

## Chapter 0520

I hear them too, but still no one else. Elena is my dad's second chance mate? What the f\*ck is the Moon Goddess Playing at? She's helping me, he hates me. She's a witch and he's a werewolf, just like Nikolas and Gentry. Oh! That explains why I keep seeing the four of them together. When did this happen? Will she stay here, in the pack? Will he go with her now that he is free of his Beta duties? Will she want to keep training me now that she is with him? My stomach plummets at the thought. We have been doing so well and I love training with her, I don't want to lose that because she chooses her mate over me.

My heart actually hurts at the thought of the loss.

"No! You are not spiraling, get out of that head Bitty." Oliver picks me up and I can tell we are moving by the flexion in the muscles in his torso.

I don't know where we are going, but I can smell Cam and Kota with us too. I bury my head in Oliver's neck. I know he says we aren't mates, but his scent is the thing keeping me sane right now. I can feel Cam and Kota close too. One is touching my ponytail as it swings and the other brushes my shoe as his arm swings. I'm trying to stay out of my head like Oliver said. I'm thinking about what I did with Jena when she was having full blown panic attacks. Five things I can see. I see Oliver's shirt below me, behind him I see trees

and a path. We're in the forest. To his right I see Cam's legs walking a step ahead. Looking down I see Kota's arm swinging behind me. Four things I can feel. Oliver's breath on my head. My hand fisted into his shirt. His firm grip on my ribs and legs. The temperature change as we move further down the path. Three things I can smell. Them. I can smell all three of them separate but together. Crisp citrus, sharp cinnamon and warm honey. It's like my personal dessert. Two things I can hear. All of them breathing, deep controlled breaths. I can hear the crunch of twigs and rustle of the damp earth under their feet. What can I taste? Salt. Was I crying? I don't even remember. 1

"Giver her here, and start a fire, she's shivering."

"Cam..." I can only whisper his name. He sits on the ground leaning against one of the large logs with me across his lap. I tuck my head into his neck and breathe in, letting his scent add a wave of calm to my nerves.

"We've got you Tiny."

"What happened? We were talking with mom and my knees almost gave out then we were running out the back door. I didn't even realize we were running to you until I grabbed your hand. It's like my wolf took over." Kota says over the pile of wood he made inside the rough stone clad circle.

"I felt your fear. This was probably just as bad as the locker room Bitty, what did they tell you?"



I let them get the fire started and just stare for a minute while I gather my thoughts. They sit on either side of Cam but facing towards me. I shift so I am sitting in Cam's lap, my back to his broad chest. Kota plays with my fingers and Oliver brushes the exposed skin between the hem of my leggings and my sock. Cam has his arms loosely belted around my waist.

"Elena and Gentry think that we can override the pentagram magic. She said all of us have to be a part of it, including mates, and my dad will be there because she is his second chance mate." I take a deep breath in and let it out slowly. I can feel tears slowly rolling down my cheeks.

"Oh damn!" Kota squeezes my hand.

"Sh\*t, Tiny, I'm sorry." Cam's arms tighten.

"How can we help?" Oliver holds tight to my leg.

"I don't know. I love working with her and now that she's his mate, I might lose her." I pull my hand from Kota's and wriggle out of Cam's lap to stand. They just watch me like a cornered animal that might lunge at them. Not a completely wrong thought though. "She might choose him over me, just like Ava, just like Lucas, just like you guys." I start pacing around the fire, trying to keep myself under control.

"What do you mean like us?" Cameron stands when he asks, but doesn't come close. The other two follow suit.

"I've had to let you guys go more than once because it was what was best for the pack. And now all of you are old enough to find mates and so far they happen to be my friends. And I am so, so glad that everyone's finding people that are amazing, but I'm afraid that now everyone is pairing off, it's going to be like my dad after losing my mom or Luna Ava the night you all called me a traitor." I really need to let that go, I've thrown it in their faces so many times with no real response. "They both chose their mates over me when I didn't do anything wrong and I'm the one who ended up hurt in the end. You guys are all going to end up choosing your mates, because that is what's supposed to happen. You two will have your Luna, who will want nothing to do with our friendship. Oliver will have his mate and he will stop being my shadow. As much as I complain, it makes me not feel alone and I will lose that. Elena will choose him and he won't let her be around me, let alone train me because he hates me and the thought just makes me feel hollow. And that sounds so selfish when I say it out loud. But being everyone's go-to, reliable person, but no one's top priority, it still hurts so much." I grasp at my chest, tears are still falling slowly, like I'm running out of them. 2

I can't look at any of them after that tantrum. I feel like a brat, but I can't hide the feeling or stuff it in the back of my head. I think the situation in the office with Lucas and Ava and then replaying it with Nathaniel brought it all bubbling to the surface again and now I am overflowing with that insecure voice that sounds so much like a mixture of my


dad and Kaley telling me I'm not important enough to be a priority to anyone, I am just a tool to be used and then forgotten. It's why I wanted to leave in the first place. I wanted the warrior bond to not feel those emotions for just a little while and then to find a mate who would choose me no matter what and sail off into the distance. 1

"Hey, Bitty. I think we need to set some things straight."  
Oliver has his hands up in a surrender gesture.

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