

## Chapter 0014

"I am not going to ruin anything, Luke. Look at her. She wants us. She is happy to see us. The mate bond is powerful. She will forgive us for not looking for her. We had every reason to believe she was dead. I've got this. You know how much I love her. How much I have always loved her."

"James, I —"

I cut the link with Luke. I need to concentrate. I cannot afford to make a mistake, especially if I expect Stephanie to forgive us for not looking for her. The mate bond is already messing with my mind. I feel like I am in a trance.

I continue to move towards her. Finally, I am within a couple of feet of her.

I reach out and touch her cheek, and she responds. I feel the sparks running from my hand up and down my arm... and directly to my cock. The werewolves who have told me about the mate bond and the sparks did not do them justice. These are magical and all-absorbing. How could my parents seriously expect me to have given these up in favor of chosen mate?

"You are back!!! Oh, I cannot believe that you are back!!! How long have I hoped and prayed that you would come back! And ... you are my mate!" I whisper to her, the weight of her

being back hitting me hard. I am so scared that if I close my eyes, this will turn out to be just a dream.

"You are so beautiful. How is it possible for you to become so much more beautiful than before?" I ask her. Stephanie was a knock-out before, but the Stephanie of six years ago cannot compete with the Stephanie of today.

I pull Stephanie into a hug and bury my face in her neck. Her scent is overwhelming me. It is all I can do to prevent myself from marking her, right here and now.

Luke once again tries to talk to me in the link, but I respond back angrily. "You will have your time with Stella, I promise. Just let me have this time with Stephanie, please!" I then cut the link again.

Stephanie tells me that I smell like vanilla and coffee beans, which makes me smile. The combination of our scents is perfect. Absolutely perfect. As though it was always meant to be. When we complete the mating and marking process, our blended scents will be the envy of all.

I feel Stephanie run her fingers through my hair. Goddess, how I have missed this. Goddess, how I have missed her.

I stand up to look at her again, reassuring myself that she is still here and this is not a dream. That is when I notice that she is a little bit taller than she was before. That is odd... typically werewolves reach their full height by age 18. But, then again, I do not know what has happened to her in the past six years.

I suddenly start to worry. Is she hurt? I spin her around so that I can examine her. There are definitely subtle changes in her, but nothing bad. Every change that I see is a good one.


I can tell that she is worried that I do not like what I am seeing, so I immediately try to reassure her. It is not hard to do so; the she-wolf in front of me is absolutely perfect. I compliment her on her hair, and I beg her to never leave me again.

I can tell that she wants to talk, but I am not ready to talk about anything serious yet. I just want to enjoy this moment and be with my mate. I find myself getting lost in Stephanie's eyes, which I notice are the same bright green color as those of the Little Brat. That seems strange, but I tell myself that she must just be wearing colored contacts.

I then give my permission to do what I have wanted to do since I first realized it was her. I kiss her.

Oh, Goddess. This is the best kiss that I have ever had. How can one she-wolf kiss this well? A part of me begins to feel jealous... or worried... or both. Have other males kissed her in the past six years?

Stephanie quickly reassures me that this is her first kiss in six years, and I relax. This must just be the mate bond at work. I smile, and then I decide to let her see a little bit of the possessive side of me. She always liked that in the past.

 +15 BONUS

"It had better be your first kiss in six years. I cannot bear the thought of anyone else touching what is mine. And you, Stephanie Brogan, are mine. All mine."

Instead of smiling and nestling up to me like she would have in the past, her face drops.

"I am not Stephanie, James. I am Lily."

And that is the moment in which I felt my world crashing down all around me.

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