

## Chapter 7 Uneasy

Theseus

My eyes stare at nothing in particular as I stand in front of the floor-to-ceiling windows of my office. Behind me, I hear the voices of my best friends as we wait for the Elder to be escorted to my office.

My baby brother, Damien, had already told me he hoped it was the invitation for the Alpha bloodline competition. His Mate, Penelope, had looked at him and said he would end up in the top five, at least.

My Delta, Xanthos, had turned around just to make sure he wouldn't laugh in her face. My Beta, Ajax, had not hidden his laughter, and her reaction to it had been hilarious. My Gamma, Apollo, and my Delta, Midas, had kept straight faces, but I knew they were struggling to keep their laughter inside.

A knock on the door makes me turn around as Apollo walks to open it. Elder Ezra walks in with a smile on his face. "Alpha Theseus, thank you for making time for me," he says, and I gesture to the chair in front of my desk.

I sit down behind my desk as Elder Ezra sits down as well. He grabs a file and an envelope out of his bag, and all of us know what this is about. Damien had been right—it is the invitation to the Alpha bloodline competition, and I know that he will enter.

Elder Ezra doesn't stay long, as he still has a few other Packs to visit, and I, for one, am grateful that he leaves quickly. Ajax grabs the file from my hand as soon as the door closes behind Elder Ezra and starts reading the rules and regulations.

With Damien entering the competition, this will be the first time in decades that a member of my family will participate. I'm not sure if I should curse him for it or be proud of him for taking a chance.

"Theseus, open the envelop. There is a list of Packs in there and maybe we can determine how long this shindig will take or make bets on how long Damien will last." Ajax says with a smirk on his face, sending all of us in a fit of laughter.

I pull the list from the envelop as someone knocks on the door, this time it is Damien that walks in and the moment his eyes land on the envelop he yells "Yes." Apollo tells him to sit down so Ajax can go over the rules and regulations.

For once he actually sits down and listens as Ajax reads the document to him, surprising me as he even asks a few questions. Damien thanks Ajax and after that he leaves my office with a huge smile on his face.

I open the list of Packs that will also receive an invitation and my Pack is at the top of the list, I read every Pack name out loud as Xanthos writes down the number of Wolves from an Alpha bloodline.

Three of the Packs on the list are allies and I know I will at least show up for the first round, just to see how they are doing. "Last on the list is White Crescent Pack." I say and four heads snap in my direction. They are the largest and strongest pack and I remember why Dad didn't participate last time our Pack got invited.

Alpha Atlas is a force to be reckoned with and Dad didn't want to get embarrassed by losing to the guy. "Okay, that is at least one. How many Pups does he have?" Xanthos asks and for a moment I am at a loss for words, I wouldn't know if and how many Pups he has.

I link my Dad and he tells me that he has two Pups at least and that one of them is female. When I tell Xanthos he writes down two and I ask him how many that totals to. If our calculations are correct this could take the week the Elders picked and now I am glad I didn't want to enter any way.

Rogues are a daily problem for us and I want to spend as less time away from my Pack as possible, I know almost every Pack deals with them on a regular basis. However, I never received a request for help from White Crescent Pack, none of my allies have ever been asked for help by them as well and sometimes I want to watch their eastern border to see if I can figure out why they never call for help.

My name is Theseus, I am a thirty year old Werewolf and the Alpha of Dark Mountain Pack. My Pack is the second largest and strongest Pack there is and according to the history of our bloodline chosen Mates are the reason for the decrease in strength.

My parents are chosen Mates unlike my Grandparents, fated Mates are the best thing for every Wolf and as far as I know every Pup is raised that way. If it had been up to my parents Damien and I would have been raised with the believes that a chosen Mate is the best option.

Luckily my Grandparents from my Father's side didn't allow it and to this day I am still grateful for that. When I was twenty I met my fated Mate and ever since that day I wondered how my parents could have settled for anything less, but then tragedy struck in the form of three Rogues.

They had gotten on to our territory by crossing the western border and they had run in to my Mate and her best friend, they had raped and killed them before they were caught. I still feel the anger inside me, even though it has been nine years and Apollo's hand on my shoulder pulls me from my thoughts.

"Calm down, Theseus. Just breath." He says and as I concentrate on my breathing I feel myself calm down. They all know how much her death has affected me and I am grateful for their support through all of it.

Ajax distracts me by telling me that Damien has three weeks to get ready and I know that Damien will be cocky and arrogant going into that competition. I take more after our Father's side of the family, while Damien takes more after our Mother's side of the family.

"Damien can handle this on his own, he wants to participate in the competition. I just hope he understands that he will have to train more than he does now, if he doesn't I believe he will not make it through the first round." I say as I sit down in one of the armchairs.

"Okay, do you want to make a bet on that?" Ajax asks and Apollo says he will tap out in both matches during the first round. Xanthos is with Apollo and so am I, Midas and Ajax think he will be dropped in the second round.

Xanthos writes down when each of us believes he will be dropped and how, before he writes down what we are betting for and Apollo suggest that who ever wins the bet gets to give the money to a charity of his choice. We all agree to that as we have enough money to spend.

The rest of the afternoon is spend with discussing border patrols and training schedules for the entire week. By the time an Omega links me for dinner we have made chances to increase the number of men running our northern, eastern and southern border and a few chances to the training schedule to free some time for Damien.

I am in a good mood as I walk into the dining room, but it quickly turns a hundred and eighty degrees as I see Penelope sitting in the seat to the left of my seat. She is unaware of the fact that I entered the room and she keeps chatting to the girl standing behind my seat.

Not even the fact that every other conversation has stopped makes her aware and as soon as her friend sees me approaching she pales, moving away from my seat with her head bowed down.

"What the fuck are you doing in that seat?" I hiss through gritted teeth and Penelope smiles up at me as if she has no clue as to what she did wrong. "Theseus, there you are. We have all been waiting for this, how long does Damien have until the competition?" she asks as she gives me an innocent smile.

I don't have to say a word as Apollo grabs her upper arm and yanks her out of the chair, before he pushes her towards Damien. "Damien, this is the last warning. Tell your Mate to stay out of that chair or next time she will end up in the dungeons." Apollo growls.

Damien doesn't argue with him as he knows damn well that Apollo has my approval and I hope that Penelope will finally learn her place within this family. When Damien came home with Penelope over five years ago I was happy for him and I actually believed they were meant to be.

Six months later their Pup, Joseph, was born and I thought that smile would never leave his face again, but nowadays I wonder if they are actually fated Mates. If I have to believe the rumors they cheat on each other every chance they get and that is impossible if they are fated Mates.

Four year old Joseph pulls me from my thoughts as he calls "Thees, Thees" and runs towards me with his arms open wide. I grab him by his waist and lift him above my head as he squeals loudly, making me smile up at him. This little Pup is the only good thing that came from Damien and Penelope.

Penelope keeps her eyes on me and the longer she keeps staring the more it irks me, making me feel uneasy.