

The Alpha and the Mistake

Mistake - 2

“No?” Mike repeated. His eyes flashed into a golden hue. For the second time that morning, I found myself doubled over, trying to gasp in a breath. Mike grabbed my neck and kneeled next to me. “Don’t you ever tell me no again,” he hissed into my ear. “Do you hear me? Never again!” With a sniff, Mike let me go and stood. “Now, show Dean what a good girl you are and apologize.”

Keeping my head down, I closed my eyes; anger and shame burning through me. Only one more year. I took a breath to do as he demanded when Dean snapped, “Enough! Man, I get it. You’re the biggest, baddest wolf. I’m impressed, but also bored.”

Mike laughed with another sniff. “Yeah, you’re right. She is lame ass boring. Come on, I’ll show you something better.”

Their retreating footsteps echoed in my ears, but I waited until the crowd had dispersed before getting up. I sucked in a breath as pain shot through my neck and stomach. Where Mike grabbed me was definitely going to bruise later. Guess turtleneck season was coming early this year. I gathered my backpack and winced as pain ran down the back of my neck. God, I hated werewolves, well, except for Harry. With a sigh, I walked to class, knowing I was going to be late.

The rest of the day turned out better than this morning. I avoided Mike by spending lunch in the girl’s bathroom; the one place not even he could go. I walked into my last class and favorite subject, science. Harry’s promise of an extra-large double chocolate fudge sundae had my stomach rumbling with anticipation. Just an hour and a half more and I would be in chocolate heaven.

I was so lost in my sundae dreams I didn’t notice who had sat next to me until the bell rang. I froze with a glance, seeing none other than Dean. Brushing back his light brown hair, he smiled a small smile at me. My heart did a strange stutter as it tried to decide between stopping completely or pound in my chest.

I sucked in a breath and jerked my gaze to the top of my desk. Oh, God. What was he doing here? Out of all my classes, why did he have to ruin the last

one? Was he even really in my class, or was this Mike's cruel plan? This was so unfair! I seriously need the number of God's customer service because I had a complaint to file with him. Good lord, Mike was unusually cruel today.

I refused to look at Dean again or acknowledge his presence. Instead, I did my best to stare only at the grandmotherly teacher and pay attention to whatever she was saying. However, in all truth, she sounded like a garbled mass of noise. Dean's staring at me was way too distracting, and it made my skin itch. I felt like prey and my whole body tensed, which only made the already forming bruises hurt even more.

As soon as the end of class bell rang, I jumped up from my seat and ran. Now, trying to outrun a werewolf was impossible for a human. I know. I had tried outrunning Mike several times before that little fact dawned on me. So as I raced out of class, I aimed for the busier halls. I'm small and thin so I can get through the crowd a lot easier than the broad, bigger Dean could, giving me more speed than him. Thanks to Mike, I've learned how to play smarter, not harder.

I weaved and dodged my way through the crowd to the nearest girls' bathroom. Since today was being rather nasty, I decided to be extra safe. I picked a stall that was in the middle and went inside, locking it, then waited. The bathroom door suddenly opened with a loud bang as it hit the wall. I jumped and nearly fell over when I backed into the toilet. I somehow kept my footing and froze, not even breathing. It was the longest second of my life until I realized the voices I was hearing were of some girls and not Mike's or Dean's.

I sat down on the toilet with my hand over my racing heart. Closing my eyes, I let out the breath I held. As I listened to the three girls talk about some teacher and how she was the worst, I couldn't help but ask the dreaded question — Why?

As a rule, I never asked why; not even in my head. In the end, what did it matter? My life was what it was, for good or bad. Would knowing why Dad had to die in the car crash change my life in some way? Would knowing why Mike was so cruel make the punches hurt less? I didn't think so. Yet, today I couldn't help but ask. Why did I have to be hiding from werewolves instead of out there with those girls complaining about horrid teachers?

The girls left with another bang of the door, leaving the bathroom feeling emptier somehow. I sighed and shook my head. The last thing I needed now

was to feel sorry for myself. What I needed was a plan of action. I took out my phone and checked the time. I figured a good twenty or thirty minutes, I'd be in the clear to leave. No way would anyone besides me stay over thirty minutes after school if they didn't need to.

Sure enough, about twenty-five minutes passed, and the school was silent. I adjusted the strap of my backpack and I left the bathroom with a triumphant grin. Point one to me! I hurried to my locker and spun in the combination. As I put most of my books away, I realized someone was standing next to me, leaning on the lockers. I looked over and froze. It was Dean.

"Hey," he said, grinning at me.

With a quick glance up and down the hall, I saw we were alone. Not good. "Uhm, hey," I replied, careful to keep my tone neutral. If I pissed him off, I didn't have the protection witnesses offered. I looked around again, realizing there was a piece missing from this equation - Mike. "At least give me fair warning," I said, closing my locker with one hand and the other grabbing the small canister I kept in my pockets for emergencies.

Dean had the audacity to look confused. "Fair warning?"

"You know, like, is Mike waiting around the corner or outside? This has to be your idea. Mike has never been the patient type."

Dean shrugged. "I don't know where he is. Haven't seen him since fifth period." He lifted his hand towards me, making me flinch.

I jumped back and out of his immediate reach. Without thinking, I pulled out the canister and pointed the small black nozzle in his direction. Dean held up his hands, eyes wide, and on the canister. He must have guessed this wasn't your average pepper spray, because it wasn't. This spray was a special mix of typical pepper spray and silver, just for werewolves. A nice little birthday gift from Harry two years ago.

"Don't touch me," I warned Dean. Might as well go all in. If I was going to get the crap beat out of me, then I was going to make it worth it. "I don't give a flying flip who you are, who your dad is, or whatever is going on with your dad and Mike's. We're done. Do you hear me? We're done. Tomorrow, round two begins. We'll see what new ways you guys come up with to prove how worthless I am, but for today, we're done. So you're going to back off and I'm going to go home. Got it?"