



Aiden

“I can’t believe she’s pregnant too,” Sienna exclaimed from the passenger seat. “This is amazing timing. We’re gonna have kids who are the same age, Aiden.”



“You don’t know she’s pregnant,” I reminded her. “She hasn’t seen a healer yet. It could just be the flu.”

“It’s not just the *flu*. I don’t know, I have this... this sense—”

“Oh, now my mate’s a healer?” I joked, shooting her a smile.

“I can’t explain it. But the second I saw the look on her face, right before she ran to the bathroom, it was like I had this maternal connection. Like it was a mother-to-mother moment. Does that sound crazy?”

“Yes,” I responded, without taking my eyes off the road.

“Whatever. You’re a party pooper.”

“I’m not a party pooper. I’m just saying maybe it’s not best to get a girl who’s just been in a coma excited about having a baby when we don’t know for sure if she’s pregnant yet.”

I could feel Sienna staring at me, so I took my eyes off the road for a second and turned to her.

“You’re a party pooper.”



“Sienna, I’m not a party pooper—”

“Didn’t you see how excited she and Josh were? They were practically exploding!”

“Yeah, and that’s exactly why I’m concerned! Between Michelle’s coma and Josh’s delusional Konstantin mission—”

“It’s not delusional.”

“They don’t need another source of drama in their lives, Sienna. What they need is stability. All of these ups and downs aren’t gonna help them find their new normal.”

“Can you stop trying to be Oprah for three seconds and *be happy for your friends?*” Sienna demanded, her tone becoming more serious.

“You’ve been so *man-of-wisdom-y* through all of this, Aiden, but the truth is you don’t know. None of us know. We have no idea if Konstantin’s still out there, and we have no idea what the next year’s gonna look like. So stop pretending you have the answers.”



As the words poured out of her mouth, they hit me. Hard. I realized she was right. After everything that had happened at the Yule Ball, I'd put up a shield.

And that shield was detachment.



If I detached myself from the possibility of the unknown by convincing myself I *did* know—and therefore convincing everybody else, too—then the unknown couldn't hurt me. It couldn't hurt Sienna or my pack or anyone else I cared about.

It was almost easier to get blindsided from a threat I wasn't worried about than getting attacked by one I'd seen coming.

That way, the fear and the danger would last the length of the attack.

But if I was fueled by worry, by *what-ifs*, then the fear and the danger would last a whole lot longer.

They'd last the whole time I was worrying.

So I backed away from the fear. And, yeah, I might've taken a holier-than-thou standpoint whenever Josh tried to convince me Konstantin was still alive. Maybe even when Sienna told me what had happened to Michelle with the watch steam.



But I wasn't too proud to admit that I didn't know what was going to happen. So that was what I told my mate.

"I don't have all the answers," I said.



"And I'm sorry if that's how I've come off lately, okay? I don't want to be some pompous asshole Alpha who talks down to everyone around him. But I can't... I can't live a life where I'm constantly on the lookout for danger, Sienna."

"We're not constantly on the lookout for danger. Konstantin is a real threat, he's proven to be a problem, and now he's back."

I took a deep breath. "You really think he's back?"

"*Yes!*" she shouted. "Why else would he have appeared in Michelle's room? If he was destroyed, Aiden, he'd be gone. Every inch, every reflection—gone. And he's not."

"Okay." I nodded. "Okay. Let's handle it, then."

I could feel her looking at me again. After a second, she asked, "Are you serious? You believe me?"

"Sienna, I always believe you. That's never the question. So if you feel this strongly about it, then yes, I'm serious. Let's get to the bottom of it."



When she didn't respond, I glanced at her. I could see the smile stretched across her face. She looked at me. "Thank you," she said, squeezing my hand.

"Don't thank me. It's my Alpha duty."

"Okay, Mr. Alpha."



We were turning onto our street, the headlights illuminating the yards of our neighbors, when, all of a sudden, a bang of electricity hit me right in my core.

Every one of my muscles tightened, the hairs on my skin shot up so they were standing straight, and I was hard as a goddamn rock.

I needed friction.

My hips started moving in my seat, trying to rub the fabric of my jeans against my hardness.

I let out a deep breath.

It was like I was on the edge of a mountain before I even realized I'd started climbing.

"Fuck," I murmured, trying my hardest to focus on the road.

We were almost home.

Just make it home, you idiot. Make it home.

“Aiden...” I heard Sienna whimper from beside me.

Don't look.



If you look at her, you'll lose it.

“Just... a few... more... seconds...” I managed to get out as I pulled the car into the driveway, turning it off and stumbling out of the car. I ran around to her side, opened the door, and pulled her to me.

On me.

She had her legs wrapped around me, and I could feel the heat radiating from between her legs. But I needed more.

I needed more heat, more fire.

I needed fewer clothes.

“Inside,” I growled, trying to carry her to the front door. She was kissing down my neck, biting my ear, and I honestly didn't know if I could make it to the house.

I really thought about lying down on the driveway

and taking my mate right there.

We were nearing the steps to the door when I pulled my face away from Sienna's—and that was when I saw them.

Two figures, sitting on the stoop, cloaked in darkness.



There was no light outside at all. I couldn't see faces, couldn't make out any indication of whether they were friends or... something else.

“Aiden,” I heard Sienna giggle into my ear. She still hadn't turned to the stoop. “Why'd you stop ___”

“Shh!” I shushed, putting her on the ground. “Stay here,” I said as I stepped closer to the people on the stairs.

Rowan

I was perched behind a tree a few houses down from Aiden and Sienna's, across the street. I had a pretty good view of the happenings outside the house from here.

Now, I know that sounds paranoid or voyeuristic, but listen.

I needed to know what was happening with them, in and out of their house. I needed to



them, in and out of their house. I needed to know who they were speaking to, who their close relationships were with, both positive and negative.

I can't tell you why.



I just... I needed to.

So when I saw the two people get out of a cab and stand, waiting on Aiden and Sienna's stoop—eventually sitting down on the stairs—I kept my eyes on them.

I had no idea who they were. Hell, I couldn't see anything about them from here. It was pitch-black out.

They didn't talk much, so I couldn't even make out voices.

I wasn't nervous. I knew I'd be ready if anything went down, if I had to intervene.

But I was curious.

And when Aiden and Sienna got home, it looked like they had no idea anyone would be waiting for them.

I watched as Aiden approached the two on the stoop, and by his body language, I could tell he wasn't exactly happy to see them.



I had my body poised to sprint over to them at the first sign of trouble. My feet were pointed toward the house, my hands already clenched into fists.

I was ready to fight.

It didn't even matter who I was fighting.



I saw Aiden lift his hand—to punch? To grab?

I was taking my first step toward them—I didn't want a fight to break out before I got there—and as Aiden threw his body at one of the figures—*what?*

They were hugging.

Aiden was hugging one of them. Then both of them.

And Sienna walked over to join them.

It was a group hug.

I exhaled, feeling silly as ever, and took my place back behind the tree.

Sienna

“What are you guys doing here?” Aiden asked his parents as he guided them into our living room.

parents as he guided them into our living room.

I watched the whole situation with a smile plastered tightly on my face, trying to focus on the ordeal we were now in—and not the praise that was threatening to burst through my core.



“Don’t play coy with us.” Charlotte wagged a finger at her son. “The news has spread, my dear.” She reached up to grab his face, kissing him on the cheek with enough force to kill a baby.

“Mom, please.” Aiden laughed, but it sounded hollow. I knew he was praising just as hard as me right now, and I couldn’t imagine what contact... from his mother... felt like.

“Son, we’re just so happy. So proud of you. You too, Sienna,” Daniel said as he clapped Aiden on the shoulder. “We couldn’t wait to celebrate with you.”

“Well, there’s a lot of pack stuff going on right now, so our celebrations are on hold,” Aiden said through clenched teeth. “Isn’t that right, Sienna?”

I looked at him, seeing the straining behind his eyes.

We were both seconds away from losing it.

My entire body was trying to hold in a monster that had a mind of its own—



and the monster wasn't taking it so well.

"That's right. Celebrations... on hold. When they happen, you'll be... the first to know." I smiled at them both, trying to keep my legs steady.

They were trembling, yearning to be closer together, yearning to give the space between my legs any sort of feeling...



"Nonsense. We'll start right now. Daniel, the champagne?" Charlotte snapped at her husband, who reached into his briefcase.

Aiden and I looked at each other in terror.

"NO!" we both screamed.

His parents looked at us.

"It's just... I can't drink with the baby," I explained. "And Aiden's not drinking right now."

"I've been sick," he mustered up.

"Oh, darling, are you all right?" Charlotte asked, reaching up to feel his forehead.

"Fine, Mom," he said, pushing her hand away. "Can we... can we do dinner? Tomorrow? That'd work much better."



“What about a quick coffee now—”

“NO!” I screamed, my mouth quivering. “Sorry,” I said, my voice lower. “No. Tomorrow’s better.”

Charlotte gave me an unreadable look and then pursed her lips and nodded. “Very well. Come on, Daniel. Let’s give them their space.”

As soon as my in-laws were out of the house, Aiden and I looked at each other. And then all sin broke loose.

Michelle

GUESS WHO JUST HAD THEIR OFFICIAL
HEALER APPOINTMENT



Michelle

THIS BITCH IS PREGGERS

Erica

stfu!!!!

Erica

Everyones w baby except me 🙄

Mia

OMG

Mia

Im freaking out

Erica
This is so typical

Mia
Erica shut up

Mia
This is EXCITING

Michelle
We need to celebrate! ASAP!

Michelle
I'm thinking joint baby shower???



Michelle
SI?

Sienna
YES

Sienna
SO HAPPY FOR YOU

Sienna
Joint baby shower it is

Mia
I'm so ready

Michelle

We need to celebrate! ASAP!

Michelle

I'm thinking joint baby shower???

Michelle

SI?

Sienna

YES

Sienna

SO HAPPY FOR YOU



Sienna

Joint baby shower it is

Mia

I'm so ready

Michelle

Get your pastels ready, bitches

Next Chapter