

Chapter 0058

(Lily POV)

"I got another call phone call from James Anderson."

Oh.

Wow. That was not what I was expecting this meeting to be about. Of all the possibilities that I considered, I never thought that that would be it. I thought maybe Dr. Hyder would want to talk about my schooling; my future in this pack or at Red Rock; or even possibly issues going on with patients that I have worked with. But James? No, I never expected James to be the topic of conversation.

Just an hour ago, I was laughing and joking around with Brady. We were throwing cookie dough, eggs, flour, and sugar at one another with the innocence of two little kids. And yet now, before Dr. Hyder—at the mere mention of James' name—I can feel my heart drop, and I can feel the tears threatening to pour out of my eyes.

The rejection happened six weeks ago. I tell myself that six weeks is a long time... that I should not care... that I should not be feeling this way... that it does not matter... that I never wanted to be mated to James anyway... but none of it does me any good. The pain is still there. I guess that is what happens when you are mated to someone with whom your painful past goes back not just days or weeks, but rather

years and years.

James Anderson. My dead sister's beloved. My bully. My (former) mate.

Saying it out loud still shocks me a little bit. I almost have to pinch myself to confirm that it is real... that the Moon Goddess really did pair me with James.

Some days, when I am feeling strong and confident, I feel angry with the Moon Goddess for ever pairing me with him; I deserved better. On other days, when I am feeling strong, confident, AND a little sassy, I wonder if the Moon Goddess paired us so that I could reject the a&&hole and put him in his place in a way that no one else could.

But then there are the other days. The days in which I let my insecurities, and everything that I have been told about myself for the past six years, get the best of me. On those days, I wonder if being paired with James Anderson was some sort of punishment. Was it the Moon Goddess' way of saying that I did not deserve to have a mate who would love me? Was it her way of agreeing with those that say that I deserve a lifetime of pain and suffering because it should have been me not Stephanie who died that night? Was it her way of reminding me that I will never actually be important to anyone? I know those are not healthy thoughts, but sometimes it is hard not to have them.

Truth be told, I had a lot of those insecure days and thoughts when I first woke up after the rejection.



Thankfully, though, I do not have very many of those anymore. Being around Brady, Alpha Hyder's oldest son, has really helped. Despite being an alpha –and a very busy one at that– he has taken a special interest in making sure that I adjust to the new situation and start to make friends here. He and I have become close friends as a result, and he makes me laugh. Being around him helps me forget my past and my insecurities.

Of course, it has not escaped me that Brady is incredibly attractive, with amazing hazel eyes, muscles to salivate over, and a strong, masculine jaw-line. He is also single. And funny. And charming. In fact, as much as I tease him about all the sexual innuendos that he makes around me, I secretly love every one of them. Sometimes I wish he would joke like that more.

At the same time, I know that I am not ready to jump into a relationship. James and I may not have had a romantic history, but we definitely had a history. Plus, despite everything, he was still my mate, and it will take time for Rose to recover from the loss of Luke, who was her other half.



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