tale. They had a whirlwind relationship and registered as a pack within a month. Then came the babies. I have six brothers, all alphas. I was an unplanned surprise, but they never loved me any less.” Snickering, I whispered with a smirk, “If I’m being honest? I’m totally the favorite.”

Riley snorted out a laugh and then flushed bright red, as if shocked by her reaction. A warm feeling stole through me at seeing her sense of humor pull through. I needed to get that cute laugh out of her more.

“What about your family?” I asked her. “What are they like?”

“Oh, um, well, there’s my older brother, Drew, my younger brother, Dell, and me.”

“And your parents? How many dads do you have?”

I moved over to the bed and collapsed back onto the soft mattress. I waved my hand, calling her over, and patted the comforter, silently asking her to join me. She tentatively made her way over and sat gingerly, as if afraid I would change my mind.

“I only have one father and mother. They are both betas.”

“Betas? Both of them?”

“Yeah, they never expected to have me, or Dell for that matter. Drew is a beta like they are. When I came along, it shocked the whole town when my perfume changed to reveal my designation as an omega, even more so with Dell. He’s an alpha.”

“Wow, that’s wild! So, wait, who did you have to talk to about being an omega, if not your mom?”

She cleared her throat. “Honestly, no one. In my hometown, I am one of the few omegas. I attended an omega school three towns over because there just wasn’t enough of us where I lived to constitute a school of our own. Dell was luckier, I think. There were plenty of alphas in town that he could turn to.”

“So, you don’t know anything about who and what you are?”

“Well, I have the basics down. Our school was small, but they tried their best.”

There was a heat behind her words that wasn't there before. I realized I had inadvertently offended her. She thought I was saying her education was lacking. I scrambled to correct that assumption.

“Oh! I'm sure they were. That's not what I meant. I simply meant did anyone teach you about nesting? Or about why your head will be screaming for things to be a certain way? Or hell, what about slick? Did anyone talk to you about any of that?!”

Riley's face was beet red, and she stared down at her hands. The answer was so quiet, I had to strain to hear her. “Not really. Classes were more about what to look for in a pack . . . and when our heat would start. The teachers didn't want to talk about anything that might be too, er, *sexual*.”

I was sure shock was written all over my face. I desperately tried to erase it and look calm, even though inside I was screaming at the injustices of our world. “Riley, I am so glad you applied for that scholarship. And even more happy that you got in. Classes here might differ from back home, however I'm here. I will answer all your questions.”

Riley's face lifted to meet mine, but before either of us could say another word, a light rapping came at our door. A staff member called out, “Lights out in five. Time to go to bed!”

I rolled my eyes. I had forgotten they gave us a curfew here. Twenty-two years old and still told when to go to bed. Ridiculous.

“Well, sounds like we better get to sleep. Would hate for them to be madder at us than they already are,” I said with a wink. Riley snorted. “What side of the bed would you like? I typically sleep on the left, but I can switch if you need?”

“The right side is fine with me!” Riley rushed to assure me.

“Wonderful!” I got up and moved toward the bathroom. “I'm going to brush my teeth quickly and then you can get in there, okay?”

She nodded, and I quickly moved about, completing my nightly routine. Ten minutes later, with the lights out, we were tucked into bed. Settling into the pillows, I murmured a good night.

“I think this is going to be an exceptional year, Riles. I'm glad we met.”

My eyes fluttered shut, and I was asleep in seconds, her soft fragrance wrapping around me.

## CHAPTER 7

# RILEY



Storm's even breaths beside me told me she had fallen asleep. Not me though. I lay on my back, stiff. I was afraid to move. What if my shifting disturbed her sleep? I usually tossed and turned for an hour or more before I finally drifted off.

I also had never slept in a bed as large as this one. There was so much room compared to my twin bed at home. And this mattress? It was like lying on a cloud. The pillow under my head cushioned my neck perfectly, and the heavy comforter wrapped around me like a hug. It was, without a doubt, the most comfortable I had ever been.

Which I thought might be adding to my problem.

I was not used to this level of luxury by any means. Gingerly, I rolled to my side, trying not to disturb Storm. I needn't have worried. She slept like the dead. I curled up on my stomach, my hand tucked under my head and my leg pulled up beside me. My nose nestled into the pillow and I inhaled. The scent of cinnamon and pine chased me into dreamland.



SUNLIGHT STREAMED in through the window we had forgotten to pull the drapes over the night before. I could feel the rays on my skin. My eyes fluttered open and I stiffened. During sleep, I wrapped myself around Storm.

I had buried my face in her hair. She pressed her face into my neck. Both of us had our arms tangled around each other, Storm plastered to my side. I swallowed thickly, frozen. I wasn't sure Storm would appreciate me holding

her the way I was. But she was holding me as well . . .

Storm stirred, her nose brushing against the gland on my neck. She murmured sleepy words I couldn't catch and then sat up, stretching. I shuffled away from the center of the bed and stared up at her, wide-eyed.

"Hello, sleepyhead. Sorry, I should have warned you. I am a cuddler." She chuckled. "I hope I didn't disturb you too much?"

I bit my lip. "Oh, uh, no. It was fine. I mean, I slept okay."

She laughed again lightly. "I gotcha."

She rolled from the bed and placed her arms on her lower back as she arched, her spine cracking. I slipped from the sheets as well, tilting my head side to side out of habit. It shocked me when I realized I didn't have my usual morning neck kinks. I guessed sleeping on better materials made for fewer morning-after injuries.

"Are you okay if I snag the bathroom first?" Storm asked.

I nodded. She grinned and, with a hurried, "Thanks," slipped into the room, closing the door behind her. I heard the shower turn on seconds later and I figured I would be safe to change out here in the bedroom. Opening my dresser, I felt my shoulders deflate. Not like I had many choices. On the list of to-dos today would be to find the laundry room so I knew where to go to wash my meager few items.

I wasted no time in changing into clean clothes. I stowed my pajamas in another drawer. They would get worn a few times before I washed them. Turning, I made my way back to the bed and set about making it. I fluffed the pillows and stacked them at the head. The comforter was laid neatly in its place, and then I smoothed out the wrinkles.

Storm was still in the shower, so I went to the island in the kitchenette and perched on one seat. Discovering it swiveled, I rocked back and forth, a smile tugging at my lips. I was still having a terrible time processing all that had happened since yesterday.

I heard the shower shut off and a few moments later, in a cloud of steam, the bathroom door opened, revealing Storm. She had a towel wrapped around herself and another around her hair.

"Go on in! I'll get changed out here and then we can head out to go shopping."

"Oh, but I don't—"

"La, la, la, can't hear you," she sang out, sweeping across the room to the closet. "There is no use arguing with me. I'll just win. Now go, freshen up."

We have a busy day ahead!”

Knowing it was futile to tell her no, I did as ordered and entered the still damp bathroom. Closing the door behind me, I winced. I would go with her, but just to look. Looking couldn't hurt, right? Maybe there would be something cheap I could pick up to satisfy Storm.

I dragged my feet through brushing my teeth and hair, trying to take more time than necessary. Finally, Storm must have had enough of my stalling because she pounded on the door, telling me to “get my rear in gear,” whatever that meant. Figuring it might be better just to face what was going to be a horrendous and embarrassing day, I left the bathroom.

Storm was sitting on the bed, scrolling through her phone, but looked up when she heard me. “You ready? Cool, let's go grab some breakfast and then it's mall time!”

I hid my wince and followed her down to the cafeteria to get some food. Far too soon, I found myself beside an excited, bouncing Storm on the academy provided shuttle to town. She chattered away beside me about all the stores she wanted to check out, and I nodded at what I hoped were appropriate times.

The shuttle rolled to a stop in front of the largest building I had ever seen. I gulped but didn't have any time to process what I was seeing before Storm grabbed my hand and tugged me down the aisle and into the mall. My eyes felt like they were going to fall from my head.

Storm seemed unaffected as she hauled me toward a large store at the end. Once we stepped inside, she dropped my arm and told me she would be right back, then she took off like a hurricane on a mission. I stood frozen as I watched her run around the store, grabbing clothes haphazardly. There didn't seem to be a pattern to her collection. Everything she glanced at got thrown into her arms.

I never once saw her checking price tags. What must that be like? To not worry about what you were choosing? I nibbled my lip and took a step forward into the racks of clothes. My hand reached out and brushed against a black hoodie.

I turned to look at it better, and a small smile tugged at my lips. I picked it up and slipped my hand inside. It was fleece lined and so incredibly soft. The front had a quirky design that made me giggle internally. Printed across the chest were the words *Knotty and Nice* with devil horns and a halo on the ends. I loved it.



I saw the tag dangling from the end of one sleeve and braced myself before I grabbed it. Lifting it, I swallowed and looked at the price. A gasp ripped from my throat as I stepped back as if on fire. How was it possible that a hoodie cost almost \$500?!

Behind me, I heard Storm. She had apparently wrangled a store employee into following her as her pile of clothing grew. Breezing past me, she stopped, backtracked, and rifled through the rack of hoodies.

“This one too,” she said and tossed it carelessly over her shoulder, confident the attendant would catch it.

I rolled my lips in as a mean thought crossed my mind. *Of course, she would pick out the one thing I liked for herself.* Immediately, I chastised myself. I had no right to think like that about her. She had been nothing but nice to me the whole time she’d known me. Who was I to judge her?

Suddenly, I jumped as Storm’s hand wrapped around my elbow out of nowhere. Without a word, she pulled me toward the changing rooms and shoved me into one ahead of her. The room was practically overflowing with all her choices. I felt my face heat once again, and I spun in confusion to face her.

“Try them on.”

“Wh-what?”

“What, what? Try them on.”

“Me? But . . . I can’t aff— I mean . . .”

“I told you I was taking you shopping, Riles. This is on me. So, try them on, please.”

Storm had a grin on her face like a cat that had stolen the cream. She slammed the dressing room door shut and I could hear her happy cackle on the other side. I stood stuck still for several moments, trying to comprehend what had just happened. Then I turned and faced the multitude of clothing in front of me.

There was so much. More than I had ever owned combined! Knowing that it was useless to argue with Storm once she got an idea in her head, I peeled off my dingy clothing. I placed it in a neat pile on the one open chair in the dressing room. I locked the door before I tried on the first item. Picking up a shirt at random, I pulled it over my head. The store had doused it in neutro-scent, making it completely devoid of any smell.

Perfect.

Almost as if on autopilot, I worked my way through the clothing. Each

one fit me perfectly. Storm had gotten my exact size correct. More than that, she had somehow figured out what would be the most flattering on me and picked styles I normally would never have tried. I was staring at myself in the mirror for the hundredth time when I heard Storm's voice behind the door.

"Well? Come on, let me see!"

I bit my lip but popped the lock on the door and peeked out. Someone wrenched the door from my hold and swung it open. Storm stood there, looking me up and down.

"Perfect," she declared. "What about the others?"

"Oh, well, um, I tried all those on." I pointed to the smaller pile. "But those I haven't yet."

"What are you waiting for? Try 'em on!"

"Alright." I moved to shut the door, but Storm stopped me.

"I'll come in and help. We can go faster that way." She marched inside and locked the door. "Okay, shirt off, hand it here."

My eyes widened again, but Storm wasn't paying attention. She was already rifling through the pile, picking out things. I pulled the shirt over my head. My bra was holding on by a hope and a few threads. Embarrassed, I covered myself with my hands.

I should have known that wouldn't stop Storm from seeing. She turned to me, and her eyes narrowed in concentration as she took in the state of my undergarments.

"What size are you?"

"Huh?"

"Your bra, what size?"

"Um, 38D, I think?" Bright red was most likely my permanent color at this point.

A knock came at the door behind me, and I jumped a mile.

"Everything alright in there, miss? Anything I can get for you?"

"Yes, actually. If you could get me every color and style bra you have in a 38D, please? Also, underwear in size twenty. Thank you."

"Right away, ma'am!"

Storm faced me once again, and she must have read how intimidated I was by my expression. "Don't worry, those you can feel first before trying them on. Definitely want something you find comfy! In the meantime, try these."

She thrust an outfit into my hands, and seeing no other option, I listened.

It was hours later that we finally left that store. We were both loaded down with more bags than I could count. Storm had bought me almost everything she had me try on, and then she stocked up my underwear and bra collection. She threw away the clothes I had come into the mall with and selected a new outfit for me to wear on the way out. Now she wanted to go to another store, and I didn't know if I had more shopping in me. I was exhausted.

## CHAPTER 8

# RILEY



Storm took the decision out of my hands—literally. She grabbed several of the bags I was holding and hauled me toward another one of the enormous stores. *Nest Goods*. As much as I didn't want to shop anymore, I wanted to check this store out. What omega wouldn't?

"Come on, Riles! Let's go make our perfect joint nest!" Storm encouraged, her energy perking me up a bit.

A joint nest. Hmm. I supposed that was what we would have this year. What my nest would look like had never crossed my mind. Or rather, I hadn't let it. Every time I thought about it, I shut it down, fast. My family couldn't afford extras. So, my longing for soft comfort items had to be pushed aside. It wasn't a necessity yet, seeing as I hadn't even had my first heat.

Now, though? Now I could dream about it. There would just be someone else in there with me. Someone who wasn't my bonded mate. I wondered how weird that would be for us. Hopefully not at all. I mean, we had no other choice really.

"I don't want you to even think about the cost here. The ORA has an account for each omega that comes here so we can get whatever we want!"

Before that news had even registered with me, we were at the counter and Storm had told the cashier where we were from. She simpered at us immediately, all aglow. I wondered if she worked on commission. If so, knowing Storm the little that I did, I had a feeling she would be making out like a bandit today.

"What is your last name, ma'am? I'll just look up your personal account!"

"Storm Vareth."

The lady's eyes widened in her skull. Clearly, Storm's name meant

something to everyone here. I made a mental note to look up some information on my roommate as soon as the opportunity presented itself.

“Ah, yes, Ms. Vareth. Here it is. You have an unlimited account from the ORA. You can choose whatever you would like. We will make sure it gets to your room by the end of the day. If there is anything you like and we don’t have it, I will personally order it and have it sent over as soon as it arrives!”

Storm shrugged like she expected nothing less. She stepped to the side to allow me to step up to the counter. I gave my name and after a few taps on her keyboard, I watched her entire demeanor change. The smile she had so easily supplied Storm slid from her face. Her pleased expression dimmed; her shoulders stiffened.

“Ah. Okay, miss. I have your account here. Looks like you have a limit of \$250. Our clearance section is over there.”

She pointed vaguely off to the right, dismissing me. I thanked her softly and turned to go the way she had pointed. I stopped when Storm placed her hand on my arm.

“Wait. Why does she have a limit and I do not? We go to the same school.”

“Oh, well, you see . . .” The lady was clearly embarrassed and unsure how to respond to Storm’s question.

“I’m a scholarship student, Storm. It’s fine. I’m sure whatever they have over there will work just fine for me.”

“No, it’s not *fine*. There is no reason that I can choose whatever I want, at no cost, and you have that small of a limit. Absolutely not. You pick whatever you want. Once you hit your limit, we’ll put it on my account.”

“I’m, uh, afraid you can’t do that,” the cashier said with a wince.

“And why not?”

“Because . . . Because I can’t charge her things to your account. That’s not how it is done!”

Storm’s brows climbed her forehead until they almost disappeared into her hairline. “Oh? Well then, I guess you will charge MY items to MY account that she picks out. Understand?”

“We really can’t—”

“Do I need to call my fathers and tell them that you are denying me service?”

The cashier’s face visibly paled. “Oh, no! That won’t be necessary. We will do as you suggested, Ms. Vareth. I apologize.”

“Good. Any other scholarship students that come in . . . get them everything they want. No limit. Charge it to me. Got it?”

The cashier nodded so hard that I feared her neck would snap.

“Perfect. Riley? Let’s go look.”

Once again, I had to scamper after Storm and her long strides. I could hear her muttering under her breath about how ridiculous the whole thing was. She didn’t slow her pace until we were deep in the middle of the store. I came to a halt a few steps behind her, my arms wrapped around myself in a hug.

“Look, it’s okay. I don’t mind the limit. It’s more than I’ve ever had before.”

Storm tried to hide her flinch at my words, but I saw it anyway. She recovered quickly. “It’s not about the limit. It’s that they gave you one at all. The school is going to hear about this. It’s not right.”

“You can’t change the way it is done. It’s fine, really.”

“Riles, you got to stand up for yourself a little more. Did you or did you not apply to this school?” At my reluctant nod, she continued, “Did you or did you not get in? Yes. So, they should afford you the same allowances as everyone else is. My fathers largely funded the scholarship program. They are going to be appalled at how their money is being spent and that those students are receiving less than everyone else is. And trust me, putting the few items you’ll pick out on my account will barely put a dent into what this school has stored away. Stop feeling bad and start taking what you are owed. Let’s go build our nest.”

It hit me again. “Our . . .”

“Well, yeah, silly. We only have one. Gotta make sure we both enjoy it. It’s going to be the coziest, most comfortable, and most snuggly nest anyone has ever seen.”

A cart appeared out of nowhere and, stunned, I simply followed Storm’s lead through the store. I touched more fabrics and looked at more patterns than I had ever seen before. Soon, our cart was overflowing. I had no idea how all of this was going to fit in the nest room.

## CHAPTER 9



# STORM

Unloading all our packages took forever. It thrilled me that Riley finally had some more clothing. I knew there would be some she would need to hang, and I busied myself rearranging our closet so she had at least a little room. Next time I went home, I would take some of these clothes back with me. I certainly didn't need this much.

As we were putting everything in its place, deliveries from *Nest Goods* arrived. I refused to let anyone but myself and Riley into the nest and ordered the delivery people to put the boxes in our main room. We could get them into the nest later, on our own.

I emerged from the closet, stretching. My shirt rode up, exposing my midriff. From the corner of my eye, I saw Riley staring, and I bit my lip to hide my smirk. Her face heated in her telltale, adorable as fuck blush, and she looked away, embarrassed. Hmm, it appeared my cute roommate liked what she saw, the same as I did when I looked at her.

I had never hated my designation. Ever. Until now. I wanted Riley, but I couldn't have her. It fucking sucked.

I needed a distraction. My gaze caught on the piles of deliveries and my omega side called to me to get started on the nest. Having that room there, empty, was calling to me to build it. I might not be going into heat for at least three years, but the need to have a place where I felt safe was riding me hard. I wanted to burrow.

I had paid close attention to Riley in the store. Anytime that wistful look of wonder graced her face as she touched something, I tossed it into the cart. I was astounded to find that everything she seemed to like, I did as well. It

would be no hardship to create a combo nest for the two of us.

Lugging the bags and boxes into the nest room, I dumped everything out into an enormous pile in the middle. I surveyed the smaller space, my hands on my hips. I could feel my omega stirring inside me. She really wanted to make a nest.

I stood on the cushions that lined the sunken floor. The memory foam inside them enveloped my feet and gripped them in a hug. The ORA had provided some supplies for this room, but I immediately chucked them out. Terrible material and terrible feel. No way was I having those things soil my nest.

I tossed all the throw pillows we had purchased today into the corners. There were dozens of them. Then, I grabbed the blankets upon blankets that we had selected, running each one through my fingers so I could decide where they belonged. Soon, my instincts took over. I stacked pillows and cushions up around the edge of the sunken center. I draped blankets over them, creating a den.

Inside the structure, I shoved more blankets and pillows, then took everything out and tried again. It took me six attempts before it felt right. I gave it a satisfied nod and backed out of the dark, enclosed space.

Behind me, I found the sparkly fairy lights Riley had been practically drooling over. I strung them up along the ceiling. Along the back wall, I hung the icicle lights I had picked out. When inside the den, we wouldn't see them, but it did enough to give our room a soft glow.

Looking around, I spied a pile of blankets and pillows I hadn't yet put anywhere. I shoved them into the blanket den and started bunching them up along the makeshift cushion walls. My nose crinkled. These weren't in the right place either. I'd have to start again.

A light knock broke through my brain fog. I popped my head out.

"Um, may I come in?" Riley was standing nervously at the doorway, wringing her hands.

"Yes! You don't have to ask; this is your space too." Then, I grimaced. "Sorry, I kind of took over. If you don't like anything, we can fix it!"

Riley's eyes were wide as she looked around the room. She stepped down into the center gently, so as not to disturb my work. She was silent, taking it all in. For the first time, I felt nervous. What if she didn't like it? I really wanted her to feel comfy here.

Her eyes clashed with mine, a smile tugging at her lips. "This is beautiful.

I love it.”

“Yeah?” I asked, tension easing in my chest.

“Yeah.”

I released a sigh of relief. “Well, come on in here. I’m having trouble deciding where to put these other blankets. Nothing feels . . . right.”

I ducked back into the den and felt the space get a little smaller as Riley’s form followed me in. Instead of feeling claustrophobic, I found I really liked her in my space. In *our* space.

“Oh, I see what you mean. May I?” she said, breaking my musings.

“Of course, please!”

“I’ve never built a nest before. I might mess it up,” she confessed quietly.

“Impossible. You’re an omega; you’ll know what to do. It’s instinctual. Go ahead.”

I sat back and watched her as she picked up a blanket, threading it through her hands in much the same way I had. I could feel the nerves pouring off her as she looked around the space. She began pushing and pulling the blankets and pillows, bunching them up on the sides, pulling them back down and flattening them on the ground, then bunching them up again.

I was in awe as I watched her work. I was witnessing an omega coming into herself and her instinct in real time, and it was inspiring. I took the time to see exactly what Riley was doing with the items she moved.

Each blanket she weaved into the nest made me more and more relaxed. It was right. They belonged where she was putting them, no doubt about it. How I hadn’t seen it, I didn’t know, but now that she was putting them in their places, I was breathing easier.

Finally, she stopped. She had placed the last blanket in its new home. She sat back on her knees, looking at me for approval. Not wanting to give her the impression that I hadn’t looked at what she had done, I took everything in.

“It’s perfect,” I breathed out reverently. “I absolutely love it.”

I would do anything to see the smile that lit up Riley’s face at my words. I was in so much trouble.

## CHAPTER 10

# RILEY

**A**fter building the nest last night, Storm and I ended up falling asleep inside the den. When I closed my eyes, I had intended it to just be a quick nap, but apparently, we slept through the night. I woke up cuddled up against Storm once again. My head was tucked into her neck, my nose pressed to her scent gland.

The nest itself already smelled like the perfect mixture of her and me. It made my omega senses happy. Beside me, I felt Storm stir, and I rushed to pull my face back from her neck. Her eyes opened, and she blinked several times before her gaze focused on me.

“Good morning! I can’t believe we fell asleep in here,” Storm said, stretching her arms over her head. “Although, it is quite comfortable, isn’t it?”

I nodded. “Yeah, it really is. I like this nest . . . a lot.”

“Me too.” Storm looked around at the walls we had constructed, a small smile playing on her lips. “First day of classes today.”

I swallowed. “Yeah.”

“Are you nervous?”

“A little.”

“Don’t be! We have the entire morning and lunch together. I’ll sit next to you for everything.”

“Okay, that makes me feel better.”

“Good! Now let’s hustle, omega. We don’t want to miss breakfast!”

As much as I didn’t want to leave the comfort of our nest, I knew she was right. Reluctantly, I scrambled out, careful not to disturb the sides of the nest. Storm emerged right behind me and closed the doors. Grabbing a towel, she

stuffed it along the crack near the floor.

Seeing my curious look, she explained, “Just trying to keep our smell in. When we get back from a day of having our nostrils attacked by all these other scents, trust me, you’re going to want to have a place with a scent you like to clear your head.”

Without waiting for a response from me, Storm ducked into the bathroom and began brushing out her long hair. I blinked a few times, a warmth seeping over my neck. *She must like it as much as I do.* That thought had me smiling like a fool all the way to breakfast and our first class.

Storm and I were the first to arrive in class, and she chose seats for us over on the side of the classroom. We were near the front, close to the teacher’s desk. This gave me a view of the door as everyone else started filing in and choosing seats around the room. It surprised me to see a few male omegas coming in as well. I knew they existed, but I had never met one.

Several people came over to talk to Storm about their summer vacations and all the far-off places they had traveled to. Almost all of them gave me curious looks, but no one said hi or introduced themselves to me. I shrunk down into my seat, hoping to become invisible.

To keep occupied and alleviate some of the anxiety I was feeling, I busied myself straightening my notebook and pens on my desk. Finally, the teacher arrived, and everyone made their way to their seats. The teacher was a middle-aged omega, and her scent tickled my nose with the calming fragrance of baby powder. I immediately liked her.

“Hello, class,” she greeted, and everyone chorused back. “Welcome to your first day of Heat Expectations for the year. My name is Ms. Ginger. Today, I want to go over a refresher, as we are all just getting back into the swing of things. But first, let’s go around the room and introduce ourselves for roll call, please.”

I took meticulous notes through the hour-long class. Beside me, Storm seemed almost bored, but I thought she knew all the information the teacher was bombarding us with. In fact, it seemed like I was the only one who didn’t know the material she was going over. My town’s omega school must really have been lacking in the teaching department.

I was scribbling down the last thing the teacher said when she added something that made me sit up straight and pay attention.

“Very good. Does anyone know why it is so important to find and claim your alpha, or alphas, before your first heat?”

No one answered her, but it was something she had said that made me raise my hand. She smiled as she called on me, and I nibbled my lip before asking, "You said claim? As in, it's our choice of who our alphas are?"

The teacher looked at me, searching. For what, I wasn't sure, but then she nodded. "Yes, dear. Were you never told that?"

I shook my head. "No. My last school didn't really tell us much of anything besides that it was our duty as omegas to bond to an alpha, or preferably alphas, to keep them calm."

Several people sucked in their breath at my statement. I glanced around and they all appeared shocked, even Storm. Clearly, I had incorrect knowledge.

"Oh, no, dear. That is such an outdated way of looking at things, I am afraid. Omegas are precious. We are rare and sought after, yes, but it is and always will be up to us to decide who we want as a pack. Some packs will already be formed before we meet them. But then it is up to us to decide if we can tolerate and bond with everyone within that pack. If not, then we move on and find another. An alpha will not give you a bonding bite before you give them one first. If they do, well, then the bond might not form properly."

"Wow," was all I could get out.

The thought that I was the one to choose who I bonded to had never crossed my mind. I had always figured that once I was old enough, a pack would come along and bring me into their fold, whether I wanted them or not. My heart squeezed when I thought about all the omegas back at my hometown's local school that were being fed false information.

"Our time is almost over, but would you mind hanging back for a few minutes? I will go over a few things with you and get you some reading material to get you caught up before the next class."

I nodded and agreed. Just then, the bell jingled, announcing it was time to switch to the next session. Storm smiled at me and said she would save me a seat in the next class. I thanked her and made my way up to the teacher's desk.

"Thank you for staying, dear," she said to me as I approached. "What school did you attend before coming here to us?"

"I went to the local omega school near my hometown."

"I thought that might have been the case. A lot of those schools are teaching old ways that are not followed anymore. I'm not saying that they purposefully taught you wrong, but that they may not have known. I am

hopeful now that you are here, we can help you learn the way things should be and give you a better head start for after graduation.”

“I would appreciate that immensely,” I told her.

She smiled. “Good. Let’s start with your family. How many siblings do you have? What are their designations?”

“Oh, okay. Well, there’s Drew, my older brother, and he is a beta. Dell, my younger brother, is an alpha.”

“Alright, so you have one of each. That must be helpful. You have some groundwork for what each designation entails. What about your parents?”

“My mom and dad are both betas.”

“What? That doesn’t seem . . . Well, I mean . . .”

I grinned. “Yup, that’s the reaction we get most often. No one understands how our beta parents managed to have the three of us when we all are different.”

“Well, while I can’t say that it is unheard of, it is definitely rare. Especially outside of a pack with alphas that could have attributed to your parentage. Tell me, were they supportive of all the quirks that come along with being an omega? Nest building and things?”

“Oh . . . well, it’s not that they weren’t supportive, more so that they couldn’t be. We didn’t have the funds to buy extra things to use as nest materials, so I’ve never built one until I came here. Storm helped me.”

“You and Storm seem very close.”

“I like her. She is so sweet and kind to me. She stepped in when I got here and one of the other omegas was making me second-guess coming to the ORA. We are sharing a room currently.”

The omega teacher’s eyebrows rose on her forehead so far, they disappeared under her wispy bangs. “Sharing a room? And how is that working out for you two?”

“Really well, actually! We are just waiting for a bed to be sent up for me, but we ended up falling asleep in the nest room yesterday, so it didn’t really matter.”

“I see. And her scent doesn’t bother you, or yours, her?”

“Not at all. I think she smells wonderful. And when the two of ours combine, it makes me feel happy. I don’t foresee us having an issue at all.”

The teacher hummed under her breath. “Okay, well, I am glad that it’s working out for you.” Before I could respond to her, I heard some noise coming from behind me. The next class was arriving. “Alright, well, I have to



get this next session started, so let me grab some textbooks here from last year. When you have time to read through them, it should help get you caught up to where we are.”

“Thank you so much!” I gushed gratefully, taking the books from her.

“You’re welcome. Now, here is a pass to get you into your next class. I’ll see you tomorrow.”

I waved goodbye and turned to leave. My next class was Pack Dynamics, and I had a feeling that I was going to be floored by even more information. Unfortunately, I never made it to class to find out if that was true.

## CHAPTER II

# STORM

Where was Riley? Class was about to start any minute now and she still wasn't here. She must really be getting a lot of information from our last teacher. Several of my friends came over and tried to sit in the seat beside me, but I turned away each one; I saved this seat for Riles.

The teacher entered and moved to his desk, shuffling papers. Around me, my classmates settled into their seats. He cleared his throat and the remaining chatter died out. But before he could say anything, a *bang* sounded through the room. Without looking, I knew exactly who it was and rolled my eyes.

Hilary stood in the doorway. Her face wrinkled in her permanent sneer as she surveyed the room. Her cold eyes landed on me and the empty seat beside me, and a cruel smirk crossed her lips. Practically flouncing, she strolled across the room and slid into the desk.

"That's Riley's seat," I spat under my breath.

She arched one perfectly shaped brow. "Is it? Well, I don't see her name on it, nor do I see *her*. I'm sure I can take this seat."

"Hilary—"

"Okay, class, settle down," the teacher said, cutting me off. "Now that we are all here, let's get started, shall we?"

I raised my hand. "Actually, we aren't all here. Riley Druman is still in our last class. The teacher asked that she remain behind for a moment."

"Ah, right, well, I cannot wait for her. I'll get her caught up when she arrives. Welcome class to your first day of Pack Dynamics. I know most of you grew up in packs and this information may seem pointless. However, I

assure you, this is important. Learning how everyone fits into a pack and how you can help with those adjustments is paramount. Let's start with learning a bit about the pack structure you all came from. Let's start over here," he said, pointing to the opposite side of the room.

Each omega stood up in order and introduced themselves and who was all in their parents' packs. I tried to pay attention, but my worry about Riley was eating me alive. Where was she?

"Looking for your little girlfriend?" Hilary sneered under her breath.

"She's not my girlfriend," I defended her. "She's my friend."

"Mmm, of course she is."

"What is that supposed to mean, Hilary?"

"Oh, nothing. I have eyes. I see the way she looks at you and you look at her. It will never work, you know. Omegas do not belong together. Especially omegas from such different social groups. She's not like us, Storm. We are better than that."

I turned my head to her in shock. Her expression was one of self-satisfaction. She was proud of what she was telling me, like she had revealed an enormous secret.

"Different social groups?" I questioned, a deadly calm to my voice.

"Well, of course. Someone like her doesn't belong with omegas like us. And she definitely isn't worthy of snagging the good alphas that this school will introduce us to at graduation. Not that I need those introductions, of course."

Hilary was referring to the fact that she had sponsors for her time here at school. Clearly, Hilary had decided that she would be accepting their claim at graduation.

"Riley deserves as much of an opportunity as any of us here. She is a student, and she earned her way in. We should extend all the benefits of this school to her, *carte blanche*."

Hilary's nose crinkled in distaste. "Of course, *you* would think that, what with your bleeding heart for the *less fortunate*. I'm sure CC just tugged all those heartstrings of yours."

"CC?"

She grinned cruelly. "Yes, charity case. I thought it was a fitting name."

I surprised myself when a growl started low in my throat and rumbled out of me. *How dare she talk about Riley like that?*

"Careful, omega," Hilary warned. "Your possession is showing."

I snapped my jaw shut and twisted in my chair to face away from her. I could not *stand* Hilary. Nothing would make me happier than someone putting her in her place. And I would pay huge money for that someone to be me. However, this was not the time. Not during class.

My fury simmered under my skin as the sounds of the surrounding class slid past my ears. I took nothing in. Beside me, I felt Hilary straighten in her chair as the teacher came to her.

“My name is Hilary Lawrence. I grew up with an omega mother and three alpha fathers. None of those useless betas in my family’s pack. Also, I have sponsors and at graduation, I will join Pack Trinity as their omega.”

Several people sucked in their breath at her announcement. Pack Trinity were well known and highly sought after alphas. They had long held the stance that they would never settle for just any omega and that they were happy being without one. Hearing that they had changed their position was going to be monumental news.

“That’s very nice,” the teacher said, ignoring the growing chatter from the class.

“Oh, it’s more than *nice*,” Hilary asserted. “I really don’t think I need this class anymore, to be honest. I already know what my pack dynamics are going to be. And I know where I’ll fit in.”

“That may be what you think, Ms. Lawrence. However, until you have a bond mark and your alphas decide you don’t need this class, here is where you will stay. What will you do if one of your packmates feels they aren’t receiving adequate attention? Or if they ask to bring another member into the pack?”

Hilary scoffed. “They wouldn’t dare. They know that *I*, as the omega, have first and final say as to who can join our pack. And it’s perfect the way it is. We don’t need or want anyone else.”

The teacher looked at her, stunned. “Alright . . . What if they meet a beta and they fall in love?”

“A beta? Really? When they’ll have *me* at home? Please.”

Our teacher raised himself to his full height. “Yes, a beta. It’s possible. I am a part of a pack. And several of your classmates mentioned how they have betas within their family pack as well.”

Hilary’s face descended into a condescending pout. “That’s very nice for all of you. I will not be sharing my alphas with anyone. They are mine. I am all they will need.”

Silence sat heavy around the room. No one knew what to say. We all knew Hilary was a judgmental ass at the best of times, but I didn't think any of us knew just how bad she was until now. She really thought she was gods' gift to mankind and that everyone would be thrilled to associate with her.

"I don't know what to say. Our time is almost up, however, so we will continue our introductions next class period. Hilary, I suggest you read up on pack dynamics before our next class. I think you have a lot to learn."

"Oh, I won't be here next class. I am heading to the office to have this class removed from my schedule." She sniffed derisively, then she rose fluidly from her seat and started toward the door. Right at the exit, she turned to look at me, a smirk crossing her face. "Oh, and Storm, I think you should let CC know she really should come to this class. I tried to tell her she needed this one because the best that poor brat could hope for would be a beta-laden pack and a single alpha that feels bad for her."

With that, she breezed from the room. Her back was ramrod straight, like she hadn't just sucker punched me in the stomach with her words. She said *what* to my Riley?

## CHAPTER 12

# STORM

I rushed from the class and raced over to Heat Expectations. I saw the class filing from the room and I quickly grabbed the attention of someone.

“Hey, did you see Riley Druman in there?”

At her confused expression, I tried to describe her a bit, and she shook her head no and hurried off with her friends. My eyes scanned the crowd of omegas leaving the room and with each one that wasn't Riley, my stomach plummeted further. If Hilary had said all those things to Riley, I was sure she was hurting, and I needed to find her.

A quiet voice came from my left. “Are you looking for the scholarship student?”

My eyes flashed as I rounded on them. “Her name is Riley.”

“Right, of course. I'm sorry. I saw her when I was coming to class. Someone had her over there, backed into the wall, and it looked like they were saying something really mean. All I know is Riley started crying and tore off back toward the dorms.”

I felt a hot flash run through my body. Fucking Hilary. With a thank you thrown over my shoulder, I took off toward Dunning Building and raced up the steps to our room. I had never felt a white, furious rage like this before. I wanted to tear Hilary limb from limb for speaking to Riley that way, for making her hurt. Riley was precious. She deserved to be protected and loved, not treated like garbage.

At the top of the stairs, I slammed to a halt. Riley's distress hit me like a ton of bricks, her scent souring the surrounding air. I heard her sniffles before I saw her, but nothing could have prepared my heart for what she looked like.



She was curled into a fetal position in front of our door, quiet sobs wracking her body.

“Oh, sweetheart . . . ,” I breathed out and rushed over to her. “What happened? What’s wrong? Why didn’t you go into the room?”

Riley hiccupped and lifted her tear-stained face to mine. “I couldn’t get in. My fingerprint didn’t work.”

My breath caught as I remembered we had never updated the lock to include her. That meant she had been lying here, upset, for the entirety of the last class. If I hadn’t come looking for her, who knew how long she would have been outside of our room? Jumping into action, I quickly unlocked the door and bundled her inside.

I shuffled her over to the nest room and, without a second thought, took her inside. I helped her climb down into our nest and grabbed the blanket I had seen her snuggling the most and tucked it around her desolate body. Her frame shook with silent tears that tracked down her beautiful face, soaking the material under her.

“Riles, tell me what happened. Who hurt you? Whatever they said, you have to know it isn’t true,” I pleaded with her.

Tear-stained eyes met mine, and I almost cried at the world of sadness I saw brimming in their depths. “It’s fine. It’s nothing. Someone just hurt my feelings and made me sad. It’s stupid.”

“Your feelings are never stupid,” I growled out, causing her to whine and slide closer to me, as if to comfort me. “Whoever said this to you is going to be sorry, I promise you.”

“No, please. Let it go. It will just get worse next time. I’m sorry I didn’t make it to class or lunch. I’m just going to go to bed. Sorry for being such a burden.”

My eyes flashed. “You are not and never will be a burden, Riley Druman. As much as anyone else, you deserve to be here. You deserve to be happy. And you definitely DO NOT deserve to be treated as less than.”

She sniffled, her gaze filled with a dim hope.

“Look, I’m going to go grab some snacks and water and come back for some cuddles. I think you could use them. I know I can, and as omegas, we are especially good at giving those. Wait here for me, okay?”

She sniffled again but jerkily nodded her head. I bit my lip and slipped from the nest. Hurrying over to the mini fridge, I grabbed several water bottles and all the snacks I could carry. I was moving to go right back when it

hit me.

Riley's green tea and honey tickled my nostrils and I closed my eyes briefly, inhaling it deep into my lungs. *Gods, she smelled so good.* My eyes snapped open and I gasped. How was this possible? How did this happen?

I mean, it explained everything. My fierce need to protect her. My powerful urge to keep her near me always. My wish to see her happy and loved and safe.

She was *my* omega. My scent match.

Mine.

Riley was mine.

Now, what the hell did I do with that information?

## CHAPTER 13

# RILEY

It was hard to believe that a quarter of the year was gone already. It was now halfway through March and classes were over for this semester. I watched everyone run around as they got ready to head back home for the two-week break. Except a handful of staff and me, the school was going to be empty.

I needed this break away from everyone. Even Storm. I for sure thought I was going to have to lie to her about not going home. But when the time came, she had rushed through packing her bag, hugged me goodbye, and rushed out to the shuttle.

It was so unlike the behavior I expected from her, it had thrown me for a loop. Although, if I was honest with myself, she had been more distant ever since she had found me crying outside our dorm. That night, she had comforted me, tucked me into our nest, and brought me snacks. The next morning, however, she seemed distracted. As if she were putting up walls between us.

I couldn't lie; it hurt. I didn't know what I had done wrong or what had changed, but I didn't like it. We had been so close when I got here, and I valued her friendship so much. She had done so much for me, and I wanted to fix whatever chasm that had been created between us.

I entered our dorm and shut the door firmly behind me. I was so grateful that Storm had gotten my fingerprint added or I would have been spending these two weeks sleeping in the hallway.

Suddenly weighed down by immense exhaustion, I stumbled over to our bed and collapsed onto the mattress. We never ended up getting a second one. Storm had told her dads that we were fine simply sharing this gigantic bed or

the nest. I buried my face in the pillows and inhaled deeply.

Without realizing it, I had ended up on Storm's side. Or maybe it was a subconscious decision. Either way, when I took that deep breath, cinnamon and pine filled my senses, curling around my lungs and filling me with a strong peace. I loved it. Who knew if that would change as I got older, but for now, it was perfect.

I hoped that whoever my future pack turned out to be, they smelled as delicious as she did. Rolling onto my back, I let my mind wander to what I thought my pack might be like. I didn't much care who was in it or what they looked like. I just wanted people who were kind. Thoughtful. Caring. Like Storm.

Fuck. I needed to stop imagining her when I thought of my pack. It had been drilled into my head this year how there would never be more than one omega per pack. We would be too possessive of our alphas. We would not want to share them with another, especially another omega who would be demanding of attention as well.

Storm wasn't for me, and I needed to remember that.

Her scent wafted up around me from her pillow, and I closed my eyes, enjoying it. And like always, I felt my thighs getting slippery. It seemed my body still hadn't gotten the memo about her not being mine. Ever since I arrived here at school, I had produced more slick than ever before, particularly while around Storm. It was like I had a Pavlovian response to her smell.

French toast with cinnamon for breakfast? Had to change my slick pads before class. A classmate brought in a pine bough for a lesson I couldn't even remember anymore? Had to run to the bathroom to double up on the pads.

I had never had this much slick *ever*. The first time I noticed it, I had thought I had an accident. Storm had been so sweet and understanding. She knew immediately what had happened to me and had produced several pairs of slick panties that she had secretly bought for me. She hadn't wanted to embarrass me, but she said she knew it was coming eventually. Storm said that it was natural and just our omega sides becoming more pronounced as we crept toward twenty-five.

I groaned as I moved to head off to the bathroom to clean myself up. But then, a thought hit me. Storm would be gone for two weeks. I would definitely wash these sheets before her return. Did it really matter if I let them get a little . . . messy?

I mean, the reason for this was because I was so turned on. Maybe a little *self-relief* would finally calm down this obnoxious amount of slick? It was worth a shot.

My palm slid down my side and under my loose top, brushing my stomach. I was so sensitive and primed that even that tiny touch was enough to bring a whine from my throat. Worried someone would hear, I snapped my mouth shut and darted my eyes to the door. I snorted at my worry and relaxed. I then remembered I had the floor (and much of the school) to myself.

My hand continued to trail across my skin, sliding up under my shirt. I hadn't bothered with a bra today, leaving my breasts open for my exploration. I slid over my peaked nipples and rolled them between my fingers. A low moan worked its way out of my throat.

*Fuck, that felt so good.*

I imagined it was someone else touching me, caressing me, pleasing me, and I felt another gush from between my thighs. My hips wiggled on the bedding, mussing up the sheets even more. Keeping my one palm grasping and kneading my breast, I slipped my other one into the waistband of my pants and under the elastic of my panties.

I met zero resistance, thanks to how absolutely drenched I was. My fingers parted my lower lips and circled around my swollen clit. The room filled with my perfume, and I wasn't bothering to conceal my moans and whimpers any longer.

The first brush of my thumb over my needy clit had me arching up off the bed. I flicked it back and forth rapidly, using my copious amount of slick as lubricant. Abandoning my breasts, I shoved my other hand down my pants as well, seeking my entrance. My middle and pointer finger glided right inside me.

I curled them and stroked at my walls, pretending it was a nameless, faceless alpha making me feel this good. My pussy walls pulsed around me, trying to drag my fingers deeper. I added a third finger, groaning at the stretch that felt so right, so wonderful. Slick continued to pour from me, drenching my hands. The room echoed with my pleasure. I felt my body start to tighten. It started in my lower back and then, like a lightning bolt, shot straight through me.

I closed my eyes and tried to imagine a face to go along with what I was feeling. My release tore through me and I screamed out, "Fuck YES, Storm!"

It wasn't until several minutes later, after I came down from my high, that I realized what had happened. Whose name I had screamed out as I orgasmed. My eyes popped open, and I bit my lip. *Well, damn.* That certainly made me question a few things. That was the most intense orgasm I had ever had. And it was because I saw Storm's face at the crest of it.

I was so screwed.

## CHAPTER 14



# STORM

Spring break was taking forever to end. I had never had such an urgent feeling to return to school before. I usually loved my breaks and spending time with my family, but being away from Riley was almost torture at this point.

I felt terrible, too, because I knew she could tell I had been pulling away over the last few weeks. I was just confused after figuring out that she was my scent match and I didn't know how to process that. Coming home and talking to my dads and mom about it had put everything back into perspective.

After our talk, I immediately texted Riley, begging for forgiveness. I blamed it on end of quarter stress and I thought she bought it. I knew once I got back to school, I would have to make it up to her. I'd never sleep well until I did.

In regard to my scent matching Riley, my parents had been wary when I first told them. They had legitimate concerns, and we took the time to break them down. How was I going to feel if Riley didn't recognize the match? How was I going to feel if one of us met a pack and bonded to them? Would I be able to accept it? Especially if they decided they only wanted one omega?

Or, if everything worked out and they accepted us both, would I be able to handle sharing my alphas with another omega? How would I feel during heats when not all the attention was on me? Could I take seeing Riley getting pleasure from those that I had claimed?

The thing was, none of those concerns seemed to be of any major importance to how I felt about Riley. I knew I would never accept a pack that didn't also accept her. The thought of her being left behind while I moved on

was abhorrent to me. Also, the idea of my pack giving us both pleasure, while simultaneously allowing us to seek it from each other? Well, that was just the hottest thing I could imagine.

Riley was mine, and I wanted to share the world with her. Sharing a pack would just be a small part of that.

As I explained all of this to my parents, and they saw how much I meant every word, their reservations disappeared. My parents were perfect scent matches for each other, which helped them understand where I was coming from.

Finding a perfect scent match was the dream. Not everyone did. Some people settled for a pack whose smells they could tolerate. But finding someone, or *someones*, who were meant *for* you, who called to you so perfectly was a little rarer of a phenomenon.

And it was completely unheard of it happening prior to an omega's twenty-fifth birthday, when their first heat started. The fact I knew Riley was mine and neither of us had reached that golden age? Well, it was a miracle. Papa Corey told me I should snatch this up and hang on. I couldn't agree more. I just needed to make sure Riley felt the same way.

Because if she didn't . . . my world would never be the same without her in it.

It was why I was dying to get back to school. I knew she hadn't gone home for break. She forgot that the phone I had bought her so we could keep in contact had location services turned on. Her locator dot hadn't moved from the school the entire time. If I had bothered to check with her to know she wasn't going home, I would have invited her here with me.

I had been too stuck in my head, however, to even consider her, and that was making me feel like a terrible friend. The first thing I planned on doing when I got back was apologizing for my behavior and spending the next several months making up for it. Then, I was going to make sure she either got to go home for our summer break or I was bringing her with me.

One week to go, then I could see my gorgeous, curvy queen again.

Tonight should at least pass quickly. My parents had invited my best friend from childhood, Ryan Brown, to come over for dinner. They said that he had a surprise that he wanted to share with me. It had been several months since I had seen him, and I couldn't wait to find out what it was he wanted to tell me.

We had grown up together. There had been a time we were certain he was

going to present as an alpha and that he and I would start a pack. But the year of our eighteenth birthdays, when we designated, I became an omega and he stayed the same, a beta. To say we weren't just a little heartbroken would be a lie.

The only thing that would have made our friendship even more perfect was if fate had destined us to be a pack. But either way, I couldn't wait to find out what he wanted to tell me tonight. We both had secrets to share. I knew I couldn't keep Riley from him. He was my best friend. I told him everything, even if we weren't as close as we once were.

Getting ready for dinner that night, I carefully chose my outfit. I refused to let my mind dwell on the fact that I was setting out to look my best for Ryan. He was just my friend. That was all he would ever be. I just . . . Well, I wanted to make a good impression after not seeing him in so long. Yeah, that was it.

I brushed out my long, dark hair, clipping it up on top of my head. Loose strands framed my face and made my green eyes sparkle. I slicked a light layer of shiny, clear gloss over my lips and dusted on yellow glitter eyeshadow. Blinking at my reflection, I grinned. It was amazing what a little makeup did for my complexion.

Downstairs, I heard the doorbell ring and Papa Greg answered the door. Giddily, I jumped up and exited my bedroom, practically racing down the stairs. Near the bottom, I stopped because it wasn't only Ryan's voice I was hearing. I craned my neck, tilting my head so I could hear better. Who was here?

"Welcome to our home, Alphas Victor and Declan. It's a pleasure to meet you," Papa Greg was saying.

Alphas? What . . . ?

"Thank you for the invite. We appreciate it."

The sound of the alpha's voice sent a shiver down my spine. It was deep and gravelly. Something about it just checked all the right boxes for me. I swallowed and crept down another step, careful to watch for the creaks.

"Is Storm here?" I heard Ryan ask.

"Oh yes," my mother replied. "She's just getting changed. I'm sure she will be down at any moment. Why don't you all go into the front room to wait? I'll go check on dinner."

Her footsteps grew louder then quieter as she went to do what she said. I heard my fathers leading the alphas and Ryan into the front room. My

curiosity demanded that I go see who they were and what they were doing here, but at the foot of the stairs, I turned and hurried to the kitchen. I would see if my mother had any information first.

## CHAPTER 15

# VICTOR

The second I entered the Vareth home, I knew. While the overarching fragrance of her parents filled the home, underneath it, my sensitive nose picked out Storm's cinnamon and pine. It filled my lungs and one quick look at my twin confirmed it. We had found our omega scent match.

Beside us, vibrating with barely repressed excitement, was our beta Ryan. He knew from our expressions and body language what had happened. He had been hoping that it might because he had been so certain destiny was meant to place him and Storm together. The idea it might be possible was sending him into a tizzy. I placed my hand on his shoulder and tugged him to my side. A purr rumbled from my chest as I tried to help calm him.

"Settle down, Ry. I know you are anxious, so are we, but she isn't twenty-five yet. She will not know our scents call to hers yet. We will have to wait to tell her."

Ryan's eyes lost a bit of their sparkle at my gentle reminder, but it quickly came back. Storm and her mother walked into the room, and it felt like the clouds had cleared after a torrential rain. She was easily the prettiest omega I had ever seen. I couldn't believe she was mine. Peeking at Declan, I saw he, too, was staring at her, slack-jawed.

Ryan was the only one with any common sense between the three of us, and he jumped up from the couch we were on to greet her. His arms wrapped around her in a hug, and he swung her smaller frame in a circle, the pair of them squealing with happiness.

"Oh, it's so good to see you!" Storm said once he had placed her feet back on the ground. "How have you been? And who are these handsome fellas of yours?"

Her brows wiggled jokingly at Ryan, and he ducked his head to hide his flush. “Storm, I’d like you to meet Declan and Victor Birmingham, my alphas. My pack.”

It was cute how he still stumbled over those words, as we had only officially brought him into the pack a month ago. Our meeting was a slew of random events that all lined up perfectly for us to be in the same place at the same time.

We had dated him, separately and together, for a few months, although, at least for Declan and me, we had known he was ours almost as soon as we had met. Then, last month, we had proposed, and now he was the proud owner of our bonding marks, right over his glands on either side of his neck.

One perfectly arched brow quirked as Storm took us in. Having risen to our feet, my brother and I stood to our full heights, hoping she wouldn’t find us lacking. We desperately wanted to make a good impression on our future omega, even if she didn’t know who she was to us yet.

She marched over to us both and craned her neck to look up. I knew the two of us made a striking pair. I was vain enough to know I looked good, and as my identical twin, Declan did as well. We just had to hope that we were pleasing enough to her.

“You two”—she paused to poke both of us in the chest with her finger—“better take good care of Ryan. He’s my best friend, and alphas or not, I will end you if you hurt him.”

The fire in her eyes as she delivered her statement would have shriveled lesser men than my brother and me. As it was, I had to fight to keep the grin off my face as I bowed my head in acknowledgement of her statement.

“His heart is safe with us, Ms. Vareth.”

“And the rest of him,” Declan added, a wicked grin crossing his lips as he winked at Ryan.

Our beta flushed bright red, but Storm snorted. “Yeah, you guys will be great for him. Come on, let’s eat and you can tell me how you met those devilishly handsome alphas, huh, Ryan?”

She turned and slipped her arm through his, pulling him to what I assumed was the dining room. Storm’s fathers grinned good-naturedly at her and motioned for us to follow.

## CHAPTER 16



# STORM

**G**oddamn, Ryan's alphas were hot. Identical twins. *Oof*. If they weren't so clearly enamored with my friend, I might have tried flirting a bit. As it was, I was thrilled for him. He deserved happiness, and it was obvious Victor and Declan provided that for him.

I pulled Ryan along with me, leading the way to the table. I slid into my normal chair and pushed Ryan into the one next to me. "Alright, you've been holding out on me. Where did you meet them? How long have you all been together? Tell me *everything*!"

Ryan snickered cheerfully. "Slow down there, speed racer. I'll tell you."

I nudged him with my shoulder. "It's just, I've been at school two months and come home to find you've got yourself a whole pack."

"Well . . . I have known them for longer than two months . . ."

"Ryan! And you didn't tell me? I'm offended," I joked, grinning at him.

"I didn't want to jinx anything. I really lo—I mean, I really like them."

"Ryan Jerome Brown. Are you in *love* with them?" I hissed under my breath, eyes wide.

"Shh! I haven't told them that yet. But also, that's not my last name anymore. I'm a Birmingham." His gaze flicked over to where Victor and Declan sat across the table and his face reflected how pleased he was with that.

"You haven't told them you loved them, and yet you're a pack?"

"Things happened kind of fast." He squirmed in his chair. "But they are everything to me. I'm really happy."

"I can see that. Ryan, I am so excited for you. You deserve this!"

"Thanks, firefly. I appreciate that."

My lower lip poked out in a pleased pout. I was sure my eyes were reminiscent of a puppy's with how tickled pink I was. "Firefly . . . You haven't called me that since we were kids."

"Yeah, but you always were my firefly. My bright point in the darkness when I needed it."

I reached out and grasped his hand in mine. Ryan hadn't always had a great childhood, and I could remember him coming to my house to get away from it all. I started leaving my bedroom light on for him, so he could see to scale the wall and get inside on the worst nights. He said it glowed like a beacon, like I was calling for him like a firefly. I was so happy he had gotten away from his family when he had.

"Ryan, I'm so sorry I didn't do more—"

"Hush. None of that. You did plenty. You helped me get rid of my father. And you were my friend. That's what I needed back then, and now."

I gave him a sad smile. "Would've been pretty awesome if it was more."

He pursed his lips to the side. "Yeah, it would. But your dads said you met someone at the academy?"

"Hmm, yes. But I think I'll save that story for later. I want to hear about you and mister tall, dark, and handsome over there."

Ryan blushed slightly and ducked his head. "It was a weird chance of fate that we met actually. Everything lining up time wise and stuff."

"Oh? Color me intrigued."

"Well, Victor and Declan own a construction company, Birmingham Builders. They were out scouting a new satellite location near where I work, Hotel True?"

"Oh yeah! Sidetrack, how is that going?"

"Really well! I'm enjoying it!"

"That's wonderful! Okay, continue," I said, propping my head up on my hands and giving him my undivided attention.

"Anyway, I was just finishing my shift and getting ready to head home when Victor and Declan came into the hotel. Victor was off balance; he had gotten bonked on the head by a rogue ball kicked by some neighborhood kids. They had left the site early to come back to the hotel, and that was the only reason I ran into them. Declan was having a bit of trouble keeping his brother upright and I rushed over to help, not even thinking. Together, we got him upstairs to their suite and put him down on the bed."

Victor jumped into the conversation. "Declan and I wanted to thank him

for helping me, and he got Ryan's number. Dec practically had to beg our beta here to let us take him for a thank you dinner."

"You did not," Ryan protested, flushing.

"I sure did!" Declan piped up. "You seemed to be under the impression that we had nefarious reasons for asking."

"And didn't you?" Ryan snarked, a gleam in his eye.

"Brat," Victor chided with a smirk. "Maybe we did and maybe we didn't. All I knew was something was telling me not to let you leave without getting to know you more. As I was in no position to do it right then, we did the next best thing and got your agreement to dinner the following day."

"They came and picked me up after my shift, dressed to the nines in tuxes. I felt so underdressed. They hadn't told me where they were taking me," Ryan said with a pout. "So I was wearing jeans and a button-down."

"And you were still the most handsome man there that evening," Victor said with heat in his gaze.

I fanned myself and teased, "Good gods, it's hot in here."

Ryan bumped my shoulder with his, grinning like a fool. "You're a mess."

"But you love it."

"I do," he agreed. "Anyway, they took me to dinner, and what I thought was supposed to be a thank you dinner quickly became obvious was a date. They sat us at a corner booth, the one with the U-shaped chairs? Victor slid in first, then Declan nudged me in, and then he sat at the other end. These two impressive alphas trapped me between them."

"That was the plan. Less chance for you to run scared when we turned on the charm." Declan flipped his hair with a smirk.

"There was no chance of that. I was already starstruck."

The alphas and Ryan fell silent as they stared at one another. The love in their gazes was scorching. I couldn't wait for my opportunity for that same feeling. That absolute security in knowing that someone cared for you so completely. That thought brought the image of Riley back into my head, front and center.

*Gods, I missed that woman.* One more week and she would be back in my arms, where she belonged. I couldn't wait.

"Ms. Vareth, tell us, how school is going for you? Second to last year, right?" Victor asked.

"Yes! And please, call me Storm."

“Storm,” Victor repeated, rolling my name around his tongue. “What a beautiful name.”

“Ah, thank you. School is going well. I’m ready to be done, to be honest.” I huffed a laugh. “I feel like a lot of what we are going over now is common sense.”

“Mmm, I remember feeling the same way my last year at my academy. Declan skipped so many classes, I’m shocked they let him graduate.”

Declan had the good grace to look abashed. “Meh, there were only so many times I could hear, ‘Make a pack, find an omega,’ before I lost my mind. Vic and I were already a pack. We have no desire to join with any others.”

“I understand that,” I said.

Ryan tapped my arm, bringing my attention back to him. “Tell me who you met? A beta, I am assuming, as alphas aren’t allowed at the academy unless it’s the mixer, right?”

“That is true. There aren’t any alphas on campus. But it’s not a beta I met.”

“Then who? An omega?!”

“Yeah.” A dreamy look descended over my features. “Her name is Riley, and she’s absolutely perfect. Everything about her is just amazing. And the best part is, she’s my scent match.”

“What?!”

I couldn’t tell who said what after my statement. The room fell into a chaos of questions being shouted over one another, confused looks, and even some upset stares from the alphas and Ryan. My brow furrowed as I looked around. This was the last reaction I had anticipated.

“Storm, she can’t be your match. Omegas don’t match to each other,” Ryan protested.

“How do you know? I know what I sensed, and I know she is mine as much as I am hers.”

“Storm,” Victor said placatingly, “that just cannot be. Omegas don’t belong to one another.”

“Says who?” I snapped, narrowing my eyes and crossing my arms.

“Well”—Declan looked around at his packmates—“everyone. It’s just not done.”

“You know, if I had any idea that you would all be so . . . so . . . *stuck up* about this, I never would have shared it,” I snarled, having had enough of this

conversation. “If you’ll excuse me, I am going to bed. I think I’m done here.”

I pushed back from my seat and, with a goodnight for my parents, turned and flounced off to my room. I ignored Ryan’s and his pack’s calls for me to wait. *The gall of them to say that Riley wasn’t my match because of her designation.* I’d show them. I’d show them all when I brought her back here next break on my arm.

## CHAPTER 17

# RILEY

**M**y body slumped against the interior of the tub, my hand feverishly rubbing my clit. “Fuckkkkkk,” I hissed out between my teeth, slick gushing into the now tepid water.

I had lost count of how many times I had practiced this *self-relief* since Storm left, but the ache wasn’t easing at all. I had hoped that by succumbing to the desperation that had been buzzing under my skin for the last two weeks, I could get her out of my head. That wasn’t what happened at all. If anything, it was getting worse.

From the moment I had accepted that it was her I wanted, that her face made me reach the finish line, I had been a mess of hormones and need. My omega side was screaming at me to go get my girl, but my rational side was telling me it wasn’t possible.

Omegas didn’t form packs together. We would need to find our own alphas that could help us through our heats. She wasn’t meant to be mine. It sucked, but that was the way of it. So, for now, for the last few hours before she returned, I was going to get as much of this *crush* out of my head as possible.

My back bowed, water sloshing over the edge onto the tile. My voice rose in a keening cry, echoing around the bathroom. I felt that familiar tingle starting low in my spine and I cried out as an intense orgasm washed over me.

My eyes shuttered closed and my breath stuttered as I tried to calm my racing heartbeat. My limbs shook with the aftereffects for several seconds before I could open my eyelids and the haze cleared. I still had my hand clamped over my pussy and I drew it away slowly, grimacing at the mess I

had made.

Again.

Standing, I pulled the plug in the tub and let the water drain, then I made my way over to the shower. This was the third time I'd washed today, thanks to my overactive libido. I knew as we aged, we were supposed to have an increase in our sexual urges, but this was getting out of hand! Only cleaning the parts that really needed it, I rushed through the shower. I toweled off quickly and moved back to the main room to get dressed.

As soon as I entered it, my nose twitched. *Fuck*. I needed to air this out. Fast. There would be no hiding what I had been doing with how strongly my perfume was clinging to everything. Biting my lip, I threw some clothes on haphazardly then moved to the window. It took me several wiggles, but I could finally wrench it open. I leaned out, drawing in the fresh outdoor air.

The haze I had been under since reentering the bedroom cleared enough that I could get my brain back online. I needed to clean the bedding immediately. Rushing over, I stripped the sheets and comforter. Then, for good measure, I took the pillowcases too. Gathering it all into my arms, I hurried down to the laundry room and tossed them into the economy washer. I added way more detergent than I needed and set it to a high heat wash.

Knowing it would be at least an hour until they were done and ready for the dryer, I went back to our room to remake the bed with fresh sheets. I pulled a new set out of the closet and started redoing the bed. We only had one comforter so I would need to wait until it dried before I could add that back.

I was fluffing the pillows when I heard a *ding* in my pocket. I pulled my phone out and a smile split my face when I saw Storm's name on it. She had been texting me all break, and it had made me miss her all the more. She had apologized for pulling away prior to the break and with how often she texted me, I believed her. Reading her message, I sent off a small white lie, hoping she bought that I had gone home for the break.

**Storm: Hey, I just left home. Should be there by dinnertime!**

*Riley: Oh wonderful! I just got here. Can't wait to hear about your break.*

**Storm: Same to you. Kisses! Xoxo**

My nose wrinkled as my perfume floated up around me. Kisses. She said kisses. Now all I could think about was kissing her. Damn it. I closed my



eyes and tried to think of anything else to take my mind off the image of Storm's gorgeous face.

*Grandma's underwear. Dell's stinky socks. Mom's vegetable garden. Dad's work boots.*

I heaved a sigh of relief when I felt my yearning halt. My perfume subsided and, even though my underwear was drenched, my slick wasn't pouring from me any longer. I flicked on the ceiling fan, hoping that would help push some of the scent from the room and out the open window.

I had to get this under control. I couldn't be slicking every time she talked to me when she got back. How embarrassing would that be? A quick glance at my watch and I saw it had been almost an hour, and I hurried off to go move everything to the dryer.

An hour later, I was back in our room, putting the now dry comforter on the bed. Thankfully, because I had used sheets that were in our closet, Storm's and my scents still clung to them. Enough so that our room still smelled like *us*. I closed the window and looked around, assessing what I saw. I had done the best I could. Dinner was still a couple of hours away. I had time for a nap. I crawled under the covers and nestled into the pillows. Within moments, I was drifting off to dreamland.

**BANG.** I jolted up from my deep sleep and, bleary-eyed, I looked over to the door. Storm stood there, grinning and holding tons of bags.

"Hello, sleeping beauty," she called out. "Wake up and come greet me properly!"

I chuckled and rolled off the bed. Storm's skin was glowing. She had a slight tan and had tied her hair up in a topknot. Break had done her good; she looked fabulous. I welcomed her back and took some bags from her hands, taking them to the dresser to be put away later. Suddenly, I stumbled as she launched herself at my back, wrapping her arms around my neck.

"I missed you so much, Riles! I'm so glad to be back."

She nuzzled her face into my neck, rubbing along my glands. A moan tried to work its way out of my throat, and I bit my cheek to keep it inside. "I missed you too, Storm."

"Let's go get dinner. I'm starving. I can't wait to hear all about your break!" She grabbed my hand and pulled me from the room, heading down to the cafeteria.

## CHAPTER 18

# STORM

Even if I hadn't been watching Riley's location on my phone, stepping into our room would have clinched it for me. Knowing that she hadn't left, I mean. Her scent was so saturated all over our room, it would take days to ease up.

And I was fine with that.

I loved smelling her perfume filling my space. With how strong it was, I knew she had been having a great time while I was gone. When she had turned away from me to put the bags by the dresser, I had physically stumbled. My body was screaming out at me to go to her. I couldn't hold myself back and I launched myself onto her back, clinging like a koala.

Rubbing against her hadn't helped me at all. I knew I had kept my perfume from puffing out around us, but only by pure dumb luck. I wanted to drag her into our nest and have her show me exactly what she had been doing the last two weeks while I was gone.

If I stood there smelling her any longer, I would have done just that. I wanted this omega something fierce, and I couldn't wait to make her mine. I wasn't even hungry, but I had to rush us out of the room because I was worried I was going to do something stupid. Like try to fuck her on the bed that was lacking my perfume and covered with hers.

It was obvious she had tried to wash the bedding to hide how strong her scent was. The problem was the green tea and honey were so deeply embedded into everything in the room, there was no way she could have gotten that out of there. My omega side wanted nothing more than to roll around in the sheets, covering myself in it.

Seeing the cafe right ahead, I picked up my pace. I typically hated the

convergence of everyone's smells in there, but right now, I needed it. I needed to clear my head before I pressed Riley to the wall beside us and kissed the daylights out of her.

Thankfully, right before my slim hold on my control snapped, we entered the cafeteria. I sucked in the smells all around us and shook my head to clear it. I was still holding Riley's hand, and I didn't let it go until we had ordered our dinners and had to carry our trays to the table. Sitting down so I faced her, I asked how her break had been.

Riley's face flamed bright red and she ducked her head. "It was great. I didn't do much, just hung around the house. How about you?"

It was obvious she was lying, but it was also obvious she was extremely embarrassed so I let it go. "Mine was great too. My family and I went out on a few excursions. Then, about a week ago, my childhood best friend, Ryan, and his new pack came over for dinner."

My face must have morphed into a scowl because Riley looked really concerned. "What happened? I would have thought that was a happy thing, but you look annoyed."

"It should have been fun, but Ryan ruined it in the end." I waved my hand and scoffed. "It's fine, just another male with his head up his ass. I don't want to talk about him right now."

"Alright. For what it's worth, I am sorry that it didn't go how you wanted."

"Thanks, Riles. Hey, I brought a TV back from home. Want to watch the new Frankie Powers movie after dinner? *Knot for You?*"

"Oh, that sounds fun! I've been wanting to see that one. She's amazing in everything."

"She really is! It's so awesome that she can act the way she does and still have time for her pack at home."

"Right? She's an inspiration. I hope whoever I end up with lets me do something outside the home. I would hate just putzing around the house all day."

"I'll make sure that they do," I growled out. Riley deserved the world, and I was going to make sure our pack knew it.

She grinned at me. "You're so protective of me."

"I'm sorry. I can't seem to help it."

"It's fine. I like it. A lot. I've never had someone care so much about me before. It's . . . nice."

My eyes flashed with irritation at whoever made her feel like she wasn't worth caring about. At that moment, I made it my sole purpose to make sure she never felt like that again. I would show her how she should get treated. How she deserved to be treated.

Later that night, we were under the blankets in our little den nest, chomping on popcorn while we watched the movie. As it progressed, I made subtle moves until I pressed along Riley's side, snuggling in close. Her face tucked into my neck, she watched from under my chin, and I buried my nose in her blonde curls. I couldn't keep the smile off my face. This was what I wanted. What I needed. My omega in my nest, in my arms, in my life.

The credits rolled, and Riley shifted slightly. I pulled back and looked down at her face. She was sound asleep. Not wanting to disturb her, I tried to move off to the side gently. Riley had other ideas, though.

No sooner had I adjusted my weight than she whined and her arms slipped around my back, hauling me close to her. She shoved her nose into my neck, running the bridge over my gland repeatedly. I knew by the morning I was going to be covered in her fragrance. She was marking me completely subconsciously.

I felt my thighs slide together as my slick dripped from me. Unable to hold it off any longer, my perfume blossomed, filling the room with cinnamon and pine. Beside me, still clinging, Riley arched her back and her perfume joined mine. My eyes rolled in my head and I panted, trying to get myself back under control. I had no clue how I was going to sleep tonight, not with this exquisite creature wrapped around me like this.

Not that I wanted her to let me go.

Riley grunted and rolled away, giving me freedom from her hold. My body was primed, and I couldn't stop rolling my hips, desperate for some relief. I swallowed thickly and then inched my way out of the nest. Looked like I was going to be making good use of the showerhead.

## CHAPTER 19

# STORM

I was dying.

This was the end of me.

Every day, I woke up wrapped around Riley or her around me. No matter where we fell asleep, even if separately, we ended up right next to each other, our noses tucked into each other's necks. Our scents were so combined by this point, there was no separating hers from mine. Even some teachers had noticed and were giving us side-eyed looks.

Fuck them and their judgmental eyes. Riley was mine, and I didn't care who knew it. Although, I was still too chicken to say anything to her. Several times, it had come right to the tip of my tongue, but then something always held me back. Why couldn't I just tell her how I felt? How she was my perfect counterpart?

What was I scared of?

If I was honest with myself, I knew what it was. I was terrified that she wouldn't feel the same way. Or that she would reject our match. Hell, I didn't even know if she knew we were matches. We weren't supposed to find them until we turned twenty-five. Why I could tell now was yet one more mystery.

Classes were not helping distract me at all. I had hoped after the break, they would pick up in intensity, but they hadn't. It was already May, a month back from break, and yet everything we were going over, I already knew. I could answer questions if called on without having to pay attention, which meant it left me with hours a day to daydream.

The star of my daydreams? Always Riley.

In the beginning, it was just flashes and images of her and me hanging out or me waking up beside her. But now, almost a month back into school, she

was wearing less and less clothing in my mind's eye. I had glimpsed her stepping from the shower the other day and the towel had barely covered her. That meant my mental images were getting pretty detailed.

Which, of course, meant that I was getting more and more sexually frustrated. I was taking long daily showers just so I could use the removable showerhead to get some relief. Any relief. Unfortunately, it wasn't easing anything. I had even discreetly ordered a dildo knot toy. I was hoping that maybe the sensation of that would provide me with some sort of satisfaction. I hadn't gotten to use it yet, but I knew it was waiting for me in our room.

It also hadn't escaped my notice how often Riley was using the shower, too. I knew I must be having just as strong of an effect on her as she was on me. No one else seemed to have our issue. No one was talking about increased slicks or urges. It was getting so bad that I had even gone to the nurse to beg for some suppressants.

She had taken one whiff of me and immediately gave me a vast supply. I was taking them religiously, every night, but so far I hadn't gotten any alleviation of this insane ache. When I had brought the suppressants back to our room, I told Riley what they were, and she asked if she could take some as well.

They barely dulled her green tea and honey.

I spent so much time changing out my panties and cleaning slick up, it was getting obnoxious. If I didn't know better, I would have thought I was going into an early heat. But I had no other symptoms beyond the frantic horniness and massive amounts of slick production.

Finally, the bell rang, and I hurried up the stairs to our room. I texted Riley that I was going to skip lunch. I wanted to go use my new toy. Hopefully, that would do the trick. *Gods, please let it do the trick.*



## CHAPTER 20

# RILEY

If Storm didn't stop hugging and cuddling me, I was going to go insane. Her scent was so ingrained in me, I couldn't get it out, no matter how many times I showered. I thought I had embedded her in my very pores.

None of this made any sense to me. Every time she so much as smiled in my direction, I had to rush to the bathroom to clean myself up. This couldn't be normal. Our classes certainly didn't teach that it was. All they talked about was how our top priority was picking our alphas and making sure we got the ones we wanted before another omega snatched them up.

I didn't want my own alphas. The idea of not being with Storm was becoming increasingly abhorrent to me. I still wanted a pack. And knots. But I wanted Storm more. I wanted to share a pack with her, and not just as friends.

I wanted to wake her up every morning with my face between her legs.

Anytime she perfumed, it was all I could do to hold myself back from doing that. I wanted her more than I had ever wanted anyone else before. It made no sense. Omegas didn't belong together. I had heard that so much since coming back to class after break. It was like every teacher had a personal vendetta against the idea.

Which, obviously, just made it all the worse.

I also couldn't masturbate like I had while Storm was gone, so that wasn't helping. There was nowhere private. I tried a few times in the shower, and while it gave me a temporary reprieve, it was never enough. My body was crying out for release. Summer break couldn't come fast enough as far as I was concerned.

I glanced at the clock and saw that there were five minutes left of class. I

raised my hand and asked to be excused to the bathroom. Getting permission, I gathered my things and rushed from the room. I was going to go back to our room and try to get myself off in the shower before dinner. Maybe I could enjoy a meal for once.

Once back in our room, I carelessly dumped my schoolbooks on the floor, ripping my clothing off in a trail as I made my way to the shower. I cranked the water to scalding and jumped in. I barely wasted five seconds before I buried my hand in my pussy, three fingers sliding into me with no resistance.

My walls clenched around them, trying to pull them in deeper. Throwing caution to the wind, I let a few moans escape, my wrist bumping against my swollen clit in just the perfect place. I could smell my perfume filling the room and it was driving me into a frenzy because mixed with my green tea was the underlying, unmistakable pine of Storm.

Slick coated my fingers, running down my thighs and into the drain. The suppressants Storm had brought back did absolutely nothing to help. I leaned against the tiled wall, rocking my hips against my hand. I bit my lip in an attempt to keep my cries of pleasure in me. That familiar tingle rocketed down my spine. I was so close. Almost there. Almost . . .

The door to our dorm clicked open and Storm came in, a clear view into the bathroom. There was no way she missed the way my hand was frantically pumping in and out of me. And there was no way I could have stopped the freight train of an orgasm from crashing over me the moment our eyes locked.

A silent scream caused me to open my mouth as my knees quaked with the force of the orgasm as it rushed through me. I cried out incoherently as my knees buckled and hit the tiled floor, slick pouring from me.

## CHAPTER 21

# STORM

Oh shit. Oh fuck. I shouldn't have come back to the room.

Riley's perfume slammed into me like a tidal wave. I banged the door shut and raced for the nest. There was no way I could leave right now. I wanted nothing more than to jump into that shower with her and fuck her senseless.

I grabbed the package waiting for me on the bed and dove into the nest. The surrounding walls fell down and I whimpered, upset at having destroyed our perfect bungalow, but another need was taking precedence. I needed to cum. I needed to cum *now*.

I stripped and ripped open the box, tossing it away. I pulled out the pink dildo, seeing the bulging knot on the end.

*Please work*, I pleaded silently.

Then, without preamble, I shoved the whole thing knot deep into my cunt. A careening cry pierced the air as I began furiously thrusting it in and out of my entrance, getting closer and closer to taking the knot.

Slick flowed out of me, covering the silicone dick, my hand, and everything around me. My hips bucked against the cushions, seeking the knot that was drenched so completely in my juice. I turned my head and caught a whiff of Riley on the pillow beside me. My head tossed back as an orgasm unlike any other tore through me, the inflatable knot popping into me. Somehow, I had the wherewithal to press the button on the side, expanding the knot even farther.

I screamed out in pleasure as my walls pulsed around the cock, clinging to the rubber knot, and I came. Multiple orgasms rippled through my body as slick gushed out around the growing knot that filled me fuller than I had ever

been before. My juices drenched the cushions beneath me, and my eyes rolled to the back of my head.

“Riley!” I screamed out into the room, blissfully unaware.

My body shook with the intensity of what had just happened, and I started to come down from my high. The dildo was still shoved deep inside me, vibrating thanks to me hitting a secondary button in my haste to make the knot inflate. I didn’t even release the pressure of the knot and already I could feel my walls clenching down again, seeking another orgasm.

“I’m sorry. I heard you yell my name. I thought you needed me.”

My eyes snapped to the doorway. I had forgotten to lock it when I came in. Riley stood framed in the entryway, wearing nothing but a hastily tied towel, her hair dripping wet. My pussy pulsed, my perfume filling the air. I watched as her eyes dilated when my fragrance hit her, then her own perfume wafted over to me. Her heated gaze locked onto where my slick gushed around the toy embedded in me.

“Riley, baby, I do need you. Please. I can’t make this ache stop. Please help me. I want you so badly.”

“Thank the gods . . .”

Without wasting a second more, she flung the towel off herself, revealing her body to me fully, finally not hidden behind the shower wall or her clothing. A whine pulled from my throat, and I pushed the button to deflate the knot as she stepped down into the nest. I pulled the soaking thing from me, lifting my arms to my omega, my girl.

“Come here, beautiful,” I commanded softly.

She smiled and practically threw herself into my arms. “I thought I was making it all up. I didn’t think there was any way this was real.”

“So, you realize it too?”

“Storm, you’re my scent match.”

“Yesssss,” I hissed out in triumph, right before I pressed my lips to hers, claiming our first kiss.

Her mouth opened and our tongues tangled together. I lapped at her and rolled us so her soft body was under mine. My leg slid between hers, and I thrust it up so my thigh was tight against her soaking pussy. Her leg did the same to me, and my hips rocked against her skin of their own accord.

“Fuck, Riley, yes!”

“Oh gods, don’t stop,” she pleaded, her fingers digging into my shoulders.

“Never. I’ll never stop, Riles. You’re mine. You got that? Mine. And I am yours. Forever.”

A whimper left her as she grasped my face, pulling me back for another soul-stealing kiss. Our hips worked back and forth against each other, juices combining and easing the way for our movements. She came first, breaking off the kiss so she could yell out my name. I followed close behind her.

I had barely come back to earth when she pushed me from her. Landing sprawled out on the cushions, I gave her a stunned look. She returned a mischievous grin. Riley grabbed my hips and hauled me over to where she wanted me, and then I saw heaven.

Not literally, but pretty damn close. The feeling of her tongue licking through my center and flicking over my clit had to be what paradise was. There couldn’t possibly be anything better than this out there.

My hands tangled in her hair and I held her to me, grinding up into her face. Her tongue dipped into my opening, and her hand reached over to roll my swollen bundle of nerves between her fingers. My head thrashed on the pillow beneath me, and I panted out in joy.

“Yes, yes, yes. Right there! Please!”

Her name echoed off the walls as I came for the sixth—or was it seventh?—time since coming into the nest. My hair stuck to my forehead with my sweat, my body shaking with pleasure. For the first time in months, I was actually satisfied. I got the relief I had been so desperate for.

Now it was time to return the favor. As soon as my head cleared, I locked my legs around Riley’s waist and rolled us once again. I licked a path down her gorgeous body and then settled in for a snack between her legs. I needed her to be a puddle underneath me.

My tongue traced through her drenched center, lapping up her slick. Fuck, she tasted delicious. I would never tire of this: licking, sucking, tasting my girl. I pried her legs apart farther and buried my head between her luscious thighs. The sounds I was drawing out of her filled me with pride. I growled low and upped my onslaught.

I swiped my fingers through her pussy, lubricating them. My mouth fastened around her clit and when I sucked, I pushed two fingers into her opening. Her scream echoed around our nest as her back bowed and a fresh gush of her slick poured from her. A third and then fourth finger slipped into her until I was stretching her around my hand. She lifted her head, her eyes wild and her hair looking beautifully mussed.

“Do it,” she demanded.

I lifted my mouth from her clit, knowing I looked just as ravaged as her.  
“Are you sure?”

“Yes. I need it. I need more. Storm, baby, please,” she begged.

A victorious snarl left my lips, and I twisted my wrist, stretching her impossibly wider. Her cries of, “Yes, yes, yes!” filled the surrounding area, her perfume so thick, it was going to be permanently soaked into my skin. I pulled back and placed my thumb across my palm. By this point, Riley had positively soaked my hand, and when I started pushing it back into her entrance, there was no resistance. Riley’s head thrashed and her cries became incoherent. My fist pressed inside her and I curled my fingers down around my palmed thumb.

“FUCK!” she screamed.

Her neck arched, and I felt her orgasm crash through her as her pussy walls rippled around my hand. It pulsed and seemed to suck me farther into her. I rocked my hand back and forth, filling her as much as possible. It was as close to a knot as I could give her without using toys. And I really wanted to please her myself, at least this first time. Her breaths came in great gasps as she tried to calm her racing heart and come back down to earth. Releasing my clenched hand, I pulled back from being inside her.

I crawled up her body, lowering myself across her. My lips sought hers and her arms reached up to pull me closer to her before she tangled her hands into my hair. I groaned into her mouth as our tongues swept over each other’s. Goddamn, I loved this omega. I grabbed her arm and brought her wrist to my lips, mouthing over her scent gland where I intended to place my bite one day.

Beneath me, Riley’s hips flexed as she adjusted her position on the cushions under us. Her clit brushed against mine and it was like a lightning bolt shot through me. Pressing my pelvis down, I ground into her.

“We are not making it to lunch or our afternoon classes,” I whispered.

“Good. Now, omega mine . . . fuck. Me.”

“With pleasure.”

Adjusting my weight so that I was straddling her once again, I did just that, my slick running out of me to coat her skin. Her swollen clit rubbed against mine with each twitch of our bodies. It took less than thirty seconds until we were both yelling out in ecstasy as climaxes took hold of us once again.



## CHAPTER 22

# RILEY

Cold sweat dripped down my back. My hand gripped Storm's tightly, but I was so clammy. What was going to happen to us? Why were they being so unsympathetic? I chewed mercilessly on my lower lip, my body shivering with fear.

"It's alright, Riley. They can't do anything to us. We didn't do anything wrong," Storm whispered beside me from the corner of her mouth.

"I'm scared, Storm."

"It's alright. I promise. It's fine."

We only had three days. Three glorious, amazing, *fantastic* days where we had not left the nest for anything except bathroom breaks. We didn't shower, didn't eat. We barely remembered to drink water. But damn, did we get good use out of that inflatable knotted dildo of Storm's.

Then it all went to hell.

Staff members from the school swarmed our room this morning before the sun had even risen. They dragged us out of our nest, tossed clothes at us, marched us down here to the headmistress's office, and shoved us into these chairs.

No one said a word to us, but their looks spoke volumes. What Storm and I had done together disgusted them. But that didn't give them the right to soil what should have been a private, special moment between the two of us.

The door slammed open, and I squeaked and jumped. Storm squeezed my hand reassuringly. Stomping footsteps made their way over to where we sat. The headmistress of the ORA crossed her arms and glared down at us. Beside her, several teachers had gathered, all with similar appalled expressions on their faces.

“How dare you?” the headmistress roared. “How dare you disgrace this academy? When students from your floor ran down to tell me what was going on in your room, I scarcely dared to believe it! There was no way that two *omegas* would be so disrespectful to their designations. I cannot believe the two of you!”

I swallowed thickly past the lump lodged in my throat. I opened my mouth to apologize, but Storm’s voice cut me off.

“We did *nothing* wrong. She is my scent match and I hers. We belong together. Even *you*, with your close-minded opinion, should know that.”

“Pah. You’re confusing your friendship with something more. You can’t be scent matches for each other. You aren’t even twenty-five. The ability to match doesn’t start until then. You would know that if you paid attention during class instead of daydreaming, Ms. Vareth,” the teacher from Pack Dynamics spoke up.

“I know what’s taught to us. And I also know it’s *wrong*! I’ve known Riley was mine for months, even before spring break. I spent the entire time pining over her, wanting her to be with me. That isn’t normal behavior for *friends*, but it certainly is for unbonded matches. I have an unquenchable desire to be with her, and I’m almost one hundred percent positive she feels the same for me.” Storm looked over at me and I subtly nodded. “Riley is my pack.”

“Pack?!” The headmistress recoiled. “No. That’s not happening. Omegas do not form packs together. One omega per pack. That’s the rule.”

“Rule? Says who? Show me something that says that,” Storm demanded, her eyes blazing with fury.

“Well, I mean, it’s not an official rule per se . . . ,” the headmistress floundered. “But it certainly isn’t done. Omegas are precious commodities. There aren’t enough of us to go around. That’s why we have packs with multiple alphas. Alphas need us just as much as we need them. It is extremely selfish to assume that the two of you can remain together. What will your future packs think? Think of them.”

“Think of *them*? These imaginary alphas should have more say in my relationship than Riley and I do? Are you even listening to yourself? I have told you, multiple times, that Riley and I are matched and as far as I am concerned, we are a pack already. Anyone who wants us to claim them will have to accept that. Not just one, but *both* of us. We belong together and that’s the way it’s going to be.”

Storm sat back in her chair, crossing her arms over her chest. She glared at each person standing across from us, daring them to contradict her. My hands were wringing in my lap, I was so nervous. However, Storm's speech gave me hope. She was so strong to stand up to these people and claim me so publicly. It overflowed my heart with love for her.

The headmistress's upper lip curled into a sneer. "Accept you both? You dare to think you can dictate that?"

"Dare? No. I demand. Omegas claim their alphas, isn't that right? Isn't it our choice to give that claim to someone?" When the staff begrudgingly nodded in acknowledgement, Storm continued, "Then I won't be giving my bite to anyone that isn't willing to accept the other half of my soul as well."

The headmistress's eyes flared, and she crowded into Storm's space, practically touching her nose to Storm's. "You will not mess with this school's perfect bonding rate, Ms. Vareth. Not for *her*, a scholarship student, of all things. You will stop this *thing* between the two of you immediately. At the pregrad mixer, you will both find your own packs and move on from this academy . . . separately."

Storm gripped the front of the arms of the chair and leaned forward, taking back her own space and pressing into the headmistress's, forcing her to back up. "No."

One word. One simple word and I fell head over heels in love with her. Even if I hadn't been already falling hard, this would have done the trick. No matter what they yelled at us, how they threatened us, what they demanded of us, Storm stood her ground, and I was so proud to call her mine. For the first time since we had been so rudely awakened this morning, I felt a tiny smile tug at my lips.

"No? Fine. Have it your way."

The headmistress rose to her full height and flicked a finger toward someone waiting in the shadows along the side of the office. Storm's eyes widened and my nose crinkled with the sharp scent of her fear. Something was terribly wrong.

Suddenly, heavy hands clamped down on my shoulders and someone physically started pulling me from my chair. I shrieked and kicked out, trying to dislodge whoever was touching me. I screamed out Storm's name. She couldn't help me.

Someone was tugging her out of her chair as well, to the opposite side of the room. She thrashed and snarled in their hold, desperate to break free and

get to me. I tried to dig my heels into the thick carpet, to slow my captor down, but it was to no avail. They wrenched me away from my packmate, my Storm, my love. Our cries and pleas fell on deaf ears as they bodily removed us from being with each other.

“Remember, Storm,” I heard the headmistress purr. “What happens next is all *your* fault.”

The office door slammed shut behind me as they pulled me through it and into the hallway. My screams turned to wails as I tangibly felt the distance between Storm and me growing. Tears tracked down my cheeks and splashed onto the shirt I was wearing. My hair was a tangled mess as I bucked and fought to get out of the grip of whoever had me.

Omegas were in the hallway, waiting for their classes to start, and they all stopped walking and stared wide-eyed at me and my disgrace. My heels dragged along the marble flooring and my voice echoed off the tall ceilings.

I heard a door open and then I was unceremoniously tossed inside a small room. It looked like it had been a utility closet at some point; it was so tiny. I scrambled to catch my footing and turned toward the quickly shutting door. The last thing I saw as it clicked shut and the lock snapped was Hilary’s gleeful face as she turned to her friends, gossiping about what had just happened.

My fists beat on the thick wooden door and I tried futilely to open it. My tears poured from my eyes, my heart feeling like it was breaking in half. I spun and my back slid down as I collapsed into a heap on the floor, sobbing. How could they do this to us? Why were they being so thickheaded?

I wasn’t sure how much time passed while I was locked in the little room. I thought I dozed off and on as the heat inside rose to a sweltering level, being there were no air ducts or windows. The only light was a single small bulb in the ceiling. Finally, after what seemed like hours, I heard the lock click.

I pushed myself to my feet and positioned myself to run out as soon as the door opened. Unfortunately, they anticipated this. When it swung wide, I darted out and right into the waiting arms of a guard. He spun me around, banding my arms around my middle. I struggled fruitlessly against him.

“There, there, little omega. Calm down,” he said, his chest rumbling with a purr in an attempt to calm me.

*Fuck.* He was an alpha. Alphas weren’t allowed on school property, not unless it was the mixer. His purr did nothing for me. It merely agitated me

more. I didn't want his purr. I wanted my Storm.

"Feisty little one, aren't ya?" he said, dragging me along against my will once again.

"Let me go!" I snarled.

"Hmm, no can do. You're on the next bus out of here, I'm afraid. It's my job to make sure you get there in one piece. I don't want to, but I will tie you up if I have to. Let's not make this harder than it has to be, huh?"

Something in his words shocked me into stillness. My struggles ceased, and I ran his words over and over in my head, trying to work out what I was reacting to.

"Wait," I whispered. "Next bus? Where are they sending me?"

"Home, omega. You've been expelled."

## CHAPTER 23

# STORM

I thought getting sent home, disgraced and expelled, was the worst of it. I fully intended to find Riley as soon as we left the school grounds and go get my girl. Sadly, I wasn't able to. When that sham of an academy sent her packing, they had put only a few articles of clothing in her bag, leaving the heaps and heaps of things I had purchased for her behind. Including her phone. I had no way of contacting her.

Too late, I realized I had never asked where she was from. What her hometown was called. Nothing. I hadn't bothered to find out more about where she lived prior to coming to the ORA, too focused on our connection.

I hadn't stopped trying to find her, though. Every day, I scoured the internet, hoping for some hint to where she was. There wasn't much to go on. I knew her full name was Riley Druman and she had two brothers. I knew that one of her brothers was a beta and the other an alpha, but even that didn't help me. It was like they didn't have an online footprint at all.

My parents were trying to help as much as they could, too. When I had come through the front door, blazing with my anger, they had jumped to assist me. I had been so furious, I couldn't get the words out for hours about what had happened. Once I did, though, they were just as infuriated.

Papa Tony had grabbed the phone and started dialing. As soon as the ORA picked up, he started roaring down the line. He ripped them up one side and down the other, livid on my behalf. How dare the school kick us out or say that we couldn't be together? How dare they try to dictate who could be together and who couldn't? Who put them in charge of fate?

It didn't matter. They refused to listen to anyone but their own close-minded opinions. They told him they had every right to keep us apart, that



they weren't willing to let our little *crush* get in the way of their perfect ratio of graduating omegas with bonded packs. When my other dads heard what the school was saying, their anger grew.

Within seconds, they had pulled all their ongoing donations to the school and stopped any payments for the year for my tuition. They were going to revoke the scholarship money as well, but I begged them not to. That money was helping others get the education we all deserved, and I couldn't bear it if they pulled it and sent the students packing.

My dads listened and begrudgingly kept sending the funding for that program. When I told them, however, how misapplied the money was, they were up in arms once again. They had never intended for the scholarship students to be treated as poorly as Riley had been.

They couldn't believe the restrictive limits placed on her and what she could get. Also, they hadn't forgotten how the school conveniently hadn't had a room or bed for her upon her arrival, as if they were hoping she would just leave. I knew that if my parents donated for the program next year, they would make some serious changes to how they allowed the money to be spent.

After that disastrous phone call with the school, my parents began helping me in my search for Riley. They hired PI after PI, but no one could find her. The ORA's system was locked down so tight, no one could get into it to find out information.

Now, it was already August, three excruciating months since I had held Riley in my arms. Since I had breathed in her delicious perfume. Everything was dimmer now, without her here with me. I was almost feral in my need to find her. My heart was aching from being apart from her. It was worse than when I'd been home for spring break. At least then I had a silver lining to look forward to. I had an end date for when I could see her again. Now, I had nothing.

No news of her. Nothing to go on. I was barely sleeping, so focused on trying to locate my girl. When I did sleep, I burrowed into my nest here, surrounded by clothing that still had her scent embedded within the fibers. I found it was the only way I could get any rest: if I wrapped myself up in what I had of hers and tried to imagine she was with me.

I hoped that wherever she was, Riley was doing better than I was.

I sat at my computer, my eyes straining after being used for hours to scroll the internet. I wore Riley's hoodie, the one that said *Knotty or Nice* on

it. I buried my face into the neckline of the material, trying to pull more of her into my lungs. My pointer finger scrolled the wheel on the mouse as I read through online white pages, searching for the name Druman.

A knock came at my door and I bade them to enter without turning to look. All three of my dads and my mom came into the room, taking a seat on the bench at the foot of my bed.

“Storm, darling, we want to ask you something,” Papa Greg said.

“Yeah?”

“Can you look at us please, just for a moment? I know how badly you want to find her.”

With great effort, I pulled my gaze from the screen and turned my wheeled chair so I could face my dads and my mom. All four of them had soft, compassionate looks on their faces and it scared me.

“What’s going on? What happened?”

“Whoa, hey, it’s alright. Nothing happened. We are just really concerned with how little you have been sleeping.” They shared a glance, then Papa Tony continued, “When you and Riley were back at school, did anything, um, physical happen between the two of you?”

My face flamed bright red. “Um . . .”

Papa Corey cleared his throat. “We understand this isn’t something you want to talk to your dads about, but we have to know. We have a theory and need to know if it’s right.”

I licked my lips, and my eyes darted around the room. This was so awkward.

“Yes,” I whispered.

“And, uh, did you happen to, um . . . bite her at all?” my mom asked softly.

“No, I didn—”

My face blanched as my denial died. I hadn’t remembered until just now, but during our three-day sexcapade in our nest, I had bitten her. She had cried out, begging me to claim her, to make her mine. Lost to the haze that was Riley, I had clamped down on her wrist with my teeth while I had been thrusting my inflatable knot dildo into her. At that moment, everything had seemed to narrow and the only thing I could see was her.

My eyes met my parents’ one by one, and they all nodded in understanding.

“We thought so. Storm, sweetheart, you started the bonding process with

her. It's why you are so focused on getting her back. Did she return the bite?" Papa Tony asked me.

"No . . . there was no time. We collapsed into sleep after I bit her and then the next day, the school disturbed us and pulled us from our nest."

"Fuck," Papa Corey said.

"What? What does that mean? What's wrong?!" I demanded, rising to my feet in agitation.

"Sweetheart, if Riley didn't complete the bond, she is probably suffering a lot more than you are right now," my mom said.

"What do you mean? What is happening to her?"

My dads exchanged another glance and then Papa Greg took my hands and pulled me into a hug. "Her body knows that it has been claimed. Her omega side is going to want to complete that bond. But with you not being there, well, honestly, sweetheart, it's going to feel like her bond is snapping. Every moment away from you is going to be torture."

Tears sprang to my eyes. "No. No, please no. I mean, this sucks being away from her, but I can deal. She's okay too, right? Tell me she's okay!" I pleaded.

My dads held me close, and my mom stroked my hair. They whispered words of understanding and compassion at me, but nothing pierced the ringing in my ears. My Riley was suffering and I wasn't there to help her. What had I done?

## CHAPTER 24

## RYAN

I couldn't take it any longer. I knew Storm had come home unexpectedly in May. She hadn't returned to school, so something was wrong. Victor and Declan forbade me from going to see her. They said whatever happened, she needed time, and when she was ready to talk to me, she would reach out.

But I knew better. Storm held a grudge like nobody's business. The last time we spoke, she was furious with my pack and me . . . for good reason. We had judged her harshly and without regard for her feelings. After she had taken off to her room in anger, her fathers had given us all a good dressing down. It had been hard to hear, but it had opened our eyes to what was right in front of us.

If we intended to bring Storm into our pack, that meant we had to bring every part of her in. It wouldn't be fair to tell her we wanted only her, especially if she was matched to another. Now, this moment of clarity wasn't instantaneous for any of us by any means. It had taken us all several conversations and a few arguments until we realized what entitled assholes we had been.

Of course, by then, Storm had already returned to school and she was ignoring my texts. Now, she was back and my alphas had said I couldn't go to her. It was killing me slowly. So much so that I had even been told to go home from work early today. My focus wasn't there and after the third glass I had dropped and shattered, my boss came out and told me to leave.

I was driving back to my house, stuck in midday traffic, and all I could think about was Storm. At the next intersection, I knew if I turned left, I would head back to my home. Ignoring the memory of my alphas' command

in my head, I turned right. Storm's parents' house was just down the street.

My car pulled up to the gated entrance, and I waved at the stationed guard there as he buzzed me through. The driveway extended in front of me for several yards and then it wrapped around the semicircle in front of their house. I pulled the car to a stop and jumped out. My phone vibrated in my pocket and I grimaced. Victor must have gotten an alert that my location changed.

"Sorry, alpha," I whispered and flicked the volume button, turning it to silent. "Forgive me."

I marched up to the front door, took a deep breath, and lifted the door knocker. Before it had even left my fingers and connected with the door, it was swinging open. Standing on the other side was Storm's mom, looking as if she were about to burst into tears at any moment.

"Oh, Ryan. Thank the gods you are here. Please come in."

"Mrs. Vareth, what's the matter? Can I help?"

"I do hope so. It's Storm."

"Storm? What happened? Is she okay?"

Storm's mom bit her lip, wringing her hands. "She's not doing well. Her dads and I figured out that she and Riley bonded before the school kicked them out. When Storm realized it, she fell into a mood that no one can get her out of. Please, Ryan, help her. She's always listened to you."

"Bonded? Kicked out?" I had so many questions, but they could wait. "Where is Storm?"

"Where she's been for the last week: her nest. She won't come out."

My face fell. I couldn't see her there. An omega's nest was sacred. No one could enter it without the omega's express permission. Storm wasn't likely to give me that, not if she was still mad at me. But Mrs. Vareth's pleas got to me, not to mention my concern for my friend, and I nodded before starting up the stairs to Storm's room.

At the entrance, I found her father, Greg, leaning with his head against the wood. He looked worn out, like he hadn't slept in days. I tapped him on the shoulder, and he turned bleary eyes on me.

"I hope you can help, Ryan. We didn't mean for this to happen when we told her about the bond. She's taking all the blame onto herself, and it's killing me to see her so upset."

"I'll try, Mr. Vareth."

"Oh, please call us by our first names, Ryan. You are like family."

He patted my shoulder and then shuffled down the hall and downstairs, I presumed to find his omega and the rest of their family. Turning, I lifted my hand and knocked twice on her door. From inside, I heard a snarl, and then something crashed.

“Storm? It’s me. May I come in, firefly?” I received no answer, but I heard something else hit the wall. “If you don’t answer me, I’m taking that as acceptance and I’m coming in. Three, two, one.”

I twisted the knob, surprised when I found it unlocked. I moved to push the door open and met with resistance. Putting my back into it, I shoved hard and heard her dresser scraping along her floorboards. No wonder it wasn’t locked. She had barricaded the doorway. How she managed that was beyond me. Her adrenaline must have been racing while she rearranged.

I pushed with everything I had, until there was just enough room for me to squeeze through and into her bedroom. The sight before me had me gasping aloud. Her room was destroyed, the bed stripped, and the mattress overturned. Clothing was thrown around and things were shattered all over.

It looked like she was the victim of a robbery.

There was no sign of Storm, but I could hear her agitated muttering coming from her nest room. Cautiously, I tiptoed over and rapped on the wardrobe style door. Through the slats on the door, I could see Storm pacing, her hands tugging at her hair. When she spun and I caught a small glimpse of her face, I threw caution to the wind and ripped her door open.

Storm’s eyes flashed with fire as she whirled to face me, the intruder in her space. When she saw it was me, her ire seemed to grow. Her green eyes spit fire in my direction as she stomped over to me.

“What are you doing here?” she snarled. “Get out of my room. I don’t want you and your judgmental pack anywhere near me, Ryan.”

I held my hands up in surrender. “It’s just me, Storm. No one else is here.”

“You’re still not invited in. Get out.”

“I’m sorry, firefly. I was wrong and an idiot. I didn’t stop to think about what you wanted, just what I thought I did. That was terrible of me. Please, firefly, forgive me?”

“Riley is mine, Ryan. Mine. I won’t give her up for anyone. And I won’t be told that what we have is wrong.”

“I know and I am so sorry that I told you anything different. I didn’t understand then because I was in shock. But fate works in mysterious ways,

they say. If you are sure and she is sure, then it's obviously meant to be."

I could see Storm thinking over my words. She had to believe me; I was telling the truth. Seeing her like this, frantic over her separation from her omega friend, I knew there was no way she wasn't just as connected to her as I was to my alphas.

"Do you mean it, Ry?"

"Yeah, I do. Your friendship means the world to me, firefly. I have been a mess the last few months with you being upset with me."

"Are you only sorry because of that? Because you miss talking to me?"

"No. That was only the catalyst to me trying to figure out what I had done and said that was wrong."

Storm nodded once and then turned on her heel and marched across her nest room. I glanced around and winced. Her normally carefully constructed nest was a mess. There was no rhyme or reason to any of it. In fact, the majority of her cushions and blankets had been tossed to the side of the room. The only thing she had was a pile of clothing smack in the middle.

That was where she headed to. She hit her knees and burrowed in under the pile of clothes. I watched with my head tilted as the pile shuffled around and then stilled. Her hand reached out from under the pile and moved the sleeve of a sweatshirt, revealing her eyes. She studied me from her spot and then motioned with her finger for me to come in.

I swallowed thickly and then took a step into the one place in her room she'd never invited me into before. I refused to think too much into it yet. Storm was clearly hurting and she needed her friend. That was all this was.

Right?



## CHAPTER 25

# DECLAN

Our beta was in so much shit. Sitting beside me, driving as fast as he legally could, was Victor. I could feel the waves of anger rolling off him. I almost felt bad for Ryan once we got there. Almost.

We didn't give him many directions to follow. Hell, we barely asked anything of him. The one thing we had asked was that he leave Storm alone. I knew he was getting antsy the longer we made him wait, but we had a plan. We were going to all go over and apologize as a pack together. We felt she deserved that. But no, Ryan had to go there today on his own.

I blew a frustrated breath out, ruffling my bangs. "He had good intentions . . ."

"I don't care. We asked him to wait. He should have waited."

"We didn't tell him why we wanted him to wait. We should have done that."

"Doesn't matter. He should have enough respect for our pack to listen to what we asked. What if Storm rejects him? His heart won't take the heartbreak again. To hear him talk about how he felt the first time, when he didn't designate as an alpha, it almost broke him, Declan."

"He's different now than he was then, though. He has us. Ryan knows he's not alone. And he knows how important Storm is to us and that we intend to tell her as soon as she is in the right frame of mind to accept that information."

Victor huffed. He wasn't happy, and I hoped for Ryan's sake that he was ready for whatever it was Victor had planned. I hadn't wanted to believe him when he told me Ryan ignored his call earlier. That was so unlike him. But then to find out he had left work early and gone to Storm's house had my ire

sizzling under the surface of my skin as well.

Pulling up to the Vareth estate, Victor spoke to the gate guard for a few moments. The guard radioed into the house. They granted access to us and the gate creaked open, and Victor took off down the driveway.

His hands tightened on the wheel as Ryan's little coupe came into view as we neared the front of the house. Our car had barely stopped before he was yanking the key out and leaping from the vehicle. I hurried to catch up and caught him right before the door.

"Settle, brother. The Vareths do not deserve your irritation."

He sighed but closed his eyes and tried to relax his stiff stature. At the front door, I rapped my knuckles loudly and waited for someone to answer. A few seconds later, it was being opened and Storm's father Tony was standing there, a grim look on his face.

"Alpha Victor, Alpha Declan. I'm sorry. We weren't expecting you."

His omega, Amber, appeared next to him and placed a hand on his arm. He turned to look down at her, a soft smile crossing his features. "I've been expecting them ever since Ryan got here. Come on in, gentlemen."

She moved off into the interior of the home, and Tony shrugged, stepping aside so we could enter. Victor and I followed the family into the living room, where they motioned for us to have a seat.

"I've gotta say," Greg said once we sat. "I honestly didn't expect you to come back here. Not after the way you talked to our daughter last time."

"We owe you an apology for that," I said.

"No," Corey said, his eyes narrowed. "You owe *her* an apology."

"You're absolutely right. We do. But we also are sorry to you and your omega, her parents, that we spoke to her like that in her own home. We should have stopped and listened to what she was saying, not made snap judgements based on emotions that were running way too high," Victor told them.

Her fathers fixed us each with a look. Greg ran his tongue over his top teeth before speaking again. "I appreciate that. Now, why are you here?"

"We came to collect our wayward beta. We asked him to stay away from Storm and your home, but he didn't listen. He got it into his head that he needed to come make things right. We planned to do it all together as a pack," I explained.

"I, for one, am glad he came." Storm's mother spoke up.

"Oh? Why is that?" Victor asked.

“Because before he got here, Storm was inconsolable. We were really worried about her. She wouldn’t let anyone into her room, and she barricaded her door. Ryan got inside and the last time I walked past, it sounded like she had invited him into her nest, where she has been sequestering herself for days.”

My heart plummeted. “Sequestering? What happened? Is she alright?” Victor demanded, leaning forward in his seat.

“She’s . . . alright. Her heart is cracking and there is nothing we can do to help her,” Corey said sadly.

“Tell us, please,” I pleaded.

And they did. They told us a tale so horrific, so gut-wrenching, that my heart broke right alongside our omega’s, hiding up in her room. For something so traumatic to happen to her, it must be devastating. And to find out she had started a bond with Riley and hadn’t completed it? My soul cried out for the injustice the two must be experiencing, the absolute pain of the bond being stretched the way it was. I had to hold myself back from racing up the stairs to comfort her.

“And no one can find Riley?” Victor asked.

“We’ve had no luck. It’s been months and Storm spends all day scouring the internet for anything she can find about her. She’s never found anything. Not a single mention,” Amber said.

“What did you say her last name was?” I asked, pulling my phone from my pocket.

“Druman. Riley Druman.”

I feverishly tapped out her name and sent a quick text to my buddy. “I have a friend that is a private investigator. If anyone can find her, it’s him.”

“We would be eternally grateful if you could. We’ve tried so many PIs and none of them even found a bread crumb to lead us to Riley. I hate seeing our baby girl in so much pain,” Tony said.

Victor and I shared a look. This might not be the most appropriate time, but we felt like we needed to be honest. I opened my mouth and started saying the most important thing in my life. “Greg, Tony, Corey, Amber, we need to tell you something.”

“We know. You are scent matches for our daughter.” Amber surprised us by taking the words from my mouth.

“How did you . . .?”

“Know? I knew the second you entered our home in March. It was all

over your expressions. I know that look. It's the same one my mates have when they look at me."

"We want you to know that we will not disrespect your daughter in any way. I know she won't be able to tell we are matches for some time yet, and we won't try to force her hand. We just want you to know our intentions are to court her, if she'll have us."

Her mother looked at her mates and then back at us. "And what about her omega?"

"That is completely up to them as well. I understand that they have already formed a small pack. If Storm will have us, we would be more than happy to accept Riley as well, in whatever capacity she desires," Victor said.

"Alright," Amber said, leaning back in her chair. "Storm's room is upstairs. Ryan will be with her."

"That's it?" I asked.

"Did you want me to deny you the chance to make things right with my daughter, Alpha Declan?"

"No, I just didn't expect it to be so easy to win you over."

Amber chuckled. "Oh, sweet summer child. I am not the one you need to win over. And I guarantee you, Storm will not be easy. Good luck."

Victor and I shared a look. What had we just gotten ourselves into?

## CHAPTER 26

# VICTOR

Declan and I stood outside the door to Storm's room. Neither of us felt comfortable enough to just barge in. This was the omega's sanctuary, her space. The door was slightly ajar, and we could see a dresser shoved out of the way to make room for Ryan to enter. Inside was silent, then came the sweetest sound: a faint giggle. Tension that had stiffened my shoulders without me even realizing it fled, and I heaved a sigh of relief.

I used the back of my hand to knock on the doorframe and called out, "Storm, Ryan? May we come in?"

I craned my ear to listen and heard feverish whispering between the two.

"Who is 'we'?" Storm asked.

"Declan and me, Victor."

More whispering ensued and Declan hid a snicker as Ryan's voice carried to us. "I'm going to be in so much trouble."

"I'm sure it's fine!" Storm whispered back. Raising her voice, she called out for us to come in.

I pushed hard on the door. The dresser protested as I forced it farther into the room. My eyes swept her bedroom, and I felt fear grab hold of my heart. Declan had the same reaction as I did because he rushed to the door to her nest and yanked it open a split second before I got there.

"Are you both alright?" he demanded.

"Are you hurt?"

I moved to step into the room, to check on my mate and our unclaimed omega, but stopped myself when a rumbly growl came from her as a warning. My eyes widened, and I knew I looked stricken at the faux pas I had almost committed.

“I apologize, Storm. I’m not thinking clearly. May I please enter your nest to check on Ryan?”

“Check on me? Whatever for?” Ryan seemed truly perplexed as to why we were so concerned.

“What for? Ryan, have you seen her bedroom? It’s completely ransacked. It looks like a tornado came through! How did you guys not hear the destruction?” Declan asked.

Storm’s face blanched, and she looked downright embarrassed. I nudged Declan and nodded my chin in her direction. From the corner of my eye, I watched as it dawned on him. His jaw went slack and he rubbed his hand over his mouth, trying to hide the grin that was forming.

“Did you do all that, little bit?” he asked her.

She squeaked and shuffled backwards into the pile of clothing she was currently hiding in. Ryan chuckled and reached his hand in to pull her back out. Something slightly dislodged the mountain of material and the smell of green tea and honey wafted over toward us.

It took all of ten seconds to fill my lungs and even less than that to register that I needed to know whose it was. Beside me, Declan appeared to be having just as hard of a time controlling himself.

“Whose clothes are those?” I rumbled out, bracing myself on the doorframe to keep from launching myself into the nest to get more of that delicious smell into my system.

Storm popped out of the top of her pile, a sad expression taking over her angelic face. “They belong to my Riley. It’s the only way I get any rest.”

“Riley,” I growled out, tasting her name.

“Mine,” Declan and I declared at the same time.

Storm’s face transformed in an instant. She went from looking embarrassed and sad to downright ferocious. Popping up from her makeshift nest, she stomped over to us, jabbing her finger into our chests. Fire spit from her eyes as she snarled angrily at us.

“Listen here, buddies. Riley is mine. My scent match. My omega. Mine. If you think you’re going to steal her away from me, you have another think coming. Riley and I are a package deal. Where she goes, I go. So, either you take us both or neither of us.”

I grinned down at the tiny firecracker, standing up for herself and her omega mate. “Then, I guess it’s a good thing you’re ours too, omega.”

“And another thing— Wait, what?” She spluttered to a stop, her righteous



tirade halted in its tracks.

I reached a hand out and tenderly cupped her cheek. My thumb stroked across her soft skin absently. “Storm Vareth, Declan and I knew you were ours from the first moment we stepped into this house. Your scent called to us like no one else’s . . . besides Ryan’s and now this mysterious Riley’s. We didn’t intend to tell you about it until you could reciprocate the feeling. We know that you’ve got a little more time until you can match to us, but I think you needed to know. We have every intention of courting you and that honey-scented girl of yours and hopefully winning your claim. If you’ll have us.”

“But I . . . I mean, well, I don’t . . . Maybe . . .” Storm seemed completely thrown off. Her eyes bounced back and forth from my brother to me, and then over to Ryan. “And you, Ryan? How do you feel about all of this?”

He rose to his feet and nimbly walked to where Storm was. He grasped her hands in his and stared into her eyes. “Storm, I’ve been in love with you for years. I know we used to joke about growing up and becoming pack, but the idea it could be a reality means everything to me. You’re my Storm. My precious, precious firefly. It would honor me to be allowed to date you alongside my pack. And if Riley is anything like you, I’m sure I’ll fall for her easily, if she wants that.”

Storm took a step back from us. Her hand fluttered to her mouth as her gaze ran over all three of us. Declan had an expression of hope and yearning on his face. Ryan looked downright dopey with his love. Me? I wasn’t too sure what I looked like, but it must have been appealing to her because she blushed prettily.

“I . . . I can’t promise you anything. Not yet. I can’t think of anything beyond my need to find Riley.”

“We understand, little bit. She should be our priority. The rest of it can come when it does.”

“Our priority?”

“Yeah. You don’t think that we are going to leave you to figure this out on your own, do you? Let us use our connections and help you. When we find her, we can all go get your girl together,” I told her.

“You . . . You would do that?”

“Of course. There is nothing more important to us than our pack. Well . . . future pack in this case.”

Her eyes softened, and she softly whispered, “Oh. Wow.” Ryan moved to

step out of the nest, drawing her attention back to him. Her gaze narrowed and she gasped. “Wait, you said you loved me!”

Ryan bit his lip. “Yeah, firefly. I do. I have for years.”

“Why didn’t you say anything?”

“Because it wouldn’t have been fair to you. You are an omega and needed to find your pack. I wasn’t holding you back from that.”

“But Ry . . .”

“It all worked out though, Storm. I cannot believe we were lucky enough to be a part of the same pack. This is everything I ever wanted.”

I looked down at my shorter beta and a soft smile touched my lips. He had such a big heart. I was so proud that he had agreed to be mine and Declan’s. I turned back to look at Storm. She had an awestruck look on her face.

“I want that,” she said.

“Want what, little bit?” Declan asked.

“Someone to look at me like you do him.”

“Don’t you know? We already do, Storm.”

## CHAPTER 27

# RILEY

The days were bleeding together. I had no clue how much time had passed, just that we were creeping into the autumn months; I wasn't sure what day it was. It felt like forever since I had seen my omega. Nothing mattered anymore. Not my family. Not my friends. Not me.

I just wanted to close my eyes and wake up from this bad dream. The problem was, being awake was a nightmare. My dreams were where I was happiest. It was probably why I didn't spend more than a few hours awake each day. I missed Storm like an extension of my body. Life didn't seem worth living without her in it.

I pulled my thin blanket over my head, burying my nose in the one item I had to remember Storm by, a tee shirt. When the academy had "packed" for me, they had grabbed only a few things: two of my shirts, a pair of jeans, and this tee. I didn't bring home as much as I took there, which was laughable. I had brought so little and got next to nothing in return.

Leaving that school *escorted* by the alpha was horrible. He spent the entire drive flirting with me and trying to convince me to stay with him instead of coming home. My only reprieve was that he had set me in the back seat, but he engaged the child locks and I couldn't open the doors.

Every mile we traveled away from the school felt like a knife slicing off a piece of my heart. My soul was screaming out for Storm. I needed her like I needed air to breathe. Without her here with me, everything was gray. It was like a fog was descending over me. The closer we got to my home, the more apathetic I felt.

The alpha finally stopped trying to get my attention after the eighth hour of me steadfastly ignoring him. We were about an hour from my house when

he suggested stopping at a motel for the night. I had snarled so viciously at him, he didn't mention it again and continued driving. When we got there, he all but kicked me out of the vehicle and tore off before my parents had even come outside to see what was wrong.

To say it surprised them to see me would be an understatement. The school hadn't even bothered to call them to let them know I was returning, let alone why. I couldn't talk about it. I burst into tears as soon as I saw them and they bundled me up and into my room, and I hadn't left since.

I had never hated how little my family had in the way of money until that very moment. We didn't have a computer. Or cell phones. Nothing connected us to the digital age. I couldn't look Storm up or try to find her to reach out. Every day that went by was like another weight landing on my shoulders, dragging me further into the depths of depression. I'd never felt heartbreak like this before.

I tried a few times to make a replica nest like the one Storm and I had back at the academy, but I failed miserably. Not only did I not have the space, but I also didn't have nearly enough materials to suffice. I had to settle for lying on my bed and burrowing under my covers and holding her shirt to my nose. Her fragrance was fading and practically gone now, but I couldn't let it go. It was all I had of her.

I heard my door creak open. No one knocked anymore. They just came in several times a day, trying to talk to me, to get me to eat something. In the beginning, I tried. I would nibble on the toast, sip the water. But now, it was all I could do to open my eyes. Food tasted like ash. Water didn't quench my thirst. So, what was the point?

"Riles? Are you awake?" my brother Dell asked softly, creeping toward the edge of my bed.

I was facing him and shrugged my shoulders listlessly. That was all I could offer him to let him know I was alive. He came around the side of the bed and crouched down so that he could look me in the eyes.

"Riley, we're so worried about you. Please talk to us. Tell me what happened. Please. We tried calling the academy, but all they said was to ask you. They won't tell us anything. You're scaring me."

I blinked at him. How did I tell him what was wrong? How did I explain to my little brother that it felt like they siphoned the soul from my body and that life wasn't worth living anymore? There was nothing he could do to help. It would just make him sadder. And it wouldn't fix anything.

Grabbing Storm's shirt, I rolled away from him, facing the other direction. His sad puppy eyes were breaking my heart even more, though there wasn't much left to damage. Unfortunately, rolling away did nothing. My other brother, Drew, was waiting for me on the other side of the bed. He had come home in June, but if anyone asked me, I wouldn't be able to tell you how long ago that was. He didn't tell me why, though I hadn't told him why *I* was home either.

"Little sis, please talk to us. We need to help. We *can* help. Please let us."

Tears sprang to my eyes and I squeezed them shut, feeling them drip down onto the pillow beneath me. I didn't know how I had any tears left. Shouldn't I be all cried out by now? How did I have anything left to give? I swiped angrily at my cheeks, streaking wetness along them.

"Dell, can you excuse us for a moment?" Drew murmured.

Dell rumbled a protest, but he listened. At the door, he paused and looked back at me. "Riley, I love you. We all love you. Please, don't fade away from us."

The door closed behind him with a quiet click. I sighed and wriggled farther into my blanket, intending to block out the sun and go back to sleep. At least there, I could imagine Storm and I were still together.

Drew's hand dove into my bedding and snagged mine. He pulled it out, his thumb brushing against it. He stared at it for several moments and then met my depressed gaze.

"Who are you bonded to, Riley?"

His question took me by surprise. Bonded? I wasn't bonded. Storm and I had the intention of becoming pack, yes, but we had been interrupted and torn apart before we could make anything official.

"I'm not bonded to anyone, Drew," I whispered.

"Oh yeah? Then what's this?"

He turned my wrist and held it still so I could look at it. It took several minutes before I was able to see what he was pointing out. I had a bright white mark on my wrist, right over my gland.

"Oh, that's nothing," I said, dismissing it.

"Riles," Drew growled, his eyes flashing. "Did you agree to this, Riley? Did you know what was happening? Or did the alpha take away your choice?"

"What?" I asked.

"That mark. It's a bond mark. Which alpha did that to you?"

Chills ran down my spine and I snatched my hand back from his hold, sitting up for the first time in weeks. Using my other hand, I held my wrist close to my face and tried to make sense of what I was seeing. My mind raced as I replayed my trip home and if that alpha had claimed me against my knowledge while on the trip here. No, I was sure he hadn't. That meant the only other person it could have been was . . .

"Storm," I said, my voice so quiet, it was almost inaudible.

"Some? Some what?" he asked, mishearing me.

"Storm," I said, louder and more clearly. "Storm bonded me to her."

Drew looked furious, but I knew it wasn't at me. He was concerned someone had taken away my choice.

"She's my omega."

Drew pulled back, his face a mask of confusion. "Riles, you have got to explain. Now. No more ignoring us."

I nibbled on my lower lip, absentmindedly stroking the mark on my wrist. Taking a bracing breath, I nodded. "Alright. But please promise you won't judge me."

"I won't judge you. I can't promise my reaction will be what you want because I don't know what you are about to tell me, but I can promise I will never think less of you, no matter what it is."

"That's all I ask."

I closed my eyes, finding it easier to speak when I didn't have to look at him. I inhaled deeply and began my story, telling him everything. About what had happened when I arrived and how Storm had saved me from Hilary. I explained how we had started as friends and how it morphed into something else. I glossed over the physical parts of our relationship, but I explained how we realized we were one another's scent matches. When I told him we had spent three days in our joint nest, he could connect the dots.

"It must have been the last night we were in the nest. When this happened, I mean. I vaguely remember begging her to make me hers, to mark me. She must have bitten me then. I would have returned this if they hadn't ripped us apart the next morning."

"Wait, wait, wait. When you say ripped apart . . . ?"

"I mean physically ripped apart. The academy broke into our room, tore Storm and me apart, and marched us downstairs. The headmistress and the staff tore into us about how two omegas didn't belong together. How we were a disgrace to our designations. They told us we had to agree to not be

together. Storm was so pissed. She yelled right back at them. Told them they had no right to break us apart. She claimed me in front of them and said we were pack. They didn't care. They dragged me away, locked me in a closet, and then an alpha guard got assigned to bring me home."

"Oh my gods," Drew breathed out, stunned. "Where is she now?"

"I'm not sure. She's either still at school or they sent her home, too. I wasn't given any information, and they didn't give me my phone she bought me. I have no way of contacting her."

"I'm so sorry, Riley. I cannot imagine what that must feel like. Though, I can guess. I see the way you are right now. But sweet girl, did you say that you weren't able to give a return bite to Storm?"

"I wasn't able to, no."

"Riley, that's why you're hurting so badly. You have an incomplete bond. It's strained to the limit right now. Your soul is crying out for hers and she isn't here. We need to find her and get you back together or you'll never be able to get out of this funk."

"Are you okay with this?" I asked, nervous and hopeful for his answer.

"I can't say I understand it or that I have ever heard of anything like it, but I support you, and if this is what you want, if this feels right to you, then it's fine with me. I love you, Riley. I just want you to be happy. Do you know her last name?"

"Yeah, it's Vareth."

He blinked at me. "Really?"

"Yeah, why?"

He scoffed. "I know her."

"What?"

"Well, not exactly. But I know *of* her. My p—my *friends* know her family. I'll call them and see what we can find out, alright? It's going to be okay, Riles. You're going to get her back. I promise."

I launched myself out of my bed and into his surprised arms. "Thank you, thank you, thank you!"

He chuckled and stroked my back gently before setting me back from him. "You're welcome, sis. Now, please try to eat something. Let me go make my call."

I nodded eagerly and rose to my feet unsteadily. For the first time in months, I had hope again. My world was still dull, but there was a glimmer of light creeping in on the edges. I was getting my girl back.



## CHAPTER 28

# DECLAN

I was pacing back and forth in my office. The windows were open, letting in the cool September breeze. Seated on the couches and chairs throughout the room were the rest of my pack: Victor, Ryan, and Storm. We hadn't made it official or anything, but as far as I was concerned, Storm was ours, too. And it was such a hugely freeing feeling, having her here, in my space.

Getting to know her over the month of August had been amazing. She was so sweet, kind, and had the most generous of hearts. Her drive and urgency to find Riley was inspiring. I would move the earth to help her if need be.

As it was, my investigator friend was coming over soon to go over what he had found. He told me it wasn't much and he was sorry, but apparently Riley's family had no digital footprint. No credit cards, no social media, no cell phones. Nothing to trace back to them. He had tried everything, even attempting to hack into the ORA's system.

It had taken him weeks to get through the firewalls, but once he did, it was another dead end. The school had erased all traces of Riley from their system. It was like she had never attended the school. He had even attempted to find information on her parents, but without knowing their names, it was like looking for a needle in a haystack.

I heard a knock at the office door and strode over to open it. Standing on the other side, looking grim, was the investigator we had hired, my friend Xavier. He lifted his hand in a wave, but before he could say anything, his phone jangled with a ringtone I had never heard before. His eyes widened, and he scrambled to grab it, quickly answering with a mouthed apology to

me.

“Bug? Is that you?”

I couldn't hear the other end of the conversation, but whatever was being said had Xavier turning to me in shock.

“Are you serious? Really? Bug, are you sure?”

The next part I had no trouble hearing as the caller roared down the line. “Yes, I'm fucking *sure*, Xavier! She's my goddamned sister!”

“I'm sorry, bug. I shouldn't have doubted you.”

A rumble came through the line, and then Xavier pulled the phone from his ear and stared at it in shock. He gaped like a goldfish and then turned to me, still death-gripping his phone.

“That was my . . . That was Drew. He's Riley's brother. I know where she is.”

The room behind me erupted into chaos. Storm flew over from her chair and began peppering him with questions. “Riley? My Riley? You know where she is? Tell me, please! I need to go to her.”

“Calm, little bit,” I purred to her, trying to help her settle. To Xavier, I said, “Do you have her address?”

“I can do you one better; I can take you there. Seems I have a wayward beta to bring home.”

To Storm's immense impatience, we weren't able to set out until the following evening. Xavier wanted to go home and talk to his pack before we left, and they all decided to join us. I couldn't believe that this whole time, my good friends were the answer to finding Riley. When I asked how they didn't know Drew and Riley were related, they told me, much to their displeasure, that apparently the beta had given them a false last name. They didn't know why he had done that, but they seemed adamant about finding out.

There was a story there and I couldn't wait to meet the man that had my friends tied in knots. Seemed like he was going to give them a run for their money. It was going to be an epic showdown.

When we all gathered the next day to start off, Xavier came over and gave us the address of her home. The town wasn't one I had ever heard of, but I loved visiting new locations. Maybe we would luck out and find a place to expand our business to.

Because there were seven of us traveling, and coming back there would be nine if my friends had their way, we took two cars. Xavier and his pack

climbed into their Range Rover, while Victor, Ryan, Storm, and I climbed into our largest vehicle, the Hummer. We wanted there to be plenty of room to bring all of Riley's belongings back with us. Even if she wasn't ready to move in or make a pack right away, we knew Storm could never leave unless Riley was with her.

The town we were heading to was about fifteen hours away. We had enough drivers that we were planning on making it in one go. We would find a hotel to stay in when we got there. Victor started us off, the control freak that he was. He couldn't stand not being the one driving. A small smile snuck up on me when I realized he was going to have to let me take over at some point. I was excited about the opportunity to show him how to drive.

Ryan sat up front next to Victor, and Storm and I took the back seat. Her nerves had her practically vibrating. She couldn't sit still, and if the seatbelt hadn't been around her, I thought she would have been bouncing around the car.

I picked up her hand and stroked my thumb over the back gently. A purr built in my chest and I let it rumble out into the space. She responded immediately. Her stressed look eased, and she relaxed back into the seat. Her sparkling green eyes looked up and met mine. She leaned over and rested her head on my shoulder. Surprised but pleased, I wrapped my arm around her and twirled her hair between my fingers.

"It's going to be alright, little bit. We are going to go find your girl."

"What if she doesn't want me anymore?" she whispered, her voice quaking with nervous fear.

"What? How could she not want you? You're beautiful, sweet, and you're already bonded."

"But none of that matters. I let them take her from me. I didn't fight back hard enough."

"Oh, hurricane, no. You did everything you could," Victor said from the front seat, meeting her eye in the rearview. "She will know that. I'm sure she is just as excited to be with you again as you are with her."

Storm still looked uncertain, but she gave Victor a hopeful smile. "Thank you, alpha."

A purr rolled through him, and I joined in. Between the two of us, we could calm our omega's racing heartbeat, and she settled deeper into my arms. My heart was full to bursting that she trusted me enough to hold her. My eyes met Victor's and he looked awestruck. Ryan turned in his seat and a

wide grin split his face when he saw how we sat.

“I’m so happy right now,” he said.

I echoed his sentiment. “Me too, Ry. Me too.”

## CHAPTER 29

# STORM

I was so antsy. It was almost ten in the morning and we were only about an hour away from Riley's home and the closer we got, the more my nerves spiked. Declan and Victor had tried purring for me again, but it wasn't helping anymore. Each mile we drove, the more I could feel my tentative bond to Riley. I couldn't believe I hadn't noticed it for so long, that I hadn't put the pieces together.

I had switched to the front seat about four hours ago. I needed distance from touching anyone because my skin was itching, and I felt like I wanted to crawl out of it. I was also incredibly sweaty.

Declan, on the other hand, was pouting because he had been certain Victor would have to take a break and let him drive. He was so put out when Victor stopped at a gas station, filled up, and chugged a Red Bull. He climbed back into the driver's seat with a wink for his brother and off we went.

Now, though, I was burning up. I didn't know if it was because we were getting so close to Riley or if maybe I was just getting claustrophobic from being in the Hummer so long. All I knew was I had the AC cranked up all the way, blasting directly into my face, and still I had sweat dripping down my neck and spine.

Everything also smelled so much stronger. My nose filled with the scents of apples, lemon citrus, bourbon, and, for some strange reason, vanilla cupcakes. I couldn't separate the onslaught of smells from each other, but they each gave me warm, fuzzy feelings.

"How much longer do we have?" I asked, my voice teetering on the edge of a whine.

Victor's eyes snapped to the side to look at me. "Fuck."

“What? What’s wrong?” Ryan said from the back, sticking his head between the seats to look at his alpha.

“Declan, take a whiff.”

A rumbling purr came from him so strongly, it shook me to my core. I whimpered in response and twisted in my chair to get closer to the comforting sound.

“Victor . . .”

“I know, brother. I know. I’m going as fast as I can.”

“Well, go faster. Now.”

Victor grunted but pressed his foot down harder on the gas, the SUV jolting forward. I wrapped my arms around my middle and groaned. Why did I feel so wretched? Everything looked hazy, too. I rubbed my eyes, trying to clear the blur. I curled up in my seat, the belt cutting into my neck.

Growling, I unhooked it and threw it against the door. My clothes felt too tight. My skin was crawling. I could hear someone whimpering and I plugged my ears to block it out until I realized it was me. I looked up and saw Ryan staring at me in confused awe.

“What’s wrong with me?” I said, on the verge of tears.

Ryan reached out and stroked my hair away from my face. “I think you’re going into heat, firefly.”

“What? No. I can’t be. I’m not old enough. I have more time!”

“Hurricane,” Victor coaxed quietly. “I don’t think your hormones care that it’s not time. I think being around us and having already formed a bond with Riley jump-started your system. We can recognize the signs of an omega going into heat. And with how thick your perfume is right now, there is no doubt.”

Declan rolled down his window at Victor’s words, sucking in a mouthful of the fresh air. “Maybe we should stop? I saw a sign for a hotel that was supposed to be right up here. Could we stop there and help Storm through her heat before we go all the way to town?”

In a flash, I spun in my seat, facing Declan. My lips pulled back in a snarl and I could feel the anger shooting from my eyes. “No. I won’t go through this without Riley. If I am in heat, she gets to be there. She’s mine and I want her!”

Declan appeared shell-shocked as he held his hands up in surrender. “Ok, little bit, we won’t stop. I’m sorry. Tell me what I can do to help you. Can I get you anything?”



“My hoodie. The one that smells like her. Please. And give me your shirt.”

“My shirt? From my bag, you mean?”

“No. The one you're wearing. Give me it. Now. Take it off.” I knew I was being ridiculous and demanding. I didn't care. “And you, Ryan, Victor, give me yours too.”

“Hurricane, I'm driving. That's not safe,” Victor protested while Ryan hurried to do my bidding.

“I said, give me *your shirt*.”

My hands grappled across the center console and I tugged on the hemline of his button-down, willing to tear it off him if I had to. I didn't know why, but I knew I *had* to have his shirt. It was no longer a want, but a need. Victor smacked my hands away and I growled at him. How dare he? But then his left hand went to the buttons on his shirt and he started undoing them.

“Little bit, here's my shirt. Please put your seatbelt back on.”

Declan handed me the material that had been pressed against his skin and I rumbled my approval, shoving it up to my nose. I sucked in a deep breath, pulling the delicious smell of lemons, bourbon, and rosemary into my lungs. I looked over the back of the chair at him.

“Mine,” I growled out.

“Yes, little bit. That's yours as long as you want it.”

“No. You. Mine.”

Sentences were hard, but he clearly knew what I meant because his face softened and he leaned forward, pressing his cool skin to my forehead. “You mean that, Storm? You want me to be yours?”

I nodded against him.

“I already am. I always was.”

His chest rumbled as he purred for me, and I whimpered in happiness, gripping his shirt to my face. Then Ryan poked his head back up front, pushing Declan out of the way. My lip pulled back to growl at him, but his shirt was right there, being pressed against my nose. My eyes rolled back in my head and I licked my lips. That was where the vanilla cupcakes were coming from. I hadn't known that betas could have such potent smells. I wanted to bury myself in these shirts and never come up for air.

Something was missing. I needed something else. “Where's Riley's hoodie? And your shirt, Victor?”

Riley's hoodie found its way up to me seconds later, and I bunched it

together with my other two shirts. Victor finished one-handed unbuttoning his shirt and was struggling to get out of it. Unwilling to let go of my prizes, I whimpered when I realized I couldn't help him. Ryan, ever the observant one, saw what was going on.

"Here, alpha, allow me."

He reached over and helped Victor pull the shirt off, one arm at a time. Immediately, he handed it to me, and I repeated what I had done with all the others. Apples, cranberries, and a hint of oats joined the others vying for attention in my nose. My eyes narrowed so that I could focus intently on the men surrounding me in the car.

"You're all mine. You belong to me now."

A collective purr of happiness came from both my alphas, and Ryan's face split into the widest grin. Gathering my bounty of procured shirts, I used the lever and pushed my chair all the way back. Declan grunted as it squished his knees, but I ignored him. He would be fine. I slipped off my seat and into the footwell on the floor. I didn't have enough room or items to build a proper nest here, but I was sure going to try.

"Hurricane, please sit back in the seat. That's so dangerous. What if we get into an accident?"

I peered up at my men happily, a dreamy smile on my face. Each of them was watching me with rapt awe. All we needed now was Riley and we would be complete. Stuffing Victor's shirt in the crack between the seat and the center console, so that it dangled down where I was, I looked up and met his eyes.

"Then I guess you'd better drive safely, don't ya think, alpha?"

"You are going to be the death of me, hurricane." He shook his head at me.

"Ah, but what a way to go, huh, brother?" Declan said, hanging his head between the seats to watch me.

"I wouldn't have it any other way."

## CHAPTER 30

# RILEY

*W*hy was it so flippin' hot? It was autumn. It was supposed to be cool. I had every window downstairs open and the light breeze from outside was blowing my hair around. Yet, I was still overheating. I stripped down to a pair of pajama shorts and Storm's tee shirt. It stretched tightly across my much bigger chest, but I couldn't bear to part with it.

Her scent was becoming masked by my own, but if I tried really hard, I could still bring it to the forefront of my memory. When I had put her shirt on, it shocked me it fit at all, even with the tightness. I had lost too much weight from not eating.

That was why I was now sitting in the kitchen with a gigantic bowl of cereal in front of me and Dell standing by, his arms crossed, making me eat. He said I needed to gain some of it back or he was taking me to the doctor's and having IVs put in to feed me. The cereal still had no flavor, but I forced it down to make him happy. Finishing the bowl, I turned it to face him, showing it was empty. He grunted and took it from me.

"Good girl," he praised. "You need to make sure you keep eating. I don't like how much weight you've lost."

"I know, Dell. I'm sorry."

He nodded and started rinsing out my bowl. "Are you going to stay downstairs today?"

I swallowed thickly. My room was where I felt the most comfortable. I liked my little makeshift nest I had made inside my bedding. But ever since Drew had told them the reason for my melancholy, my bond to Storm, my family had been making me come out of my room more and more. They said

that I was wasting away up there.

“It’s too hot up there. I’ll try to stay down here with you as long as I can.”

“Too hot? Riles, are you getting sick?” My brother dried his hands and then came over, placing the back of his hand on my forehead, then my neck. “You’re burning up. Come on, let’s go get you situated on the couch. I can bring your bedding down from upstairs?”

“NO! Sorry, no. You can’t touch it. It’s perfect.”

He chuckled. “Okay, omega. I won’t touch your nest. I like my limbs attached.”

He ruffled my hair and helped me to my feet. I was still getting used to being upright after spending so much time curled into a ball on my mattress. Together, we walked over to the old floral-patterned couch my parents had gotten at a yard sale before I was born. It looked like it, too, the filling coming out of torn places on the cushions.

Dell got me settled. I was lying on my side with a pillow tucked under my neck. He pulled down the small, thin blanket sitting on the back of the couch and covered me with it. He moved to go close the window and I stopped him.

“Please, leave it open. It’s so hot.”

He pursed his lips but nodded. “I’ll let Mom and Dad know that you’re not feeling well so they don’t close them.”

“Thanks,” I croaked.

“I’ll get you some water. I want you to drink it all, got it?”

“I’ll try.”

“That’s all I ask, Riles.”

He went back to the kitchen, and I heard the tap turn on as he filled a glass. My stomach ached and I groaned. Why had I eaten so much? I was crampy now from eating too much, too fast. I rubbed at the pain, hoping to chase it away. Dell came back and put the water on the floor, complete with my favorite silly straw.

“I want you to have at least half that gone by the time I come back, okay? I’m going to go find Mom and Dad and tell them you’re sick.”

“Thank you, Dell.”

“You’re welcome. Feel better. I’m going to get some ibuprofen too. You don’t look so good.”

I huffed a laugh. “Oh gee, thanks.”

He chuckled and patted my head before leaving the room to go find our parents. Left lying on the couch, I felt my mind wander. Things became

clearer for me. The fog that had invaded my brain didn't seem as bad any longer. It was still there, and probably would be until Storm got here, but Drew had told me she was on her way. His friends had told her where I was.

I couldn't wait to see her. I pulled my wrist up to my face and smiled again at the proof there that I was hers. She had claimed me and the visual confirmation of that was thrilling. I rubbed my thumb over the raised mark and brought it to my lips. I pressed my mouth onto the bite, hoping that it would go telepathically to Storm.

"I love you, gorgeous girl. I'll see you soon."

I closed my eyes, thinking maybe I could take a nap. A loud knock came a moment later, and my eyes snapped open. Could it be? Was she here?

I scrambled off the couch, almost spilling my glass of water in my haste to get to the door. I yanked it open and looked up and up. Standing there wasn't the girl of my dreams. Instead, it was my living nightmare.

"Hello, omega. Aren't you going to invite me in?"

"Alpha Brown. What are you doing here?"

"That's no way to talk to an alpha, omega. I came all this way just to see you. Invite me in."

He barked the last command at me and I whimpered. My omega senses were forcing me to listen to him. It was the thing I hated the most about my designation, our inability to ignore an alpha's bark. No one had ever used it on me before and I was so thankful for that, because this feeling of *having* to obey was horrible.

I stepped aside and Alpha Brown moved inside my home. He smirked at me, clearly liking how uncomfortable I was. His gaze roved around the room and his lip curled in distaste.

"Well, this just will not do. You will come home with me."

"Wh-what?"

"If you're going to be my omega, we need a much better location to take care of your heat. This is much too small for my needs. Come along, omega."

He reached out and grabbed my elbow, tugging me. Like a cornered kitten, I lashed out and smacked his hand. "Get off me! I'm not going anywhere with you. Who the hell do you think you are?"

He reared back and rose to his full height. "Who do I think I am? I'm an alpha. *You* are an omega and you will listen to me. You're going into heat, and I fully intend to be the one to help you through it. I will be your alpha by the end of this."

“The hell you will!” I shouted, stepping back from him. “I don’t want you. I’m already bonded to someone. They are coming for me. And I’m not going into heat. I’m not twenty-five yet.”

He barked a laugh. “You certainly are. Your perfume is wafting all over this town. It called to me, omega. I’ve been watching you for years. It’s time I took what is my right. I’ve kept the others away from you, with your teasing looks and tantalizing perfume. I protected you. Me. It’s time you repay the favor. Now, come along.”

He reached out once again and grabbed my wrist, right over Storm’s bite. I hissed in anger, hating his touch on me, hating that he touched that mark. I screamed out for my parents, for Dell, Drew, anyone. Alpha Brown snarled and clamped a huge hand over my mouth, muffling my cries. He picked me up and held me against his chest as he left the house.

I pushed against him, scratching, kicking, doing anything I could to get away. He was too strong. Tears lashed my cheeks as my fear grew. I yanked my head loose and screamed once again.

“HELP! Please, someone hel—”

His hand covered my mouth once more, and his long strides took us from my home. He picked up his pace and started jogging toward our rickety gate. I couldn’t let him get past there. I couldn’t leave. My struggles picked up, and I connected my shin with his testicles, earning a roar of pain.

He dropped me and I crawled backwards away from him as fast as I could, struggling to get to my feet. Alpha Brown’s eyes met mine, filled with fury and hate. He lunged toward me and I put my hands up to cover my face, terrified.

Suddenly, a shape came barreling from the left and Alpha Brown went flying. He sprawled onto the grass with a grunt. Drew landed on top of him, his fist pulled back. A resounding *crunch* filled the air as he pummeled his fists into the alpha’s face.

“Who the *fuck* do you think you are? Touching my sister without her permission? You fucking asshole. I’ll kill you!”

Alpha Brown finally seemed to get his wits about him and roared as he pushed Drew off him. “She is mine! I am claiming her. No one else has yet. I have rights. I’m an alpha!”

He swung his fist and connected with the side of my brother’s face. That didn’t deter Drew one bit. Whipping around, he slammed his fist into the alpha’s gut.

“She is not yours. She will never be yours. It is her choice, and by her screams, I’d say she’s made it pretty fucking clear she doesn’t want you!”

Drew punctuated each statement with a hit from his knuckles. From my position, curled up against the fence line, I could see he was bleeding. I didn’t want him hurt, but I didn’t want Alpha Brown trying to take me again. My brain was a jumbled mess and I couldn’t make heads or tails of anything. I curled my legs up and wrapped my arms around them, rocking back and forth, whimpering. My tears hadn’t stopped and I could barely see through them.

From the corner of my eye, I saw two huge vehicles come screeching to a stop and several large bodies spill from them. In moments, they had Alpha Brown and Drew pulled apart, although Drew was struggling desperately to get loose and go back to hitting Alpha Brown.

“Let me go, Xavier. I’m going to kill him,” he demanded, eyes spitting fire.

“Hush, bug. Let us handle it,” the alpha holding my brother back crooned. “What’s going on here?”

“Thank goodness you are here. This stupid beta attacked me while I was trying to take my omega home. I want him arrested. Someone call the cops,” Alpha Brown said, blood dripping from his jaw.

The alpha holding Drew growled, his eyes narrowing.

“Dad?”

A soft, stunned voice spoke next. I swiped at my tears, trying to find the source. Standing beside a large Hummer was an absolutely breathtakingly handsome young man. He appeared completely taken aback by Alpha Brown’s presence. He took a step forward unconsciously before stopping himself.

“What, uh, what are you doing here, Dad? I thought you were in jail.”

“Pah. Jail is for losers. I got out. Can’t keep me locked up. What are you doing here? Still clinging to the coattails of those better than you, I see?”

“Hey!” another voice barked out. My gaze flitted over to find a jaw-droppingly handsome alpha and his identical twin—both of whom were shirtless—glaring at Alpha Brown. “Do NOT speak to my beta that way. I don’t care who you are.”

Alpha Brown snorted derisively. “You can have him. He’s a waste of space.”

“That’s it,” the other twin said and started forward, raising his arms.



“Hang on, Declan.” His brother stopped him. “Did you say you were trying to take *your* omega home? Where is she?”

“Over there, terrified by all the bloodshed. I’ll just be taking her. Let me know when I need to testify about this one here.” He turned and started toward me.

I whined and pushed to my feet, backing up farther, but there was no place to go. “Leave me alone!”

“Don’t mind her. She is going into heat and confused. That’s all. Once I get her home, she will feel better,” he claimed.

“No, no, no. Leave me alone! I don’t want you!”

The alpha from the car, the one who had stopped his brother, stopped Alpha Brown by clamping a hand down on his shoulder. “I think she’s made it pretty clear she doesn’t want you, buddy. Back off.”

Alpha Brown snarled and whirled to face the other. He had to look up, as the other alpha was so tall. “Listen here, punk. That’s my omega. I’m taking her.”

With a raised brow, the other alpha replied, “Oh yeah? Looks to me like she’s not.”

Alpha Brown spun around but this time, it was to find Storm and me. She was kissing me furiously all over my face, clutching me, pulling me closer, and wrapping herself around me. I fell to my ass on the ground, holding her close.

“Don’t leave me again,” I pleaded.

“Never, ever. You’ll get so sick of me soon.”

“Impossible.”

“Two omegas? That’s impossible. She doesn’t need an omega. She needs an alpha.”

“Wrong. She needs her omega *and* her alphas. We are right here. So. Back. *The fuck*. Off. Our omega.”

Alpha Brown looked around, his jaw hanging open in shock. Seeing he was on the losing side of this argument, he growled angrily. He stomped off toward the gate.

“She’s not worth all this.”

“You’re wrong,” the young beta said. “They are worth everything.”

Alpha Brown snorted and stormed off down the street. I pulled back from Storm, still holding onto her. I looked over to the twin alphas, who were smiling down at us indulgently.

“Mine?” I asked.

“Ours,” she agreed.

I looked at the beta. “Mine?”

“Maybe, up to him.”

I looked at her and grabbed her hand. “Mine?”

“Always.”

## CHAPTER 31

# RYAN

I had always thought Storm was the most beautiful girl I had ever seen. She still was, but Riley was just as gorgeous. Between her blonde hair, her violet eyes, and her curves, I could see why Storm was so infatuated with her. I knew it was more than her appearance—I wasn't that vain—but goddamn, she was sexy. A commotion pulled my attention away, and I looked over to where Xavier was still restraining Riley's brother.

"Let me go, Xavier."

"No chance, bug. Last time I let you go, I didn't see you for three months. We've got a lot to discuss, and we aren't leaving without you."

"Fuck off, Xavier. There's nothing to discuss. Go on home to your omega girlfriend and leave me be."

Riley's brother yanked on the alpha's grip and broke free. He started striding toward the house, but Xavier's packmate, Charlie, quickly overtook him. Coming at him low, he knocked him off his feet and swung Drew over his shoulder. Riley's brother roared in indignation and shoved off Charlie's back, shouting vehemently in anger.

"Let me go, asshole! I'm not going anywhere with you."

"What the hell is going on here?" an older gentleman said, appearing at the front door.

"Drew? Are you alright?" the tiny woman next to him asked, moving toward Riley's brother.

"Mom, Dad, tell these fuckheads I'm not going with them!"

"Oh, well, um . . .," his mom floundered.

"We apologize, Mr. and Mrs. Druman," Xavier said. "We didn't mean to cause a scene. It's just, we have some things to discuss with Drew here. Some

things he left out and some misconceptions he has.”

“There were no misconceptions! Dad, tell him to put me down.”

Mr. Druman rolled his lips in like he was fighting a smile. “Son, they seem pretty adamant about you going with them. Maybe you should listen to what they have to say.”

“You’re not serious?” Drew said, stunned.

“Hush, Drew,” Charlie said with a smack to Drew’s ass. “Listen to your father.”

Drew reared back and stared down at his captor in shock. His dad chuckled. “Yeah. I can see why you’ve been so mopey the last few months. They will definitely keep you on your toes. You take care of my son. If he comes back here as pissed off and angry as he did last time, mark my words, I will make you regret it.”

“Yes, sir.”

“Yes, Mr. Druman.”

“We promise,” the three alphas chorused back to Drew’s father.

He held each of their gazes for a few seconds and then nodded once. “Carry on.”

The alphas thanked him and took off with a still angrily squalling Drew, bundling him into their SUV and seating him between two of them. Then, the Range Rover roared off to wherever their destination was.

“And who are you all?” Mr. Druman addressed Victor, Declan, and me.

Victor turned to him and ducked his head in respect. “Hello, sir. My name is Victor Birmingham. This is my brother Declan and our beta Ryan. We came to bring our omega to her—and our—omega.”

Mr. Druman raised his brows. “As in, both omegas are yours?”

“Yes sir. We are matched to those beautiful girls over there.” He pointed by jerking his chin in Storm and Riley’s direction. “Storm needed to be back with her bonded packmate. Plus, I am sure it hasn’t been easy on Riley these past four months.”

Her mom shook her head, tears brimming on her lashes. “We were so worried. She wouldn’t eat, wouldn’t drink, wouldn’t talk. It was like she’d given up. No one could get through to her.”

I hated to hear that she had been suffering so badly. I had seen how rough it was on Storm when she had told us she had bonded Riley to her, but they weren't able to complete it. My heart shattered. As a beta, that had been one good thing when Declan and Victor had given me my bonding marks,

claiming me as theirs forever: I didn't have a bond bite I could return, so our bond was solid immediately. Needing to be close to my alphas, I moved from the car to stand beside them.

Declan was speaking to Riley's mom, a saddened expression on his face. "I am so sorry that she went through that. I promise I will do everything in my power to keep that from happening ever again. We will protect her mind, body, and soul if we are lucky enough to have her choose us."

Her father glanced at me. "And how do you feel about this? This was your pack first."

"Honestly?" I asked.

"Of course."

"Well, I don't know your daughter yet, sir, but I would like to get to know her. She is obviously very important to Storm, and I have been in love with Storm for years. She was my best friend growing up, always there for me, especially when I really needed it."

Mr. Druman studied me then looked over at his daughter. She and Storm hadn't moved an inch besides trying to get closer together. But unless one crawled inside the other, I wasn't sure how that would work. His lips twitched like he was trying to hide a smile at how happy Riley looked.

"Dad!" someone else called out as they came careening around the corner.

"Dell? Where have you been?"

"Looking for you guys! Riley is sick."

"Oh?"

"Yes, she's inside burning up with a fever and . . . Who the hell are all of you?"

Dell finally seemed to realize there were more people here. He looked around at all of us and then spotted Riley over in the corner. He started toward her.

"Riley! Why are you not on the couch, resting?"

She looked up, her eyes clearly not focusing. "Dell? That you?"

"Riley? What's the matter with you? Who is—holy fuck."

"Shit," Victor swore. "I had hoped we'd have more time. Dell, you might want to step away from them. Riley may recognize you still, but Storm will not."

The wind had shifted, and Storm and Riley's fragrances must have blown toward him. His eyes widened, and he looked around at all of us gathered

there.

“Do you know what’s happening?”

“Yes,” Victor said. “We know what’s happening. Storm started about an hour ago. The closer we got, the worse it was for her. I knew it would only be a matter of time when they got back together until they were both lost.”

“Are you bonded to them?”

“No. We would love it if she chose us because we are matched to them both, but it is completely up to them.”

“Do they know they can’t go through this alone?” Dell asked.

“What’s going on, son?” Mr. Druman asked.

“Um, they are going into heat.”

“What? But I thought that didn’t happen until they were older. Isn’t Storm Riley’s age?” Riley’s mother seemed at a loss as to what to do or make of this news.

“We think that because Storm and Riley are matched and bonded, that it may have jump-started the process. We need to get them inside, however. They do not have a claim or bond from an alpha and with the way their perfume is spreading, it won’t take long until every unbonded alpha in this town comes looking.”

Riley’s mom’s eyes widened in fear. “Franklin, we have to help them.”

“Yes, Sofia, we will. What do we need to do?” he asked Victor and Declan.

“Does Riley have a nest here? Or a space that’s all her own?”

“Her bedroom . . .”

“That will be perfect. I’m honestly surprised they haven’t started trying already, but they will both need to nest soon. Can you bring them up to her room, ma’am?”

“Yes, yes, of course.”

Sofia hurried over and crouched down to look at the girls. She talked to them quietly and seemed to get through because she helped them to their feet and herded them toward the house. At the doorway, Storm stopped and spun and ran to the Hummer. She wrenched open the door and gathered the clothing that, until this moment, I had forgotten was in there. She rushed back to Riley and showed it to her, and they both buried their noses in the pile.

“Smells good. Want,” Riley said.

“Yes,” Storm replied.

Full sentences seemed to be too much for them as they fell deeper into the

heat fog that was taking them over. Sofia got their attention again and led them inside. That left Riley's father, brother, and us standing outside.

"Look, I don't get all this heat stuff, but I have a faint idea of what's about to happen." Riley's father looked extremely uncomfortable. "Please, promise me you will help her. Be kind to her. She's my little girl."

Victor took a few steps forward and held Franklin's gaze with his own. "I promise you we will. No harm will come to her under our care."

"Does she even want you?" Dell asked, stomping over, full of righteous brotherly energy.

Victor smiled at him. "Never let go of how much you care. You're going to make a great alpha someday. I give you our word as well that if she doesn't choose us, we will not touch her. We are under no illusion that this is forever. She can choose us for today, for tomorrow, or forever. Or even not at all. It is your sister's choice, as it always should have been."

Dell stood a little taller with Victor's words. He gave him a nod of thanks. "You said our word. Do you speak for them as well?"

"He can. He is the head alpha of our pack, but you have my word as well," Declan stated.

"And mine," I added.

"Thank you."

Franklin rubbed the back of his neck, looking embarrassed. "I guess we should probably leave. I don't think we should be here during this."

"It might be for the best," Victor agreed. "We booked a room at a nearby hotel. We weren't sure how long we would be staying. It's paid for through the next two weeks. If we don't show up, it's money lost. Would you and your family like to take our place?"

"Oh, we couldn't ask that . . ."

"Nonsense, you didn't ask. I offered. Here is my card that is on file if they ask for proof. I will call them and tell them to expect you in our place. It is a suite, with plenty of room for you, your wife, and Dell. Go, enjoy, and have some room service. Think of it like a spontaneous vacation."

"I mean, if you're sure . . ."

"I've never been more sure."

"Well, alright. Thanks."

Franklin took Victor's black card and turned to go back inside. At the doorframe, he paused. "We'll just pack up some things and be out of your hair."



“Take your time.”

“Thank you.”

After his father left, Dell looked at Declan and Victor. “You didn’t have to do that.”

“We know, but we wanted to. It looks like they both could use some relaxation.”

Dell blew out a breath. “Yeah, it’s been rough here.”

“I thought as much. Declan?”

“Got it. Here’s my card. Same as the one Victor gave your father. Please use it. I didn’t want them to feel bad, but money isn’t a concern. We own a business and it is doing well. Please, treat them.”

“My parents might be too proud to accept the help, but I’m not,” Dell said. “They really need a break. Thank you so much for this.”

“You are very welcome. And like I said before, your sister is safe with us.”

“I trust you. Thank you.”

Dell left to go get the family’s car, and Declan looked at me. Let’s go grab some of the luggage. I think Storm and Riley are going to want all they can get to make a nest.”

“Yes, let’s,” I agreed as we walked to the car. “What, um, what do we need to do to take care of an omega in heat?”

Declan sighed. “I’m not going to lie to you. It’s going to be a lot. Riley and Storm may be marshmallows normally, but in heat, omegas are demanding. Everything has to be just right. And it is extremely important when we get up there that we do not enter the bedroom until they invite us. Each of us individually.”

“Yes, of course.”

Declan stopped unloading bags and turned to me. “I also need you to know that Victor and I do not like you any less. You are our beta, our first love. If it seems like we are not giving you enough attention, tell us.”

“Oh, no, I realize they will need more right now . . .”

“I don’t care! Ryan, you are just as precious and important as they are. If you need anything from us, tell us. We will do everything we can to meet your needs.”

I smiled happily. “Okay, alpha. Thank you.”

Declan grinned then dipped his head to steal a kiss from me. I wrapped my arms around him and threaded my fingers through his hair, holding him

close. I loved their kisses. This one ended far too soon for my liking and I pouted.

“None of that,” Declan said, tapping my lip with his finger. “There’s plenty more where that came from. But for now, let’s get these upstairs to the girls. I have a feeling it’s about to get heated.”

I snorted at his silly joke but grabbed as many bags as I could. Victor and Declan grabbed the rest. We headed inside just as her parents were coming out, a single duffle bag between them.

“I know it’s been said a lot, but please, take care of her and Storm,” Sofia said.

“You have my word,” Victor said to her.

She gave him a half smile, her eyes still filled with worry. Then, with a glance upstairs to where I was assuming Riley’s window was, she and her husband hurried over to the car that Dell had brought to the front. They climbed in and he took off, taking them to the hotel.

Victor looked at me. “Ready?”

“As I’ll ever be . . .”

He gave me a smile and motioned for me to precede him. This was going to be a wild week.

## CHAPTER 32

# VICTOR

Walking into the Druman house, it was like a wave of cinnamon and tea splashed over us. It was so strong that even Ryan took a step back. He looked utterly bewildered that he had caught the scent so strongly. Visibly swallowing, he shuffled his feet anxiously. He needed a task.

“Ryan,” I stated, bringing his deep brown eyes to mine. “Will you please make sure we shut all the windows down here? Can you do that for me?”

“Wha—oh yes, I can do that.”

“Thank you. Declan and I will go secure the doors. Meet us back here at the stairs, alright?”

Ryan agreed, still looking a bit out of it. As he left to go fasten the windows, Declan whispered to me, “Goddamn, brother. I’m getting close to a rut.”

I glanced at his eyes and saw them partially glazed over. It wouldn’t take much for him to fall to his alpha instincts, and he would soon. I knew I was just as close, but for my pack, I would keep my head on straight. I had to.

“I know! It’s driving me wild, too. Go make sure the doors get locked up tight. I’ll grab water bottles.”

He took off to check the doors, and I made my way to the kitchen. I opened the fridge and closed my eyes in sympathy when I saw how little was inside it. Riley’s family was truly struggling, and I was even more glad I had sent them off to the hotel for the week.

I gathered everything I could from the fridge, grabbed a nearly empty gallon of milk, swallowed it down, rinsed it out, and filled it back up with

water from the tap. Opening the cabinets, I grimaced but took everything I found there as well. I would make sure to fill this house up with food before we left, as we were taking it all.

Taking my armful of food and the gallon of water, I went back to the stairs to await Declan and Ryan. They came over moments later. From upstairs, we could hear Storm and Riley as they shuffled around her room, presumably moving things to their liking. I took a moment to center myself and then I took the first step to go up.

As soon as I did, I knew this was going to be rougher than anything I had ever gone through before. Declan and I were no strangers to helping omegas through their heats. We used to belong to a heat help agency where an unbonded omega could go and request an unbonded alpha, or alphas, to help them through their upcoming heat.

Sometimes, it resulted with a happily bonded pack when it was over, and sometimes everyone just went their own way. Declan and I had assisted in several heats before, but we had made sure to never let the omegas bond to us, even if they begged. We knew that once the heat faded and their clarity returned, they wouldn't want us, not like that. Declan and I had stopped doing this service when we met Ryan. He became the center of our world and nothing and nobody else mattered at that point.

Until today.

Their perfume was thick in the air. It coated my tongue and filled my senses. I felt a rumble start deep in my chest and beside me, Declan did the same. We were sinking into a rut for the first time. I tried to fight it off. I hated not being in control. My limbs felt shaky, and my vision crossed.

"Ryan," I panted out, desperate to talk to him before I couldn't any longer. "Ryan, Declan and I are struggling. Riley and Storm combined is driving our senses crazy. We may not communicate properly soon."

"I understand."

I rearranged my bundle of food stuffs and took his chin in my hand. "No, Ryan. I mean Declan and I won't be thinking clearly. If we fall into a rut, I need you to make sure Storm and Riley drink their water. That they take breaks and sleep."

"What about you, alpha?"

I smiled softly at my precious, caring beta. "Declan and I are less important than they are. Their separation was far too long. I have a strong feeling that it will be next to impossible to get them to stay hydrated. They

will have moments of clarity; we all will. Can you please look out for those and help make sure we get drinks? Food? A shower?”

“Yes, I can do that.”

“Thank you, Ryan. I love you; you know that, right?”

Ryan nodded, a dopey grin on his face. “Yes. I love you too, both of you.”

He looked over at Declan and his eyes widened. It would have been comical, except he looked frightened. I knew without looking that Declan’s rut had taken hold. I could smell him thick in the air, like a goddamned bourbon lemonade. Mine was probably just as strong, though I was used to it and didn’t smell it. Ryan’s sweet vanilla cupcake remained the same.

“It’s alright, Ryan. We will never hurt you or the girls. Trust me.”

“I do. It’s just . . . a lot right now.”

“I understand that. Shall we head up?”

He nodded shakily, but that was all I needed. I ducked my head to his and pressed a chaste kiss to his lips, chuckling when he tried to chase my mouth with his when I pulled back. Turning, I started up the stairs, Declan right beside me and Ryan bringing up the rear.

## CHAPTER 33

# STORM

**N**one of this was right. Riley and I were growling at each other, trying to build a nest, but we didn't have enough clothing. The room she had brought me to was small, but it was perfect to build our nest in. The problem was, we just didn't have enough items.

We'd already stripped her bed, using all the covers and sheets. We then shoved it against the far wall and dragged the mattress down to the floor. Thankfully, carpet covered her floor, albeit a rough shag. It wasn't what we had back at the academy, or what I had at home, but it would do as long as we could get more nesting materials.

Riley's drawers hung open on her dresser, all of her outfits tossed around the room. I was currently rifling through them, looking for the ones that had her scent the strongest. My omega was tugging on my shirt, trying to pull it off and making this entire process harder.

"Omega, stop. Mine," I commanded.

"No. Shirt off. Mine. Need it. Nest too small."

We scuffled back and forth a little until a light knock at the door had us both swinging our heads over and growling. Who was disturbing us? Standing there were the three men whose shirts I had stolen. That was okay. They smelled nice.

"Omegas? We have some things for you. What do you need?"

"Stuff. Nest," I demanded, making grabby hands.

One alpha dropped a large bag on the ground in front of him and pushed it forward with his foot. It sat right on the edge of the room and hallway. Then, he took the other alpha's shoulder and the cupcake beta and pulled them back from the doorway.



Suspiciously, I crept forward, Riley clinging to my hemline. The bag was lying unzipped and on top, I could see what looked like blankets folded neatly. I sniffed as I got closer and my eyes lit up. It smelled like the clothing we were already using. Perfect. Riley and I plunged our hands into the bag and started ripping the soft items out. She grabbed one blanket in particular and dragged it over to the far corner, near the mattress, and spread it out.

I wanted to see what she was doing, but there were far too many other items here to peruse through. Thrilled, I grabbed everything I could and took my prizes back to the mattress. Riley saw what was in my arms and grabbed for it. I hissed unhappily. She could get her own. These were mine. She whimpered and pouted at me.

“Omega, there are more.”

She perked up and crawled back toward the door. The alphas had dropped a few more bags, and she took the handles and tugged them into the room. Unceremoniously, she upended the bags and dumped everything out. The next second, she and I were both practically feral. The men’s scents filled the room, along with an influx of hers and mine. They had brought me all the clothing I had nested with at home that smelled like Riley, along with several other items of their clothes and mine.

Riley and I took everything we could and started fluffing the corners of the area we decided was our nest space. We erected a small wall of clothing, blankets, and her pillows. It still wasn’t enough.

“Pillows. Cushions. Soft,” I got out.

“I’ll get some from the couch?” the beta offered.

“Yes, go ahead.” I heard one alpha grant permission.

There was the sound of thunder as he raced down the stairs, and then several cushions and pillows flew into the room. Thankfully, they all smelled strongly of Riley’s perfume and we could accept them. Soon enough, the nesting corner had spread out a bit as we added the cushions to where the mattress was, giving us a much softer floor.

A few more moments and several rearranging of walls and we both sat back on our heels to look at what we had created. Perfection. Riley whined, and I turned to her. She was far too overdressed for what I had in mind. Now, instead of her tugging at my shirt, I was tugging at hers.

She acquiesced much quicker than I had and handed me her top, then she hooked her fingers in her waistband and wriggled out of her shorts. I tossed them carelessly into the pile. I crawled forward, pressing her back into the

mattress, caging her in under me. My omega was so fucking gorgeous. Her perfume spread up and around me and I ducked my face into her neck, covering her in mine.

“Clothes. Off,” she demanded.

I grinned and followed her orders, tossing my own into the growing pile around us. Reaching up, she pulled me down flush against her, her lips covering mine. I groaned into her mouth and her tongue darted in, tasting and teasing mine. My hand wandered down her side until I reached for her full tits; I kneaded them, alternating sides, and rolled her erect nipples between my fingers.

“Storm, please,” she begged.

“You’re so pretty when you beg, omega. Beg me again.”

Underneath me, she squirmed, her beautiful body rubbing against mine. We had slick pouring out of both of us by this point, the bedding beneath us drenched already. Her hips bucked up and met mine, our cunts brushing.

“Ohhh, yes, omega. Do that again.”

Riley listened, and soon she was grinding up while I pressed down, our whines and pants echoing around the room. She tossed her head back and a cry of ecstasy left her pretty lips. Slick gushed around me. In seconds, my body followed hers into bliss.

“More, don’t stop,” she pleaded.

A throat cleared near the door. “Omegas, may we enter your nest?”

The alphas stood at the doorway, pressed against either side as if the walls were the only thing holding them back. Behind them, the beta man was wringing his hands and looked really nervous. I moved so I was sitting up, straddling Riley, and continued rocking my hips against her. Her hands held onto my hips, nails digging in. My eyes rolled in my head. Fuck, this felt so good.

“Knot, need knots,” I panted to her.

“Mm-hmm, later. Need you more. And cupcake. I want cupcake.” Her head turned to look at the door. “Him. Gimme cupcake.”

The beta looked stunned but came closer to the door. “Me, Riley? You want me?”

“Yes, cupcake. Smells good. Come.”

He looked at me, and I nodded eagerly. Something was telling me this man was mine, too. He could come in. The beta stepped into the room and Riley and I each held a hand out to him. Slowly, oh so slowly, he approached

us. At the very edge of the nest, he stopped.

“May I enter your nest, omegas?”

“You are mine,” I told him.

“Mine too. Please,” Riley said.

“It would be an honor to belong to you both,” he responded and then carefully climbed into the nest.

He sat beside us a bit awkwardly. I still sat atop Riley, but I dug my hand into his hair and pulled him to me. His mouth met mine, and I whimpered as our teeth clacked from our eagerness. From my vantage point, I saw Riley reach up and grab his hip bone, stroking her hands along the bare skin of his chest. He shivered under her exploratory touch. Our kiss broke, and he looked down at her in awe.

“My beta,” she said.

“Yes, butterfly, I’m yours and Storm’s.”

“Good. That’s good. Storm?”

“Yes, love?” I asked.

“I think we are in heat.”

“I think so too.”

“I’m scared.”

“We’ll be alright. We have others here to help us,” I told her.

“A pack.”

“Yes, *our* pack.”

## CHAPTER 34

# DECLAN

I literally lodged my hands into the wall behind me so that I could hold myself back from launching into the nest. Riley and Storm had allowed Ryan access and had yet to say Victor and I could come in. Watching the three of them was doing a number on me. I wanted to be in there. With them.

My only consolation was that Victor seemed to struggle as much as I was. His arms were shaking at his sides, and he kept rocking back and forth on the balls of his feet. His eyes were wide, and his mouth was set in a grim line.

I looked away from my brother and back into the nest. That was a mistake. The trio in there had switched positions. Both girls were up on their knees, and they were trading off kissing Ryan and then each other. Ryan looked absolutely stunned to have the attention of both girls on him.

Storm's hand was in the shadows near their knees, but from the moans and rocking of Riley's hips, I'd say it was pretty clear where it was. Wet sounds came from the room and filtered over to my ears, teasing me with what I hadn't been offered yet. The perfume from both of the girls mixed into a perfectly spiced tea.

The omegas' hair danced across their backs, and I longed to run my fingers through Riley's curls and Storm's waves. A sheen of sweat covered all three of their gorgeous bodies. Ryan's pants and underwear had disappeared at some point, and his thick, erect cock stood at attention.

Riley turned her face to Storm's and their mouths clashed in a wet, open-mouthed kiss, their tongues visible as they chased each other back and forth. They broke apart and turned to look at Victor and me over their shoulders. As one, they raised their hands and beckoned to us.

I lunged forward and stopped right at the edge of the doorway. "May we

enter, omegas?”

“Come in, alphas. Please.”

Storm didn't need to say it twice. I rushed into the room, Victor on my heels. We approached the makeshift nest the girls had built and paused right before climbing over the walls they had erected.

“Do you want us to come in with our clothes on, omegas?”

They shared a look and then Riley answered, “Take off, give.”

Victor and I quickly removed our pants and handed them to Riley, who had her hands out, waiting. Storm took one from her and they both moved to the far side of the nest, grabbing Ryan's and their own clothes on the way. There, they weaved it all in and out of the nest walls that were already built.

When they finished, they sat back with a smile. Their eyes glazed over, the heat clearly having finally set in fully for them. They made their way back to Ryan and sat themselves next to him, placing a hand on each of his thighs. He jumped slightly under the touch but still appeared completely awestruck.

Storm blinked several times and shook her head. Victor and I watched as she forced her way out of the heat fog and lucidity returned to her features. The smell changed slightly as a fresh burst of her perfume filled the air as she stared at Victor and me. Another burst of Riley's quickly matched it. A quick peek at her revealed her gaze had cleared slightly as well.

“Alphas,” Riley said, fighting back a whine. “Your omegas invite you into our nest. Please join us.”

Victor stepped over the wall first and sank immediately into a seated position. He reached out and took each girls' hand in his own. “You both built a fantastic nest for us. Thank you, omegas.”

A blush stole over both their cheeks; his praise pleased them. Not wanting to be left out, I carefully climbed over the wall, careful not to disturb anything, sitting myself next to Victor.

“This really is a fabulous nest, omegas. Great job.” Both girls grinned and ducked their heads in pleasure. I was closer to Riley, and I reached out and tipped her chin up. “May I have a kiss, omega?”

She didn't answer with words. Instead, she launched herself forward, forcing me to catch her and keep us steady. My lips found her plump ones, and I nipped at her lower lip, earning a moan. Using that to my advantage, I slipped my tongue inside, stroking hers with mine. Her legs straddled my hips, her slick gushing over my lap. My cock strained, desperate to get inside

the ravishing girl I was holding.

“Alphas, before we cannot think straight again,” Storm said, “please do not bond with us. We are not ready, scent match or not.”

“We understand, omega. We will not bite you, nor will we allow you to bite us. You have our word.”

With that promise, their lucid moment disappeared. Their eyes returned to a cloudy state, and it was impossible to see what they focused on. The only sounds that came from them were whines and whimpers; they were no longer speaking in sentences. Ryan looked at us both.

“Alphas, are you alright?”

“For now,” Victor grunted.

“It won’t take long, though. Not with the scents in this room and seeing the three of you together right before we came in. A rut is pushing right on the edge and I’m going to free-fall soon.”

“Okay, I love you both,” he said.

“We love you more,” we chorused back to him.

“What do I do?” he asked.

“Whatever they ask. They know what they want.”

He nodded and his eyes bounced back and forth between the girls, watching them. Riley was still straddling me. My hand was holding onto her hip, fingertips digging into her skin. I was sure I was leaving a bruise, but I couldn’t find it in me to care. In fact, I liked the idea of leaving a mark on her, knowing that I wasn’t giving her my bite this heat.

“Omega,” I said softly, nipping at her ear. “Do you want my knot?”

She whimpered and her hands pawed at my chest. “Knot. Yes. Knot me, alpha.”

“Present. Show your alpha what a good omega you can be.”

She scrambled off my lap and spun herself so she was face down and ass up. I stroked my hand along her spine and grabbed a handful of her plump ass. I massaged the globe and smacked it lightly once. Her head lifted from the floor, and she looked back at me, lust clouding her face.

“Knot, now!”

I ran my length through her lower lips, coating it in her slick. It was running out of her like a waterfall. We were going to need to invest in some waterproof sheets. That was my last coherent thought as I slammed myself into her waiting cunt and my rut took over.

## CHAPTER 35



# VICTOR

Ryan couldn't take his eyes off Declan and Riley. I didn't blame him one bit. They were gorgeous together. She took everything he dished out and gave it right back. Her cute little whimpers filled the room, vying for space with Storm's. Thinking of the minx lying in front of me, I grinned ferally and brought my attention back to her.

She lay spread out on the nest floor like my own personal buffet. Her hands kneaded and played with her own breasts. Her fingers twisted her nipples and she tugged on them. I knocked her hands away and replaced them with my own, following exactly what she had done. Her back arched and her fingers dug into the cloth under her.

Her hips writhed on the ground, seeking relief, but I wasn't inclined to give it to her yet. I knew as soon as I sunk into that tight, wet center she was teasing me with, I'd be a goner, like Declan. I wanted to enjoy this for just a few moments more.

"Ryan, my love, come here."

He crawled toward me expectantly. I grabbed his jaw and pulled him to me for a heated kiss. He groaned into my mouth, and I bit at his lip. My hand stroked over his bond mark from me on his neck. A shiver ran through him.

"Get me ready for our omega, beta mine."

Greedily, he dropped and took my length into his mouth without further coaxing. I groaned in pleasure and thrust up, testing his gag reflex. His hands came to my thighs, clasp onto my legs, holding but not pushing me.

Ryan knew what I liked. I loved to push him to his limits and see how far he would let me go. He looked up through his lashes at me, drool gathering at the corners of his mouth. I gripped his hair and held him still as I fucked his

face.

“Fuck yes, beta. Take what I give you,” I growled out through my teeth.

He whimpered, sounding suspiciously like the omega that was watching us with rapt eyes. She licked her lips and never stopped watching my length slide in and out of Ryan’s hot mouth. Tentatively, she reached out and her slim fingers stroked across the part of me that he couldn’t swallow. I shuddered under her explorative touch.

“Omega, yes. Stroke me. Help him take more.”

Storm gripped me harder, rubbing her hand up and down my shaft in time with my thrusts. Ryan’s spit spread down my length and she used that to ease her movements. Her other hand disappeared between her legs, and I could just see her feverishly rubbing at her swollen clit. Slick covered her hand and spread out on the material beneath her. I wanted to bury my face in it and lap it all up.

Taking my eyes from the tantalizing scene in front of me, I peeked over at Declan and Riley. He now had her on her back, legs spread wide while he pounded into her pussy. Each time he pressed forward, his partially formed but still soft knot popped in and out of her entrance and she screamed in ecstasy. Her head was thrashing back and forth, and I watched as she orgasmed over and over. I could just imagine what it felt like for Declan, her walls fluttering and squeezing him each time.

I wanted to feel that. I pressed deeper into my beta’s throat one last time, grunting from the feeling of him squeezing my tip. With a roar, I pulled back, holding myself at the base to stave off my orgasm.

“Omega, hands and knees.”

She flipped herself over and tossed a saucy look at me over her shoulder.

“Ryan, in front of her. Feed her your cock. Omega, make him feel good. You don’t cum until he does, understand me?” She whimpered and her face fell in her displeasure. “If you fail, I’ll just have to punish you.”

I punctuated my threat with a sharp smack to her ass. It bounced under my slap and turned a bright pink immediately. Fuck, that was a pretty sight. Her groan of ecstasy told me that, like her omega mate, she was fine with a little spanking.

I nodded at Ryan, and he tilted Storm’s face up. Her mouth fell open, her tongue falling out. I could just imagine the look she was giving him as he fed her his tip, barely putting even a third of his length in. Storm, ever the demanding one, snarled and grabbed his hip, supporting herself with one arm.

She jerked him forward, swallowing him down in one go.

“Holy *fuck!*” Ryan cried out, clearly enjoying the feeling.

I chuckled and ran my hand down to Storm’s dripping center, plunging three fingers into her. I met no resistance. I pistoned in and out of her entrance and she ground back onto my hand. I added a fourth finger and still she stretched to meet my demand. My eyes flashed as I imagined everything I could do to her with this knowledge.

But not today.

I pulled my drenched hand from her and brought it to my lips. My eyes rolled back in my head as I swirled my tongue around each digit, lapping up all of her unique flavor. Swallowing, I took a little bit of my omega into me, then I grabbed her hips and slammed forward, burying myself up to my knot in one go.

## CHAPTER 36

## RYAN

Victor's sudden movement jolted Storm's body forward, my cock sliding down her throat even farther. I threw my head back and moaned to the ceiling. As often as I had pictured this moment, nothing could have prepared me for the feeling of my first love's wet, warm mouth swallowing me down. Victor growled low in his throat, and Storm whined in response.

Storm clawed at the mattress, crying out in bliss around my cock. The sound was garbled, but her gorgeous green eyes looked up at me, her face a mask of pure ecstasy, and I was lost. I shouted out as jet after jet left me and shot straight down her throat. She moaned in appreciation and licked my cock all over, catching any stray drops. The entire time, Victor did not stop slamming into her, bottoming out each time. I fell backwards away from her, landing on my ass in a heap.

"Knot me, alpha!" she wailed out as soon as she sucked in a lungful of air.

Her hair was a tangled mess around her face. Drool, cum, and tears streaked her cheeks from choking on my dick. Her eyes were rolling in her head, giving her a positively feral appearance.

She had never looked more gorgeous.

With great effort, I dragged my gaze away from her and looked over to where Declan and Riley were. Declan had rolled them so he was underneath Riley, and she sprawled across his chest. They were taking heaving breaths as they waited for Declan's knot to go down and release Riley from him. My cock twitched at the sight, clearly not having had enough yet. The air was

thick with the smell of sex and cum.

“Omega,” Storm called out. “Come to me, please!”

“She can’t, firefly. She’s locked on Declan’s knot.” I tried to placate her while pushing her hair back from her face.

“No. My omega. I need her.”

I could tell there would be no dissuading her from this, so I crawled over to Declan and Riley. “Alpha, I need your omega.”

“No. Mine,” he snapped, wrapping his arms around her.

“Yes, alpha. Yours. But she’s also Storm’s. And Victor’s. And mine. We need her too, please?”

“Can’t. Knotted.” He huffed.

“Can you slide over this way just a little? Please, alpha. Bring your omega to her omega.”

“Mmm,” he murmured.

It took a few more moments, but then he shuffled his weight sideways, still clinging tightly to Riley. It took some work, but we got them so that they were right next to Storm and Victor. Victor was dripping sweat, and his thrusts were slowing down.

“Don’t want to stop. Feels too good.” He panted, gripping Storm’s hips and grinding in farther.

“Omega, kiss me,” Storm begged, her eyes wild, her neck straining.

Riley lifted her head and twisted just enough to reach Storm’s puckered lips. Their kiss quickly turned heated, and Declan groaned from his position under Riley, as she must have moved against his knot. His head knocked back onto the pillows beneath him.

I leaned over him, brushing his lips with my own. Declan inhaled as I pulled back and then, lightning fast, his hands whipped up and grabbed onto me, holding me a breath away from his face. His eyes cleared, just a little, and he brushed a thumb lightly over my lower lip.

“I love you, Ryan,” he whispered. “You are the best beta I could ever ask for.”

A blush tinged my cheeks. “You aren’t so bad yourself, alpha.”

A low purr built in his chest at my words, and he tugged me down into another kiss. His tongue pushed past my lips, taking over. He growled into my mouth, claiming me, making me his. Again.

From the corner of my eye, I saw Riley shift her weight and move off him, his knot finally releasing her. Declan took that opportunity to curl me

into his side, peppering kisses along my jawline. He reached my neck and he nipped at my skin, making me jerk in his hold, and a moan left me. His mouth reached his bond mark, and he bit down hard.

Light shot behind my eyes, blazing, as my body shuddered, my mark still sensitive even after all this time. I felt cum shoot from my dick, coating Declan's stomach. I hadn't even thought I was ready or able to go again, but his bite proved that wrong. Declan didn't release my neck for a few minutes and simply sucked my skin into his mouth, marking me in yet another way.

When he pulled back, he held my gaze as his hand slipped between our bodies, scooping up some of my spent cum from his stomach. Watching me, he brought it to his mouth and sucked it from his fingers, smacking his lips.

"You taste delicious, my beta," he praised.

I whimpered, instantly hard again. I squirmed in his hold, and he released me. He looked up and around the room. Riley sprawled on the floor, Storm using her breasts as a pillow. Victor hunched over Storm, finally having given in to his body's demands and knotting her. The fragrances in the room were all blending into the perfect pack cocktail. Declan stroked a hand down my back and then closed his eyes, drifting into a nap. I snuggled into his chest and closed my eyes to do the same. I knew we were far from being done.



I WOKE up to the sweet scent of honey and tea perfuming the air. I blinked my eyes open and looked down my chest at the exquisite sight of Riley straddling my hips and riding my dick. Her sharp, little nails were dug into my shoulders so she could use them for leverage as she lifted and dropped herself down my length. Beside her, Storm was sitting up on her knees, her hand rubbing Riley's clit furiously.

"Does that feel good, omega? Are you enjoying our beta's cock deep inside your wet cunt? Doesn't he feel just perfect, filling you up?"

Riley whimpered, her eyes clear for the first time since her heat hit fully. She rocked her hips harder against me, seeking an orgasm. "He feels so good. Hitting all the right spots."

Storm grinned wickedly, licking her lips, and then snagged a kiss from Riley. She turned to look at me and tilted her head to study my expression.

“Is this okay, Ryan? We should have asked before, but Riley woke up needy. And I think we tuckered out the alphas.”

She snickered and jerked her chin to my other side. I turned my neck and bit back a smile. Victor and Declan were snoring, curled up on the side of the nest. They both looked completely exhausted.

“It’s fine. This was a great way to wake up actually.”

“I thought you might think that.” Storm pulled her slick-covered hand away from Riley’s center and held it to my lips. “Taste your omega, beta. See how much she craves you?”

My tongue darted out and swiped up Storm’s finger. Riley’s tangy, sweet flavor burst across my tastebuds and I groaned in pleasure. Fuck, she was delicious. My eyelids fluttered shut as I continued to lap at Storm’s hand, making sure not to miss a drop.

She chuckled. “Want to see what your other omega tastes like?”

“Fuck yes,” I muttered around the fingers still in my mouth.

I assumed she was going to swipe her hand through her pussy and let me lick it from her fingers like I did for Riley. I assumed wrong. As soon as I said yes, she rose onto her knees and swung a leg over my head. Her sopping wet cunt was right over my face.

“Oh, fuck yesss,” I hissed, knowing immediately what she planned to do.

“Take a deep breath, beta. I’m about to suffocate you.”

A guttural groan left my throat as she descended onto her folded legs and positioned her entrance right over my waiting, open mouth.



## CHAPTER 37

# STORM

I didn't know how long this period of lucidity was going to last, but I was going to milk it for all it was worth. Straddling Ryan's face, I ground down onto his stubble, cursing as it rubbed against my hypersensitive clit. I repeated the movement over and over. His tongue plunged into my opening, thrusting in and out in imitation of what his cock was doing to Riley. His lips sucked, nibbled, and ate me out like he was a man on a mission.

Riley continued to bounce on his lap, grinding her hips down onto his pelvis, seeking that perfect amount of pressure that was sure to send her soaring. I reached out with my hand and tipped her face up to meet mine. Her lucidity was already disappearing, a cloudy look reappearing in her eyes.

"Hey, baby, stay with me, just for a few more moments," I begged her.

She shook her head to clear it and her eyes found mine. I watched her struggle to focus her gaze, but finally she could. "Storm, everything is too much. It's so good. I can't—it's too—ahhhhhhhh!"

An orgasm ripped through her, and I watched in awe as her face transformed into one of absolute bliss. Her hips moved at a blinding speed as she tried to draw it out. Slick gushed from her, covering Ryan's stomach and running down his sides to the drenched material under us all. I grabbed her hand and brought her wrist to my mouth, biting into my mark from before, desperate to claim her once again, this time with us both aware of what was happening.

I knew that what we had experienced at school before we got expelled had to have been a heat spike. We had been too close, too perfect for one another, and our bodies had decided we were ready. Age be damned. My

omega instincts had taken over, and I had bonded with her then.

Lightning zinged through my system, racing from where my teeth clamped to her skin, straight to my pussy. I released Riley a second before I screamed out in ecstasy, an orgasm tearing through me. And then another one hit me just as fast. My hips pressed down into Ryan's face and I heard him grunt. I went to lift off, but he grabbed my waist and pulled me right back down, his tongue lapping through my slit.

I looked over at Riley in awe. She embedded her teeth in my wrist and growled as she completed our bond fully. Lucidity snapped back into focus for her and she released me, lapping at the pinpricks of blood that came to the surface.

"You're mine now, omega," she declared. "No take backs."

I leaned forward swiftly and claimed her blood-smearred lips with mine. Our teeth clacked with the force of our kiss and our tongues clashed as we tried to inhale each other. We tumbled off Ryan into a heap on the floor, hands touching each other everywhere we could, mouths kissing, biting, and sucking. I rolled so that she was astride me and pulled her pelvis down to meet mine.

"Ride me, my omega," I commanded.

Our clits were both so swollen and sensitive by this point, all it took was a few rocks of her hips until we were both orgasming again, our perfume flooding the air. Riley collapsed on my chest and I snuggled her up into me. I pressed a kiss to her forehead.

"I love you, Riles," I managed right before the fog descended over my vision again.



THE NEXT TIME I was lucid, I came to while in the shower. Water was pouring down over my skin, and I lashed out at whoever was holding me under the spray.

"No! Stop, don't wash it off!"

"Hush, omega. It's alright. Let me clean you up and we can go right back into the nest and cover you with our smell again. Shh," Declan crooned in my ear.

I struggled against him for a few more seconds before realizing it was

futile. All my delicious smelling partners were being rinsed down the drain. A whine built in my throat and I released it, letting him know just how unhappy I was. He returned a purr, trying to calm me, but I was too irritated.

“Little bit, you had cum in your hair. You needed to get clean.”

“I wanted it there. It was mine.” I pouted.

His chest shook against my back as he tried to hide his laughter from me. “No, little bit. It was mine . . . I think. Or it could have been Ryan’s? It doesn’t matter. It was old and making your gorgeous locks mat. Your and Riley’s heats are nowhere near finished, though. We have plenty of time to cover you all over again. I promise.”

I wasn’t happy with that answer, but I had to accept it. I slumped against his chest and folded my arms. My lip poked out in a pout, and he loosened his hold on me so he could tap it with his finger.

“Put that away, Storm. It doesn’t work on me.”

“Maybe not. But it makes me feel better.”

He snorted. His hands rubbed my arms, and then he gently turned my head to face him. “Tell you what, little bit. How about you let me clean you up, and then we’ll turn off the water and I’ll knot you against the wall in here? Hmm? I’ll take you back to your nest, full of me? What do you say?”

It wasn’t perfect, but it would do. I nodded in acceptance.

“That’s my good omega. Now stand up so I can wash your hair.”

I rose to my feet, careful not to slip on the tub floor. Declan got up as well, reaching over my head to grab the shampoo. He poured a large amount into his palms and then dug his hands into my hair. His fingers massaged my scalp, and I moaned in pleasure. He shifted behind me, his cock brushing against my ass, and I wiggled backwards, teasing him.

“Now, now, omega. Don’t test my resolve. I’m hanging on by a thread here. Let me finish what I started.”

Because I wanted the soap out of my hair, I listened. Otherwise, a statement like that would have meant “game on.” Declan repositioned the showerhead and pulled me back under the spray. Suds slid down my body and disappeared in a swirl down the drain. Even though I knew all my delicious scents were long gone by now, a pang of sadness still went through me watching it.

Declan seemed to sense that—or maybe my perfume shifted—but either way, he wrapped his arms around me and pulled me into a hug, resting his chin on top of my now clean head. I snuggled into his chest, tickling my

cheek with the light dusting of hair there. I stroked over his nipple, rubbing my fingertips over it. He sucked in a breath at my play and tilted my head up.

“I’m going to kiss you now,” he said.

I nodded, though I thought he knew he had my permission. His head dipped to mine, his tongue probing at the seam. I opened and allowed him in. I felt the water stop as he grabbed the handle and turned it off. He gathered me into his arms, lifting me under my ass. My legs automatically circled his waist, and I locked my ankles together. He stepped out of the tub, water dripping everywhere, and moved us to the wall. Declan pressed my back against it, the tip of his cock brushing tantalizingly against my pussy.

“You were such a good omega, letting your alpha care for you. Now, it’s time for you to get your reward, little bit. Hold on, this is going to be fast.”

I squealed and looped my arms around his neck as he thrust up, filling me full. My pussy walls stretched around his girth, and I screamed out in pleasure. My slick, having washed away in the shower, lost no time in lubricating him and me. Declan bounced me hard on his dick, my back hitting the wall repeatedly.

He growled near my ear, “You feel so perfect, Storm. You’re squeezing my cock so tightly. Do you like this? When I’m rough?”

“Yes, alpha! Please, more. I need more.”

“As you wish.”

He held me up by one arm and used his other to brace against the wall. His strength surprised me. He continued to pound into my pussy, his growing knot teasing my entrance with every forward thrust.

“Knot me, alpha. Give me your knot, please!” I begged.

“Not yet, omega. Hang on.”

I yelped as he moved us again, this time to the other wall, and slammed back into me. My head hit the drywall behind me and I heard a crack, but I didn’t care. The feeling of him inside me was much more prominent than a little pain.

“Yes, yes, yes!”

“That’s it, little bit. Take your alpha’s cock.”

“Give me it. I want it. I want it all. Knot me, alpha. Knot your omega and lock us together.”

“Such a demanding little thing, aren’t ya? Fine, have it your way.”

He roared out and pressed upwards, his knot slipping past my entrance and filling me to bursting. I screamed as an orgasm ripped through me,

starting at my head and working its way to my toes. A gush of my slick and his cum poured out of me, coating our lower halves, even with his knot. There was so much.

He buried his head in my neck, and he rubbed his nose along my gland. I turned my face, granting him better access. I wanted his bite. I needed it.

“You’re killing me, little bit. I will give you my bite, but not today. Not this time.”

I whimpered. Even though it was what I had asked for, my omega side hated what she took as a rejection. I wanted him, and I would have him. Lifting my face, I nuzzled into his neck, seeking his gland. I’d bite him first, then he’d have to accept me.

“Ryan! Help me!” Declan cried out.

I hissed angrily. How dare he bring someone else in here now, while I was getting ready to claim my alpha? The door to the bathroom slammed open and the beta stood there, a frantic look in his eye. He saw me and gasped, running forward.

“No!” I snarled. “Mine. My alpha.”

“Yes, firefly. Your alpha. Don’t bite. Not yet.”

My mind latched onto his broken sentences, trying to make sense of them. “No bite?”

“No, firefly, not yet. Soon.”

I huffed. That wasn’t the answer I wanted. I looked back at Declan and he was panting hard, pulling his neck back as far from me as he could. I was being rejected again. I needed to get away. Now.

## CHAPTER 38

# RILEY

I had never been fucked so much, or so well, before in my life. My body was aching and well used. When I woke up this time, I was shocked to find that I was aware of my surroundings. Even covered in cum and slick, I felt fantastic.

I purred and stretched my arms over my head before sitting up. Ryan was asleep beside me, snoring, his mouth open. A small smile twitched on my lips. He was adorable. Looking around, I didn't see Declan or Storm, but I heard the shower running. He must have taken her for a bath.

Victor was sitting up in front of me. He held out a cup filled to the brim with water and a granola bar. "Hello there, precious girl. How are you feeling?"

I took the cup and gulped at the liquid gratefully. "I feel so good."

"Do you think you're coming out of it?"

"No. I'm okay right now, but I still feel so hot and my skin itches. I think I still have some more to go."

"That's what I think too."

"How about you? Are you alright? We haven't worn you out?"

"Even if you had, I wouldn't stop before you were ready. This has been an incredible three days and I can't wait to see where the rest takes us."

"Three days?!"

He chuckled. "Yeah, you've been in and out of it for days. Declan and I went into a rut in the beginning and Ryan over there had to play director to get everyone settled. I think we might have tuckered him out."

A laugh escaped, and I slapped my hands over my mouth. I didn't want to wake him if he was really that tired. Poor guy. Victor grinned and reached a



hand out to smooth Ryan's bangs away from his forehead. The look on his face relayed his feelings.

"You really love him, huh?"

"Yeah, I do. He's easy to love."

"Tell me how you met?" I asked, pulling my knees up to my chest and opening the granola bar.

He leaned back on his elbows and looked at the ceiling, a smile on his lips. "Declan and I were scouting a location for a new office for our business. I got injured on the site and we went back to our hotel early. Ryan was there, getting ready to leave from his shift. Declan stumbled. He says it was accidental, but I think it may have been purposeful. Ryan came over and helped him get me to our room.

"I remember how good he smelled, like a freshly baked batch of vanilla cupcakes. And I remember being so surprised it was so strong because he was clearly a beta. Declan seemed to have the same idea and told him he wanted to thank him for helping by taking him to dinner. Poor guy didn't know he was being asked on a date. At dinner, we made it clear we liked him. The rest is history, as they say."

"That's such a cute story," I said, wiping the crumbs off my fingers.

"He needed love and someone to care for him. You've met his father."

A dark look passed over Victor's face and I was sure my expression matched. "Yes, unfortunately. He always gave me the creeps."

"I'm sorry we didn't get here sooner, petal. I hate that his foul hands ever touched you."

"It's alright. You got here in plenty of time for the important thing." I blushed. "Why do you call me petal?"

"Your eyes. They remind me of violet flowers."

I ducked my head, pleased by the compliment. I had always thought my eyes were strange, but knowing that this handsome alpha liked them, maybe they weren't so bad.

Suddenly, a bang came from the hallway and I jumped. "What was that?"

Victor craned his head, tilting his ear to hear. He rolled his lips in, hiding a smirk. "I, uh, I think Storm convinced Declan to put his smell back on her after their shower."

"How . . . ? Oh."

Victor chuckled. "*That* embarrasses you? After everything we've done here?"

“No . . . but it does turn me on, and I know you must be tired.”

His eyes heated, and his pupils dilated slightly. “Never too tired for you, petal. Do you need me? Do you need your alpha to ease the ache inside you?”

His deep, rumbly voice teased me, settling inside my chest. I whimpered and preened under his gaze. “Yes, alpha. Please. It aches so much.”

His grin turned wild. “I know just how to settle that. Come here, omega.”

Eagerly, I crawled toward him, slick already gathering between my legs. I felt my stomach cramping, desperate for more sex. Were heats always this intense? I had no idea but goddamn, I couldn’t wait to find out. When I reached for Victor, he crooked his finger at me, beckoning me closer. I inched up his lap until I sat at the tops of his thighs. My legs splayed out on either side of his waist, and I lazily wrapped my arms around his neck.

His thick cock jutted up between us, brushing against my stomach with each of our breaths. Victor’s hands came up to either side of my face and he stroked my matted hair back, his thumbs brushing over my cheeks.

“You are so beautiful, Riley,” he whispered.

“Thank you, alpha.”

“I cannot wait to get to know you better after all of this.”

“Me too, alpha.”

Holding my gaze, he leaned forward and captured my mouth with his. He tilted my head back, deepening the kiss. I lifted slightly, caressing the tip of his cock with my dripping pussy. He moaned and moved his hands to help lift me by my ass and then dropped me down onto his length.

My walls pulsed around him, and I yelled in rapture, “Yes, alpha!”

“Such a good omega. Taking me so well. You feel so good wrapped around my cock, petal. I could live here, inside you, forever. You and Storm take your alphas’ knots so well. Did you know that, petal? You are perfect for us.”

Unadulterated joy filled me with his words. Knowing that I was bringing this strong as fuck alpha pleasure? Me? It was a powerful feeling, and I wanted more of that. As he jerked his hips up, I rocked mine down, taking him deeper each time. I squeezed my muscles, trying to milk his cock. A tingle started in my lower spine and I leaned back, bracing my hands on Victor’s legs as I prepared for the wonderful orgasm I knew was coming.

“That’s it, omega. Take. My. Knot!”

Victor chased my body, knocking me onto my back, and he loomed overtop of me, his knot sliding into me and locking us together. I shuddered

in euphoria as he shot stream after stream of his hot cum deep into me. Not thinking, I raised my head and went straight for his neck, intent on claiming this alpha for my own.

“No, Riley! Don’t!” Ryan’s voice jolted me back to the present, and I realized what I had been about to do.

Shock, shame, and fear filled me in equal parts. Tears sprang to my eyes, and I blinked rapidly, trying to clear them.

“RYAN! Help me!” Declan’s shout had Ryan jumping up and running from the room.

“Petal, hush, it’s okay. I know you want to claim me and that’s fine. I am not rejecting you; Ryan is not rejecting you. It’s just not the time. Later, we will do this right. Make it perfect for everyone. I promise.”

My head was clouded and my mind befuddled. Why wouldn’t they let me bite him? He was mine, right? Didn’t he want me? I thought he wanted us.

“Omega!” Victor’s bark snapped my attention to him. “Listen to me. No one is rejecting you, sweetheart. I am beyond honored that you want to make me yours. But shouldn’t we wait for Storm? And Declan? We can do this right all together, as a pack.”

“Pack? My pack?”

“Yes, my precious, sweet omega girl. Your and Storm’s pack.”

“Yes, pack. Bond as a pack. Later.”

“Yes, petal. I promise. Rest now.”

“Mmm,” I agreed. My mind accepted what he was saying, and I allowed my eyes to drift closed. I didn’t want to sleep again, but a nap sounded awesome. And Victor was still inside me, filling me so full. Everything was perfect right now. Really perfect.

## CHAPTER 39

## RYAN

I rushed into the bathroom, finding a similar scene to the one I had just left. Storm was desperately trying to bite Declan's neck, intent on giving him her bond. I hurried forward, snapping my fingers in her face. She hissed angrily at me, telling me in no uncertain terms that she was not happy with the disruption.

"No!" she snarled. "Mine. My alpha."

"Yes, firefly. Your alpha. Don't bite. Not yet."

I watched her expression change as her foggy mind tried to grab onto the broken sentences I fed her.

"No bite?"

"No, firefly, not yet. Soon."

"Doesn't want me?"

Her shattered words pierced my heart, and I almost joined her in the tears clinging to her lashes.

"Omega," Declan said, moving her head to face him again. "I want you so much. You are mine. Riley is mine. Ryan is mine. But not yet. You asked us to wait, and we will. You already have my heart, little bit. I can wait for your bite until you are absolutely sure. And as soon as you are? I'll give you my bite, right here."

He tapped the spot on her neck next to her gland, the same one where he had bitten me. Storm shivered in his arms, clearly appeased by that. He shifted her weight and tucked her head into his shoulder.

We turned and headed back to the nest. Entering, we found Victor staring dreamily down at a sleeping Riley, the two still very much knotted together. Declan gently sank to his knees and then sat back on the floor, careful not to

disturb Storm, who appeared to have fallen asleep as well.

Declan looked over to Victor and the two shared a smile. “We are really fucking lucky, brother.”

“We sure are, Dec.”

“Ryan, come here please?” Declan asked.

I eagerly moved to his side, still on my feet. He turned his head to me, looking up from his seated position. “Thank you, Ryan, for your help in the bathroom.”

“You’re welcome, Dec. But I didn’t do much.”

“You broke through to her to get her to not hyperfocus on biting me. That was huge.”

Pleasure filled me with his words. I knew Declan and Victor appreciated me and the things I could do for them, but it still was nice to hear.

“I think you deserve a little treat; don’t you agree, Vic?”

“Oh, most assuredly. He helped me here too. Riley almost claimed me, and he got her to stop.”

“What a good beta you are, Ryan.”

Declan leaned forward and kissed the tip of my cock, which, with our positions, was right at mouth level for him. I fisted my hands at my side, fighting for control, so I didn’t try to pull him farther onto my dick. He was my alpha; he knew what was best for me. Even if the teasing would be the death of me one day.

Declan’s tongue poked out from his lips, and he licked all around the head of my cock, taking care to lap at the sensitive vein underneath. His eyes burned with his lust, and it filled me with joy. I did this to him. He wanted me this badly. He looked over my shoulder and then a grin split his face a moment before he slid his mouth down the length of my dick, almost to the base.

Light exploded behind my eyes, but not just from what Declan was doing. Oh, no. Apparently, Victor’s knot had gone down. How did I know? Because he was currently kissing my neck and his dick was pressing in between my cheeks, probing for my hole.

“Are you going to give your alpha this delicious ass, Ryan?”

“Yes, alpha.”

“Right answer. Whose ass is this?” he growled into my ear, grabbing a handful and squeezing.

“Yours!” I yelped out, Declan’s magical blowjob skills making my head

swim.

“That’s right. It’s mine.”

Victor punctuated his sentence with a forward thrust, driving his length deep into me. In doing so, he forced my hips forward and my dick deeper into Declan’s mouth. He sucked hard, trying to make me cum.

“Don’t you dare cum before I do, Ryan. This is a reward for you, for being such a good beta for your alphas. But I get to use this ass as long as I want, understand?”

“Yes, alpha. Please, fuck me. I want it.”

Victor groaned, pushing himself deeper into me. I was never more thankful for omega slick than right now. His cock was drenched, and he slid in and out of me easily. My knees shook and knocked together as I valiantly tried to stave off my impending orgasm. Declan, without ever taking his mouth off me, gently removed Storm from his lap, placing her on the cushions.

He then moved to his knees, bringing his hands to the base of my cock so he could stroke the part not in his mouth. His other hand reached underneath me to fondle my balls, squeezing gently.

“Alphas, please, I can’t hold on much longer!” I pleaded.

“You can and you will,” Victor commanded. “If you want my knot.”

I moaned. Victor, Declan, and I had been working me up to take their knots, but we had never attempted it before now. They were too concerned it would hurt me. Now Victor was willing to give it to me? As long as I didn’t cum before him?

I would hold off on my orgasm for as long as it took for that.

Behind me, Victor grunted and groaned, pushing more and more of himself deep into me. His hands gripped my hips, pulling me back against him with each of his forward thrusts. Declan had my entire cock in his mouth now. His tongue was lapping at me like it was an ice cream cone and he didn’t want to miss anything. He looked up at me, and I knew my pupils were blown wide. He grinned around my length and then sucked hard, creating a vacuum with his mouth.

I screamed and used every trick I could think of to hold off spilling down his throat. Thankfully, I didn’t have to wait long for my permission. Victor grabbed me forcefully and slammed himself forward, his knot pressing hard against my entrance. I whined and wiggled against him, trying to help him get inside.

With a *pop*, he slipped in. I had never felt so full. He and I shared a simultaneous moan, and I couldn't hold back any longer. As Victor filled my ass with his hot, salty cum, I did the same to Declan's mouth with mine. Declan lapped at my tip, sucking hard and getting every single drop from me. He opened his mouth, showing me a small pool on his tongue, and then he stood, grabbed my cheeks, forcing my mouth open, and he dipped his tongue in, making me taste myself on him.

"Fuck, that is so hot," Victor said behind me.

I wriggled slightly, feeling his knot still deep inside me, and another small spurt of cum fell from my dick and onto the pillows at my feet. I had never felt more amazing than right now.



WHEN I SAID that I had never felt anything as amazing as being knotted by my alpha and getting a blowjob from my other, that was a lie. What I was experiencing right now was by far the best of my life.

*How did I even get into this position?*

Storm, Riley, Declan, Victor, and I had fucked all over the nest, in every configuration imaginable, so many times over the past five days. We were still going strong. The girls' joint heat didn't seem to be letting up at all. They were needy, demanding, desperate, *perfect* messes.

A few hours ago, during a moment of lucidity, Storm had demanded her toys to use on Riley. It was how I'd found myself running out to our SUV, naked, in the middle of the night. We had forgotten one bag in the trunk, apparently a pretty important one. When I brought it to Storm, she had immediately pulled all kinds of things out that amazed even Victor and Declan.

Now she was putting those toys to good use.

I had been taking a nap when I woke up to Victor's tongue wrapping around my half-erect length. My cock seemed to never go down anymore. Even after cumming more than ever before, it still had more left. Victor and Declan, as well, seemed to have a never-ending supply to use. Riley and Storm? Well, their slick was everywhere. On everything and everyone.

Victor was behind me, his dick stroking in and out of my ass at a leisurely pace. He had used the omegas' copious amounts of slick as lube and slid right



into me after blowing my mind and my cock. Declan was thrusting into Storm's ass, gripping her hair and telling her what a good omega she was being for her alpha.

Storm? Well, she had a double-ended, vibrating, knotted dildo that was currently inside her and Riley. And my cock? Well, that was the best part. I rolled my eyes back in my head because Riley's pussy was not only holding Storm's dildo, but my cock as well. It was so incredibly hot, feeling that silicone rubbing against me on one side, while the other side of my dick stroked against Riley's walls. It stretched her pussy to the absolute max, and she was loving every minute of this.

Our alphas were the ones running the show at this point because each time they pushed forward, it forced the girls to get closer and moved the dildo against my skin. The girls couldn't stop kissing each other, biting at their marks, and running their hands over every part of each other they could reach.

"Declan, I can't hold on much longer," Victor said to his brother.

Declan looked up. "Me either, brother. This is amazing. Everything feels so great. And goddamn, doesn't our beta look good fucking our omega? And our omegas fucking each other? Goddamn."

Storm broke away from kissing Riley and glared over her shoulder. "Less talking, more fucking, alpha. I want your knot."

"Your wish is my command, omega."

He grunted and pressed forward, a loud groan signaling when his knot made it into her ass. In turn, she reached out and clicked a button on the dildo, the knots in the middle inflating. She grabbed Riley's shoulders and pulled her close so that a knot slipped into each of their pussies. The knot next to my cock drove me over the edge and I saw white as an orgasm tore through my body. Behind me, not wanting to be left behind, Victor's knot thrust into me for the second time and he locked me to him.

Cries and yells of pleasure filled the room. It was impossible to tell who was saying what, everything just a mishmash of everyone enjoying themselves. We were all locked together in one giant pile as we hit our knees and fell to the side, completely wiped out.

Cum, slick, and fluids were everywhere. There wasn't a dry spot in the room. The nest walls had long since fallen down, but the girls didn't seem concerned any longer. I peered over Riley's shoulder, into Storm's clear green gaze. Her heat had finally broken. She held her hand out to me, and I

nuzzled into her palm.

“Best. Heat. Ever,” Riley said.

“Fuck yes,” we all agreed.

## CHAPTER 40

# STORM

**D**uring our heats, I didn't want to wash anything off me. I chuckled, remembering how much I had fought Declan and his mission to clean me up. Now that it was over, though? Gods, this water felt good. I stood under the spray of the shower, just letting it soak into my hair and slosh down my skin, not caring in the slightest as the cum, slick, and everyone's smell washed right off. A quiet knock interrupted my moment of solitude, and I peered around the plastic curtain to see Riley's adorable but shy face peeking in the doorway.

"May I join you?" she asked softly.

I pulled the curtain back and waved her inside. The smile that lit up her face made me want to do everything in my power to keep that look there permanently. Fuck, I was a lucky omega. Riley climbed into the shower and pulled the curtain shut.

"We don't have much time before the hot water runs out," she confessed, her face red with embarrassment.

"That's fine; we'll just have to wash each other quickly then."

Her eyes met mine, a glimmer of happiness from my words sparkling there. I needed her to know that her financial situation meant nothing to me. She might not have as much as I did, but that didn't matter in the slightest. She was my girl; that was all that I cared about.

"Turn and I'll scrub your back, Riles."

Hurriedly, she followed my instructions and spun to face away from me. I grabbed the washcloth and bar of soap, lathering it up, then started washing my gorgeous girl's back. Suds ran in rivulets down her spine and over her legs. I pressed on her shoulder and made her turn back to face me.

Reapplying the soap to the cloth, I started washing her front. I took my time around her breasts, winking at her as I rubbed over each of her pebbled nipples.

“Storm,” she groaned. “I can’t . . .”

“I know, precious girl; I can’t either. I need a week of sleep after the last few days.” I chuckled. “But I can’t help myself around you.”

I pulled her closer, her soapy body sliding against mine, to give her a kiss. Water sprayed down on us, adding another sensation to everything else. Her hands slipped into my hair, holding me closer to her. I dropped the cloth and wrapped my arms around her back, deepening the kiss.

“Fuck, I love you, Riles.”

“I love you too, Storm. So much. You make me so incredibly hap—  
ahheeeeeeeee!”

Her words cut off into a shriek as the water, without warning, plunged in temperature. My teeth clattered as I jumped to turn off the shower. Riley wrapped her arms around herself, shivering. We hopped out of the shower, reaching for towels right as the door to the bathroom burst open, and Ryan stood there, panting.

“Are you alright?” he demanded. “I heard screaming!”

Laughing through the shivers, Riley said, “Yes, Ryan. We were just attacked by ice cubes.”

His face scrunched in confusion. Feeling giddy, I squeezed some water from my hair into my hand and flung it at him.

“Holy shit, that is cold,” he said.

“Yeah. That’s why we screamed. I promise we’re fine.”

He smirked, a gleam in his eye. He dragged his gaze up and down both of us, making no secret of what he was doing. “You certainly are.”

I snorted. “That was so cheesy.”

He grinned. “Yes, but it made you giggle. So, I win.”

Ryan turned and left. Riley and I shared a look and then burst into laughter. I bent over at my waist, I was laughing so hard, and Riley had tears streaming down her cheeks. I didn’t know why we were giggling like this; it wasn’t that funny. But damn, did it feel good.

“Now that is a beautiful sound.”

Riley and I looked up to see Declan leaning against the doorframe, grinning at us.

“Hi, alpha,” she said shyly.

He chuckled her under the chin and then tilted her face up to meet her eyes. “Hey there, pretty omega. Are you shy now?”

Her face flushed, and she bit her lip. “A little bit, yeah.”

“Hmm, well, there is no need. I thoroughly enjoyed what we did this past week. I hope you did as well.”

“I did. It’s just . . . Well, I barely know you guys. I don’t want you thinking badly of me for how I acted . . .”

“Oh, sweetheart, no. We would never think that. For starters, your mind wasn’t your own during your heat. There were a lot of hormones and feelings going around then. Secondly, we were just as needy as you. Besides, just because we did things a little backward, doesn’t mean you are anything but the perfect omega for us. Well,” he amended, smirking at me. “One of the perfect omegas for us.”

Riley’s face lit up with pleasure at his explanation.

“Come on, girls. Let’s get you fed and then we can start cleaning up that room.”

I shared a look with Riley. That was the last thing I wanted to do. That room was a fucking disaster. Correctly guessing my train of thought, Declan barked out a laugh.

“Alright, I’ll make you a deal. You go place the order for pizzas, and Victor and I will clean up the nest. Deal?”

I thought we got the much better side of that, but I nodded. “Definitely. Deal.”

Riley and I went back to her room only briefly. We had enough awareness to stash a set of clothing aside so that after our heats, we had at least one outfit to wear. We got dressed quickly and made our way downstairs. There we found Victor and Ryan, drinking glasses of water and wearing nothing but boxers.

Even though my mind rebelled at the idea of any more sex, my body didn’t care. I felt my thighs dampen of their own accord, some of my slick gathering in my underwear. Victor’s nostrils flared and his eyes burned with heat as he stared at me. I licked my lips and moved off to the side, keeping Riley between us.

He chuckled darkly. “That didn’t make a difference, hurricane. She smells just as enticing.”

Riley flushed, and a plume of her perfume filled the air. Victor’s chest vibrated with a purr, and Riley and I both whined in response. No matter that

we were exhausted, our omega sides wanted to get closer to that sound and snuggle in. Thankfully, Ryan seemed to still have a solid head on his shoulders.

“Firefly, what brings you downstairs?”

“Hmm? Oh, Declan asked us to order a bunch of pizzas. He said that you three would take care of cleaning the nest for us while we did that.”

I bit my lip, but it was impossible to hide my smirk at that statement. Victor quirked a brow up, and his tongue traced across his teeth. Ryan looked momentarily shocked, and then he laughed lightly.

“Alrighty. Here’s my phone and card. Order one of everything.”

He walked past us, stopping to give each of us a kiss on the forehead, before he began climbing the stairs back up to the room. Victor watched him go, a soft smile on his face, before he turned back to us. Opening his arms, he beckoned us forward. Eagerly, we raced toward him and snuggled against his chest. He gave us a hug and kissed the tops of our heads.

“You girls behave. And do as Ryan said, one of everything. That boy can eat.” Snickering, he made his way back upstairs too.

“So,” I said to Riley, “where’s the best place for pizza around here?”

She shuffled her feet. “Honestly? Nowhere close.”

“What? There has to be a pizza place nearby!”

Her blush returned, but this time I could tell she was really embarrassed. “There isn’t. Not in this part of the town. And the one on the other side won’t deliver here.”

Understanding hit me like a ton of bricks. Her part of town wasn’t the best area. Obviously, the “better” restaurants wouldn’t get built here. The residents wouldn’t be the ones going out to eat.

“Well, that’s fine. We have the guys’ SUV. Let’s call in an order and by the time we get there to pick it up, it should be ready.”

“Will they let us take it?”

“Sure. We just won’t tell them beforehand,” she said with a wink. “Come on, Riles. Let’s go get some food.”

Still looking nervous, she agreed. I grabbed the keys from the counter and happily scribbled out a note. *Gone to pick up pizza, back soon xoxo.* We ran out to the Hummer, jumping in and taking off before anyone was the wiser.

## CHAPTER 4I



# DECLAN

Watching out of Riley's window, I grinned as the girls took off in our SUV. They seemed to think that they were getting away with being sneaky and I found it hilarious. The Hummer had several trackers in it that connected to an app on Victor's and my phones. We would find them no matter where they went.

Deciding to not tell the others for now, I stooped down to pick up the blanket I had come over this way for. Victor, Ryan, and I were separating all the different clothes and blankets into piles so that we could wash them easier. The entire house needed airing out.

"Ryan, did you find the washer and dryer?"

"No, I didn't see one. They must use the laundromat I saw a few miles back on our way in here."

"Well, damn. We certainly can't go over there like this."

I waved down my body. I was wearing as much as the other two were. Boxers. I had a feeling that even in this tiny town, they may have an issue with three men walking around in nothing but underwear.

"I can drive us over," Victor suggested. "Maybe her brother has some clothes we could borrow for a few hours?"

"Borrowing the brother's clothes, great idea. Driving, not so much."

"What do you mean? Why?"

"The girls took the Hummer."

"What?!" Victor charged over to the window, glaring outside where we had parked. He took a deep breath and closed his eyes, almost as if he thought if he blinked, it would reappear. "Why would they do that?"

I shrugged. “Who knows? But they did. So, either we walk or we wait for them to come back.”

Victor sighed. “Alright. Let’s get the rest of these things sorted and then we can decide. Maybe they will be back from their little joyride.”

I chuckled but returned to sorting through the piles. By the time we had finished, a stark difference in the stacks was staring us in the face. Everyone’s piles were massive except for one. Our sweet, curvy omega had barely half of what any of the rest of us had. And that included her blankets and pillows. I couldn’t wait to spoil her senseless and cover her with anything that looked remotely good on her. Which would be everything. That girl was fucking gorgeous.

The girls hadn’t yet returned, so I went into the bathroom to grab a shower while the other two went downstairs to wait for them. When I entered the room, I flinched. In the drywall, right where I had Storm pressed, was a head-sized hole. I had apparently been a little rougher than I meant to.

Thankfully, with my knowledge, that was an easy fix. I jumped into the tub and turned the water as hot as it would go. The pipes clanged and banged for a few seconds before the tepid spray came from the showerhead. I’d look at that, too, before we left. I was halfway through scrubbing my body with Riley’s bar of soap when the water temperature suddenly dropped off.

I jumped around, trying to keep the freezing spray off me, but it was no use. Rinsing as quickly as I could, I hopped out and grabbed a towel from the rack by the toilet. The material was rough against my skin, and I shuddered to think how abrasive this must feel to our omega.

Omeegas were notorious for needing and appreciating the softest of materials on themselves, but that came at a price. Knowing my sweet, violet-eyed beauty had been going without tore at my heart. It was obvious her family was doing everything they could, but they just didn’t have the opportunities here. An idea began formulating in my brain. I’d have to run it by Victor, of course, but it just might work. It would benefit the entire town, too.

Wrapping the towel around my shoulders, I pulled on my old boxers once again. I had nothing else, so they would do until we got to the laundromat. Jogging down the stairs, I found Victor staring at the front door, as if willing the omegas to walk through it.

“They will be fine, brother,” I said with a grin and a slap to his shoulder as I passed. I smirked. “Why don’t you go get a shower while you wait?”

You'll feel better."

He grunted but pulled his attention from the doorway. "Alright. Make sure Ryan has some more water. I don't want anyone getting dehydrated."

"Yes, boss." I gave him a mock salute and dodged around him to go to the kitchen.

Ryan was in there, fighting back a laugh, a full glass of water in front of him. I held up a finger, asking if that was his first. He shook his head, holding up three fingers.

"Yeah, I doubt you're going to be dehydrated."

He snickered. "I know better than that with Victor on the offense."

We shared a look and then the laughs we had been fighting burst out, then there was a shout from upstairs and a roar. Tears poured down my cheeks as I cackled at Victor's anger at being tricked into taking a cold shower.

"DECLAN!" he yelled.

Through my chuckles, I said, "Thought a cold shower would do you good!"

His response was just a bellow of anger. He stomped back into the bathroom, and I heard the water start again. It shocked me to the point that my laughter stopped dead. Ryan looked at me, wide-eyed.

"He's fine. Being a big ole baby about a little cold water."

"Dude. That water is like ice cubes once it gets cold."

"Ha. Yeah, it is. And there is no warning when the heat is over. I'm going to buy the Druman's a water heater as a thank you for giving us their house this week."

Ryan shook his head, smiling. Before he could say anything else, the sound of tires outside was heard and we both perked up. Our girls were back. With pizza. Playfully shoving each other, we raced to the door, each intent on being the first one there. The door slammed open before either of us got there, however.

Storm's eyes were wild, her hair flying around her face in her panic. The cut above her eye leaked blood that smeared on her forehead.

"He's got her! He took her!"

"Whoa, little bit. Slow down. Who's 'her'? Who's got her?"

"Riley! Alpha Brown took Riley!"

"The *fuck* he did!"

## CHAPTER 42

# RILEY

Storm and I raced down the road, windows down and the radio blasting. Her left hand was on the wheel and her right rested on my thigh. Our hair was whipping around our faces, and I had never felt so free.

I had already called the pizza place and ordered ten pizza pies; hopefully, that was enough. I tucked Ryan's phone into my pocket and turned the radio up louder, singing at the top of my lungs. My girl beside me, on the way for food, and three hot as fuck men waiting for us back home? Yeah, life was pretty good.

Storm came to a stop sign and slammed the brakes on. Laughing, we shared a "whoopsies" look, and she pressed down on the gas to go through the intersection. One moment, the SUV was on the road, and the next it was spinning wildly out of control.

I screamed and threw my hands up to the dashboard, the colors outside swirling around and around the windshield as we spun in circles. Glass rained down on us when the Hummer came to a stop against the side of a tree. My eyes fluttered and I blinked, trying to remain conscious.

"Storm?" I asked, my head flopping to the side to look for her.

My heart plummeted to my feet. Blood was running down her face. I couldn't tell where it was coming from, but it looked terrible. I floundered with my seat belt, trying to undo it so I could check on her. My own bumps and bruises covered me, but I ignored them. I needed to get to Storm. The belt unclicked at the same time as someone yanked my door open. Arms wrapped around my middle and started pulling me from the vehicle.

"No, stop! Let me go. I have to check on Storm. Let me go!"

"Stop fighting, omega. You're coming with me. Let's go."

My breath halted in my chest. I knew that voice. A shiver rippled down my spine, fear causing me to break out in a cold sweat.

“No . . .”

“Yes, omega. You’re mine. Those alphas don’t deserve two omegas. I’ll just help them pick. Besides, you were always meant to be mine. I saw the longing looks you threw my way. You want me as much as I want you.”

He dragged me from the Hummer kicking and screaming. His arms held me so tightly, I couldn’t get away. I tried to scream, but he covered my mouth. My eyes darted side to side, but there was no one on the streets. It was eerily empty except for us and the other Hummer that Alpha Brown was forcing me into. He shoved me into the back seat.

I clambered across and tried to open the other side, but like the alpha that had brought me home all those months ago, he had engaged the child locks and the door wouldn’t budge. I pounded on the window, trying fruitlessly to break it. Alpha Brown climbed into the front seat and before his door was even closed, he was racing away.

I stared out the back window until I couldn’t see the Hummer any longer, tears clinging to my lashes. Storm had to be okay. I knew she was alive because my bond with her was still intact. I had that to comfort me at least. As Alpha Brown drove erratically out of town, I clung to that thought.

Turning around, I scanned the interior of the car, looking for anything that I could use as a weapon against him. There was nothing except some fast-food wrappers and empty cans on the front passenger seat floor.

We hit a bump and it jostled the phone in my pocket. I snapped my eyes to the rearview mirror, scared that he had somehow found I had it, even though I knew that wasn’t possible. I slipped my hand into my pocket as discreetly as I could. I had to keep this hidden from Alpha Brown in any way possible. Shoving it farther down into my pocket, I put my hands back in my lap.

“We are almost home, omega.”

“That’s not my home. And my name is Riley,” I snapped.

He chuckled. “Your name is whatever I tell you it is, *omega*. I am your alpha now. Those idiots may have stolen your first heat from me, but they didn’t even bond you. They are going to regret that mistake. As soon as your next heat starts, you’ll be mine. Permanently.”

“No.”

“It’s cute how you think you have a choice. My last omega thought the

same. I showed her how wrong that was. Then she had the nerve to give me a useless beta child.” He scoffed. “You won’t do that, will you? You’re a good omega. I can tell. You’ll give me alpha sons. Ones I can be proud of.”

Fear formed a lump in my throat, my panic spreading through my system. I couldn’t let this man anywhere near me. From what it sounded like, he had forced a bond with Ryan’s mother. I couldn’t let that happen to me. I wouldn’t. Storm was already mine, and I fully intended to claim the other three members of my pack. They already had proven they were good men. Alpha Brown would not get his teeth into me.

His SUV screeched to a halt and he jumped from it. He moved to open the back door, and I shuffled along the back seat as far from him as I could get. Snarling, he leaned in and grabbed me by the ankles, pulling me back to his side. I kicked and smacked at him, but he remained unfazed.

Getting me to the edge of the seat, he grabbed me around my middle and hefted me up over his shoulder. He grunted as I let my dead weight collapse into him, hoping to throw him off balance. Unfortunately, he stayed upright. I lashed out with my legs, trying to connect with anything I could. My fists beat down on his back.

I couldn’t believe this was happening again.

At the door, Alpha Brown swung it open and then slammed it shut, locking it. The entire time we had been walking in, I had been screaming at him to let me go. He growled angrily and made his way downstairs into the basement. At the foot of the stairs, my cries died out as pure, unadulterated horror consumed me.

Lined up on either side were cells. There had to be dozens. Alpha Brown headed straight for one and tossed me carelessly inside, onto a thin mattress. The door clanged shut, and I heard keys jingle as he locked it.

“Stay in here and think about how much worse this could be for you, omega. I’ll be back.”

He turned and stamped up the stairs, snapping the light off and plunging me into darkness. The door at the top of the stairs shut, and I heard the click of him turning that lock as well. Trapped. What the fuck was I going to do?

Frantic, I finally remembered the phone in my pocket. Desperately, I dug it out and tapped the screen to wake it up. On the display were several messages from Victor and Declan. Keeping one eye on the basement door, I clicked one and swiped to the “call” symbol. Frantically, I tapped it, trying to call one of them.

“Come on, come on, come on!” I pleaded.

The phone lit up with Victor’s picture and then beeped. Call failed. There was too much concrete down here. It couldn’t find a signal. Tears clung to my lashes, and I tried again and again, but the phone steadfastly refused to connect. A sob pulled from my throat. This couldn’t be happening.



## CHAPTER 43

# RYAN

Victor and Declan were running around, looking for something to wear. Storm was standing by the front door, quiet sobs shaking her shoulders while tears tracked down her cheeks. My eyes darted over everyone and my frazzled brain tried to make sense of it all. My father had taken Riley. My father had *taken* Riley. *My father.*

Panic clawed at my chest. My skin was hot, tight, and I felt like there was a forty-ton elephant sitting on my chest. I slid down the wall behind me, slumping to the floor. This was all my fault. I should have known my father wasn't just going to go away after everything he had done.

He was a terrible man and an even worse alpha. No one would contest that. He beat my mother and me regularly. He said it was to toughen me up when I "inevitably presented as an alpha." But then I didn't. Things went from bad to worse. He always talked down to me about being "just a beta." It was a huge point of contention between us. He hated that I wasn't an alpha. To him, I was useless. My mother bore the brunt of his anger, however.

After I was born, she had some complications, which meant she could never have another child. My father saw her as a broken omega at that point. He told her that her only purpose was to give him, an alpha, as many children as he wanted. The fact that she couldn't meant she was incompetent at her *job*. For years, he belittled her, and then, as time went on, he became physically abusive.

I had tried to stand up to him multiple times, but I was no match for his strength. He was an alpha and, as he loved to point out to me, I was just a weak beta. There was nothing I could do. Then one day, he snapped. He had

been drinking quite heavily. He came home in a fit, smashing things, punching the walls, everything.

My mother tried to calm him down and he backhanded her, making her fall to the floor. Something in me that day finally had enough. I remember screaming and charging at him, and I somehow knocked him off his feet. Of course, I couldn't keep him down. He roared in anger and tossed me across the room.

Dizzy, I looked up from where I had landed to see him running toward me, brandishing a knife. I put my hands up to protect myself, but he never connected. My mother jumped in front of him, protecting me, and the knife sliced right into her stomach. She bled out in minutes, right in front of me.

I fled the scene, racing to Storm's house, where I called the cops and they finally arrested him for his crimes against us. I had foolishly thought that would be the end of him. Never in a million years did I think he would get released from jail. Or that he would come here.

My actions had put Riley right into his crosshairs. I had done this.

Guilt swamped me. This was all my fault. Everything. If only I hadn't tried to stand up to him, just gotten my mother out of the room instead of trying to defend us, she would still be alive and my father would be in our old home. He never would have met Riley, stalked her, and taken her.

I had done this.

My breaths sawed in and out of my chest. Sweat beaded on my palms, making them clammy, and my heart was racing. My ears were ringing, and it felt like my brain filled with static. What had I done?

Through blurry eyes, I looked around the house, the one that smelled so strongly of my pack. I heard a sob and it took me several seconds to realize it was coming from me. Tears poured from my eyes and dripped down onto my legs. I peered down at myself, shocked to find I was in only my underwear. Where were my clothes?

"Shit."

I heard someone speak, but I didn't know who it was. Suddenly, someone hoisted me up and deposited me onto a hard lap. Muscular arms banded around my middle, securing me to the body behind me. I tried to crane my neck to see who it was, but the person dipped their head into my neck, rubbing along my glands.

"Ryan, look at me."

My unfocused gaze looked forward to where my alpha, Victor, was

crouched down in front of me. I knew the only reason I could listen to his command was because he had threaded a bit of his bark into it. From the corner of my eye, I saw Storm's terror-stricken face, and it was like a sucker punch to my chest. I tried to suck in air, but my throat felt too small.

I caused my best friend, my Storm, my firefly, to lose her mate. Me.

"Ryan!" Victor tried once again, this time using his full alpha bark.

My eyes snapped to him.

"Ryan Jerome Birmingham, listen up and listen well. You are *not* responsible for what just happened. Your father's actions are not yours. You have done nothing wrong. Do you understand me?"

I understood what he was saying, but it wasn't true. I shook my head. Of course, it was my fault. It all went back to me and my attempt at standing up to my father. If I had just taken the abuse, if I had just let him go, Riley would never have been on his radar because he would never have moved here after getting out of jail.

"Ryan, I can hear your brain whirring, trying to make you the responsible party for your father. You are not and never will be that. Your father made his own choices. Poor choices, I might add. You did not *make* him do anything. Especially not what happened today. Okay?"

My voice cracked and, barely above a whisper, I murmured, "If I hadn't sent him to jail, he would never have moved here. He never would have met Riley."

"You don't know that!" Storm rushed to my side and turned my head to face hers. "If you hadn't called the police, I would have. I almost did so many times, but I knew if your mother didn't press charges, there was no way they would arrest him. If he hadn't killed her that night, he would have done it the next night, or the next week. He was getting worse and worse every day. It was only a matter of time until he would have killed you, too."

"Ryan, she's telling you the truth. We have seen our share of violent alphas and he was following their footsteps like a blueprint. Calling the police on him and getting him arrested was the right thing to do."

"But he got out. He came here. He took our Riley."

"Something in him isn't right. If it hadn't been Riley, it would have just been another omega. At least we can track her. We have a hope of finding her. But we need you to let go of this idea that you are responsible for his actions in any way. You are not your father. You are a much better man. I promise you that."

I sniffled and looked into the gaze of my alpha. Nothing but truth shone from his eyes. He meant every word he was saying to me. I turned my neck to see Storm's face, and she still looked scared, but I realized it was for *me*. She was worried about me. Declan, I couldn't see, but I felt his arms tighten around me and the way he continued to cover my neck in his scent. He wanted me to know he was there for me, too. That he didn't think this was my doing either.

Taking in my pack around me, the care they had for me, their words, my panic finally subsided. My breathing slowed down, my heart stopped pounding, and my pulse calmed. I took several stuttering breaths and closed my eyes to focus. When I opened them, I met Victor's intense stare.

"Let's go get our girl," I said.

## CHAPTER 44

# VICTOR

I had never felt terror like I was feeling right now. I kept it tamped down while talking Ryan out of his spiraling panic attack. Now that we were getting ready to go find Riley, though, it was building back up. However, the strongest emotion I was feeling was rage.

Knowing Alpha Brown had crashed into our vehicle and could have severely injured or killed either of our omegas, I wanted to destroy him. I wanted to strangle the life right out of him for daring to touch my girls. My omegas.

Declan and I borrowed some of Dell's clothing and soon all four of us were running out to the damaged Hummer. Seeing that damage, my heart stuttered in my chest. We could have lost them today. I jumped in the driver's seat, trying to ignore the blood I saw smeared around. It was just another reminder of how bad this could have been.

Ryan and Storm climbed into the back, and Declan hopped into the passenger seat beside me. Before the doors had even shut, I was tearing out of the driveway and down the road.

"Does anyone know where he is?" I growled.

"No," Storm said, sadness weighing down her words. "The accident knocked me out. When I woke up, I saw him shoving Riley into another Hummer and then he took off. It happened too fast for me to catch them. I'm so sorry!"

Declan twisted in his seat to touch her knee. "It's alright. We'll find them. But Ryan, I'm sorry, but I cannot promise I won't kill the bastard when we do."

"I can't promise you'll get to him first."

Ryan's panic attack had subsided fully, and now righteous anger filled him and he was furious. His eyes darted everywhere as he tried to look for some indication of where his father had gone. This newest offense from his dad was pushing him over the edge.

"Storm, sweetheart, did you see which way they went?"

"Yeah, they headed out of town, I think. He got to us before we even made it to the pizza place. He went the other way, not back toward Riley's house."

"Okay, good job remembering that, hurricane. It gives us somewhere to start."

She took a shaky breath but nodded. Tears still clung to her lashes, but she managed not to cry. The poor thing was as scared as we were, and she was beating herself up over this. I needed to make sure she knew none of this was her fault. To be separated so violently from her bonded mate, especially right after coming off a heat, had to be so hard.

"Wait! Storm, did you and Riley complete your bond?" I asked, catching her eye in the rearview.

"Um, yes?"

"Oh, thank the gods. Your bond will tell you where to go. It's going to want you and her to be together. Listen to it and let it guide you to her."

"I don't know how to do that."

"Close your eyes. Let your bond speak to you. Take your time."

She gave me a look of disbelief, but she listened. Her pretty green eyes shuttered closed, and she leaned back against the seat. I slowed the car down, knowing that until she told me where to go, we were driving blindly. We had no clue where he had taken her.

"I don't feel anything specific. It's like I am being overwhelmed by her fear and sadness."

"Shit," I whispered. I hadn't thought about that. How much of Riley's feelings were affecting Storm?

"Storm!" Ryan gasped. "Where is my phone?"

"Oh, uh, I don't know . . . Riley had it to call the pizza order in, but I don't know what she did with it after that . . ."

"Vic, if she still has it on her, can't you track it?"

"Yes! Declan!"

"Already on it!"

He whipped his phone out and opened the tracking app we had on all our



phones. It was quiet for several seconds and he shouted out in victory.

“Got it! It keeps blinking in and out, like there is terrible service, but the dot isn’t moving. If she has the phone on her, I know where she is. Vic, go straight for about three miles, then make a left.”

“On it.”

With Declan giving us directions, I sped up, and before long, we were coming up to a home. It was set back off the street with trees covering the front. If we hadn’t had the confirmation of the dot from the location tracker, I would have driven right past. I slammed on the brakes and whipped the car into park. Ryan reached for his door handle, and I hit the lock button.

“What the hell?” he said, yanking on the handle. “Let me out, Victor.”

“No, Ry. I want you and Storm to stay here.”

“What? No way. She’s my omega too,” Storm snapped.

“I agree! No way I’m staying here!”

“Ry, hurricane, I know you guys want to help, but I don’t know how unhinged your father is at this point. I couldn’t live with myself if either of you got hurt. I don’t want him hurting you or Storm. We will get Riley. We will get our omega and bring her back to you both. I promise.”

Storm didn’t look happy, but she nodded and took Ryan’s hand. Ryan was still fuming, but he gripped her hand and slumped back in his seat. I knew he was upset, and I felt terrible because of it, but I really couldn’t try to keep him safe and look for Riley at the same time. I needed my attention on her right now. Hopefully, he understood.

“Come on, Dec. Let’s go get our girl.”

“And kill an alpha,” he growled, throwing open his door and stepping out. I snorted but internally, I agreed. This scumbag needed to go down.

We marched toward the front door and Declan raised his foot and kicked it right by the knob. It splintered under the force and, using our shoulders, we got it knocked down. Together, we spilled into the house, our eyes darting everywhere.

“What the fuck? Get out of my house!” Alpha Brown came thundering down the stairs to our right, holding a bat above his head.

He swung it, trying to connect with Declan’s head. Declan grabbed the bat and pushed back on the deranged alpha. He might have been big, but he wasn’t strong. Declan and I had worked years in the field for our business and still did on occasion. We had the muscles to back it up.

Declan shoved Alpha Brown back. He stumbled and tripped over his own

feet, going down in a heap. Declan wrenched the bat from his grip and tossed it across the room. His fist cocked back and slammed into his nose. Blood sprayed everywhere.

“Go, Vic. Find her. I got this asshole.”

He continued to rain punches down on the pathetic excuse for an alpha, his bellows of rage turning into cries of pain. I ran from the room, yelling out for Riley. There was no sign of her. I charged toward the stairs, intending to go up and look for her, when I saw a door that was padlocked. I didn't see the keys anywhere, so I took a running start and slammed into it.

The hinges cracked and the wood split a little, but not enough to let me in. I tried again. This time, it burst open, and I promptly fell down a flight of stairs. Pieces of the door slid across the floor. I tumbled into a heap, groaning. I rubbed my head and shook it to clear the cobwebs.

“Victor?” Riley's soft, terrified voice broke through the fog.

I leapt to my feet and ran to the *cage* the fucker had her in. “Riley, petal, I'm going to get you out of here. Stay back from the bars.”

Tears tracked down her cheeks, and the room was rank with the stench of her fear. She nodded at me, though, and backed into the far corner. She curled into herself and hid her face with her knees. I studied the bars; they were too close together for her or me to squeeze through. I saw the lock. It looked like a typical jail-cell latch.

Where the fuck did he have the keys? They had to be around here. Snarling in anger, I told her I'd be right back and raced back up the stairs, leaping over the broken bits of the door. At the top of the stairs, I marched over to Alpha Brown, yanking him up by his collar. Declan was still straddling him, his knuckles split from how hard he had been laying into him.

“Where's the key?” I barked into his face.

Alpha Brown's eyes lolled in his skull. His nose was smashed, and he'd lost several teeth. I hoped he choked on them. His cheekbone was broken, and his jaw was possibly dislocated. Blood covered his face, and he was holding onto consciousness by a thread.

“Fuck. You,” he spit out, blood splattering onto my hand from his mouth.

Declan yanked him from my hold and smashed the back of his head down on the floor beneath him. “That's for being a smartass, fucker. Now, tell him where the keys are!”

“Never. I'll never tell you anything.”

I roared angrily and kicked out, slamming my foot into his ribs. I heard a

resounding crack and knew I had broken at least one of them. He screamed in pain, and I stepped down onto his ribcage. I bent in half and got right in his face.

“I have no qualms about killing you. If it were up to me, you’d already be dead, asshole. Not only did you dare to put your hands on my omega, you also treated *my* beta like shit his whole life. Scum like you don’t deserve to breathe the same air as those two precious humans. Now. Where are the keys?” I stepped down a little harder, hearing another small crack, and he whimpered.

“On the counter,” he bit out, eyes spitting fire.

“Now, that wasn’t so hard, was it?”

I motioned to Declan, and he grinned ferally before smashing his fist into Alpha Brown’s face, knocking him unconscious. He scrambled off the floor, and we rushed to the counter. There we found an immense ring of keys. I grabbed it and we sped down the stairs. Declan cried out, seeing Riley shaking and shivering in fear in the corner. A soothing purr came from him as he tried to comfort her the only way we could.

The keys jangled and clanged together as I tried one after the other fruitlessly. None of them fit this cell, but they all looked identical. Finally, I heard the best sound, a clunk as the lock tumbled open. I wrenched the door open and raced inside, bundling Riley into my arms. Declan was seconds behind me, gathering her up as well. We held her and purred as she cried tears of fear, horror, and relief onto our shoulders. Declan and I nuzzled into her neck, covering her in our scents. No one was touching our omegas ever again. We would make sure of it.

## CHAPTER 45

# RILEY

Victor carried me out of the basement. I wrapped my arms around his neck and snuggled in. I didn't want to let him go. Declan stayed right in stride with Victor. If he didn't, I couldn't help but whine until I could see him again. They quickly figured it out and made sure that they were within my vision range.

Before we made it to the Hummer, Ryan and Storm came running toward us. Victor put me down, maintaining the connection with me by holding onto my shoulder. My omega and beta rallied around me, wrapping me in their arms. Tears poured from Storm's eyes, and even Ryan looked close to tears. Victor tried once again to step away from me and my hand found his arm and my nails dug into his skin. He couldn't leave me.

"Petal, we need to get out of here. Can you let me go so I can drive?"

I vehemently shook my head. I needed him. Why didn't he understand? I couldn't let him go.

He stroked my hair and whispered crooning words into my ear. I needed all of them. They all needed to be with me. I couldn't let any of them out of my sight or touch. I wouldn't ever let go, not again. They were mine.

"Call Dell," Victor said.

I heard Declan agree, and then he tried to step away to make a call. I whined and tried to grab him back into our upright cuddle pile. He purred low and stepped back so I could still have contact with him. My mind was racing, my ears ringing. I knew I was on the verge of a panic attack, but I couldn't calm myself down.

I didn't know what they said, but after he hung up the call, he helped

move us all toward the trunk of the Hummer. He lifted the gate and then pressed a button, releasing the back seats. They folded down, making a larger space. Ryan climbed in first, holding his hand out for me. My head whipped between all of them. I couldn't get in if they weren't coming.

"Shh, petal, it is alright. We are all getting in with you. Climb inside with Ryan and we will join you. It will just be a second."

I nodded shakily and climbed inside. Storm was a hair's breadth behind me. As soon as she was inside, she wrapped herself around me like a koala and held tight. I settled into Ryan's lap and looked at my alphas. They got in together and laid themselves around us all, their arms wrapping across my middle to hold everyone close.

The scents of my pack filled my nostrils and finally, my heart stopped pounding so hard. I could hear talking around me but had no idea what was being said. I couldn't focus on it. Storm clung to me, crying and repeating something over and over, but all I could see was her lips moving. No sounds pierced my muddled mind.

A deep purr filled the interior of the back seat. It soothed my soul and helped to settle my nerves. I heard a door slam outside and I flinched, curling into my pack farther. They rubbed my arms and pet my hair. Storm nuzzled into my neck, rubbing her nose along my gland.

"RILEY?!" I heard in a scream.

I jerked but immediately realized I knew that voice. It was my brother.

"Dell?" I whispered.

Suddenly, his face was there, terrified but so familiar. I reached for him and he didn't hesitate to climb inside. He saw the way everyone wrapped around me, and he didn't try to disturb anyone's positions thankfully. He reached across and stroked my hair.

"I'm so sorry, Riles. I'm so, so sorry," he repeated over and over.

"It's not your fault, Dell. Don't be sorry."

"I wasn't there the first time, and now he's gotten to you again. I didn't protect you. You're my sister. It was my job to watch out for you and I failed."

It was that statement that broke me out of my muddled fog. "No, none of you failed. None of this is anyone's fault except Alpha Bro— Bro—"

I couldn't get his name out. I shuddered, and Declan lifted the volume of his purr, trying to calm me back down.

"It's his fault," I managed. "No one else's. You all found me in time."

Nothing happened. It could have been so much worse. You saved me, Victor, Declan, Ryan, and Storm. Dell, there is no blame for you either, understand?"

His eyes still looked sad, but he did nod. "I'll drive you all to the hotel. I think you guys need that more than Mom, Dad, and I do right now."

"Thank you, Dell," Victor said.

Dell jumped back down, shut the hatch, and moved to the driver's seat. Within seconds, I felt the car start to roll as he drove off toward the hotel.

"What is going to happen to him?" I whispered softly.

"Hopefully, he's dead," Ryan said.

"He had better be," Dell growled from the front seat.

"We left him broken and bleeding on his floor," Declan replied.

"Where?" Dell asked.

"Right inside the front door. Police will have no trouble finding him."

"Uh, he wasn't there when I got there."

"What? No, of course he was. There is no way he could walk away after what we did to him," Declan decreed.

"I went inside first when I got there. I didn't know where you all were. He definitely was not by the door. The back door was open . . ."

"Fuck," Victor snarled. "We'll get him. Don't worry. He isn't getting away with this. I promise you."

"I believe you, alpha," I murmured. I couldn't worry about that right now. There was too much else racing around my mind.

## CHAPTER 46



# STORM

**B**y the time Dell pulled up to the hotel, Riley's racing heartbeat had slowed. She could relax her hold on everyone, although she still stayed snuggled in the middle of our unorthodox cuddle pile. Dell parked the car and ran around to the back to open the hatch for us all to clamber out.

Riley looked around at all of us, and then she burst into the sweetest sound. It was one I had been terrified I would never hear again: her laugh.

"Where are your clothes, Ryan?!" she gasped out between hysterics.

Victor, Declan, and Ryan shared a look, and then their lips twitched too. Apparently, she had not noticed until now that Ryan wasn't wearing anything beyond his boxers. Dell even cracked a smile at that, too.

"We should probably get you all inside. I don't think this hotel will take kindly to a half-naked person loitering outside."

Victor snorted. "Yeah, they most likely won't. Come on, everyone, let's head upstairs."

He led the way, breezing through the doors, head held high. Ryan followed behind him, decidedly less confident now that he remembered his state of undress. Declan snickered and caught up to him, clamping a hand on the back of his neck. He leaned down and whispered something in his ear that had Ryan blushing, but he stood a bit taller.

Dell, Riley, and I brought up the rear. Riley might be better and able to let everyone walk ahead of her, but I wasn't. I clung to her arm, running my fingers down until I could intertwine them with her hand. She squeezed mine and rubbed her thumb over my hand as we followed the boys to the bank of elevators.

Declan pressed the button for up and seconds later, the one to the left

opened. We all piled in, and Dell used the keycard on the button panel and the one labeled PH lit up. He pressed it and the door slid shut and with a whoosh, we shuttled up to the top floor. The elevator had barely opened when Riley's mom and dad were flying into the car, gathering her up with a million hugs and kisses.

"Riley, sweetheart, are you alright?" her mother asked, tears streaking down her cheeks.

"I'm okay, Mom. They got me before he tried anything," she reassured her mom.

"Where is he?" Mr. Druman demanded of our alphas.

"We, uh, beat him unconscious. Or so we thought. But Dell says he ran away while we were caring for Riley. I am placing a call to the police as soon as we settle her enough to talk to them. He will not get away with this. I promise you," Victor said.

"Good. I want him dead. What? He tried to hurt our baby girl twice. Who knows how many other people he hurt? He doesn't deserve to live."

"He doesn't," Ryan said vehemently. "I am sorry that I allowed that man anywhere near Riley."

"Allowed him?" Riley's dad seemed completely confused.

"He is my father. A fact that I hate, but true nonetheless."

"That does not make what happened today your fault. Your father is a grown man who makes his own decisions. You didn't tell him to go grab Riley, did you?" Mr. Druman asked with a raised brow.

"No, of course not."

"Then there you go. Not your fault."

"Told you," Victor said with a snort.

Ryan gave a sheepish grin. "Well, I guess I can't argue with you all."

"You were a victim of his, the same as Riley. The fact that you got away does not make what he did today your fault, or anyone else's. The only person to blame is him. He is an asshole. He's the one responsible for his choices. Not you. Not me. No one but him. Got it?" I reiterated.

He nodded, a sheepish grin on his face. "Fuck, I love you, firefly."

"You better."

Victor snorted and rubbed his hand over Ryan's back in comfort. "I hate to break this up, but I think we all need to take a nap. We are in that room right there next to yours. Can we all get dinner together later tonight?"

"Yes, of course. But we don't need to stay here, wasting more of your

money. We will head home.”

Declan cleared his throat. “Well, um, we haven’t had the chance to clean up yet. We don’t want you having to sleep there. We have both suites rented because we weren’t sure what our sleeping arrangements would be when we got here. We were going to stay in this room and the girls, that one, if they wanted. But right now, I think we all need to be together. So please, stay, enjoy the room for another night or two.”

“Well, if you’re sure . . .”

“Positive,” Victor asserted.

“Okay, then we will see you tonight for dinner.” Riley’s dad leaned over, giving her a hug. “Riles, if you need us, we are right next door.”

“I know,” she told them. “Oh, actually. Can I come ask you both something really quickly?”

“Of course!”

Riley moved to go with her parents, but I was still clinging to her hand. She looked down at where we were touching and smiled softly. She pressed a kiss to my forehead and whispered into my ear, “I’ll be right back. I promise. I won’t disappear again.”

With my heart in my throat, I released her hand and watched her walk off into her parents’ suite, Dell coming up behind them. The second the door closed behind them, I felt my anxiety ratchet up. I hated this. It was happening far too often: her being away from me. She needed to be here, next to me, forever.

“How are you holding up, hurricane?” Victor asked, sensing my mood shift.

“We almost lost her. I almost lost her. I just found her and—” I broke off in a sob.

“Oh, hurricane, our precious, precious girl. Come here.”

He gathered me into his arms, lifting me up so I could wrap myself around him. Declan came up behind me, pressing into my back and burying his face in my hair. Ryan wrapped his arms around all three of us from the side. This was nice, even though one of us was still missing.

“I’m sorry we haven’t been checking on you, hurricane. You needed us too.”

“Riley was more important.”

“No. Riley is important, yes. But no more or less than you, or Ryan, or us. We are all a piece of this pack and if one of us is hurting, then we all are. We

should have been looking after both of you. You and she are bonded, and today must have been so incredibly hard on you. We are so proud of you, Storm. You are so strong.”

Hearing those kind words filled me with pleasure. He really knew how to make me feel better. It didn't hurt that he smelled so damn good either. I rubbed the bridge of my nose along the gland on his neck, adding my scent to the ones already there. This man belonged to me, bond or not, and I wanted everyone to know it. Twisting in his hold, I did the same to Declan and Ryan. No one was ever going to take a member of my pack from me again.

I'd kill anyone that tried.

I heard the door to Riley's parents' room open, and then she was hurrying back to our side. Seeing the impromptu cuddle session, she quickly followed Ryan's lead and hugged all of us from my other side. She buried her face in my side and pressed a kiss there. I reached out and brushed my hand over her hair.

Her gorgeous violet eyes looked up and met my own. “I want us all to bond. Now.”

## CHAPTER 47

# RILEY

**M**y announcement was met with silence. Storm's gaze held mine and I felt a zing through our bond, relaying how pleased she was with the idea. We needed this extra layer of security, the guarantee that they wanted us and we were theirs forever.

"Let's go into our suite. We can talk there, petal," Victor said.

*Fuck.* Did that mean they weren't on board? Victor released Storm from his arms and as soon as her feet hit the floor, she grabbed onto my hand again, rubbing her fingertips over my bond mark from her. Declan led the way to the room, using the keycard Dell must have given him to open the door.

We walked in, anxiety gripping my heart, and I stopped dead in my tracks. Holy. Shit. This "room" was bigger than my entire house. It was set up in a circle, with the center of it being a living room/kitchenette space. Around the edges were several doors that were standing open to reveal multiple bedrooms and bathrooms.

My jaw dropped open as I took it all in. To think that such opulence was so close to where I had grown up was astounding. Storm, Declan, and Victor had walked into the room and were taking seats on the large sofa by the floor-to-ceiling windows.

Ryan came back to my side and brushed a piece of my hair from my face. "Overwhelming, isn't it, butterfly?"

I swallowed and nodded. "This is the nicest place I have ever seen."

He smiled softly. "I get that. Come on, let's go talk to them about your proposal."

He winked at me, and I bit my lip to hide my smile. He held my hand and

led me over to our little pack seated on the couch. Storm patted her lap, wanting me to sit there. I shook my head.

“I want to be able to see you all for this conversation,” I told her. “Victor, Declan, Ryan . . . I know we said we wanted to wait, and that may have been true before.”

“It’s been a week, petal. There’s no rush. We will wait however long it takes until you are ready.”

“That’s the thing. I am ready. I knew this morning that all of you were it for me. The way you cared for us. Treated us. All of it. I want that forever. Then, when I was taken—” Growls from the alphas filled the room at the reminder and I spoke louder to be heard over them. “When I was taken, the only thing I could think about, over and over, was how much I wished I were back with my pack. I didn’t care if I got hurt, or even if I died, as long as I got to see you all one more time. That clinched it for me.”

“I don’t want to wait either,” Storm piped up quietly. “We both tried to claim you during our heats, and I think it was more than the hormones then as well. We knew you were ours and we wanted to make it official. I want the world to know we belong to you and you to us. I need it.”

“There will never be any doubt of that,” Declan said. “I’ll shout it from the rooftops if you want me to.”

I snickered. “Oh, I’m sure you would, Declan. But it’s more than that. I need to be connected to you all in the only way that is permanent. Forever. More than pack. I want that bond.”

I looked each of the guys in the face, allowing them to process what I had said. Victor’s gaze heated as he studied me, like he was checking to see if I really meant it. I had never meant anything more, except for when I told Storm I loved her.

Victor cleared his throat. “Please, don’t take this the wrong way, but are you only asking because of what happened to you today?”

My eyes flashed. “Have you listened to a word I’ve said? That was only the catalyst. I want you, my thickheaded alpha. I want Declan, my goofy, fun-loving alpha. And I want Ryan, the best beta I’ve ever had the pleasure of knowing. You all are perfect for us.”

“There she is,” Victor said with a grin, folding his arms across his chest.

“There *who* is?” I growled.

“Our omega.”

I blinked, confused by his response.

“The minute you said you wanted us, Declan and I were ready to bundle you both up into our room and make it official. We never had any intention of denying you. We just needed to know that you knew what you were asking for. That you really wanted it and you weren’t suggesting it because you were scared. We fell hard for you, petal. For both of you. If you want us to mark you as ours officially, it would be the greatest honor.”

“What he said,” Declan agreed.

“You mean it?” Storm asked, fresh tears brimming on her lashes. Storm never cried this much. Her emotions and nerves must be shot.

“Every word, firefly. You and Riley are ours. Let’s make it official,” Ryan said.

Storm and I both let out whoops of happiness.

“Let’s just wait until after dinner though, yeah? Declan and I would like to talk to your family. And call yours, Storm,” Victor added.

“Oh, I already told my parents. That’s what I went to their room to talk about. They are completely on board with the idea. They told me they were so happy that I had found my safe place with you all.”

Declan gave me a dopey grin. “That’s so sweet.”

“I already told my parents too,” Storm said with a conspiratorial smile. She held up her cell phone. “They are thrilled.”

Victor chuckled. “Of course you did. You two are going to give us a run for our money, aren’t ya?”

“Oh, of course. Got to keep you on your toes somehow, alpha.”

Declan’s eyes heated with her words. “I love hearing you calling me that.”

Storm twisted on the couch so that she could face him full-on. “Better get used to it, alpha. I intend to call you that a lot. Now, take us in there and make us yours.”

“Such a demanding omega you are. I cannot wait to make you mine officially.”

Declan rose from the sofa and grabbed her around the waist. Her legs wrapped around him and his strides ate up the distance to the nearest room. My eyes tracked their movements and when I turned back to face Ryan and Victor, I almost melted from the heat in both of their expressions.

“What do you say, butterfly? Should we join them?” Ryan asked me.

I held my hands out to the two men seated before me. They each gripped one and pulled themselves to stand. Victor towered over both of us, but even



Ryan made me feel small. They each wrapped an arm around me and led me toward the bedroom, where Declan and Storm were waiting.

## CHAPTER 48

## RYAN

When Victor, Riley, and I entered the bedroom, we didn't see Declan and Storm right away. It was too dark. Their shadowed shapes were visible on the large California king-sized bed in the middle of the room. Declan was kissing her and Storm was giggling at something he must have said to her.

Riley let our hands go and climbed up onto the mattress. Storm immediately pulled her closer, and the two shared a heated kiss. I could hear them whispering, but I was too far to make out what they said.

"Come, beta. Let's join them, shall we?" Victor's deep voice rumbled in my ear.

I nodded eagerly, and we made our way onto the mattress as well. Declan pulled me close to him, pressing a kiss to my temple.

"Are you okay with this, Ry? We didn't check with you to make sure bringing two omegas into our pack was alright. Are you up for that? We should have asked you before jumping in feet first," Declan said.

"Alphas, this is everything I could have hoped for. Everything we've been working toward. The fact that it's coming sooner than we thought . . . that's a bonus. You know I have been in love with Storm for years. To get the chance to be a part of a pack with her is a dream come true. And, while I just met Riley, she is just as amazing as Storm as far as I am concerned. When she chose me first to come into the nest, she stole a piece of my heart right there. There was no reason for her to do that, but she did. I want them both to be mine."

While I had been talking, I hadn't seen Storm and Riley creep up closer to

me. I felt the bed shift, and I turned my head to see them grinning at me.

“It thrills us to hear that, Ry-bread,” Storm said.

I snorted. “Nope. No way. That is not my nickname.”

“I don’t know. I kinda like it, Ry-bread. I can say I loaf you!” Riley snickered.

“What did I do to deserve this?” I asked, my eyes rolling to the ceiling.

Storm tipped my chin back down, pressing a kiss to the side of my mouth. “It is us who want to know how we deserve a beta, friend, and lover like you. Will you honor us by being the first to take our claims?”

My mouth popped open, and I stared at them in shock. They were picking me first again? My eyes bounced back and forth between Storm’s and Riley’s faces. They both smiled at me, nodding to show they meant it. I turned to look at my alphas and they, too, wore the hugest grins, but in their eyes, I saw something else: glimmers of pride. They were so proud of our omegas for their choice in me. I swallowed past the lump in my throat.

“I would like nothing better than to belong to the two of you.”

“Wonderful,” Riley practically purred.

Each girl took one of my arms, bringing my wrists up to their noses. They rubbed their bridges over my wrists, where I knew I had scent glands, though they gave off a much subtler smell than anyone else in this room. Their eyes rose to meet mine and then I saw a blinding white light.

Both of them bit down, hard, over my glands at the same time. A bond zinged to life between us, running through my system from the top of my head to the tips of my toes. Feelings of love, pleasure, joy, gratitude, and an overall sense of completeness filled me. I knew from when Victor and Declan had bonded themselves to me that I was also getting a dose of the feelings of the omegas. It was a heady cocktail.

My cock, that had been at half-mast since Riley suggested we all bond as a pack, hardened. It strained against my waistband. Storm and Riley released my wrists, running their tongues over the pinpricks of blood that remained on my skin.

“We will have to do that every few months or our marks will fade.”

“Darn, what a shame,” Riley said with a wink.

“Oh, yeah, sucks . . .,” I panted out, teasing them back.

Storm licked her lips, and then her eyes fell to my lap. “That all for us?”

Surprise made me bark a laugh. “Yeah, firefly. It has a mind of its own where you two are concerned.”

Storm's hand trailed down my chest and over the bulge in my boxers. She squeezed gently and I groaned, my chin dropping to rest on my chest.

"We'll take care of that for you in a minute," she said, releasing me.

I fell back on the bed, my heart still racing from the experience. I lifted a limp thumb up and closed my eyes. A split second later, I had them open again. I needed to see the girls claim our alphas too. I just knew it would be amazing. They shuffled around on the bed, going to Declan next.

"We want to do the same to you as we did to him. Together," Riley said, somewhat shyly.

Declan brushed a loose lock of hair back from her forehead. "I would love that. Taking both of your bonds at once is the perfect plan."

Riley and Storm nuzzled up against his neck, doing the same to him as they had to me, covering his scent glands with their perfume. They wanted all of us to be so intertwined, no one could pick out a particular smell. That sounded wonderful to me.

Declan's chest vibrated with a soft purr as the girls found the spots that they wanted to mark him. From my position on the bed, I watched as they reached hands out to each other, grabbing ahold. Then they bit him, marking him as their alpha forever. Declan roared out in ecstasy, and I was hit with another wave of pleasure and pride, this time from all three of my packmates. It rippled through my system so forcefully that I knew what they were experiencing must feel life-changing.

They had barely pulled back from his neck when he struck. He first bit Riley, then Storm, giving them matching marks over the glands on their necks. The girls whimpered in happiness, their hips rocking on the bedspread. The bonding was clearly having as much of an effect on them as it did on me. When they moved away from Declan to head over to Victor, I saw glazed looks in their eyes, similar to when they had been in the throes of their heats. And yet, they still had hints of awareness peeking through.

"Alpha Victor," Storm said. "Would you allow us to claim you as our pack? Our leader? Our head alpha?"

Victor's pupils blew wide as he stared down at our girls. I knew Storm's words had influenced him. "Of course I will."

Riley and Storm's faces transformed into expressions of complete contentment. Rising to their knees, they leaned forward to reach Victor's neck. He stopped them gently and whispered something into their ears. I strained to hear, but it was impossible. Whatever he told them had them

nodding emphatically.

He gathered Riley into his arms and buried his face in her neck. It looked like he was going to claim them first. I wasn't sure why, but he must have had a reason. Victor never did anything without knowing exactly what he was doing. His teeth sunk into her neck and everyone in the room either groaned or whined. There was nothing like your bond expanding and taking in more people.

He lapped at her skin and set her down on the bed, her irises slightly cloudy, as if she were riding a high of adrenaline. Storm didn't wait for him to pick her up and instead scrambled into his lap. She bared her neck to the side expectantly. He chuckled low and repeated the movement from before. The bond snapped into place, and I could feel everyone so much more.

Storm had the same out-of-it expression on her face when he set her down on the mattress. She shook herself, clearing some of the fog from her gaze, and took Riley's hand. They both turned their faces to Victor and feral-like grins took over. They once again rose to their knees. As one, they moved closer to him and whispered something, this time loud enough for us all to hear.

“All of you are ours now, alpha.”

“Perfect,” was his reply.

Their teeth sunk into the glands on either side of his neck at the same time. It was like a shot of lightning went straight through me. I could feel everyone. Every member of our pack was now completely and wholly together. Our bond was singing through all of us. Growls, purrs, whines, whimpers, and every other sound filled the room. Everyone descended on each other, intent on solidifying the bond physically as well.

## CHAPTER 49

# STORM

If I had known that completing the bond the way we did would be such an otherworldly experience, I probably would have insisted we do it during a heat. My heart was pounding, and Riley's and my perfumes were thick in the air. Slick was gathering between my legs, and I knew it would be moments until these panties stopped holding it back. I twisted my body so I could grab Ryan and pull his face to me.

"Hello, beta mine," I whispered, my eyes shining with the love I felt for him.

"Hello, firefly."

"You're ours now, you know. You can't get rid of us."

"I would never want to."

His lips lowered to mine, and he nibbled at my bottom one. I moaned and his tongue slipped into my mouth, deepening our kiss. I threaded my fingers into his hair, keeping him close. Suddenly, he broke away and pulled back from me slightly, eyes wide. I looked over his shoulder and bit my lip. Fuck, that was hot. Declan was behind him, running the length of his cock through the split in Ryan's cheeks. By the expression on Ryan's face, he must have been teasing at his hole at the same time.

"Be a good beta and make sure our omega is enjoying herself, please," Declan's gravelly voice said.

Ryan shivered lightly as he hurried to do what our alpha commanded. His hands grabbed at the waistband of my pants and he tugged them down to my knees. My slick gushed again, drenching my thighs. With a mewl of pleasure, Ryan wriggled himself down the bed so that his face was poised right above my pussy. He held my gaze and plunged his tongue into my seam, finding my



clit immediately.

My back bowed off the bed, and I grabbed at the back of his head, holding him in place. I rocked my hips up, riding his face. His tongue swirled through my core, lapping up my slick as it continued to flow from me.

“Ryan, use our omega’s slick on me,” Declan growled out from beside us. “Make sure I’m good and covered.”

With a groan of appreciation, he pulled back from my pussy, face shiny with my juice. Turning his head slightly, he plunged his mouth down over Declan’s full length in one gulp. My body responded to the erotic sight and a fresh burst of my perfume wafted around. Not able to help myself, my hand drove into my soaked pussy, rubbing furiously at my swollen clit. The sounds from Ryan’s mouth as he slobbered all over his alpha’s cock were driving me wild.

He pulled back, a thin line of spit shining in the dim light from his lower lip to the tip of Declan’s dick. Ryan licked his lip, breaking the connection. Without looking, he reached down and grabbed my drenched hand. He brought it over to Declan, and my fingers curled around his length. Ryan, using my hand, stroked our alpha several times, covering him in a combination of my slick and Ryan’s spit.

“Good job. Thank you, Ryan. Now, I want you and Storm to show me how well-behaved you can be for me. Put just the tip of your cock inside her, Ryan. No more. You don’t fuck her until I am buried in you. Understand?”

Both Ryan and I let out simultaneous groans. The mental image alone was almost enough to bring me to orgasm. Ryan, thankfully, could follow Declan’s instructions because I was ready to just toss him down on the bed and take my pleasure from him. This delayed gratification was hard.

Trying to focus on anything other than the feeling of Ryan’s cock pressing into me, I looked up into his eyes. The love shining in them, for me, for all of us, was astounding. He grunted, and I peered over his shoulder. Declan’s eyes were closed as he fed himself into Ryan. Sweat beaded on Ryan’s forehead from the effort of holding himself still.

Declan moaned and then his body curved around Ryan’s back, and he met my eyes. “Go ahead, Ryan.”

That was all he had to say before Ryan plunged himself all the way inside me. All three of us yelled out in bliss as Declan began moving. He held onto Ryan’s hips, fucking me by using our beta’s body. He thrust in and out of Ryan at a quickening pace. Soon, the hotel room was echoing with our cries

of ecstasy.

“Alpha, please, I can’t hold back much longer,” Ryan begged.

“Me either. Fuck, he feels so good,” I added.

“Come for me, my precious packmates. Let me hear how much you love this.”

No sooner had his permission been granted than my pussy was fluttering around Ryan’s length as an orgasm unlike any I had ever experienced tore through me. It was built upon and expanded by the feelings through our newly formed bond. When Ryan came, and then Declan, it was like I orgasmed all over again. My body quaked with the aftershocks for several minutes as I tried to catch my breath.

“That was beautiful,” Declan praised, lowering his body to the side and pulling Ryan with him so his weight wasn’t crushing me.

Ryan wriggled in Declan’s hold and they both moaned. Declan had knotted him, and they were both still experiencing the pleasure of that. Panting, I craned my neck to find Victor and Riley. I saw them lying across the bed at the top. Victor was whispering something to her, stroking her hair. His cock was deep inside her and they were rocking together at a leisurely pace.

I saw her neck strain, the vein on the side popping slightly, emphasizing her new bond mark from Victor. Her eyes rolled back into her head and she opened her mouth in a silent scream. Victor grunted and pressed into her one more time, his knot filling her and locking them together. I flipped over onto my stomach and crawled up the bed to them. I leaned down and pressed a soft kiss to the corner of her mouth. Her eyes fluttered, and she met my gaze with a happy sigh. I laid my head down on her chest and her fingers tangled in my hair. Victor laid his head beside mine.

“These make wonderful pillows,” he said before closing his eyes and falling asleep.

Riley and I snorted. “He’s right though. They really do.”

She snickered. “Glad I can be of some assistance. Now, let’s follow his example and take a nap.”

“Sounds like a plan.” I closed my eyes and started drifting off. “Hey, Riley?”

“Yeah?” she said, sleep already claiming her tone.

“I love you.”

“I love you, too.”

“I’m really happy right now.”

“So am I, Storm. So am I.”

With a full heart and a sense of completeness, I drifted off into a dreamless sleep.

## CHAPTER 50

# RILEY

Our alphas were wizards. That was the only explanation I could come up with for how, when Storm and I had woken up, there were brand-new outfits lying on the bed, waiting for us. They had even included full-sized bottles of shampoo in our regular brands. Squealing, we grabbed everything and ran off to the adjoining bathroom to take a shower and try on our clothing.

Everything fit perfectly. Wizards. They had to be.

When we came out of the bedroom, it was to find our three men seated at the barstools at the kitchenette. All three were dressed in suit pants and button-down shirts. Victor and Declan had their matching navy-blue shirt sleeves rolled up to their elbows. Ryan wore a ribbed tank under his shirt and the top three buttons were undone. I wanted to take them all back into the bedroom. Declan seemed to know exactly where my mind had gone. He gave me a wink as he approached Storm and me.

Leaning down, he whispered into my ear, “If you keep filling this room with your delectable perfume, omega, you are going to get your wish and we’ll never get to dinner.”

Of course, his gravelly voice in my ear had the opposite effect he was going for. A fresh burst of my perfume swirled around us. His chest rumbled with a purr as he inhaled, his eyes flashing. He dipped his lips to my neck and placed a soft kiss there, right over his mark.

“You smell fantastic, omega. The perfect mixture of all of us.”

I rubbed my nose into his shirt, breathing deeply. “So do you, alpha. I want to bottle this and wear it forever.”

“You’re in luck then, omega. I have no problem with covering you in all

our scents every day.”

I snickered and felt a blush rise to my cheeks. I probably would never get used to flirting, but damn, it was nice to hear. Declan chuckled at my expression and reached out for my hand. I slipped my fingers through his. Storm took Ryan’s hand, and Victor led us all down to the ground floor to the restaurant. My parents and Dell were waiting right outside the doors, looking uncomfortable.

We all greeted them, and Victor went to speak to the hostess. She seated us at one of the large corner booths in the back of the space. Storm and I slid into the middle seats. She draped her arm over the back of my chair, twirling my curls in her fingers. The waiter hustled over, taking our drink orders and dropping off menus.

“How are you, Riley?” my dad asked me.

“I’m . . . good. Really good,” I replied, slightly surprised to find it was true.

My parents smiled. I could see the concern lingering in the depths of their eyes, and I knew it would take a while for that to go away. Today had been a traumatic experience, one I never wanted to relive. But this afternoon? Well, that made a lot of the bad seem insignificant.

I never wanted to see Alpha Brown again, and it really bothered me he had gotten away, but I had a pack now. Two alphas, an omega, and a beta that were all mine forever. I was protected. I felt secure. It was what I had always dreamed of but had hardly dared to believe was possible for me. I scanned the faces of each of my pack members, feeling a pulse down our bond letting me know I wasn’t the only one thrilled with the outcome of the day.

At that moment, the waiter returned, and we got distracted with providing him with our orders. When it came to my parents’ turn, I watched them order the cheapest things they could find on the menu. Victor, ever observant as he was, noticed. I watched him as he fiddled with his hands, trying to avoid speaking up. After the waiter left, he couldn’t bite his tongue anymore. However, what he said was nowhere near what I was expecting.

“Mr. Druman, what is it you do for work?”

“Hmm? Oh, I work as a floor manager for the factory at the edge of town.”

“Do you enjoy it?”

“It pays the bills,” he said, chuckling.

Victor joined him. “Declan and I have a proposition for you.”

“Oh? And what might that be?”

“I don’t know if you know, but we own Birmingham Builders. We are always on the lookout for new locations to expand our business. When we came into town, we saw a dire need for new job opportunities. We would like to open a branch of our offices here. It should open up around two hundred jobs for the residents.”

“That’s nice,” my dad said, sounding confused. “But what does that have to do with me?”

Declan shared a look with his brother and gave Victor a small nod. “Well, we won’t be able to run the business currently. We will need someone that can do that for us. Be our right-hand man to get it underway.”

“Someone with managerial skills. And drive. Someone that likes to work and does a good job. You wouldn’t know anyone like that, would you?” Declan asked, grinning.

My mom elbowed my dad and he grunted. “Gosh dang, woman. Give me a moment. I might be interested if that’s what you’re hinting at.”

“We are,” Declan said. “The job comes with on-site housing, a company car, a full benefits package, and an annual midyear bonus.”

“Midyear?”

“Yes. A lot of companies wait until the end of the year, but we know sometimes, having a little extra halfway through can be a big help. So that was what we went with,” Victor answered. “So, what do you think?”

“I think this sounds too good to be true. What’s the starting rate?”

Victor stated a number that had both my parents blanching.

“Per day?”

“Oh, no. We pay hourly.”

“That’s far too much. Don’t offer me anything more than what you would pay anyone else.”

Declan and Victor shared a look. “But that’s not more than we pay anyone else. We have a tiered system based on experience and position. That rate is on the lower end because you would be fresh to the company.”

My dad looked shell-shocked. I didn’t know what he made at the factory, but their offer must have been a lot more than he was making now.

My mother looked astounded as well. “Did you say it came with a house? On-site?”

“Yes, we provide that for all the managers because they are technically on

call a lot and it's just easier for them to be right there and available if needed. Now, with a new setup like what we are proposing, there will be a lot more issues that arise in the beginning. It does tend to settle down as time goes on. Don't worry about constantly having to put out fires or anything," Declan explained.

"Would, um, would our whole family be able to stay with us?" my mom asked softly.

"If they want to, yes. It is your house. If you ever leave or look to retire, we will assist you in purchasing a home elsewhere so that we can grant the on-site one to the next person to take over," Victor said. "Although, I think Riley will come with us when we leave, and Drew, I have a feeling, will be with his pack for a while."

"What about me?" Dell asked. "Do you have a place for me on your crew? I don't want to be managerial or anything, but maybe starting in the field as a laborer?"

Victor studied him. "We are looking for a new apprentice for the electrician at our main headquarters. If you like, we can bring you to meet her and see if you think you would enjoy that type of work."

"That would be amazing! Would you mind, Mom? Dad?"

They looked at each other and then back at my younger brother. "It would be a great opportunity for you. You must promise to still come home sometimes though," my mom said.

"Yes, of course! Oh, now I'm all excited! I have to pack."

Without another word, Dell ran from the restaurant, completely forgetting his meal. Storm snorted and buried her head into my shoulder. I ran my hand down her back, her hair falling through my fingers like a waterfall. I heard a throat clear and I glanced up, fully expecting it to be one of our pack trying to get our attention. Instead, I met the angry stare of a strange alpha.

"Excuse me," he scoffed. "The two of you need to knock it off."

"Knock what off? We aren't being inappropriate," I asked, completely thrown off.

"Not being inappropriate? There are families here. Two omegas should not be over here canoodling. It's not right."

My jaw dropped open, but before Storm or I could say anything, Declan and Victor rose to their feet. Growls came from both of them as they glared at the alpha that dared to speak poorly of us.

"What did you just say about our omegas?" Victor demanded.



“Your . . . But . . . that’s just not right.”

“Says who?” Declan snarled. “Just because you haven’t seen it before doesn’t make it wrong. They obviously love one another. You can clearly see the bond marks on their necks from us. And yet, you have the gall to come over here and insult them, insult us, and their family? Because you decided they shouldn’t be together? Get the fuck out of here.”

The alpha gulped in the face of Declan’s ire and scurried away. Declan scanned the rest of the restaurant and saw several people looking over at the scene that had just occurred.

“Same goes for the rest of you. There is absolutely nothing wrong with our pack or who is a part of it. If you have an issue, you can leave.”

Declan dropped back into his chair, still glaring at the few people that hadn’t immediately returned their attention to their own table. Victor sank back into his chair too, albeit much slower.

He looked at both of us and asked, “Are you alright? I apologize you had to experience that.”

Storm snorted derisively. “We know there is nothing wrong with our love. We are happy. Complete. If they are so close-minded over the fact that two omegas can find that together, then screw ‘em. Right, Riles?”

I smiled. “Always my protector. And now that I have you three, I have even more.”

“Yeah, one more second and I was going to stand up too,” Ryan said sheepishly.

Storm chuckled. “It’s alright, Ry-bread. We know you would defend us if our big, bad alphas weren’t here.”

He groaned. “We have to get a better nickname.”

“Nope, that’s yours now, Ry-bread.”

“Save me from these silly omegas, please,” he pleaded, looking up at the ceiling.

“Ry, I don’t think there is any saving. I think we’re stuck with ‘em,” Declan stage-whispered.

Everyone laughed, even my parents. I looked around as the waiter reappeared with everyone’s food. Declan and my dad fell into a discussion about the business. Victor was asking my mother what appliances she would like for the home they would be building for them in the new office location. Ryan and Storm were play-fighting over his nickname.

I sat back in my chair, enjoying the sounds of my pack all fitting in with

each other. Everything was perfect. It was all falling into place. I didn't know what the rest of my life had in store for me, but I sure was excited to find out.

## EPILOGUE - RILEY

### Ten Years Later

Seeing my girl up on stage, speaking to the younger generation of omegas, always filled me with pride. It hadn't been a smooth road to get to where we were today. We had fought tooth and nail against societal norms for years, defending our love and our rights, that two omegas could indeed be together.

There were a few close-minded individuals that still attached a stigma to us. But now, more and more people realized that fate and love didn't care what someone's designation was. If it was meant to be, it would be.

Storm wrapped up her speech and the auditorium erupted in cheers. I saw a few faces with tears running down them. Obviously, her words had moved them. I hoped that meant that if they had been hiding who they loved, for whatever reason, that they had a little more confidence to stand up for what they wanted.

My beautiful omega made her way down the side of the stage. Several teachers came over to shake her hand and the students started crowding around her. She was in her element. Storm was made to be a public speaker, defending those that she felt needed help.

I caught her eye overtop a young omega male's head and winked at her. She gave me a small smirk back and then someone else grabbed her attention once again. Shaking my head fondly, I slipped out the back door of the auditorium. I wandered the halls, surprised at how similar everything looked, even though it had been years since I had stepped foot in the ORA.

Much of the school was the same: the same marble floors, the same tiled walls, the same classrooms with their doors standing open, just waiting for

the omegas to come in. Down the hall from me, I could see the sign for the office still hanging above the door. Across from there was the infirmary where Storm had gone to get the heat suppressant pills all those years ago.

My hands trailed along the walls as I walked, and I thought how different my life might've been if I hadn't been given that scholarship to the school. If I hadn't met Storm that first day I arrived or if we hadn't been scent matches . . . Fate had a funny way of making sure everything worked out for the best, I guessed. If even just one thing had been different, my life, Storm's, Ryan's, Victor's, and Declan's would've all differed completely from where we were.

As the years passed, we had gotten closer and closer. Even now, knowing they were at home and Storm and I were here, I couldn't wait to get back to them. Every day with them was like the best day of my life. It just kept improving.

I turned the corner and wandered down another hallway. In front of me was a room that made me pause. It was the old headmistress's office. The one where Storm and I had been torn apart from one another when they had decided we didn't belong with one another.

Thankfully, when we came back to town after becoming a pack, Storm and I had told them everything that had happened to us. Our alphas were furious. Along with Storm's parents, they had gone on a warpath against the ORA.

They went all the way to the school board council. All the teachers that had been a part of the treatment that Storm and I had faced, including the headmistress, had been charged and fired for negligence. And the alpha that dragged me from the closet got charged with assault. He was currently rotting away in jail. I hoped he stayed there.

Alpha Brown evaded the police for several months, but he got his comeuppance in the end. I didn't feel bad for him in the slightest.

Moving toward the door, I knocked lightly, hearing a kind voice answer, "Come in!"

I pushed open the door and took a step inside, surprised to find my teacher from Heat Expectations behind the desk. She looked up, not recognizing me at first, until I said her name. Instantly, her face transformed into one of surprise. She leapt up from the desk and came around to give me a hug.

"Oh my gods, how are you, Miss Druman? Is it still that? Silly me, of course it's not. I know that. It's been so long! When I heard what happened to

you, I was so worried, but no one would give me any information. Are you all right? Clearly, you are. I mean . . .” She paused to take a deep breath. “How are you?”

I laughed at her enthusiasm. “I’m doing well. Storm and I found a pack, as I’m sure you know. Pack Birmingham has been the best thing to happen to us.”

“Oh, that’s absolutely wonderful. I’m so glad to hear it! You know, I knew from the moment we talked that you and Storm were destined to be matched. It was just something about the way you talked about her. Like she was your everything already and you hadn’t even realized the depth of those feelings.”

“Yeah, I should have known, to be honest. Everything about her called to me. I’m pleased to see you are the headmistress here, Ms. Ginger.”

“Thank you. It was never my intention to take this position, but after what happened last time, everyone was too scared to fill this role, worried that someone would evict as well them. I volunteered to take it on temporarily. That was ten years ago,” she said, laughing.

“The students need someone like you. I’m glad that you took the position. I can tell what a great job you are doing here.”

“Thank you so much for that!”

Before either of us could say anything else, there was a quiet knock at the door behind me. I turned and there was Storm, smiling at me from the doorway. I motioned for her to come in, and she and Ms. Ginger talked for a little, going over all the changes that had happened since we left the school.

A few minutes later, Storm and I were making our way out of the ORA. We gave it one last look over our shoulders, happy that we had the experience of coming back and that this time around was much better than our first.

We got into Storm’s car and made our way back home. On the way, we stopped to get some fast food for dinner. Neither of us felt like cooking, and I knew the boys were out working all day and would be tired when they came home.

Not for the first time, I thought about how wonderfully everything had worked out. My younger brother had been thriving as an electrician, having completed his apprenticeship a few years after he moved here. He had even met his pack thanks to his job.

Drew had worked things out with his pack. He was now settled down a

few miles away from our home. My mom and dad were getting closer to retirement, which was now a possibility for them thanks to Victor and Declan's hiring of my dad. Previously, my parents had thought my dad would work until the day he died. Now, it was a guarantee that they could stop and enjoy their old age. They were planning on moving somewhere tropical and warm. My mother couldn't wait.

As for myself, I had taken up a job as a teacher at the local omega school. They had offered me one at the ORA, but I felt I would be better suited to the local districts. I knew I could offer more help there. I taught a brand-new class on scent matching.

It was created just a few years back, when I had petitioned the school boards to add it in. When I suggested it, the boards all seemed surprised that we didn't have something like that already. Immediately, they jumped on board with getting it added into the curriculums around the globe. Now, starting in their third year, I helped omegas begin learning which fragrances were the ones for them.

People all over the country sent scent swatches for the schools to use. Usually, it led to at least one or two matches being made per class. It was giving omegas and alphas better chances to make sure they settled with the pack meant for them. Also, there was no limit to the number of matches someone could make. Omega/omega pairings were becoming more common. I liked to think Storm and I spearheaded that movement, and I couldn't be prouder.

Storm and I pulled up to the house, parked the car, and jumped out, carrying our bags of burgers and drinks. Inside, we placed them on the kitchen counter. We made our way through the house, looking for the rest of our pack. Upstairs, we could hear the water running and assumed one of our alphas must have gotten in after they were done with work today.

"Maybe we should surprise them?" Storm suggested.

"Surprise them how?"

A wicked smirk crossed her face, and she pinned me against the wall, ravishing my mouth with hers. "I think we'll think of something."

I moaned into her, my body already waking up for hers. I was constantly ready to go around any of my pack, but something about my first packmate really got me going even now, after all these years together.

"Get in the nest, omega," I whispered.

She giggled and took off at a run toward our nest room. We stepped in,

tearing our clothes from our bodies without care. We tossed them by the door and dove into our little fort that we had built, reminiscent of the one we made back at the ORA. It had been the perfect nest then, and it still was now.

Storm rolled us over so that she was straddling me, her hips flush with mine. Her face was right above mine, her hair cascading around us like a curtain. I reached up, running my fingers through it and down her arms. She lowered her head and pressed a kiss to my neck. I whimpered and thrust my hips up, rubbing against her pelvis.

“Riles, my love, that feels so good. Do it again.”

She didn’t have to ask twice. I rolled my hips up, our slick mixing and lubricating us as we slid against one another. Her gorgeous breasts smashed into mine as she joined in the pace I was setting. Her voice carried out of the fort and into the surrounding area as her orgasm crested over her, covering me in her release. She panted hard, her eyes shining. I continued to lazily rock against her, not having climaxed myself yet.

“Get your toy, omega mine. The one we used the first time we were together,” I whispered.

Her eyes widened with glee, and she jumped off me to run to the side of the nest, where we kept a small box full of all the toys we had played with over the years. Nothing held a candle, though, to that pink dildo she had gotten in secret back at the ORA. There was just something about that one that really did it for us both.

Returning to where I lay, patiently waiting for her, she clicked the button, turning the vibration on. I groaned in anticipation, and she ran the tip through my drenched slit. Slick gushed from me, covering the waterproof sheets below us, something the guys had insisted on.

“Do you like that, sweetheart? Do you like when I tease you with my knotty toy?”

“Fuck! You know I do, Storm. Gods, it’s so good.”

“Mmm. You know what’s even better?” she asked, winking. “This.”

She took the dildo and plunged it into my opening, filling me right up to the uninflated knot. I screamed and my neck arched as my back bowed. The tip of the pink toy pressed against my G-spot in the perfect way. The buzzing from the vibrations made my pussy walls clench and pulse. Storm pulled and pushed the toy in and out of me, picking up speed. My cries of bliss filled the room.

“More, Storm. Give me more!”

“You need more, omega? Is my toy not enough for you? How about I add this?”

From behind her, she produced a small silicone rose toy that had become another favorite of ours. Pressing the button on the side, I watched as the top of it started a pulsing suction. Grinning wickedly at me, she pressed it down on top of my clit. I saw white behind my eyelids as the combination from the toy inside me and the one sucking on my clit sent me to outer space.

Slick poured from me, along with my release, coating Storm’s hands and the surrounding cushions. She inflated the knot and pressed her toy deep into me, giving my body what it was seeking to keep my orgasm going. Wave after wave rolled through me—one starting before the other even finished—until I was a quaking mess. My eyes blurred and crossed, my legs shaking with the aftershocks. Storm sat back, looking extremely pleased with herself.

“Come here, omega,” I growled.

She giggled and flopped down next to me. I grabbed her face and kissed her deeply, our tongues warring with each other’s. We were so lost in each other, we didn’t notice right away when Ryan poked his head in.

He cleared his throat. “Hey there, ladies. Room for one more?”

“For you? Always,” Storm said, holding her hand out in invitation.

Ryan climbed into our nest and snuggled into my other side. He kissed my neck and I bared it to him, loving the feeling of my beta kissing where one of his alphas had claimed me. His blunt teeth scraped across my skin and I moaned.

“Keep doing that and we won’t be leaving the nest in time for dinner,” I warned.

“Oh, there was never any chance of that, butterfly.”

“What do you mean?”

“Don’t you know what today is?”

“Hmm . . . September 9<sup>th</sup>, I think.”

“Right.”

He didn’t say anything else, just looked at us expectantly. Storm was quicker to figure it out than I was.

“Shit,” she said.

“What?”

“Riles, how are you feeling?”

“How am I feeling? Well, a bit hot now that we are crowded in here. And still horny, thanks to you two kissing and touching me.” I chuckled.



Storm and Ryan wore matching expressions as they waited for it to click. Suddenly, I felt a cramp start in my lower stomach. Shit. Time had slipped away from us; today, our heats started. It was the anniversary of Storm's and my first dual heat, the one that paved the way for all of us as a pack. For whatever reason, this heat was always the most intense every year.

"Knock, knock," Declan said from the doorway. "We come bearing gifts of water bottles and food. May we enter?"

Storm and I laughed. They still insisted on asking permission every time, even though we had told them over and over that they were welcome in our nest whenever they wanted. We told them to come in, and Victor's head popped inside the fort moments before his brother's. Their arms were laden with food and water bottles. Ryan grabbed some and helped Declan take them to the mini fridge that they had insisted we put in here, stocking us up for what was going to be a very busy week.

Between my legs, I felt the inflatable knot go down, and Declan pulled it from me, earning a whine as it brushed against my entrance on the way out. His pupils were blown wide as he stared down at me, covered in Storm's and my releases.

"Fuck, that's a pretty sight," he said.

Blush tinged my cheeks, and I turned my head to avoid his eyes. A second later, I was crying out. His thick tongue was lapping at my drenched pussy, gathering all the slick he could and swallowing it down. Victor came back to the nest and, upon seeing what Declan was doing to me, grinned and grabbed Storm's ankle, pulling her close.

"Your turn, hurricane," he purred.

Victor pushed three of his fingers into Storm's pussy, using her slick as lubrication. Her cries joined my own in a chorus of ecstasy. The wet sound filled the room, teasing me. I needed to see. I leaned up on my elbows, my eyes laser focused on Storm. Victor saw me watching and smirked. I groaned, matching Storm's whine as he added a fourth finger, easily stretching her to take it.

I knew what was coming. This wouldn't be the first time either of us had taken one of our pack member's whole fists, but it was no less erotic to witness. Declan sucked on my clit, hard, as Victor repositioned his hand and then slipped the whole thing inside Storm. I knew from experience, it felt amazing. His fingers would hit all the right places.

Looking up and meeting my fiery gaze, Victor commanded us to take

Ryan's length into our mouths. Storm and I had to twist due to our prone positions, but we made it work, each of us licking and sucking on a side of his cock. We alternated bobbing up and down his erect shaft. It didn't take long before his cum erupted from his tip, and Storm and I happily swallowed it down. We turned to each other and kissed once again, tasting him and ourselves together.

Storm and I were so close to exploding ourselves by this point, it was no surprise when she demanded, "Fuck us, alphas. Give your omegas your knots."

Both our alphas growled eagerly, and I heard the slick sound of Victor's drenched hand leaving Storm's opening. They rose overtop us and slid into our cunts, taking us right to their bases. Their growing knots bumped against our entrances teasingly.

Victor and Declan began thrusting in earnest. Our bodies were jolted and shoved across the soft floor a few inches from the force. A look into their eyes and we knew our alphas were in another rut. The pace they set was brutal. Intense. But fuck, it felt so good.

Ryan moved so he was behind us, stroking our hair and telling us what good omegas we were being for our alphas. We whined and whimpered, pleased by his words. The haze that I had been ignoring and that had been shimmering on the edge of my vision began to cloud over my eyes. It wouldn't be long now until I was lost to my heat. Beside me, Storm's eyes were already foggy.

"Ryan," Victor grunted. "Get over here. I want to taste you."

"Give me your hand," I growled at Victor. "I want to taste my omega."

Victor's eyes heated, but he held himself up by his other arm and extended his still wet hand to me. I opened my mouth and sucked each of his fingers in, licking and lapping up my Storm's tangy, unique taste. My eyes rolled to the back of my head and I knew my heat was here. The last thing I remembered before the haze took me fully was Ryan's neck straining as Victor's mouth wrapped around his cock and he swallowed him down.

Our heat lasted a full week, as it always did. By the end of it, we had all been fucked, sucked, and played with until none of us could think straight anymore. Even as exhausted as we all were, Storm and I couldn't wait until the next one. Fuck, I loved my pack.

# COMING SOON - RUN, OMEGA, RUN

Drew:

I wasn't supposed to be here. If my alphas knew that I was listening to their conversation, they would be furious, but I had to know what was going on. The secrets were killing me. I didn't know why they didn't think they could tell me, but I knew something was changing and it was big.

I crept closer to the office door, hearing voices inside. I heard my name mentioned and my ears perked up. The door was cracked open just slightly enough that I could see Charlie sitting on the couch. His arms were waving emphatically while he talked, but I was having trouble making out the words.

Suddenly, the most gorgeous girl I had ever seen crossed in front of him. Her brown hair hung down her back in shining waves. Brunette eyes flashed with ire as she snarled back at Charlie. Who was she? I needed to know. I wanted to know. Something was telling me that she was important.

"No. Absolutely not. There is no way I will ever let that happen. I am omega here. That means I say who is in the pack and who isn't. Me. Not you. Me. I will not allow, or have, a beta in my pack! You are my pack. The three of you. Not anyone else. No other omegas. No other alphas. And certainly no disgusting betas."

My heart plummeted to my feet. She was talking about me? And my pack? I mean, I guessed they technically weren't mine, but I had always thought that they would be. That seemed to be their intention this whole time. I waited for someone, anyone, to speak up for me, but they all sat in silence.

Slamming open the door, I glared at the three alphas that had stolen my heart and were now stomping it into the ground with their refusal to defend me. "I can't believe that I ever thought I loved any of you. I thought that what

we had was something special. I can see now that it was all a lie. You were just stringing me along until you could get your omega. Well, congratulations, you have her. I'm out."

Spinning on my heel, I ran out of the house, not even stopping to grab my clothes. I was going home. Fuck this and fuck them. But most of all, fuck that omega trash.

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

R.A. Alyse always wanted to write. From an early age, she began stuffing notebooks with her stories. When she got older and discovered romance novels, she knew what she was going to create.

Now she fills her books with love, spice and a little magic. Her characters have a tendency to be a part of the LGBTQIA+ as she wanted to see more representation for where she fit.

If she isn't spending her free time reading or writing, you can find her scrolling social media or hanging with her family and their growing number of pets.

Follow her on her socials to keep up to date on all her new and upcoming releases!

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I also need to thank all my loyal readers. I write these stories for you and I hope you fall in love with the characters as much as I do!

Until next time!

Love, Spice, and a Little Magic  
R.A. Alyse

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