



PACK ENFORCER

WERE CHRONICLES

CRISSY SMITH

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Pack Enforcer

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Warning: This book contains sexually explicit content which is only suitable for mature readers. This story has been rated *Total-e-burning*.

Were Chronicles

PACK ENFORCER

Crissy Smith

Dedication

This book goes to everyone who loves the wolves — thanks for the support.

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Chapter One

Emily Black kicked her shoes off and watched as they flew across her living room. Godforsaken things. She hated shoes no matter what kind they were. At least the tennis shoes she wore to class were more comfortable than the heels her friends wore.

She kicked them under the coffee table as she passed and stripped off her shirt and jeans while heading into the bedroom for loose shorts and T-shirt. Once comfortable, she headed into the kitchen. The fridge, which she kept overstocked, was cool as she opened it. She grabbed a bottle of water and the Tupperware full of lasagne she had packed.

Heating it up in the microwave, she sat on the counter to wait for it with a fork in her hand. Many people would consider her behaviour weird or think that she hadn't eaten in hours. But, for her, it was just another day. She had eaten lunch only two hours ago, but a shifter burned a lot of energy and needed to eat large regular meals.

She, however, ate many small meals. Especially around the few people she called her friends. Even though the world had finally admitted there were Shifter or Were creatures out there, she didn't like to call attention to herself. No one at school knew about her. Of that she was pretty sure. To them, she was just a quiet girl who liked to study and keep to herself. She was pretty in a traditional way, but not a head-turner. She would leave being stunning and charming to those around her. She preferred to blend in and not draw attention to herself.

She could see her answering machine light blinking, indicating she had a message, but wasn't in any hurry to check. It was probably someone trying to sell her something. She didn't get many phone calls.

* * * *

Cain knocked on the door to his Alpha's study and waited for the grunt meaning to come in. He entered and remained silent as Lamont finished his phone call. If Lamont hadn't wanted the conversation overheard, he wouldn't have let Cain in. Werewolf hearing was better than any device you could buy.

Cain immediately recognised the young Were's voice on the other end of the line. She spoke softly to the Alpha of the Pack, although her tone showed frustration. Hearing her voice sent a shiver down Cain's spine and a jolt to his cock.

They all worried about the young Were women who were out of the Pack's territory. In all of the attacks that had recently taken place, the females were away from home, out of Pack territory. Showing why he was Alpha, Lamont was calling them home before Cain had thought of it.

"Have some bags packed when your ride gets there," Lamont said sternly into the phone.

Cain barely held back a smile when he heard the order.

"No, someone will be there to pick you up." He looked over at Cain. "It will be someone you recognise from the Pack. Do not leave with anyone else."

Lamont listened for a few more minutes before cutting her off. "No. You will stay in one of the cabins. It will be fully furnished for your arrival." He waited again. "You'll stay until we know what is going on and I tell you it's okay to go back." That was all Alpha speaking to one of his Pack. Cain knew how Lamont felt about Emily. How everyone felt.

Emily had been changed as a child, which was against every rule and law they had. Most children could not handle the stress of change. That was why it was forbidden. Too many children had died back in the settling days before his family had a Pack leader. It was Lamont's father who had forbidden the change of children or anyone who did not choose it. There were too many risks.

Someone could carry the Were DNA two ways—through birth or by being bitten. However, being bitten did not mean they would automatically change. They must carry the strain somewhere down their line.

Cain's brother, Tony, could explain it better. Tony was a natural born talker. He could smooth over anything or anybody. He was the face of the Pack. When the Packs had decided to come out in the open, to stop hiding from the world, there needed to be a recognised face. A face that people could see and not think of a monster. Cain was just glad it wasn't him. He would rather stay home in his Pack's territory, keeping watch and protecting his Alpha.

He turned his attention to the man who sat behind the desk. A man he respected more than anyone else.

"Emily Black," Lamont told him once he hung up the phone.

"She's coming home?" Cain asked even though he knew the answer.

Lamont nodded at him. "I want every female home and safe. Especially her."

Cain understood what Lamont was saying.

They had rescued her from the cage she had been put into after she had been changed — when the ones who had changed her couldn't handle her. She had been filthy and bruised from head to toe. Neglected and scared with no idea what was going on. She'd been twelve. Now, ten years later, she would be coming home to be kept safe once again.

"I want you to go get her and get her here safely," Lamont told him.

Cain just stared at his Alpha. "Me? You sure? Maybe Tony would be better," he suggested instead. It wasn't that he didn't agree. He did — she needed to return home. He knew it was for the best. But after years of fighting his attraction to her, Cain wasn't sure being closed in a moving vehicle together was a good idea.

Lamont just looked at his second-in-command and raised an eyebrow.

Cain cleared his throat. "Of course. I'll leave right away." He turned to walk out.

"Cain," Lamont called after him. He waited until Cain had turned around and met his gaze. "There's always been something there between you and Emily. Do you want to tell me about it?"

Cain shook his head. "I'm not sure I know what you're talking about."

Lamont stood and walked around the desk. "I'm not asking as your Alpha. I'm asking as your father. Is there something between you that I should worry about?"

Cain understood the question that wasn't asked. He was a dominant male. Emily was still scarred and young. It had been cute, as she'd grown up, the little crush she had on him. She would follow him around instead of playing dolls; she would practice fighting and manoeuvres as he'd taught others. It hadn't hurt anyone, and both he and his father had wanted her to be able to protect herself. Never to be a victim again. That was the promise the family had made her when they saved her. That no one would ever hurt her again.

So the lessons had started when she was seventeen. It was the longest year Cain could ever remember in his life. There had been something instantly attracting him to her. The first time he'd touched her to show her a throw, there had been a spark. He could still remember the moment. The widening of her eyes, the catch of her breath, and the feel of her skin under

his hands. He had backed away immediately, but the damage had been done. The attraction had been noted.

But the big episode had come at the end of a year of working with her. She was eighteen by then, but still safe and off limits to him. He had made a promise to protect her, and he would – even from him. She had just thrown him, and he kicked the back of her knee, having her go down at the same time. He shifted to break her fall, and her body fell onto his. She didn't rush or scramble off him as she normally did.

Their eyes met, and there was that connection once again. Then her mouth was on his, moist and hesitant. It was a feeling he would never forget. Her lips moving and caressing while her hand rubbed his chest. He'd rolled her onto her back, taking control of the kiss, deepening it, making it hard and rough. His hands slid under the tank top that she wore, and he rubbed her breasts, pulling at her nipples as he kissed her mouth. She moaned, and he felt that into the deepest core of his body. He was between her legs, hard as a rock and ready to plunge into her the moment he could pull her shorts off.

He stroked down from her breasts past her stomach to her hot core. He slipped his hand into her shorts and inside her panties, shimming his fingers against liquid heat. As he brushed his hand over her centre, she pressed against it, begging him to take her. And as she moaned and writhed under his touch, the kiss became brutal. When he dipped his finger inside, she exploded and rocked and screamed at the climax that tore through her body.

He shook the memory away. He hadn't handled that well. He had come to his senses at the last minute. He'd stopped before it was too late, sent her back to the house and avoided her from then on. After that, she'd begged and pleaded with Lamont to let her go away to college.

Neither Lamont nor Cain had wanted to let her go. Being in Pack territory almost guaranteed her safety. Lamont had held off as long as he could, kept her there for four years at the community college in two towns over.

Finally, he had to let her go. At twenty-two, she'd left to go to the closest university. They would still worry with her being outside the territory, but she had promised one thing.

If trouble came, if she got a call from the Alpha, she would return home.

The call came now, and Cain would be the one to pick her up.

She'd returned every summer and for holidays to spend her time off with the only family she had ever known or could remember. So they had been thrown together numerous times but had managed to avoid each other and talking about what happened.

Obviously, they hadn't avoided keeping everything from the Alpha. From his father.

"No, nothing." Cain shook his head.

Lamont didn't look convinced, but nodded. "Then go get our girl."

Cain turned and left to go get the one girl he could guarantee wouldn't be glad to see him.

Chapter Two

Emily glanced up at the knock on the door. She had been sitting on her couch with her packed bags at her feet. She was needed at home. She knew this day would come, when Lamont would want her to return.

The knock sounded again, and she smiled. Nothing like an impatient wolf at the door. She opened the door, smiling until she got a look at the dark, handsome man standing there.

Damn.

Cain looked wonderful. He was over six feet tall with dark hair and gold eyes. His hair was longer than she remembered and fell over his forehead. Her fingers twitched to push it back. He radiated strength as he leaned against the doorframe.

She noticed his eyes took her in the same way as she was him.

"Surprised?" he asked with a nasty twist of his lip.

She shouldn't have been. Fate loved to throw her curve balls. And if her dreams lately were any indication, she wasn't over this handsome, cocky wolf in front of her. It was going to be a long drive. She opened the door wider to allow him in. "I was expecting Tony."

"Well, you got me instead." Cain stepped into the small apartment.

With a deliberate ease he walked past her and sniffed the room.

"What are you doing?" she asked as her eyes narrowed.

She knew exactly what he was doing. He was scenting for other men. But she hadn't been 'dating' anyone recently, so there were no others scents in her apartment but hers.

He just smiled back at her.

"Ugh." She stomped over to her two bags and picked them up. "Fine, let's go."

Cain's eyes lit in amusement. Whenever they were together, she could feel the tension in the room and in her body. They brought out the absolute worst in each other.

It took Emily twenty minutes in the car to finally give in. Cain knew she would. She always made the first attempt to talk. This time was no difference.

"Why am I going back?"

"That's where you belong," Cain told her, tightening his hands on the wheel.

She snorted. "Says you, but Lamont wouldn't have called me back without a good reason."

Cain glanced over at the woman next to him. It had taken all the control he had not to grab her in his arms the moment she'd opened the door. She was everything he remembered, everything he dreamt of at night. He could swear her scent had wrapped him into a web when he'd first seen her. Same now as she looked up at him expecting the truth. Weighing his options, he decided to tell her as little as possible.

"There have been some attacks on female Weres outside Pack territory," he said gently.

When her eyes widened with horror, he reached over and patted her leg. "No one in our Pack. It's been four women so far, but Lamont wants to be careful. The latest one was from Christian's Pack."

"Who?"

He frowned, thinking he should have left this for Lamont. "Mindy."

She turned and looked out at the passing scenery. "What happened to her?"

He shook his head. "You don't need to know that."

She turned then to look at him. "Well, I think that since I was called home due to it being a danger to me, and the fact that a good friend was attacked only two territories over, I should have a good idea of what is going on. I'm a big girl, Cain, I don't need you to protect me."

He shook his head again. She might be a big girl, but he would always protect her. "If you want to hit up Lamont for that information, that's fine, but I'm not telling you." He took a deep breath. "And I'll always protect you whether you like it or not." They both knew he wasn't only talking about with this situation.

He reached over, turned the radio on and put both hands on the wheel.

Emily just stared at him. She'd been dismissed. Just like that, he thought he could tell her that they weren't going to talk about it and they weren't. Well, he had another thing coming. She'd tried, she told herself. She would have been nice and polite, but his attitude just stank. She switched the radio off.

"Listen to me, Cain." Surprised, he looked over at her. She kept her voice low. "I'm not a child any longer. You can't pat me on the head and send me to my room."

He cleared his throat. "I never did that."

She laughed. "Yes, you did. I made a pass at you, you turned me down. We are both adults, and I think it's time you stopped holding a grudge." She crossed her arms over her chest and turned her head to stare out the window again. There. She'd said what she had wanted to for years.

"What are you talking about?"

When she didn't say anything, he whipped the car to the shoulder and slammed on the brakes. She had to put her hands out in front of her to keep from hitting her head, and the seat belt tightened around her body.

"What the hell!" she cried out.

He undid his seatbelt and turned to face her. "I hate to tell you that you're wrong, but being that you are, I'll force myself. I crossed a line with you. I shouldn't have, and I apologise. If the only way to make sure it doesn't happen again is to stay away from you, then I will."

Emily noticed his eyes were practically glowing. It was past time for them to talk about this, but *now* was most definitely not the time. But she had to know why he thought that.

He reached behind him to pull the seat belt back on, but she stopped him with a hand on his arm.

"What line did you cross?" she asked gently.

He growled in the back of his throat. "You know damn well what I did."

She nodded, not moving her hand. "I know what you did, Cain, and I know what you didn't."

He tried to pull away, but she tightened her grip. She might not be as strong or as fast, but in the small confines of a car, he couldn't move enough to avoid her.

"You refused an eighteen-year-old girl who jumped on you, who had planned for months for the right moment. Maybe I made a mistake. I don't think I did, but I know you do. I was eighteen and infatuated with you, Cain. You were all I could think about. When you sent me back into the house, it broke my heart."

It was time for honesty. This had been going on with them for far too many years. "I'm still not sorry," she told him. "And you didn't do anything to be ashamed of. It was my doing. And," she added with a small smile, "I can't promise I wouldn't do it again if I went back. No one's ever kissed me like that again."

He shook his head, but she noticed his lips twitched in amusement. "You were a child."

She shook her head sadly. "I stopped being a child at twelve, Cain."

"That's no excuse," he told her.

She blew out a breath. She had tried. "Fine, Cain, punish yourself. Do what you want."

Chapter Three

The next morning, Emily had breakfast with Lamont, and he told her a little more about the assaults than Cain did. More, actually, than she thought she wanted to know.

After breakfast, Toby, the youngest of the Alpha's children, talked her into making chocolate chip cookies for him. Every six-year old's dream. One of the guards had come in right after she had started and kept her and Toby company while she baked.

That was where she was when Cain walked into the kitchen—bent over the counter passing a plate of fresh chocolate chip cookies to Toby.

"What's going on in here?" he asked, casually leaning against the door.

Emily turned and rewarded him with a brilliant smile. "Eating cookies. Want some?"

He looked over at the guard who had straightened from behind her. "What kind?" He walked over and took one. "Eric?"

Eric cleared his throat. "Yeah, well, I better get back outside. Thanks for the cookies, Emily."

She smiled at him. "No problem."

Cain stood close to her, and she could feel irritation radiating off of him. She was getting really tired of this. He hadn't said anything else after their short talk in the car. She hadn't wanted to press him further at the time, but she wanted things to be different this trip. Every time she returned home, there was always so much tension between them.

For once she would like a good visit, to go back to how things had been. If he didn't want her, he shouldn't have any problems with her being there. But the tension coming off him told her that he indeed have a problem with it, with her.

He took another bite then said, "Go play outside, Toby," while still looking at her.

Toby frowned at the loss of his milk and cookies. "But I don't wanna."

He did look at Toby then and had him scrambling up from his chair and out the sliding glass door. Emily watched him go, preparing herself for round two with Cain.

When the door finally slid into place, she whirled around. "What is your problem now, Cain?"

She was prepared for a fight, not for being lifted off her feet and his mouth on hers. She was so surprised her mouth opened in a gasp. He used that opening to slide his tongue in. It was rough and brutal and bruising. It was everything she wanted from him. He didn't release her immediately, and the kiss made her lose all sense of her surroundings.

She wrapped her arms around his neck and her legs around his waist. She could feel his hard length pressed up against her. It made her moan and tighten her legs around him. He left her mouth and continued kissing, nibbling her chin, her neck, her shoulder.

While he leaned against the counter, one arm around her waist, he held her as he slipped the other hand under her shirt. He ran his fingers over the soft silk of her bra before pushing it away and finding her skin. She wanted to scream at how good his hand and mouth felt on her. She wanted to drag him to the floor and demand he take her like she had wanted him to for years.

Then he was releasing her, sliding her back off the counter and turning her away from him. Stepping back, he put her hands on the counter and straightened her clothes. She looked back at him, confused, hungry, and hot.

"Cain."

He just shook his head and nodded to the kitchen door. Not a minute later, Tony walked in. Emily busied herself washing her hands, using the cold water to try to relieve the heat burning in her body.

When she turned around, Cain didn't even look at her as he ate the cookies, not quite pulling off the innocent look he was going for.

"Good God, are you two fighting again?" Tony said as he continued farther into the room. He walked over to the counter and popped a cookie in his mouth. "The emotions swirling around in this room are enough to strangle a man."

Cain growled and stuffed another cookie in Tony's mouth. "Is he ready?"

Chewing the cookie, Tony brushed crumbs off his shirt. "Yeah, he wants to meet in the living room hoping Christian will be more comfortable."

"Christian's here?" Emily asked.

Cain's eyes narrowed.

"Yeah, he just arrived with Adam and Kyle," Tony gladly told her, obviously noticing Cain's reaction as well.

"Tell them to find me before they leave, will you?"

Tony nodded and grabbed another cookie.

"I'll catch up. Give me a minute," Cain told his brother.

He waited until Tony had left and they could hear his footsteps going down the hall before he turned to her. "Stay away from Eric and Kyle."

"What?" He had caught her off guard once again. She was expecting another 'Emily, that was a mistake'.

"You heard me," he said in a dangerously low voice.

She placed her hand on her hips as her eyes narrowed. "Oh, I heard you all right. I just think you should reconsider the orders you give me."

He walked slowly to her, his eyes never leaving hers. "Really?" He smiled, and it wasn't a nice smile, but one of the cat before he caught and ate the mouse.

She tossed her head. She would not be intimidated by him. "Yes."

He leant in. "Okay how's this? You'd better stay away from Eric and Kyle and anyone else I say." His eyes flashed.

"No." She said it more bravely than she felt.

"No?"

"You're not my boss. I can talk to who I want." She tilted her chin up.

He laughed. He actually laughed at her.

"Hmm, interesting." He ran fingers lightly down her cheek and she shivered. "Actually, I am your boss, Emily. I am second-in-command in this Pack. A Pack where you are a member."

She pulled away. "That doesn't mean you can tell me who I can be friends with."

He'd stepped forward as she stepped back so he was actually closer to her than he had been. "You don't want to push me here, Emily. Not with this."

"You're jealous," she accused.

"No, not jealous. Cautious." He had moved his hands up her arm and fisted one hand in her hair. He pulled gently and had her lifting up on her toes. "Do what I say, Emily." Then he kissed her quick but hard and walked away.

She was still sputtering out a response when he turned before going out the door. "And, Emily, you don't want to see me jealous."

Everyone else was already in the formal living room when Cain arrived. His Alpha sat in one of the chairs next to Christian. Kyle, Adam, and Tony stood by the bar.

Tony smiled at him as he entered, and Cain wanted to take his frustration out on him. Emily knew better than to argue. Where had the submissive young Were gone? She was argumentative and hard-headed. He knew he couldn't keep his hands off her much longer, and he'd be damned if he was going to share her.

Kyle and Adam both walked over and shook his hand, and he couldn't help but be resentful of Kyle. He was the only Were that had been close to Emily's age. They had become fast friends, and back then, Cain had been happy for her.

Now looking at the young wolf with blond hair and charming smile, Cain had to squash every instinct he had to crush his hand while shaking it. But when he turned to the two Alphas, everything jumped back in place.

Especially his responsibilities and the reason for Emily's return in the first place.

The other Alpha looked tired and worn out. Cain walked over to him and held out his hand as Christian stood. Christian had been granted Alpha status and land by Cain's father. He'd only had his Pack about thirty years.

That was not long in Wolf time. He had taken a few wolves with him when he'd started out—his family and others who'd agreed to follow the new leader. Now, Christian had a girl who'd been attacked. A girl who hadn't been protected. For an Alpha to not be able to protect one of his Pack members, especially a young female, was the worst crime in the laws, and Christian was taking it hard.

Lamont got right to business, going over every detail they had learnt so far and sharing theories. It was a long information switch meeting, running over three hours. When Christian recounted what had happened to Mindy, his voice cracked. Adam went over and laid a hand on the shoulder of his Alpha, his father, but Christian shook it off. It was his burden alone to carry.

Everyone in the room except the Alphas stood and listened. They spoke no words and asked no questions. That is the way it was in a Pack—follow the Alpha, absolutely, with no questions asked.

It was decided that Cain would work with Adam, looking into the attacks and taking care of the problem when located.

Gage, another Pack Alpha, was also sending his second, Logan, to Christian's pack for added security.

Cain did not like the idea of having to leave his territory during this mess. To leave his Alpha – and yes, Emily – without his protection, but he would have to.

The meeting wrapped up, and Cain walked out with Adam. Kyle walked out with Christian. Cain met Lamont's eyes and knew he was to go back in shortly. His meetings were not over for the day.

"We find this bastard, and he's mine," Adam said as he stopped a few yards from the waiting car.

Cain understood what Adam was saying and nodded.

Adam nodded back. "I have another favour to ask." He looked back at Kyle. Cain had a really bad feeling about this favour. "I am asking permission for Kyle to stay in your Pack's territory until his sister has her baby."

Kyle's sister, Alisha, had stayed with Lamont's Pack and later bonded with one of their males. They were expecting their first child.

Cain wanted to demand Kyle's return back to his own Pack, but he nodded, knowing he would want to be with his sister if he had one.

"Granted until this is over."

Adam shook his hand and nodded at Kyle. The relief that spread from the other man wrapped around Cain. He had done the right thing. Now, he just had to keep Kyle away from Emily. And it wasn't jealousy, he told himself. He was only looking out for her, like he always had. It was his job.

Later that evening, he called Emily and set up a time for her to meet with him in the gym.

"I want you to meet me at eight in the basement," he told her as soon as she answered.

"What for?" Her voice was cautious with a hint of annoyance.

He almost told her because he'd ordered her to, but he knew that wouldn't go over well.

"You need to get back to training. We're not sure how long you will be here but while you

are here, it won't hurt to work out. Especially with all that is going on." He wasn't used to explaining himself, and he didn't like it.

She was so quiet on the other line he wasn't sure she was still there.

"I don't think..." she started.

"Eight o'clock, Emily," he ordered this time.

She blew out a breath and muttered something.

"I'll see you then." He hung up without another word from her. She'd be there.

Chapter Four

Emily arrived tired, annoyed, and mad as hell. Who the hell did he think he was? Demanding she be at the gym in the stupid morning before any sane person should be awake. This was her vacation! She should be able to sleep until at least noon. He had no right to order her around, and she was going to let him have it.

He was waiting on her, of course, standing in sweat pants and no shirt, curling weights. Her heart jumped and lust flowed through her entire body. This wasn't going to work well.

So she used her anger and led with that.

"Who the hell do you think you are ordering me here at the butt crack of dawn to train?" she asked him with her hands on her hips.

He smiled at her in the mirror but didn't turn around.

When he didn't answer, she took another step closer. "I'm telling you, Cain, you better stop ordering me around. I'm not going to put up with it."

He lifted an eyebrow at her. "You wouldn't have come if you didn't want to." She fisted her hands at her sides, and he laughed. "I forgot you're not a morning person." He put the weights down and finally turned to her. "Now, would you like to stretch before we get started?" he asked sweetly.

She switched strategies. "This is not a good idea, Cain."

Cain continued to smile as he wiped the sweat off his chest. She almost moaned with the need to lick it off.

"Are you not the one who keeps telling me we are both adults?" he asked.

She didn't respond. Just turned and stomped to the other side of the gym and started stretching.

He gave her fifteen minutes before walking over and nodding to the mats. She sighed, but walked over to them and stood in the middle.

"Okay." She raised her arms. "I'm here. Now what?"

He smiled and circled her. "I think we'll start with hand-to-hand. You've seemed to have a problem lately with your reflexes. "

“What?”

“You’ve been pretty easily grabbed and touched and...mmm...kissed,” he taunted.

She lifted her chin. She was a fierce competitor, and he knew it. Insults and challenges were always the way to push at her.

“Well, don’t worry. I’m wise to your tricks now so we won’t have that problem again,” she assured him.

He threw his head back and laughed. Then he shot a foot out at her knee and made her crumble. She fell, but rolled and was right back on her feet.

“I wasn’t ready,” she told him, then tried a kick of her own that he easily blocked.

That started the twenty-minute battle. She landed on her ass at least a dozen times but was always right back up. She even landed half a dozen blows, one knocking him back pretty good. She finally landed a perfect jab with a kick to the back of the knee, sending him down. She yelled and clapped right before he swept her feet from under her.

He was immediately on her, sitting on her legs and holding her arms over her head. “Celebrating before your enemy is all the way out is never a good idea, Emily. I taught you better than that.”

They were both breathing hard, but she smiled. “Got you down.”

He looked her over with a slow, hungry gaze. “Did you? Hmm. but it looks like I finished on top now, didn’t I?”

She struggled for a brief moment as he shifted his body in between her legs while still holding her arms above her head.

“What a very interesting position you seem to be in.” He leant close. “Almost helpless.” He licked the side of her face.

Her breath washed out of her, and she trembled with need. “Cain,” she warned.

He moved his mouth down and licked her from her collarbone to her ear. “Yes?”

She couldn’t help it—she moaned. “Don’t. Stop.”

He laughed softly and licked her again, this time from her ear to under her chin. She lifted her chin to allow him access.

“Which is it? Don’t, or stop, or don’t stop.” He pressed close and teased her lips with his tongue. “Come on, Emily. Get away. Take me down.” With his free hand, he slid it down her body, teasing with light touches.

She moaned, arching her back. "Let go of my hands," she demanded, her voice heavy with need.

"Make me." He brushed his fingers through her clothing over her centre, just hard enough to have her biting her lip to keep from screaming. "Make me, Emily," he said again before he took her mouth in a rough kiss.

He used his teeth on her lips. She pushed up and, using his momentum from the kiss, was able to change positions briefly before she was on her back again.

"Mmm, good." He rocked against her, and she could feel his hard erection.

"Cain," she pleaded.

He looked her in the eye and smiled. "Oh, you'll beg before I'm done, make no mistake." He took her mouth again, and she already wanted to beg.

He released her only long enough to pull her shirt off. He had her hands caged once again in one hand before she knew she'd been released. She struggled against his hold, but he didn't seem to notice.

"I want to touch you. Let go of my hands, Cain," she said as he continued to kiss her from the collarbone down.

"Then get your hands loose," he told her.

She struggled again, pushing up, and only managed to rub herself against the hardest part of him. For just a moment, she saw spots. She wanted – no, *needed* – him so bad.

Then, with his one free hand on her sports bra, he pulled and ripped the material. The feeling the sound of the fabric ripping was too much for her. She did beg. "Please, oh God, please."

He licked one nipple and blew on it. "Not yet," he told her, taking the nipple in his mouth and sucking.

She screamed, but he didn't release her. He used his tongue and his teeth until she was sobbing out his name. Her body was on fire. Never had she ever been so turned on in her life. Each tug on her sensitive nub shot through her body.

"Almost there," he told her, sliding his body down to concentrate on her stomach.

He released her hands, but she kept them above her head until he used his teeth to pull her pants down. She moved quickly, pushed up and had him on his back. He let her have the

position as she reached down and pulled his pants off. He wore nothing underneath, and she purred as she cupped him.

Then she was on her back again with his mouth on hers. He slipped a hand down and brushed a thumb over her swollen centre.

"Now, Cain. Now!" she demanded.

But his body slipped down hers as he held her legs apart and feasted.

"You have no idea how long I've wanted to taste you," he murmured.

She screamed when he stabbed his tongue inside, using his tongue to separate her folds, then penetrating inside. His thumb circled her clit. Her hips bucked, and she was scratching at his shoulders. Too much pleasure assaulted her. His tongue caused each sensitive nerve to dance.

"Cain." She cried out his name as her body tightened and exploded.

"Yes, say my name," he told her as he knelt between her legs. "Mine."

He pushed just the tip of his cock inside, then stopped. "Look at me, Emily."

When she opened her eyes, he pushed farther in. "Say it."

She nodded, tears streaming down her face. "Yes."

His hands held her up and in position. Their eyes held. "Scream my name now."

And she did at the first thrust.

Emily felt her body stretch to allow him entrance. Cain moved with long, deep strokes, picking up speed as he slammed into her.

Emily lifted her hips and matched each thrust, her body taking him deeper each time. She was slick, coating him as he pulled out and then pushed back in.

Watching him, she saw his eyes start to glow. She knew she was giving him pleasure. "More. Harder," she panted out.

He groaned but lifted her hips higher so he could plunge in faster, his hips snapping a fast rhythm. Emily felt her second release tear through her body.

She dug her nails into his sweat-laced skin as he reached orgasm.

Chapter Five

Cain rolled off of Emily, and they lay side by side on the mat, trying to catch their breath. He got his first and propped up on one elbow and looked down at her. Her eyes were closed, and she had a small smile playing on her lips. He leant down and kissed that smile gently.

"Emily."

"Uh huh," she answered without opening her eyes.

"Emily, look at me," he told her softly.

She opened her eyes, "Cain, if you tell me that was a mistake, I think I might kill you. No, I'm pretty sure I will."

He laughed softly and adjusted her where she could lay on him and still look at him. "No, I wasn't going to... I want you to... I mean..." He sighed and rubbed his hand over his face.

"What?"

"I want to go on a run with you. Tonight."

He watched the surprise then pleasure and, at last, uncertainty flicker in her eyes. He held her breath as he waited for her answer.

"Run?"

He nodded. It was a big step for him. Going for a run just the two of them was what mates, what bonded, did. It was intimate. He wanted her to understand that she belonged to him now. To run in their other forms, their wolves, was a sign of commitment.

"Just us?" Her voice was quiet.

Cain didn't know what to think about the amount of time she was taking to answer. A male could not force a female. The females in a Pack were protected above all else. If she said no, he had to back off, no matter what. He only nodded in answer to her question.

She leant in and whispered her answer against his lips, "Yes."

He let out the breath he wasn't aware he'd been holding. He kissed her gently, running his hand through her hair that had come loose from its holder, trying to make up for how rough he'd just been.

He couldn't stop touching her. He had fought his attraction for so long. Now, having her in his arms, he knew he would never let her go.

He deepened the kiss and felt her shudder. "If we don't get up now, we won't make it to tonight," he told her, pulling away. He stood and lifted her to her feet. His hand covered the bruises on her wrists where he had held her. He stroked them with his thumbs.

"Cain."

"I hurt you."

"No," she said, placing a hand on his cheek. "You didn't. And these will be gone in an hour."

He stepped back to let her dress before he had her on the mat again. He pulled his pants on and watched her slip into hers. She looked at the ripped sports bra then pulled her shirt on without it.

Her breasts stretched the material, and her nipples were hard. He groaned and rubbed his chest. She was going to kill him. He picked up her ruined bra and stuffed it in his pocket before taking her hand and leading her up the steps into the main house.

He didn't drop her hand when they went into the kitchen and saw Tony sitting at the counter with a bowl of cereal, but he stepped in front of her and blocked her from Tony's view.

Tony looked up and smiled. "Did you have a nice...workout?" he asked.

Cain felt Emily lean her forehead against his back, and he knew she was blushing. Every room in the house had extra soundproofing because they had such good ears, but you could hear enough.

That and Tony would be able to smell them on each other, along with other smells.

Cain cut him down with a look that said to be gone when he came back.

Tony just continued to smile at him. Then he sobered. "Adam called. I told him you were a little...busy and would call him back."

Emily's grip tightened on his hand, and Cain growled at his brother who just blinked innocently at him.

He pulled her from the kitchen, but turned back just before the door closed and mouthed, "You're dead," to his brother.

Emily didn't say anything as they walked through the house and out the front door. When they reached the car she used when she was there, he held open the door for her then leaned in and kissed her before she could get in. He had her trapped against the car and his body.

He had meant it as a soft, quick goodbye kiss, but it deepened as if on its own, and his arms caged her to his body. She kissed him back with the same amount of passion and need he gave her. His body hardened, and he lifted her off her feet and leaned her against the side of the car.

He quickly scanned the area for any others who may have been walking by or the guards making their rounds, but the area was clear for the moment. Not that it would be a big surprise to anyone to see a couple making out or even having sex.

But Cain wasn't about to let anyone but him see Emily. The fact that it was the first time he had that thought did not escape him. In the past, when he'd been with another female, he hadn't cared if anyone walked in while they were together.

Her legs were wrapped around his waist, and he was pressed against her. She moaned and rubbed herself on him.

"Cain," she whispered when he broke the kiss.

"I know, baby. I know." He tried to release her but the pulse between his legs only increased when she moaned again.

He cursed and hitched her higher around his waist. Kissing her, he walked over to the trees on the north end of the property. It would keep them hidden from the house or anyone who drove up. He would hear or sense anyone else.

He barely had her on the ground before she was tearing his pants down. He did the same to her and plunged into her as his mouth covered her scream.

* * * *

"What is wrong with us?" Emily asked from under him as they came back to the world.

He rolled off of her and shook his head.

She blushed, pulling her pants back on. Her hands were shaking. He reached over and grabbed them. Her eyes met his and he saw her confusion.

"Emily?"

"We just did it in the middle of the yard. Anyone could have walked by." She sounded nervous, and he smiled to reassure her.

"It's not unusual." He pulled her up to her feet with him.

She frowned at him. "No, Cain. I mean, I've been...uh..." She looked around, as if what she wanted to say would be written somewhere. "With others, you know, and it's never been like that. Well, like either time really."

She pulled her hand away and wrapped her arms around her middle. He embraced her, hoping to give her comfort.

"Baby, you haven't been with a Were before, only human men. That's bound to be different. Plus I am very good if I say so myself. I've ruined you for all others, human or Were."

"Don't be cocky." She pushed him away, laughing. She started walking back to her car but stopped so abruptly he almost ran her over. "How do you know I've always been with humans?"

He froze. He couldn't very well tell her he knew about every one of the men she had been with. Checked them out when she started dating them and kept an eye out for any problems. So he told her the other truth.

"Because I put the word out if any wolf touched you I'd kill them," he told her as he put his hand on her back to push her forward.

But she dug her heels in. "You did what?" Her tone was the first warning. The narrowing of her eyes the second. And her fist smashed into his face.

His head snapped back, and he saw stars of a moment. When he recovered, he looked at her and saw her eyes wide with surprise.

"You deserved that." she told him as she started back for her car.

He shook his head again. It wasn't to clear the pain but the shock. She'd just almost taken his head off.

He smiled and ran to catch up with her. "That was a good hit."

She sent him a sidewise look.

"You're right, I probably deserved it." He walked around her and then backward in front of her. He felt young again. Happier than he had been in years.

"Stop, Cain."

"Stop what?" he asked innocently.

Emily reached her car, but he was still in front of her.

When he in to kiss her, she pushed him back.

"No way, or I'll never get home. You can wait until tonight."

He sent her a mournful look before tucking his hands in his pockets. And, of course, that's where her bra was.

"Get in the car while you can then," he warned her.

She laughed and went around the door he had left open. Before she could close it, he grabbed her chin and kissed her long and hard. Her eyes were unfocused when they separated.

"Drive safely," he told her as he shut the door. And he could swear he heard her growl.

Laughing, he headed upstairs to shower. He'd never felt so light-hearted in his entire life. He was already in his room with his pants off before he remembered he needed to kill his brother and call Adam back. So he made a mental note—shower, call Adam, and kill brother. That ought to do it, he laughed to himself.

* * * *

He never did go after Tony. The call from Adam changed that.

"Another girl was attacked."

"When, where, who?" He grabbed for a pair of jeans.

"Riker's territory in Colorado. He did the same as the other Alphas and called the Pack home. Girl was fourteen miles from territory."

"We need permission to go up and talk to Riker, and the girl." Cain was already making plans in his head.

"Done. Christian's already called. We leave at first light."

Cain nodded then said out loud, "Good. Good."

"Just me and you. Riker doesn't want anyone else around the girl."

Cain frowned into the phone. "It was bad?"

Adam sighed, and Cain could hear it clearly over the line. "Very. I'll be there to get you at six."

"I'll be ready," Cain promised, then went downstairs to give his dad the news. He didn't want to leave Emily. The fact that she was his first thought instead of the attacked girl confirmed that he was already in over his head. He had a job to do. Even if all he really wanted was to curl up in bed with Emily and shut out the world.

Chapter Six

Cain returned home tired and frustrated. They hadn't learned anything new from their trip to Colorado. Only that neither one of them smelled a familiar scent on the girl's clothes. All he wanted was a hot shower, food, and some rest before he went and saw Emily.

Walking into the house, he heard the noise and racket of numerous guests. So he probably wasn't going to get the nap.

He could still get the hot shower and food before going to see her. That was his plan when he started up the stairs, until he caught her scent in the air. She'd been in the house very recently. Even better. He would talk her into the shower with him.

He'd hated being away from her for three days. His mind kept returning to the run he'd shared with her. Chasing her as she ran, jumped, and teased. The feel of her fur and tongue when he'd finally caught her. They had laid in woods together, just taking in the sounds of nature. He'd watched her fall asleep and closed his eyes beside her.

He must have fallen asleep as well because the next thing he remembered it had been dark and they were both back in human form. She was spread over his body kissing his neck and chest.

His body hardened at the memory of her taking him deep inside. Riding him with the moonlight shining over her.

The words to ask to mate with her had been on the tip of his tongue when she'd dropped her head back and climaxed. The jolt that had gone through his body had sizzled him, and he had rolled her over to pound himself inside her until she came again, screaming, taking him with her.

Dropping his bag at the foot of the stairs, he headed to look for her. She needed to join him for a shower *now*.

Toby was in the kitchen, tying his shoes. "You're home!" he exclaimed.

Cain smiled. That was a good greeting, and he was expecting a better one from Emily.

"Hey, champ." He ruffled his hair. "How's it going?"

Toby smiled up at him, showing a missing tooth. "Good."

"Hey, there's something different about you." Cain stroked his chin, pretending to think about it. "Did you get your hair cut?"

Toby laughed and shook his head.

"Hmm, wonder what it is."

Toby smiled, his large gap in plain view.

They both turned as the kitchen door opened. Toby scowled and bent down to finish tying his shoes.

"Hey, just came in for some water. We got a football game in the back yard going," Kyle told them.

Toby mumbled something and jumped off the stool.

Cain nodded at Kyle and placed a hand on Toby's shoulder. They were silent until Kyle walked out the door.

"Okay, bud, let's figure this out." He studied Toby again. "It's not new shoes. Hmm, let's see..." Cain trailed off. Toby still had the scowl on his face. "What's up, bud?"

Toby looked down at the ground and kicked the cupboard. Cain waited patiently. When Toby finished thinking about what he wanted to say, he looked up at Cain with big eyes.

"I thought Emily was your girl," he told his older brother.

Cain nodded. "Does that bother you?"

Toby shook his head enthusiastically. "No, if she was your girl, she'd stay. Not go away again."

Cain nodded. "Okay."

Toby shifted from one foot to another. "But if she's your girl, how come Kyle was kissing her?"

Cain felt like he had been punched in the stomach. "Where?"

Toby tilted his head at him. "On the mouth."

Cain tried to hold his fury in. He looked at the young, innocent boy in front of him. "Where were they?"

"In the living room."

Cain nodded.

"I don't want her going away with him," Toby told him.

Cain gently ruffled his hair again. "She won't. Don't worry."

Cain gave him one last pat on the head and strode to the sliding glass door.

He saw her the minute he stepped out the door. His vision narrowed to only her. He crossed the yard quickly as she turned and smiled at him.

Emily sensed him more than knew he was there. She smiled, but as she turned, the smile almost immediately fell from her face. He looked furious. When he reached her, he grabbed her arm in an iron tight grip and yanked her towards the house.

"Hey!"

He dragged her forward so fast she tripped over her own feet. He held her up by her arm then half turned, picked her up, and threw her over his shoulder.

Emily was humiliated, but instead of causing a bigger scene, she let it go without fighting. He went through the open glass door, crossed the kitchen and kicked the swinging door open into the hall.

She cursed at him quietly, demanding he put her down. Emily couldn't believe he was acting this way as he stomped up the stairs and down the hall to his room. She started kicking and scratching when he opened the door then slammed it behind him. He dropped her on the bed none too gently.

"Cain?" Emily raised herself on her elbows.

"What the hell were you thinking, Emily?" he yelled.

She blinked. "Wh...what?"

He stood in front of the bed, and his eyes were flashing. She could feel the shimmering in the air as he tried not to shift.

"Why, Emily?"

"Cain, I don't know what you're talking about. Please just tell me what happened. What I did." She tried to keep her voice soft and controlled. She'd never seen him this way. She didn't know if it was something with what he was working on or her. But it scared her. He was pacing the room like... a caged wolf. "Cain, calm down."

"Don't! Do not tell me to calm down, Emily. Did you think I wouldn't find out? Did you think I would just shrug it off?" His voice had gone low, dangerously low.

"Find out what?" She moved more firmly up the bed. She didn't like where this was going. "Talk to me, Cain."

"Shut up. Just shut the hell up," he ordered still in that deadly tone. "What did you think I'd do, Emily?"

She didn't know what was going on, but for the first time in her life, she was afraid of him. She kept her mouth closed. Part from fear and the fact she couldn't believe he'd told her to shut up. That wasn't like him. Sure, he was domineering and arrogant, but he was never downright disrespectful.

"Answer me, damn it!"

"You told me to shut up," she blurted out. She hadn't meant to say it, but she was scared and starting to get pissed herself.

He was on her—from the door to the bed in one leap—and he sat with his knees holding her legs down and arms at her side.

"Cain." She struggled, which only seemed to make him madder.

He lifted her shoulders up and slammed them back on the bed hard. Her breath whooshed out of her.

"Cain, please!"

He did it again, and she felt the tears forming more from fear than pain.

"What? Wasn't expecting I wouldn't take it well?"

Emily shook her head. "Cain, please...you're hurting me."

He let go of her abruptly and backed away with a look that said he couldn't stand to touch her.

"Cain?"

He shook his head at her. "Go."

"What?"

He turned his cold eyes at her. "Go. Get out. I don't want to see you. Don't want to be around you."

She stood up slowly. "Cain."

"Get out!" he yelled at her.

She fumbled for the door while tears ran unchecked down her cheeks. She made it out the door and down the hall, but stopped as she ran into something solid.

"Emily." Kyle gripped her shoulders. "You okay?"

She nodded. She was numb. She had no idea what was going on. How could Cain turn on her? She'd been so looking forward to having him home.

"Did he hurt you?" Kyle asked her quietly.

She shook her head. Cain hadn't hurt her. He'd destroyed her. The look on his face was one she would never forget. She'd known he'd be home today and had hung around waiting for him. Then he flipped out and...

"Aww, isn't this sweet?" Cain's voice came up behind them.

Emily jumped and slammed her back into the wall. Kyle shifted slightly and had Cain raising an amused brow.

"Coming to her rescue?"

Kyle looked between Cain and Emily. "Just making sure she's okay."

Cain laughed. "Were you? Were you really?"

Cain's fist flew out and landed on Kyle's jaw. He didn't pull his punch and had Kyle going through the sheet rock on the wall. His head cracked against it, and the sheet rock fell in clumps around him.

Emily screamed and ran towards Kyle to help. Cain grabbed her arm before she reached him and pushed her back into the wall.

"Don't touch him," he ordered.

Emily looked up at him. "Cain. Please tell me what's wrong."

"Wrong?" His hand snaked up to her throat. "Why do you say something's wrong?"

Her eyes widened as she felt his hand tighten. "Cain," she managed.

"You're not laughing now, are you?" he asked. "Did you when he had his mouth on you? His hands?" he spat at her.

"No, Cain." She looked at him pleadingly. "He didn't touch me, I swear!" The tears fell again. Why would he even think she would betray him? What had happened? "I didn't do anything."

He laughed. "Just couldn't wait to get another wolf between your legs." Cain moved in to cover her body with his. She was trapped between his body and the wall with his hand still around her throat.

"Let her go, Cain," Lamont said from behind Cain. He looked quickly over to Kyle and watched as he tried to sit up. Cain blocked Emily from his view, and Lamont knew he had to get them separated. Whatever had happened needed to be taken care of quickly, before someone got hurt badly.

Cain didn't turn, didn't acknowledge his Alpha.

"Cain," Lamont growled.

Finally, he turned his head but still held her.

"Cain, let go of Emily."

Cain just shook his head.

"That is an order from your Alpha," Lamont said loudly. He moved forward. "Now!"

Lamont watched Cain try to get control. His eyes were black, which Lamont had never seen before. As Cain blinked, they lightened.

He let go of Emily abruptly, and she sagged against the wall.

"Go to the study now," Lamont ordered.

Without looking at her, Cain headed down the stairs. Lamont knew Tony had followed him up and was standing behind him.

"Tony, help Kyle to the living room and take care of his injuries," Lamont said without turning around. He never took his eyes off Emily.

He walked slowly to her. She was shaking so badly her teeth were chattering.

"Come on, honey." He wrapped his arm around her and pulled her from the wall.

She dropped her chin but let him help her. "Kyle never touched me. I swear," she told him softly, her voice hoarse and the bruise around her neck red. She wasn't hurt though, just scared. Lamont's hands shook as he tried to remain gentle.

"I know, honey." He pulled her with him down the stairs.

He led her to the study. Cain had his back to them as they entered but knew they were there. Lamont gently ushered her to the couch. She sat and pulled her legs up to her chest and wrapped her arms around them.

Lamont went back to the door and closed and locked it. Cain stared out into the yard, and Emily had her chin on her knees.

He took his seat behind his desk. "Want to tell me what happened?"

Neither answered. He didn't think they would. He had a very good idea what was going on. His heart lifted a little thinking about it. And he knew his son. He knew how to get through to him.

"Okay, maybe you can tell me when you two mated, and why you didn't tell your Alpha or get his permission first."

Emily's head popped up, and Cain turned. Yes, that got their attention, he thought.

"We didn't, Lamont," Emily answered.

But Lamont wasn't looking at her, he was looking at Cain.

Cain nodded. "We did not. You should know better than that."

Lamont leant back in his chair. "And you should know better than to put your hands on a female."

Cain darted his eyes away. "I didn't mean to. I...I just couldn't stop."

Lamont looked over at Emily, who was rubbing her chin on her knees. "You remember Marc?" he asked.

They both nodded. Marc had been a young wolf only about five years older than Emily. He had found his mate with one of the young members of the Pack. Marc had come home to find his female with another Were and had killed them both.

"He'd gone into a rage when he'd found out his mate had betrayed him. To this day, he doesn't remember what he had done to them."

Emily sucked in a breath, and Cain's eyes narrowed. They could see where he was heading with his questions.

"We didn't mate," Cain told him.

Lamont believed that they hadn't intended to. They may not have exchanged blood. But he knew, could sense, that they were indeed mated.

"Yet you two are very much mated."

Cain laughed. "Mated. Soul mates," he said bitterly.

Lamont nodded. "It is also been said that when one mate betrays another, the pain from it can be blinding and result in things the injured mate would never normally do."

Cain shook his head. "She is not my mate."

Hurt flickered in Emily's eyes, but she quickly schooled her face.

"How'd she betray you, Cain?" Lamont asked him.

Cain turned his back again. He took a deep breath before looking back at his Alpha.

"She betrayed me with Kyle."

"I did not!" Emily yelled, jumping up from her seat.

Cain whirled on her. "Don't fucking lie to me. Toby saw you."

"Toby? Toby saw..." Her eyes widened and knowledge filled them.

Cain growled and took a step towards her.

"Cain," Lamont warned.

"Cain, it wasn't..." She put her hands up, but he turned his back on her.

Emily bit her lip and looked at Lamont. "I was playing Monopoly in the living room. Tony and Kyle came in, and I—"

Cain whipped around and had her by the arms. "So you admit it!"

"No!" She shook her head. "I mean, he came in and picked me up and...kissed me for like a second. Just hello. He's been doing it for years. That's all. I swear that's all."

"That's not all!"

"Yes, it is. I haven't been alone with Kyle. Not once."

She wasn't lying. Lamont could smell it and knew that Cain could too.

"I swear, Cain." She begged for him to believe her.

He shook his head. "I just... When Toby told me Kyle kissed you, I lost it."

"I'm so sorry," she said softly.

"Don't! Don't you fucking apologise to me!" Cain's eyes burned. He could have hurt her, killed her. Lamont heard his thoughts even if they weren't said out loud. "She needs to go back to school."

Emily's gasp was audible, but Lamont wasn't surprised.

"No," he told his son.

Cain looked him in the eye. "I am asking, as your son, send her back."

"Unprotected?"

Cain frowned, then rubbed his hand over his face. "No. Hell."

Emily's eyes had cleared and her voice was strong when she told them, "I don't have to be sent anywhere." She looked at Lamont. "I'm going home."

She walked out without permission from her Alpha. After she slammed the door, Cain looked at Lamont.

"I could have killed her."

Lamont nodded. "Yes. Now what are you going to do?"

"I don't know." His son confessed. "I wanted to mate with her. I almost asked her to but didn't."

Lamont stood and clasped his son's shoulder. "There have been a few instances when the exchange of blood hasn't been necessary. It's very rare, but it has happened."

"I didn't know." Cain laid his hand over his father's and squeezed. "I swear I didn't know."

Cain stepped away. Lamont gave him time to get his thoughts together. It took several minutes.

"It wasn't me... What I mean is, I knew what I was doing, but I felt disconnected somehow." Cain went on, "I couldn't stop myself. All I could see was red. I can't believe I hurt her."

"She'll be okay," Lamont assured him. "Most of her hurt is not physical."

"I don't deserve her," Cain's voice was full of hurt. "I never did."

Chapter Seven

Emily cried the entire way back to the cabin. So he didn't want her around. That was fine with her, she wouldn't be around then.

But it hurt. It hurt so much. Cain, the man she had always loved, had thought she would betray him. He didn't want her anymore. What they shared had been enough for him.

He wouldn't have to see her, she would make sure of that. She wiped her eyes with the back of her hands. And she wouldn't cry over him. She made it to the front door before she started crying again.

She opened the door and looked around the empty cabin. It was fully furnished with furniture, pictures, food, but it was lonely. She had always liked living alone, having her privacy, but right now it was just deadly quiet.

She walked to the bedroom, kicked off her shoes and climbed to the middle of the bed, curling up as she cried herself asleep.

Emily woke up drained. Her eyes were gritty, and her throat raw. Her stomach felt sick. Dragging herself out of bed, she went straight into the bathroom and climbed into the shower. She turned the water on as hot as she could stand it.

The shower and bathroom was done in a deep brown marble with large showerheads raining down. She placed both hands on the smooth wall of the shower and leant her forehead against it.

She didn't know how long she was in the shower, but when the water started to turn cold, she unhappily turned off the water. Dressed in pyjama pants and a tank top, she headed for the kitchen to make some tea to smooth her stomach.

She didn't turn on any lights, because she didn't need to, and the least amount of activity the better. She walked slowly and made it halfway into the kitchen, which opened to overlook the living room, before she saw him.

He sat in the chair next to the lamp that was on, watching her. Once he saw he had her attention, he stood.

She didn't ask how he got in. "What are you doing here?"

He didn't answer immediately.

"What do you want, Cain?" she asked. Her voice cracked, and she looked away.

He stepped towards her, but she stepped back, shaking her head. "Don't touch me. Just go away, Cain."

"I can't, Emily. You know I can't. I have to make this right."

She didn't look at him but shrugged. "Fine, it's fine. Now go away."

He stepped closer to her slowly. "Emily."

She shook her head and tried with all her might to hold back tears. "Go, Cain. I can't see you. Please."

He did touch her then. He moved and wrapped his arms around her, holding her close. She struggled, but he held on.

"Shh, please, please let me try to fix this," Cain begged.

"No... No... Just let go." Her voice broke, and he held her head on his shoulder and let her cry.

He picked her up and cradled her in his arms. "Oh baby, I'm sorry, so very sorry," he told her, rocking her.

"Y-y-you d-d-don't w-w-want me," she choked out.

"Baby, oh baby." He moved to sit on the couch, still holding her to him. "No, baby. Oh God, Emily."

"Y-y-you said..."

He laid his forehead on the top of her head. "Listen, just listen." He lifted her chin and looked into her eyes.

He leant in and kissed her tears away. "I'm in a new place here. I've never had these feelings before. I feel out of control...like I'm sinking."

Emily wiped her eyes and took a deep breath. She was embarrassed that she couldn't stop crying. She tried to pull away, but he held her.

"Don't, baby. Please let me hold you."

Emily watched him a moment. "Why?"

Cain frowned. "Why? I want to feel you. I want to touch you."

"You wanted to send me away," she accused.

"I did," he admitted, and her eyes teared up again. "I've had feelings for you for so long that I couldn't act on. I finally have you, and then I hurt you. I could have killed you, Emily. Do you understand that?"

She sighed. "Do you think what Lamont said is true?"

Cain shook his head. "I don't know." He tightened his grip around her when she shifted. "Does it matter?"

She nodded. "I don't want to be with someone who doesn't really want me. If you're here just because your dad made you come, then you need to leave. If you don't want me then...then that's fine, but you have to leave me alone then."

He kissed her lightly on the lips, rubbing softly. "Emily, my dad did not tell me to come here. He doesn't even know I am. He's probably figured it out, but I don't care. This is about you and me. I hurt you, baby, and I have to make up for that."

She pushed away and he let her finally. She stood in front of him. "You feel guilty."

"Yes. I had no right to put my hands on you out of anger."

Emily gave him a sad smile. "Go, Cain."

He reached out and grabbed her hands. "Emily."

But Emily pulled them away. "No. I don't want you because you feel guilty. I've been in love with you for eight years. Maybe it was fated, or maybe it wasn't. I don't care about you grabbing me. I just want you to love me. I want you to choose me, Cain."

He stood and put a hand under her chin. She met his eyes, as he wanted. "Do you remember what I said to you that first day? Before I made love with you."

She nodded.

"Say it."

"Mine. You said I was yours."

He stepped closer. "That was just me talking to you. I meant it then, and I still do. You are mine, Emily. I choose you and still want you." He kissed her gently, just a soft meeting of lips before picking her up.

"Let me prove it to you." He took her into the bedroom and laid her gently on the bed.

He made love to her slowly and gently, putting all the feelings he had for her in the open. Emily knew it was the only way he had to show her.

His lips lingered over her body, his tongue worshipped her skin, and his fingers traced across her so lightly it was barely a touch. Cain whispered sweet nothings in her ear as he seduced her body and mind.

The love she felt for him was reflected with every caress. Tears welled up, and for the first time in her life, she felt truly adored and protected.

When he slipped inside, she wrapped around him, taking all of him in. He kept his strokes slow and deep, and when her eyes went unfocused and she breathed out his name, he linked their fingers, leant in, and kissed her as they came together.

* * * *

Lamont hung up the phone with a feeling of dread.

There had been another attack. This time in Montana, this time had been more brutal, and this time it had been on Pack territory. Shaking his head, he looked out the window into the darkness.

A meeting had been called for all the Packs. It would take place in Colorado in Riker's territory. He had to send Cain, and while his son could handle it, how would it affect his relationship with Emily?

Lamont had suspected for a while now that they might be fated to mate. No two had ever fought it as hard as they did, but you couldn't miss the emotions when the two were together.

He hadn't believed Cain would hurt Emily until he saw them that day.

Cain had more control of his emotions than any wolf he'd known, including himself. It had been when Lamont had heard her scream at the stairs that he'd known something was wrong.

He hadn't punished Cain. Cain would be doing that to himself. Sometimes being a father was harder than being an Alpha. He had to protect them both, even if that meant protecting Cain from himself. Lamont was sure that Cain would punish himself ten times worse than Lamont would have.

He glanced at his watch. It was ten-thirty, and he didn't expect Cain back tonight. If they worked things out, Cain would be an idiot to leave her tonight. If they did not, Cain still

wouldn't return. He would be off torturing himself. Lamont wanted to reach out to his son. He wanted to offer his reassurances, but he knew Cain wouldn't accept them. Cain had to work out his own feelings.

He looked up as the knock came on the study door.

Tony walked in and nodded politely. "You got a minute?"

Nodding, Lamont gestured to the chair in front of him.

Tony rubbed his hands on his pants and took a deep breath. "What are you going to do about Cain?"

Lifting his eyebrow at his middle son, Lamont did not answer.

"I mean. If you see fit to punish him, well, I'd understand, but..."

"Just say it, Tony."

"I should probably be punished too," Tony finished quietly.

Lamont sat back in his chair. This he hadn't been expecting. "Want to tell me why?"

Tony sighed heavily. "I knew about the first time they...were together. I was eating in the kitchen when they came up from the gym. I also knew how Cain would react to her friendship with Kyle. I didn't warn Kyle. I thought... I just wanted to give him a nudge. You know, to make a move. I don't know two more perfect..."

"Mates?" Lamont finished and Tony nodded.

"So should I punish Toby?"

Tony's eyes widened. "No, that's not what I meant."

"Well, if I punish you for knowing Cain would be jealous of Kyle, then shouldn't I punish Toby for telling Cain about it?"

Tony would know where his father was going with this. "No."

Lamont nodded at him. "Honourable for you to feel guilty, but unnecessary. Cain is responsible for his own actions."

Tony nodded again. "He wouldn't have hurt her. Not like that. He doesn't have it in him. He loves her. I can feel it when he's with her."

"Yes."

"I just don't understand what happened."

Lamont reached over and tried to give his son the only help he could. "I believe that Cain and Emily mated."

Tony jumped up to come to his brother's rescue. His mouth opened and closed as he sputtered out an argument. It was a crime to mate or bond without the Alpha's permission. Lamont gestured him back down.

"I don't believe they knew."

It took a moment, but the realisation at what Lamont was saying came through.

"You think they were fated?"

Lamont only nodded.

Tony digested that information for a minute. "It would make sense."

They sat there for a moment.

"So what else is bothering you?" Tony asked him.

Lamont smiled. Tony could read people even without his enhanced features.

"There was another attack. A special meeting has been called. I have to send Cain."

Tony nodded. "And he just got back today, and this happened."

Lamont nodded. "I'll give him tonight with her. He'll have to be back in Colorado the day after tomorrow."

Chapter Eight

Emily was wrapped around him, her head cushioned on his shoulder and her arm around him with her hand resting on his chest, one long slim leg thrown between his.

Cain realised then that he had never actually slept all night with a female before.

He stroked a hand down her arm to her waist. He had an overwhelming feeling to take Emily to his bed. To prove to himself that she was different. She would not leave him.

His cell phone rang, and she shifted, rubbing her face against his chest with a moan. It was six in the morning, and she really wasn't a morning person. Cain knew who it would be before he reached to the floor where his pants had fallen.

Taking his cell phone out of his pocket, he opened it and answered his father's call.

"Hello?"

He started rubbing his fingers through Emily's hair absently as he listened to his dad talk. She moved her head slightly and placed a row of small kisses on his chest. His hand tightened in her hair, and she laughed softly.

He finished talking to his dad then turned to her as he closed his phone.

"There was another attack?" she asked him.

He reached over for her hand and lifted it to his lips. "Yes, in Montana." He watched her eyes widen. "A meeting has been set up for all of us in Colorado. I have to go, Emily."

"I know."

"Emily." He held her hand tight. "I want..." He shook his head. He couldn't give her orders. "Would you please stay in the main house? In my room."

She looked down at the sheets that were tangled around her legs. "Because of the attacks?"

"Partly. The attack happened on Pack territory this time. She was in one of the houses, and he got her there. I don't want you here alone. That's why I want you in the main house. I want you in my bedroom because it's *my* bedroom. I've never had a woman stay in my room, ever. I want you in it. I want you to be different. And not just while I'm gone." He rubbed his thumb on her wrist. He felt her pulse quicken.

She smiled at him. "Good answer."

He leaned over and kissed her. "And your answer?"

She pretended to think about it until he laughed and pulled her on top of him. He kissed her, his hands caressing down her back to her bottom.

"Mmm, when do you leave?" she asked, straddling his waist.

He pushed up, moving his hand in circles until he cupped her breast, then bent to take her nipple in his mouth. She moaned, and he flipped her on her back.

"Oh, we have a little bit of time."

An hour later, they were arguing in her living room.

"But I don't need all my stuff now. I can come back and get what I need."

He shook his head. "You're not returning alone."

She sighed. "Okay, I'll bring Tony with me."

It was logical, but he wanted to see her stuff mixed in with his before he left. He wanted that reminder that she would be there when he returned. "It will make me feel better if I knew you had everything you need."

She looked at him suspiciously. "Cain, you're not thinking about doing something stupid like locking me inside the main house, are you?"

He'd thought about it. He knew it would never work, but honestly, he had thought about it. "No, not locking you in the house. The main yard is fine, and if you want to go for a run, take Tony with you. Just don't leave the main house alone."

"Cain. When you come back?"

He was throwing her books in a bag and looked up. "What?"

She shrugged. "I was just wondering how long I was going to stay in your room."

He frowned, not understanding what she was asking. Hadn't they already discussed this? "It's your room now, too."

"But what about when I go back to school?"

He straightened slowly from where he was trying to get her stuff together. "You're not going back."

He watched her back go up and her eyes narrow. He hadn't really thought about it. He'd just guessed now that they were together she wouldn't want to go back.

"Cain."

He slung the bag over his shoulder and picked up the two bags of clothes and bathroom products. "Let's go."

She didn't move. "Cain, I only have one semester to go. I need to finish school."

He shook his head. "I'm sorry, Emily. I really am, but it's just not possible." With that, he walked out of the room.

It only took her a minute to follow and be on his heels. "We need to talk about this." She followed him through the house and out the door.

He didn't speak until he threw her bags in the back of the truck. "If there was any way to have you finish, baby, I would. But it's just not logical. I can't leave here. This is my place. I have to be here to take care of Pack business and protect Lamont. I can't do that hours away."

"Yes, but I could go—"

He interrupted her. "Baby, stop and think about what you were going to say. What? You'll go and finish? I wouldn't be able to let you out of my sight for that long. And you would be a walking target as an Enforcer's mate alone. No, that's not going to happen. And you need to think about our future. Together."

"Our future?"

He cupped her chin, lifting her face up. "Emily, I am going to want to do the mating ritual soon, and after that the bonding ceremony. I want you officially mine."

"Cain, I am yours. But if we just waited..."

"No, Emily. I know it's not fair, but this is what you're getting. I'm an Enforcer. I am second-in-command of our Pack. This is me. And it will have to be you too." He leant down and kissed her gently. "Now, you have enough to think about, and I have to go pack my bag. Come on, let's go."

Cain could feel Emily fighting her emotions as he got in the truck to take her home. It would be her home, and he knew she would have to adjust to it. To the people and the noise. But it's what she had wanted. It was the only way they would be able to be together.

He wanted her to finish school and knew it was important to her. But he couldn't see how she would be able to.

Toby was playing outside in the front lawn when they pulled up. He started to run to the truck and stopped as if he'd remembered the scene yesterday.

God, had it only been yesterday? Everything was changing so fast.

Seeing Toby, Cain turned to Emily. "Emily, he didn't mean... What I mean is, if you could take it easy on Toby..."

She sent him a sidewise look and rolled her eyes. "I'm not heartless, Cain. I know Toby didn't mean any harm."

Cain took her hand. "He was scared you were going to leave again. This time with Kyle."

She looked back at the young boy who was kicking rocks, his hands in his pockets, and her heartstrings tugged. "Let me talk to him."

Cain grinned at her and jerked her forward for a kiss. "I'll put your things in my...our room."

Emily approached Toby slowly. Looking over her shoulder, judging the hearing distance from Cain, she asked softly, "Got a minute?"

Toby nodded but didn't look at her. She sat cross-legged on the grass and took off her flip-flops. "I love this time of year. When the grass is so thick you can run your feet through it," Emily told him.

"Are you leaving? Is that why Cain has your bags?" Toby blurted out.

She held a hand out to him. "Come here please, Toby."

He came to her reluctantly. She pulled him to sit on her lap and adjusted him so she could see his face. "I guess you're pretty upset about what happened yesterday, huh?"

Toby just shrugged.

Emily continued. "Yeah, me and your brother had a pretty big fight. I bet that scared you."

Another shrug.

Emily sighed. "Toby, Cain and I have a complicated relationship. I don't really understand it myself."

What was there to understand? Cain asked himself as he eavesdropped on Emily and Toby from the porch. She was his. There, easy! Tony opened the door and started to ask him what he was doing, but Cain hushed him quickly. Tony rolled his eyes and was going to shut the door when Emily spoke again.

"Sometimes when we don't know how to say what we want, we yell."

Cain couldn't see them, but he could picture Emily with Toby on her lap.

"But Cain did more than yell."

Cain sighed and turned to head towards the two of them when Tony caught his arm. Tony shook his head at him.

"Let her take care of this," he said quietly.

Emily did. "And you think that's your fault."

"Did you get hurt because of me?"

Cain knew she would be hugging him now.

"I'm not hurt. Cain didn't really hurt me. He scared me. That's all. But I understand why and you need to too."

Toby nodded. "Because I told him Kyle kissed you."

Emily surprised them all with her next statement. "Toby, you did the right thing."

"I did?" Toby asked, and Cain and Tony exchanged confused looks.

"Who do you trust more than anyone you know to help you and protect you?" she asked him.

"Lamont."

"And then?"

"Cain and Tony."

"Good. You see? You had a worry. You thought maybe I would leave. So you told one of the people you trust the most so they could fix it, right?"

"I thought Cain could make you stay."

"I am staying. But Toby, Cain didn't make me stay. I chose to stay."

Toby laughed happily. "I don't care why as long as you do. I've got to tell Lamont and Tony."

Emily stood laughing. "Tony already knows. He's listening from the porch with Cain, but you can tell Lamont."

Tony and Cain exchanged an amused look and stepped inside.

Cain felt his whole body tingle with the awareness that Emily had said she would stay. She had committed herself.

Chapter Nine

The drive was long to Colorado, but Cain knew he had something to look forward to getting home to. Emily had been awake to see him leave and kissed him goodbye. The sight of her in her robe standing at the door was one Cain would cherish during his time away.

Adam had been silent for most of the trip. They had stopped for coffee fifteen miles back, and Cain took over the driving.

"How's your dad doing?" Cain asked his friend.

Cain and Adam had been best friends growing up. When Lamont offered Christian his own Pack and territory, it was the first time the two friends had ever been apart.

Adam sighed heavily before answering. "Still depressed and blaming himself. It seems the only one who can reach him is Logan."

"Logan's been staying at your house?" Cain asked.

"Yeah." Adam sighed. "Logan and Dad have been friends for a long time, since before I was even born. Dad doesn't have a mate, so I'm glad he at least has his friend. I'm not sure what's going to happen."

"Not his fault," Cain commented.

"I know, but he blames himself. He thinks she should have been in territory, and it wouldn't have happened."

"The last attack happened in territory."

"Try telling him that." Adam's laugh was bitter. "I'm thankful for the help, though. Logan is a good guard. With me being gone so much, I feel better having him around."

Cain rubbed his hand over his face. "Can't be easy being an Alpha. I know Lamont is always the last one to bed and the first one up."

Adam stared out the window. "He wants me to take over the Pack."

Cain wasn't surprised. Most Alphas left their Packs to their sons. "You'd be a good Alpha."

Adam finally looked at him. "Do you think so?"

Cain didn't hesitate with his answer. "Yes, I do. You would be a fair leader. A good leader. One of the reasons Lamont gave Christian a Pack was knowing that someday you would take it."

Adam gave him a small smile. "I'm worried when Logan leaves that Dad might want to end his existence."

Cain knew Weres who had done that. Not many did but some. Usually after they lost their mate. Both his mother and Kyle's had died in a car accident when they were children, but luckily their dads had stayed around to raise them.

"Maybe he won't," Cain offered, not knowing what else to say.

"I guess we'll find out soon. Logan got word that his Alpha is expecting his first child. He'll need to return to guard over them."

Cain smiled. He had always liked Logan's Alpha, Gage. Gage's mate was one of the few Weres who couldn't shift. He understood she'd had a hard childhood, but when he met her for the first time, the love she had for her mate was obvious.

Thinking of Gage having a child made him think of Emily. She would be a great mother. The way she was with Toby was proof of that.

It was something they needed to discuss. He could picture their children running around playing while he held her in his arms.

* * * *

Cain knew the minute he walked into the meeting that it wasn't like the others he had attended. The different Pack's representatives were all edgy and looking at each other with suspicion.

Cain took in the others in the room as he sat in one of the offered chairs.

Riker sat at the head of a long conference table. He was the only actual Alpha in attendance, so he would be in charge of the meeting.

Cain had taken the seat next to Sam, who was a guard and third-in-command with Gage. With the new Alpha expecting their first child, Cain knew Gage's Pack was stretched thin. Extra precautions would be taken with Gage's mate, and that would require extra guards.

If he didn't have Emily at home waiting for him, Cain might have offered to accompany Sam back to his territory.

Cain watched as the room filled up quickly. There were nine territories being represented today. Riker started the meeting as soon as everyone had taken a seat. It was agreed upon that the attacks most likely had been done by another Were.

The survivors had all gave the same description. The attacker had only wanted one thing from them. After he attacked the girls, he would beat them with his fists. The beatings had rapidly gotten worse until the last victim hadn't lived through it.

In the middle of the meeting, Riker's second entered and stood behind his Alpha. Cain didn't know much about Larry. Unlike most Packs, Riker made the males of his Pack fight for position. An Alpha could tell dominance inside a wolf without the need for violence. However, a few Alphas still let Pack rank be held by earning it.

Cain watched Larry as he watched the room until finally their eyes met.

Cain took an immediate dislike to the man. There was no compassion in the second's eyes as Adam spoke about the results of Mindy's attack.

Sam shifted beside him, and Cain noticed he was also staring at Larry. Sam tilted his head, and Cain got the impression he was scenting him.

Larry's eyes narrowed at Sam as he sneered back.

Sam sat back in his chair as if nothing was up, but Cain made a mental note to get together with him once the meeting was over.

Sam was leaning against the car when Cain walked up with Adam. He straightened and nodded towards them as they approached.

Cain shook hands with him then moved aside for Adam. Other Packs were leaving as Cain acknowledged Brent Simpson. They waved at one another in greeting. He'd only met the man once when Cain had made his first and only trip to California. Brent had been the one to show him around, and although Cain wouldn't say they were friends, Brent was a nice enough guy.

As the parking lot started to thin out, Cain turned to Sam and Adam. "This meeting didn't do anything. Everyone is still blaming each other, and we didn't find out anything new."

"Gage calls it political bullshit, but it had to be done. Otherwise, the Packs will start to rip each other apart," Sam said.

"Damn." Cain ran his hand over his face. He was tired and just wanted to be with Emily. "We need to end this fast. Did you get anything from scenting Larry?"

Sam smiled, but shook his head. "No. His scent wasn't one I recognised, but I could have sworn it was in the room."

Cain hadn't wanted to say anything, but he agreed. "So you think it is someone who was at the meeting?"

"Son of a bitch." Adam growled. "And we let him go?"

Cain put his hand on Adam's shoulder to calm him. "We don't know that it was. But it gives us an idea. We do know who was at the meeting, and that gives us a place to start."

Adam shrugged off his hand. "That's going to do a lot of good for the next girl."

Sam moved restlessly, and Cain knew he could tell how close Adam was to shifting. "It gives us something," he told his old friend.

Adam took several deep breaths before nodding. "Sorry."

Sam slapped him on the back. "Had me worried there for a second. Well, I've got to run. Marissa is driving Gage crazy with all her cravings, so in turn, he's driving me crazy sending me after things. I have instructions to stop on my way home and pick up a list a mile long. I tell you, I don't think I want children after seeing this."

All three men laughed and waved goodbye. Getting in the car, Cain looked over at Adam.

"You okay?"

"Yeah, but if we think it's Larry, why don't we just go after him?"

Sounded like a plan to him, but Cain knew they couldn't, not just yet. "Because if it's not, it would start a Pack war, and we don't need that on top of this."

"Just so you know, I'm going to rip this guy apart when we find him," Adam said quietly.

"Okay." With that said, he started the long drive home.

Chapter Ten

Emily ran around the large tree and pulled her shirt over her head. She had long ago learned not to be shy about her naked body, but she didn't think that Cain would much like his brother seeing her that way.

She'd been restless all day waiting for Cain to return. She didn't like being away from him. It also made her realise that she couldn't go back to school with him staying inside the territory.

She needed a good long run to calm herself. The wolf inside was scratching to get out. Finally, she had been able to talk Tony into taking her out. She didn't like having to have a chaperon, but she did understand it. If Cain came back, and she'd been hurt, there would be no telling what he would do. Or how many people would end up hurt.

Why that thought made her happy she wasn't quite sure, but she decided to go with it.

After folding her clothes and placing them against the trunk of the tree, she knelt and welcomed the magic that would allow her to shift.

The tingling started at the tip of her toes and moved over her body quickly. Her skin grew tight, until it felt like it would burst. Bones adjusted inside her, and she felt herself float like she always did.

Then, only minutes later, she stood on all fours, tilted her head back, and yowled in pleasure. An answering call from the west told her that Tony was ready. She bounded for him, content to run and play until her man came home to her.

After dropping Adam off, Cain drove faster than the posted speed limit signs. He couldn't shake the feeling that something wasn't right. Picking up his cell phone from the middle console, he tried once again to reach Emily.

It rang four times before he got the message she couldn't answer at this time but to leave his name and number. Dread filled his stomach as he tried his brother. No answer there either.

Cain stomped his foot harder on the accelerator, and the car shot forward. They should be answering. He had told her to stay in the main house except if Tony was with her.

Of course, if she was in trouble, and Tony was with her, that might explain why neither was answering. Cain took the next turn too sharply, and the car skidded. Correcting the vehicle, he took a deep breath and slowed down. Getting himself killed wasn't going to help either of them.

His cell phone rang from where he thrown it in the seat beside him, causing him to swerve again in surprise. The number of the house showed on the I.D.

"Emily!" he answered.

"No, it's your father. What's wrong, Cain? I can feel your unease from here." His father's voice was soft but sharp, pulling him out of his panic.

Cain laughed almost hysterically. Why hadn't he thought of calling the house? Of course his father could sense when he was worried, so why wouldn't he be able to sense if Tony was in trouble?

"Cain, are you okay?" his father asked again.

"Yes. Yes, I'm fine. I couldn't get a hold of Emily or Tony, and I started to freak out. I didn't even think of calling you," he tried to explain.

His father's sigh of relief was audible even over the phone. "Emily and Tony are both fine. She was so restless waiting on your return that they went for a run."

That made Cain feel better, but he just wanted to be absolutely sure she was okay. "Can you sense them?"

When his father remained silent, Cain knew he was trying.

"Yes. Emily is very happy right now, and I believe she is outrunning your brother."

Cain could picture Emily in her small timber wolf body running from the bigger black wolf. While his brother was big and powerful, Emily was smaller and faster. She had almost outrun Cain the first time they'd gone out.

"Thanks. I'm only about thirty minutes away, but I could feel something wasn't right." He still had that feeling, but it had lessened. He still felt on edge, just that something wasn't right.

"It's probably just your bond. You've been away from her for too long. I'll have Kyle go tell them you're almost here."

Cain felt a growl try to escape from the back of his throat at the mention of the other man.

"Cain." His name came out as a warning.

He shook his head to clear his mind. "That would be great." Then he hung up and once again sped home to his waiting mate.

Cain pulled to the gates and waved to the guard inside. Antonio waved back as he pressed the button to let him in. Cain looked in his rear view mirror, still uneasy.

The drive to the house seemed to take hours even though it was less than ten minutes. He had his seat belt off before the car came to a complete stop.

Lifting his head to the wind, he concentrated on the sounds and smells around him. Then, using the mating bond, he tried to find Emily.

He could sense her behind the house still in wolf form. She was only about a mile away. He started to go to the house until another smell reached him. One mixed with hers. He knew that smell. It had been at the meeting.

Cain took off running while pulling at his clothes. He shifted as he ran which was as painful as it could get. Once on his four feet, he could run faster. That didn't stop the black and grey wolf from coming up from behind and passing him. So Lamont could sense the trouble too.

He picked up speed and ran next to his father into the woods. His ears picked up a loud growl then a whimper. He ran faster, jumping over fallen branches instinctively as he headed in the direction of Emily.

When he and his father broke through to where the sound of battle was already taking place, he immediately sought Emily.

His brother, in wolf form, was fighting a larger wolf while another went from snapping at the strange wolf to blocking Emily from it.

Lamont howled and headed into the fight. The strange wolf threw his brother off his back and met his father.

Cain ran to Emily to make sure she was okay. Her small frame was hunched down and little whimpers were escaping her. The wolf guarding her moved aside as Cain approached.

Looking in his eyes and smelling him, Cain knew who he was. But if Larry was the wolf protecting Emily, who was his father now fighting?

Cain nuzzled Emily's neck and could have cried himself when her small tongue licked his paw. He shifted away from her and nodded at Larry.

The other wolf understood and moved to stand guard in front of her once again. Cain next checked on his brother who was lying on his side, panting. Tony was injured but alive. He turned to the wolf that now stood muzzle to muzzle with his Alpha.

Lamont darted in and nipped at him, but the other wolf was faster. Cain waited patiently while Lamont distracted him until the perfect moment. Then he jumped, knocking the other wolf off its feet, causing him to roll. He tried to regain all fours again, but Cain pounced and held him down.

They rolled, teeth clashing, as they both tried to get the upper hand. Distantly, Cain could hear Emily's whines and his father taking care of Tony, but he couldn't look back and give up his attention on the attacker.

The wolf made a move to get his back legs under Cain. It was just what he had been waiting for. Adjusting his body weight, Cain got a hold of the wolf's neck. He slammed him down hard once, then again. His sharp canines sunk farther into the fur until the other wolf gave up.

Going limp, he submitted to Cain.

Cain remained on alert as other members of his Pack—both in wolf and human forms—joined them. It was Antonio who spoke quietly to Cain, telling him to release. But the wolf inside Cain wouldn't let him. Instinct told him to rip the wolf's throat out for endangering its mate.

Then his father was there in human form, adding his voice to Antonio's. But it wasn't until Emily dropped next to him, human and naked, and placed her hand on his head that he could.

Letting go of the wolf, Cain crawled into her lap and started his own shift back, staring into her eyes the entire time.

Chapter Eleven

Cain held Emily in his arms as she shivered. Antonio had taken off his shirt and jacket and given them to her until he could return with her clothes, which Cain was grateful for. He was raw enough without having to think about her naked in front of everyone.

He still could not believe that the attacker had been Brent Simpson. He turned and glared at the other non-Pack member present.

"You knew," he accused Larry.

"I had my suspicions," the other man told him, shrugging. "I wasn't sure, so I decided to follow him when we left the meeting."

Cain was still shaking with rage at the thought of any man putting his hands on his mate. Emily's soft hand turned his head towards her.

"He saved me, Cain. I had gotten separated from Tony when he went to investigate another smell. I was trying to make my way back to my clothes when the other wolf appeared in front of me."

Cain tightened his hold on her.

"He came out of nowhere. One minute he was standing in front of me, and the next, he attacked."

"Shh..." Cain ran one hand over the back of her hair, letting the silk fall through his fingers.

"No, I want to tell you," she insisted.

Cain nodded, knowing she needed to get out what happened.

"He had me pinned down, and I really thought he was going to kill me. Then, all of a sudden, he was gone. Larry had pulled him off of me, and they started fighting. Then Tony ran in and joined the fight." Tears welled up in her eyes. "I'm so sorry, Cain. I just wanted to run."

"Oh, baby, it's not your fault." Cain let her bury her head in his chest as she cried. He looked up and met Larry's gaze.

"Thank you." It wasn't enough. It would never be enough to him. But this man, who he had suspected, had saved his mate's life.

Larry shrugged and half-smiled. "I should have told you what I thought, but I didn't know for sure. Besides, I don't think anyone would have believed me."

"Why not tell your Alpha?" Lamont asked, walking up and handing Cain Emily's clothes, which Antonio had found not far away.

Larry barked out a laugh. "Things run a little different in my Pack. If Riker had come into what you had, he would have watched the fight and then offered the winner a job."

"Sounds like you need a new Alpha," Cain commented.

The shadow that crossed Larry's face was brief, but he had seen it.

"Maybe I do," he whispered softly. He looked around the area surrounded with family and friends, his face showing a bit of longing. Then he backed away until he blended in with the trees and was gone.

* * * *

"Cain?" Emily rolled over and reached for him as she called out his name. The bed beside her was empty. She sat up and saw him sitting on the end of the bed.

"Cain?" She moved up behind him and wrapped her arms around his neck, pressing her breasts into his back. "What's wrong?"

"What's wrong?" He laughed out bitterly. "You could have been killed yesterday while I wasn't even here."

Emily sighed and crawled onto his lap. "I could have been killed even if you had been here."

He shook his head. "He knew I was with Adam, and he could beat me here. He went after you because you're my mate."

Emily understood. "And you blame yourself."

"Of course I do." Guilt laced his words.

She placed her hands on either side of his face and made him look at her. "You love me." When he started to respond, she put her fingers over his lips. "You love me, and you're afraid because of that I'll get hurt."

When he didn't deny it, Emily knew she was right. "But here's another thing. I love you too. I love you so much that when you're gone, I find myself going crazy thinking about you." She placed a soft kiss against his lips as she moved her hand. "There's always going to be danger, Cain. Whether I'm with you or not. I'd rather know that you'll always be looking out for me than have you push me away because of it."

"That's just it though. I'm so selfish that I would rather have you in danger than give you up."

Emily smiled, hoping he would understand. "I need to be with you, Cain. Always. I don't want you to ever give me up."

He visibly relaxed and under her bottom started to come to life. She wiggled and nipped his bottom lip. "Seems to me someone is feeling better."

With strong hands, he cupped her ass and pulled her tighter against him, her wet sex sliding over his skin. "I'll show you just what I'm feeling." And he kissed her.

Emily had never known a kiss to be so sweet and promising in her whole life. He drugged her with his caresses and tenderness.

Cain broke away, and she tried to follow. "One more thing."

"Enough talk," she demanded, reaching to fist his hard cock.

"Just have to tell you this..." he panted as she started to stroke him.

"What?"

"I talked to my father last night. We're going to promote Antonio to Enforcer so he can take the out-of-town jobs."

Emily's hand stilled. "You're staying here with me permanently." Joy filled her at the thought of not having to be separated from him again.

"Well, no."

Emily's heart jumped in her chest. "No? But you just said you wouldn't give me up."

He looked at her for a full minute before a smile broke out of his face. "I'm not."

"But...I don't understand."

"I'm going back to school with you. You'll finish the semester and then we'll return here together. To our home."

"Cain!" Emily smothered him with kisses.

He grabbed her face and their eyes locked. "I would do anything for you, honey. And this is just a small thing. You want to finish school, so I want to support you."

Once again, tears fell down her face.

"No crying! This is a good thing," he complained.

Emily scrubbed the tears from her face with the back of her hand. "Happy tears, Cain. You've made me so happy!"

"I'll always try to make you happy. But, when we return, I will take my post back as Enforcer for the territory. Are you okay with that?"

"Yes! Yes! I know that's who you are. I understand that!"

"Okay, then enough talk."

She squealed as he flipped their positions, so she was on her hands and knees on the bed and his hard body was over her.

"I also want to start a family after you're finished with school."

"A family?" Emily's breath caught as he teased the entrance of her pussy with his thick erection.

"Yes, a family. So we need to practice making one." With those words, he thrust deep inside her.

Her head fell forward as he started to pound into her from behind. Sensations ran rampant through her body as each stroke took her higher. A family. She would finally have a family.

"But we also need to take care of one more thing," he told her, not slowing the force of his strokes.

Emily couldn't believe he could talk right then. "Hmm?"

"I asked my father permission to mate officially."

Emily's body tightened and she knew she was close. "Mmm."

"Say yes. Say you want to mate with me," he ordered.

Emily slammed back into him. "Yessss..." she hissed her agreement. She felt his canines against her neck. "Yes."

He pierced her skin as she screamed out his name and her body exploded.

About the Author

Crissy Smith lives in Texas with her husband, daughter, and three Labrador retrievers. When not writing or reading, she enjoys hunting, camping and shooting. But she has a girly side too and is addicted to pedicures and coffee.

She has been writing since she was a teenager and still loves everything to do with the paranormal. Her stories and characters all have a place in her heart. She loves the alpha male, the dominant werewolf, or the Master vampire which find their way in most of her books.

Crissy is currently working on her first series for Total-E-Bound called Were Chronicles. She will introduce her readers to a hidden world of wolf shifters and their unpredictable mates. The first book Pack Alpha will be released in May 2009.

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