

## Chapter 0141

“NO!”

She flinches back and I briefly feel bad for being so nasty to her, when she only wants to help, but I shake it off. I walk to the chair that has my dirty, bloodstained clothes. I drop the hospital gown, not caring who sees my scars anymore. If they want to care for me they can look at me as I am, and learn to do it without looking at me like I am broken or with pity. I despise pity. I dress slowly, keeping every sound of pain stuffed deep in my chest. I know it's punishing me to not ask for help, but this is how it has always been for me and they should see that too. 1

“I'm going to the Beta house, to my isolated room where no one bothers me or cares about what I am doing. I'm going back to having freedom and control without having to check in every three seconds with someone or having people follow me and force me to do things differently without a second thought or even just asking if I'm alright with the change, assuming they know what's best for me. You think you can make me healthy? I wouldn't even know what that is.” I seeth, on a roll now, directing all my unfiltered anger out into the hallway to the guys,

Sierra, the Alpha, Gamma and Deltas. “I am broken beyond repair and I have been surviving that way for as long as I can remember. You heard the doc, irreparable damage has been done. There is nothing you can fix, cause even on my worst day I still perform better than everyone in that hallway pretending to care about me, while overlooking everything that has ever been wrong with me. I will heal myself, by myself, it just works better that way. I’m sorry Luna, I just can’t do this anymore, it hurts too much.”

My voice is raspy and my throat hurts but I continue to speak. “Maybe somewhere everyone has a soft spot for the small, spare beta. The one her father can’t even stand to look at or be around, who TOLD the principal to punish her more because she is unworthy and could use the lesson in humility. I do not want pity love. I don’t want love that comes from feeling bad for my situation. This is me, damaged and messed up, love me like this or not at all. I can’t change for everyone else anymore.” I turn my back on her and walk toward the treatment room door and find all of my so-called friends and family huddled red-eyed and grief stricken. Their eyes widened at the gruesome sight of me. Even my dad had the decency to show up and feign a look of shame. I just rolled my eyes and walked past everyone down the hallway and

out the door.

I ran all the way back to my house, pain shooting up my legs, not noticing or caring if people were staring at me. I let myself in the back door like always and walked the silent halls to the staircase leading to my former prison. I ascend slowly, everything about this feels wrong, but so does the thought of going to my room at the packhouse. I don't belong here, it doesn't fit anymore. Like clothes that are just too small, no longer comfortable and easy, but suffocating and tight. I agree with my wolf, the packhouse is home now, but I just can't be around the guys or even Sierra right now. ①

I make it into my room and head straight for the shower to get rid of the evidence of my self destruction. I don't cry though, which is something new for me. I'm not sure if I am just all cried out or if the anger has finally taken over the sadness.

I climb out, dry off and get dressed. The first thing I need to do is figure out how long I have been at the hospital and see if I have missed any school. All my stuff is in my room at the packhouse. Just another thing I'm going to have to deal with later. I leave my door locked and head out the window, just like old times. I can't believe it's been almost a year since I

have had to sneak out. I don't need anyone scenting me come and go. I head straight for school taking the well worn long way through the woods. Sneaking in a back entrance that I broke a couple years ago so I had a quick escape in or out if I needed it. And I needed it on a regular basis.

Now, who to talk to to get caught up on the day? Doc T. is a no go. The pack doctor is just going to send me back to the hospital and almost guaranteed to call Luna Ava. The only other person who doesn't completely hate me is Mr. Lyons the history teacher. He is old and could care less about pack drama. The hallways are empty and I think it's too early for lunches. I take all the paths that I know are blindspots for the security cameras. That will be one of the first things I fix when I get back from training, but for now I'm going to use them to my advantage. I peak around corners like a criminal just trying to make it to his classroom and not get caught sneaking into school.

## Chapter 014.2

I get about five feet from his door when a hand grabs my wrist. I instinctively twist and take a defensive stance ready for an attack.

“Relax! It’s just me.” Sierra whisper yells, dodging my fist as it comes flying at her face. “I told the guys you would show up here, they didn’t believe me. They are all still camped at your house trying to figure out how to get you to come out and reason with you.”

I go to open my mouth to argue, but she puts her whole hand on my mouth.

“Stop! I don’t want to hear it and I’m not here to fight. I am not your enemy and no matter how stupid the guys are, neither are they. That’s all I am going to say about it now though. You are not going to avoid me and I will not force you to be around the guys, cause whatever this is,” she gestures at all of me, “It’s bigger than any of us thought. Your trauma runs deep and you are the only person who can get yourself past that since you won’t let anyone in that far. Now, it’s Monday and we have about eight minutes before the bell will ring for second period. I

already went to the packhouse and grabbed your stuff and to your locker and got everything you usually have for all classes before lunch. I talked to the school counselor and I have been moved into all of your classes, that way neither of us are alone per Luna Ava's request. The guys might catch on by then, so I will switch everything out for you and we can make a better plan for tomorrow, cause this hiding sh\*t isn't going to fly past today." With that she handed me my overly stuffed backpack and started to walk off.

"Sierra, I'm not going to come between you and the guys, I won't make you choose. But I just can't..."

"Stop. I told you I'm not talking about them today. You are my concern right now. I had to watch your basically dead body, covered in blood, being carried out of the basement. I watched Gamma Brett run with you to the pack hospital, barely breathing. I can't feel your emotions like Oliver and apparently the twins, I don't know where your mind is at, but that was the scariest f\*cking thing I have ever had to go through. And we do care, I care, but I can't help if you keep things from me. I didn't realize getting out of here was life or death for you, but that's how bad it is, isn't it? You will die if you don't get out of here." Tears are rolling down her cheeks. I just step up to her and pull her in for a hug. This is what I didn't want,

my needs are affecting others. This is why I feel stuck. Like her, I'm not going to think about it though. We are here, right now, and she is on my side, apparently, no matter what I do or say.

We both took a big breath in and sighed out, silently agreeing to just get through today. We walked off to second period and she filled me in on how long I was in the hospital, which was only overnight.

We made it through the day uneventfully, the guys never showed up. She even helped me come up with a reasonable excuse for missing the first class. I was at the pack hospital for a training injury. Mostly the truth so I don't feel bad about the lie and it could be verified by Doc. T. She then helped me sneak food into my room so I don't have to leave, but only on the promise that I wouldn't shut her out and I would meet her for breakfast at the diner tomorrow. She only stayed for a little while after that. Sam started blowing up her phone and I kept reminding her that I wasn't going to come between her friendships with the guys even though mine were imploding around me.

"What do you want me to say to them? You know they are going to smell you on me and ask questions."

"Just tell them that you were right and I did show up

at school. You understand me better than they do.” I shrug. She just rolls her eyes, but doesn’t argue either.

“Do I really have to go out the window?”

“I don’t want them to know I can come and go even if they are playing at being guards at my door. They can’t know you were here. So yes, out the window it is.”

I sat on my bed in the quiet and got the little homework I had left done and then laid down to read a book in the silence of my childhood bedroom.

All pack members 15 and older, with their wolf, will begin running patrol shifts effective immediately. We have a potential threat on our hands and our leadership council has decided training for all is vital for pack safety. You will get your schedule at your regularly scheduled training session tomorrow. Any students, this will not affect your studies. Alpha Lucas mindlinks the pack.