







# Forbidden Mischief

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**Category:** Fantasy

**Description:** New town. New family. New stepbrother I definitely shouldn't be thinking about this way.

Asher

New town. New name. New life.

It was supposed to be a safe start for me and my mom—somewhere we could lay low and keep my wolf in check.

Then Zayne showed up.

My new stepbrother. My new problem.

He's magic—literally. A warlock with a sharp tongue and that wicked spark in his eyes.

Every part of me knows this is wrong, but I can't stop craving him.

He sees me in ways no one ever has... even the part of me that howls beneath the surface.

Zayne

Asher's different. Dangerous.

There's a quiet wildness to him that calls to something I didn't even know existed in me.

I've never wanted another guy.

But I've never met anyone like him.

My magic should warn me to keep my distance.

Instead, it hums when he's near.

He's off-limits, and not just because our parents are playing house.

There are things in this town that would tear us apart if they found out what we are—and who we want.

# Page 1

*Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 10:16 am*

ASHER

“Everything’s going to be okay now. We’re safe.

” My mom gives my hand a gentle squeeze, staring into my eyes to prove how much she truly believes this.

I gaze back into eyes so much like mine, except they’ve seen far too much hurt and pain for such an amazing person to look at me with a hope she’s never had before.

“I know.” I force a smile. “Dexter is an amazing guy. He’s perfect for you and as long as he treats you right, and you’re happy, that’s what matters.”

“I’m sorry we didn’t wait to get married.” She chews on her lower lip, and it’s my turn to give her a comforting squeeze.

“It’s okay, Mom. I get it. You needed that feeling of safety, something legal, to keep him from trying anything further.”

Her eyes fill with tears, and my heart aches seeing her upset. “I’m so sorry.”

Letting go of her hand, I cup her face, making sure she can see the care in my eyes.

“You have nothing to be sorry about, Mom. You did the best you could in the situation you were in. We’re out now.

We’re safe. It’s time to leave the pain of the past behind and start fresh.

I'm okay. And more than anything, I want you to be, too.

"She's so small compared to me. She's hardly over five feet, while I'm a few inches over six feet.

It's why I felt like I needed to protect her more, not just because she's my mother, but she's so tiny.

"I'm so proud of you," she sniffs.

"You made me who I am." I kiss her forehead and we both settle back into our seats, ready for the drive ahead of us.

She gives me a watery smile before looking back out the front window. Putting the car into drive, we cross the town line into Sugar River.

The deeper we get into the town, the better I feel. We're surrounded by trees and forests, so at least I'll be able to shift and run. I'd go crazy if I was forced to stay in my human form for too long. I need to be a wolf for at least a few hours a couple times a month or I lose control easily.

"Here we are, home sweet home," Mom announces as we pull up in front of a log cabin mansion.

"Holy shit," I whisper. My eyes widen in awe as I take in the beauty of the structure. It's stunning. I knew Dexter was well off because he's the coven leader, but normally, when you think of the rich and their houses, you picture modern, fancy houses like in the movies.

I'm glad this place isn't like that. It looks perfectly shrouded by the forest trees.

The pack house was big. It had to be to fit my father and his harem of women.

My father is the alpha of Pack Canton. He's a nasty man who put his hands on my mom and me one too many times.

The only reason why he kept her around was because of me.

Out of his four women, my mom was the only one to give him a child.

Add on the fact that I turned out to be an alpha too, my dad wanted us close by, but it was all for show, all for control.

He hated I didn't want to be like him, to find a group of women to fawn over me, to control and fuck whenever I wanted.

He was hitting Mom longer than me, but that changed once he found out that I wasn't going to be who he wanted me to be. That I was gay.

That pissed him off. Did you know you can't beat the gay out of someone? Yeah, someone should have told him that because it didn't stop him from trying.

Mom got a job in town at a café to get away from him as much as she could.

That's where she met Dexter. He came in one day and while I don't know the exact details, I know he kept coming back for her.

I was there a few times when he came by and after a few conversations with him, I knew he was a good man.

Dexter could tell something was going on with my mom, and he was determined to find out what.

One day, when Dexter came to the cafe, she had a black eye. That's when he refused to leave until she told him who did it. Once she did, he talked her into leaving with him.

Of course, she said no unless she could take me too. I was more than happy to go with them as long as my father didn't come after my mom over it.

Dexter promised us he wouldn't let anything happen to her or to me.

When my mom voiced her concerns about my father, Dexter asked her to marry him.

He said that a legal marriage would make it harder for my father to come after my mom if he chose to.

So they went down to the courthouse and tied the knot before Dexter came with us to pick up our things.

My father was not happy. He went crazy, and that was the first time I saw just how powerful Dexter was.

If I didn't like the man before that, I sure as hell did after seeing the lengths he went to protect me and my mom.

Dexter took everything of ours back to his place while he sent my mom and me on a trip down south to see my grandma to give us some time with her and some space to relax before this big change in our lives. He wanted to make sure my dad didn't do anything irrational.

Grandma was one of the lucky ones who got out of that pack. She met a human man and never looked back.

Mom said she knows that my grandmother hated to leave her behind, but at the time my grandmother didn't know just how bad things were at home.

It had been five years since the last time we saw her, and I'm glad we went because my mom really needed the time away.

But we're back now, and went from the airport to the café to say goodbye to my mother's coworkers one last time before starting our new life.

"Well, come on," she urges excitedly. "Let's go in."

Getting out of the car, I smile, taking in a deep breath of fresh air. "There they are!" Dexter cheers as he comes down to the car to meet us. He gives my mom a big hug and a kiss that almost passes PG ratings. I look away, giving them some privacy.

Letting my eyes roam over the house, I take in the true beauty of this place. But as I reach the door, I stop. My heart picks up, my cock twitching at the sight of one of the hottest guys I've ever laid eyes on, leaning against the doorway, with a sexy little smirk on his face.

Cupping his mouth, he shouts. "Get a room!" followed by a chuckle.

"Sorry," Mom giggles as she pulls away from Dexter.

"Don't mind Zayne. He's always a cheeky little shit." Dexter chuckles.

"Love you too, Dad!" He turns and disappears inside the house.

Dad. Shit, the guy who's practically making me drool is my step-brother. Lovely. Well, it's not the first time I found someone hot that's off limits, and it won't be the last.



“Come in, come in,” Dexter says, waving us both inside.

Following after, I’m in total awe, eyes widening at the sight of the place. Everything is made of wood, with a big fountain in the center of the entryway. I’m going to get lost in this place, I just know it.

I keep following them until we get to a seating area, and I find Zayne already sitting on one of the couches.

“I hope your flight was good?” Dexter asks, tucking my mom under his arm and kissing the top of her head.

“It was. But I’m glad to be back on land.” Mom laughs.

“So, Asher, I want you to meet my son, Zayne.”

I look at the man in question and give him a silent nod. He raises a brow, that smirk still on his face. “Well, hello to you too.”

“Zayne is the same age as you. So you two will be in the same grade, maybe even the same classes.” Dexter sounds like he likes that idea.

“Cool.” I nod again, saying nothing else.

“Zayne, do you mind helping Asher get his and Alice’s bags from the car?”

Zayne slaps the arm of the couch before standing. “Nope. But I got to go after.”

“And where might you be going?” Dexter’s eyebrow rises in question.

“I’m heading to the woods with some friends for a bonfire. I told you I was going this

morning. Are you getting old?” Zayne jokes, making Dexter laugh.

I stand there, watching. Is this how all dads are with their kids, or is it just how these two are? I don’t think my dad has ever joked around with me once. He’d prefer to degrade me more than anything, really.

“Watch it, kid.” Dexter chuckles. “How about we eat first, then you can go?”

“Fine.” Zayne rolls his eyes.

As he walks past me, Zayne claps me on the shoulder, and it takes everything in me not to flinch in response. “Come on, little brother. Let’s go get those bags. I’m starving.”

Zayne walks ahead of me, and it takes me a moment to follow after. Little brother? From what my mom said, he’s only a few months older than me, although I’m the bigger one of the two of us. He’s a few inches shorter than me.

As we head out to the car, I can’t stop looking at him. His arms have muscles, giving off the vibe that he goes to the gym, or works out for some kind of sport. I’m betting he’s on the hockey or football team. He just gives off that cocky-jock vibe. Although, so far he doesn’t seem like an ass.

Speaking of asses, his is too damn nice for a stepbrother. And his brown hair, fuck. I need to stop.

“You get your bags, I’ll get your mom’s,” Zayne says as he opens the trunk.

“Thanks.” I grunt, opening the back door to get my stuff.

Once everything is out, he shuts the trunk and looks at me. “You’re not a man of

many words, are you, Asher?”

I just shrug and head toward the house.

“Tough crowd,” I hear him mutter from behind me.

Well shit, he must think I’m an asshole.

I don’t mean to come off as rude, it’s just I am not much of a talker.

I don’t often have a lot to say, and when I do, I don’t bother.

I grew up being told that what I had to say didn’t matter if it didn’t match with what my father wanted, so I just got used to keeping quiet.

Dexter tells us to leave the bags by the door and come eat supper. As we sit down to eat, I feel out of place.

Zayne and Dexter fall into this easy flow of conversation while Mom and I sit and listen. She asks a few questions here and there, but I only speak when someone asks me something directly.

“Tell Ruth her food was amazing as always,” Zayne says as he finishes his food. “I’m gonna head out now.” He stands, but Dexter grabs his arm, keeping him from leaving.

“Why don’t you take Asher with you? Introduce him to your friends. Help him make some of his own.”

Zayne looks over to me, raising a brow. “Ahh...” He runs his hand through his brown locks, not sure how to answer his dad.

“I don’t know,” I say under my breath, finding my mom looking at me with pleading eyes. I know this means a lot to her, for me to get along with Zayne. This is our new family, after all, and it sure as hell beats the old one.

“I mean, if he wants,” Zayne answers his dad.

“Sure,” I sigh, standing up, having already finished my food a while ago.

“Wonderful. Be back before two.”

“Follow me,” Zayne says, not giving me time to react as he heads out of the dining room.

As I jog to keep up with him, I wonder what the hell I’m getting myself into? I’m not a very social person. Maybe people won’t talk to me and I can easily blend into the background. I can only hope.

## Page 2

*Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 10:16 am*

ZAYNE

The ride to the bonfire is awkwardly quiet with my new step-brother. I always thought wolves were loud, obnoxious, and growly, but he's quiet, shy, and standoffish. Constantly checking his surroundings, his head swivels like he's waiting for someone to jump out and scare him.

We pull into the field where we're parking tonight, and I throw my car in park.

"We walk from here. It's not far, though.

" I look at him, taking in his dark shaggy hair and the five o'clock shadow to match.

He looks like he'd be rugged and kinda asshole, but so far I've only seen the total opposite.

He gets out of the car after me, and I lead the way deeper into the woods.

The closer we get to the clearing where we have our bonfires, the louder the music and my classmates' voices get.

Sugar River is full of supernaturals and humans who know we exist; we get along well enough.

The few wolves we have are lone wolves, with no pack, which is odd in itself given what I know about them typically being in packs.

But at least he won't be the only one of his kind here, maybe he can make friends with them easier than he is me.

"Hey, Zayne, you're late!" Duke calls, and I give him the finger as I head toward him. "Here, man." He hands me a cup of beer from the keg, and I take it before holding it out to Asher.

"You want one?"

"No, thank you," Asher says softly, eyes wide as he takes in all the kids here dancing and drinking.

"It's a bit warm, but I can fix that no problem." I call my magic forward and feel my hand tingle as I frost the cup. The benefits of being a warlock.

"You keep it. I don't feel like drinking tonight," Asher murmurs.

"Whatever floats your boat, dude. It's here and free if you want one.

Our parents all know we drink when we hang out and party.

As long as we're safe about it, they don't mind.

It also doesn't hurt that we don't get drunk as easily as humans, huh?

Jenn over there will be two sheets to the wind and humping a tree after three beers. "

I laugh.

"Fuck you, Zayne, I will not!" She curses and flips me the bird as I laugh.

Cup of beer in hand, I head toward my group of teammates from football. "Zayne!

Dude, you're here. I thought you wouldn't come since your new mom is moving in tonight," Warren snarks as he wraps an arm around my shoulder.

"Stepmom. She did move in, and she's cool. This is her son, Asher. He'll be going to school with us, same grade and everything," I introduce Asher to the group. "Asher, these are my boys. Duke, Warren, Levi, Mario, and Roshun. They're dickheads, but they're my group of dickheads."

"Hey." That's all Asher says, not anything else. The guys fist bump, clap him on the back, or shake his hand, but he just smiles softly while not saying anything.

As the night goes on, Asher doesn't lighten up or try to buddy up with anyone.

Lena and Molly both hang on him as they bat their lashes and put their tits in his face.

They've even tried to drag him out to dance.

But he still just smiles and gives them the brush-off in the nicest way possible.

Dude is way too shy, but I plan to help him with that.

"Hey, fuckhead! I've been looking for you. You were supposed to text me when you were on your way here." A body jumps on my back, wrapping their legs around me.

"Shit, Harley. I'm sorry. Dad asked me to bring the step-brother with me tonight, and I forgot. You know you still love me, babe." I turn my head as I look at my best friend with my bottom lip sticking out, so she knows how sorry I am.

"Fine. But only cause you're cute, and I love you.

Now where is this stepbrother? Is he hot?

” Harley asks, and I roll my eyes. “Well, he was right here, but I’m not sure where he ran off to.

He’s around here somewhere. Let me see if I can find him.

” I see Asher sitting on a log by the fire, so I hold on to Harley’s ankles and walk to where Asher is sitting and watching the fire.

Harley frees herself from the piggyback ride when we get to Asher, sits on the log next to him, and wraps an arm around him.

“Hey, cutie. Name’s Harley. I’ve been your brother’s bestie since like second grade. ”

“Hi, Harley.” He smiles at her.

“You like it here so far?” Harley asks.

“Yeah,” he replies.

“Is Zayne here treating you okay or do I need to kick his warlock ass?”

“He’s fine,” he says softly.

“You don’t talk much, huh?” She raises a brow at him, grabs my beer, and chugs it.

“Don’t have much to say just yet,” he tells her.

“I love him!” Harley gushes, and I roll my eyes. She would love him. Harley is known for liking and collecting outcasts, and unfortunately, I think Asher is going to fall into that category unless this is all just new-kid-to-town issues.



“I-I,” Asher stutters, looking at Harley with wide eyes.

“Oh, baby, not like that. I’m not into what’s between your legs. Although Zayne here tells me you’re a wolf, so I could be tempted by a knot, but I much prefer ladies.”

“Subtle, Harley.” I roll my eyes. “I’m gonna go get a refill. Anyone want anything?”

“I’m good, thanks,” Asher murmurs.

“No, but I think I’m gonna go see if I can find a certain someone.” Harley gets up from her seat next to Asher and heads off to the other side of the fire by Lena. The latter has been pouting and staring over here ever since Asher ignored her when she was hanging all over him.

I just shake my head and make my way to the keg to get another beer. I pump the tap to fill my cup, ice already forming on the bottom, thanks to my magic. Lena steps in front of me, looking up at me through her thick lashes with a puppy dog look in her eyes.

“Your brother wouldn’t play with me,” she pouts.

“He’s new to town, Lena. Getting the feel for things. You gotta walk before you run, babe.” I take a sip of my beer and hiss at how cold it is now.

“Still, he’s sexy as hell. I wanted to play,” she whines.

“Come on, Lena, I’ll let you suck my dick. You get pouty when you’re hungry, and you’re not cute when you pout.”

“Yay!” She jumps up and down, doing little claps. Grabbing my hand, she pulls me into the woods behind some trees. Lena wastes no time pushing my pants down,

freeing my cock, and dropping to her knees.

I lean my head back against the tree we're behind as she takes me to the back of her throat.

I'd prefer if she gagged a bit on my length because that shit turns me on, but being a succubus, she has no gag reflex and she's not good at faking it.

In no time, I'm cumming down her throat, and she swallows every drop I give her.

"Thank you, Zayne. Sorry I was pissy. The downfall of being a lust demon."

"No problem, Lena." I tuck my cock back in my jeans and button them back up.

Sex isn't a big thing around here unless your species has mates.

Then it's a big deal only when you're intimate with your mate.

But supernaturals aren't as close-minded and shy with their bodies as humans are.

So why not help out Lena? She's a friend who feeds on lust, and sex is an easy task.

Once I'm back in the clearing, my eyes lock on Asher who is in deep conversation and smiling with Prudence.

Of course, when he finds someone to be friendly with, it has to be the weirdest girl in school.

Prudence is in my coven, and she's nice enough, but she's very strange.

Maybe she's Asher's type, and that's why none of the typical hotties or popular girls

caught his eye; he's into nerdy, weird girls. Prunes is that in spades. Dresses oddly, says whatever she wants without apology, and is just an all around strange girl.

"Brother found a friend, huh?" Harley's voice startles me from staring at Asher and his new friend.

"Looks like it. He's got some weird-ass taste in women. Molly, Lena—maybe even Jenn—tried to dance and flirt with him, but he gave them all the cold shoulder. And now he's in a full-blown conversation with Prunes, of all people."

Harley gives me the stink eye. "Don't call her that."

"Sorry, I know you don't like when I call people names. Even if it's not that bad of one." I shake my head at her.

"Still rude, Zayne." She glares at me.

I'm Good by David Guetta and Bebe Rexha pounds through the speaker and Prudence jolts up off the log, grabs Asher's hand, and pulls him to the sea of dancing bodies.

She throws her hands up in the air, moving them in a circle as her hips move like she's hula-hooping.

Then she squats down and alternates kicking her legs out one after the other with her arms crossed before popping back up and voguing.

Asher is laughing his ass off but joins her, just voguing along with her and doing some moves that I think might be his version of the sprinkler. People step away from them and just stand, staring at them. Neither of them seems to notice, or if they do, they don't care.

What in the ever-loving fuck is happening right now? School is going to be very interesting tomorrow. Seems my new stepbrother is full of surprises.

## Page 3

*Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 10:16 am*

ASHER

I'm up way before my alarm is set to go off. I hardly got any sleep last night, unable to shut my mind off. Yesterday was a lot to take in, with so many new changes happening back to back.

I'm at an unfamiliar house in a strange town. Now I'm about to start at a new school filled with strangers. I hate change. Wolves like consistency and structure. But I need to remind myself that this is for the better.

We're safe here where he can't hurt us. This change is good. I just hope it doesn't fuck with me too much.

One thing that surprises me the most is that I've already made a friend. Rolling over, I grin into my pillow as I think about my time with Prudence last night.

I felt very out of place and not really eager to talk to anyone. I was not at all interested in the girls who were hitting on me. My sexuality isn't something that's a secret, but I don't know them well enough to casually toss it out there.

So, I kept to the background like I wanted and just enjoyed the music from where I was sitting around the fire.

That was until Prudence came popping out of the bushes, chasing after a frog that was hopping away from her. I watched and smiled, her very colorful crocheted top and long seventies style skirt catching my attention.

When she gave up trying to catch the frog, she turned to leave and noticed me sitting there. Her face slipped into a big grin, and she invited herself to sit down.

She started talking a mile a minute, first about one thing, then she'd quickly move to the next. I didn't mind, though, I kind of enjoyed not being expected to talk.

After a while, I felt at ease around her. Wolves have a keen sense of sniffing out who's a good person and who isn't. I knew right away, Prudence is as pure as they come.

So when she decided I was her new best friend, and she was going to pick me up for our first day of school today, I didn't argue.

It's better than being forced to sit in a car with Zayne.

It's not that I don't like Zayne, it's the complete opposite.

What I got from being around him last night is he's funny, has been kind to me and seems to be liked by everyone.

He is nice enough to his friends, and has this cocky, confident vibe about him that's just enough that he avoids coming off as an asshole.

But the reason why I don't want to be stuck with him for any amount of time is because anytime I think of him, my thoughts wander to a dirty place. Thoughts I shouldn't have about my stepbrother. It's hard, though, because he's so damn hot, and the more I think about him, the stiffer my cock gets.

Like right now. It's not morning wood because I've been up for an hour. It's the fact that I had a wet dream about Zayne and now it won't go away.

Finally, my alarm goes off. Groaning, I roll out of bed, shutting the alarm off before padding sleepily over to the attached bathroom.

That's another crazy thing, I get my own bathroom here. At the pack house, I had to share with so many people, there was never hot water by the time I got to shower.

Now, not only can I shower, but I can take a bath in a damn jacuzzi tub.

Rubbing my eyes, I grab a towel from the shelf and hang it up next to the shower. I turn it on nice and hot before getting in. Steam fills the space quickly and fuck, the pressure of the water feels amazing.

After washing my hair first, I work on my body, paying extra attention to my cock.

Groaning, I tip my head back as I let my soapy hand stroke up and down my shaft. My body tingles as pleasure shoots down my spine and right to my knot. "Fuck," I groan, the image of Zayne on his knees, taking my cock deep into his mouth pops inside my head when it really shouldn't.

But it doesn't stop me from touching myself as I pick up the pace. I tighten the hold on my cock in a punishing grip, pre-cum already leaking from the tip.

Zayne bobs his head, taking me all the way every time. "Yes," I breathe out, feeling my orgasm coming fast. I imagine him gagging from my size, forcing him to take all my cum, and wrap my free hand around my knot, giving it a squeeze.

Letting out a long groan, my cock jerks, sending cum shooting out and hitting the tile wall. It's so damn much, I should be embarrassed. After my balls are empty, my chest heaves, and I feel a little guilty. I grab the shower head and spray off the walls, watching my cum disappear down the drain.

Shutting off the water, I pull my towel from the rack, dry off, and wrap it around my waist before heading back into my room.

Opening my closet, I sigh, looking at the dark navy blue uniform hanging. Yet another change. At my old school, we wore whatever we wanted. So much change and I don't think I like it.

Knowing I have no other choice, I put it on, grab the bag that mom has ready for me, and head downstairs.

"Shit, sorry," a voice grunts as I round the corner, running into someone.

Not someone. Zayne. A half naked Zayne. He's standing there, a towel around his waist and nothing else.

"Oh, hey there, Asher. Sorry about that."

I just blink stupidly, unable to take my eyes off his ripped chest.

"Anyway, gotta get back to my shower, ran out of shampoo," he says, and then I notice the bottle in his hand. Looking up, I see his hair is wet, water dripping down his chest.

Fuck, I need to get out of here. My cock is already coming back to life, and I don't have time for a round two right now when there shouldn't have even been a round one.

"Asher?" he asks at the same time I get a text from Prudence that she's out front waiting for me.

Ignoring him, I step around him and practically sprint down the hall, then the stairs



and straight out the front door. Only when I'm in Prudence's car do I let myself breathe.

"Hey, you!" she says excitedly. "I'm so glad we can ride together."

As my breathing settles, I become more aware of my surroundings. My eyes widen as I take in Prudence's car. It's like a Care Bear puked color all over it. But it's the back seat that gets me. It's one big trunk and... is that a coffin?!

"Uh, Prudence... is this a hearse?"

"Why yes; yes, it is." She gives me one firm nod before heading down the driveway.

Well, I guess that answers my question. And I'm not at all surprised this is her choice in vehicles. It suits her.

We make a pit stop at a coffee shop along the way. Pru vowed on her life that if she didn't have coffee, she would die. While I don't believe she actually would, I humored her and got myself something, too.

Once we got back into the car, Prudence turns on the radio.

Evanescence's Bring Me To Life flows from the speakers and she starts to belt out the lyrics.

I look at her with a raised brow. She came off as this bright, bubbly person so far.

She looks over at me, smiling as she sings, and I crack a smile of my own.

Shaking my head, I look out the window and sing along with her.

When it gets to where the guy joins the female's vocals, I start to sing his part, while she sings hers.

By the time we reach school, the song is over and we both look at each other and burst out laughing.

"Not bad, Ashy," Prudence teases, holding out her fist.

"You too, Prudence." I tap her knuckles with my own.

"Call me Pru, all my friends do. And yes, I suck donkey balls, but that's okay. I love music, to sing and dance, and I don't give two shits what anyone thinks."

"I can respect that." I chuckle.

"Alright, Ashy, here you have it. Welcome to hell, where the richest get bitches and the poors are whores," she announces as she swings her door open.

I can't help the laugh that escapes me. Pru is a ray of sunshine that I desperately need in my cloudy life.

"Wow," I murmur as I take in the school. "Are we at Hogwarts or something?" I joke.

"I wish," Pru sighs dreamily. "But no. Sadly, that is just in the movies. But we do have similar magic. Just , no crazy man trying to kill some poor dude."

I was joking, but I'm not sure if she knew that or not.

"Sugar River Academy isn't bad, it's the people who make me want to turn everyone into toads. Stick with me and you'll be fine. I could tell last night that you're not a fan

of people, but with me around, no one will come close to you. Perks of being the weird kid in school.”

“Oh.” I blink. “I don’t think you’re weird.”

Pru casts me a ‘really dude?’ look, and I chuckle. “You’re sweet, but let’s be real. I’m weird, I’m gay, and I’m proud.”

That has me stopping. “You’re gay?” I whisper.

“Yes,” she mockingly whispers back. “I like the V, not the D.” She gives me a slow grin. “And you like it the other way around, don’t you, Ashy?”

“How did you know?”

“The way you were eye fucking your brother last night when you didn’t think anyone was looking was a dead giveaway.”

My cheeks heat as I swallow thickly.

“Was I that obvious?”

“Nah.” She laughs. “I saw it, but I don’t think anyone else did. They were too busy getting shit-faced.”

Nodding, we continue. Just as we make it out of the parking lot, I find Zayne sitting on a bench. There’s a girl tucked under his arm, another by his side. He’s laughing while they run their hands over his chest, giggling at whatever he’s saying.

“Down, boy,” Pru says, poking me in the side. “Your jelly is showing.”

“I’m not jealous,” I mutter, looking away. I just met the man, he can do whatever he wants with whomever he wants. Also, he’s my stepbrother, nothing could happen even if I wanted something to.

Pru wraps her arms around mine, placing her head on my arm as we walk into the building. My heart swells with happiness. One thing I miss the most about my pack is touch. Part of me hopes Pru is a touchy-feely kind of girl because I think that’s what I need.

She manages to show me to the office to get my class schedule and each of the rooms the classes will be in before the bell rings. Thankfully, Pru is in the same morning class as me, so she makes sure we sit together, and when I ask for the back corner, she gladly agrees.

Math, English, and Science were interesting. At my old school, we followed more of a human curriculum, but here it’s more tailored toward witches and warlocks. I’m not sure if this is going to affect my ability to do my work, but maybe Pru can help me with things I can’t do due to not having magic.

“One of the best things about this school is the food,” Pru says as we stand in line in the massive cafeteria. I’m almost expecting waiters and waitresses to come out and take our orders with how fancy this place is.

I hum in agreement, my mind elsewhere as I find myself looking around for Zayne.

“He’s not here,” Pru giggles.

My eyes snap over to her. “Who’s not here?” She gives me a look like she doesn’t believe me, and I sigh.

“Where would he be then?” I ask, not caring. Not really, at least.

“Probably on the football field. Coach has them practicing for the first half of lunch before eating. Then again, three days a week after school.”

Football. I knew he played something. “That’s a lot.”

“Tell me about it. But our team is the best,” she shrugs.

“How do you know all this?” She doesn’t seem like someone who would like sports, but then again, I’ve learned quickly not to assume anything about Pru.

“I was dating the head of the school paper last year, and she went to the games to take photos and shit for it. Turns out she just wanted to find more time to see Tony, the football player I found her fucking behind the bleachers.”

“What the hell?” I mutter. “Wow.”

“It’s okay. I don’t want to waste my time with people who don’t value me or mine. She wasn’t meant to be, but I’ll find my forever someday.” She gives me a beaming smile, not looking the least bit upset about it.

I smile back and we grab some food. “Come on, wolfy.”

“Where are we going?” I ask her as I follow her out of the café and down the hall.

“Going to watch,” is all she says before taking me out of a side door.

That’s when I hear the shouts and the sounds of a whistle.

Pru leads me to the football field and over to the bleachers.

“There’s your boy toy,” she teases, nodding her head toward the field before taking a

bite of her turkey sandwich.

“He’s not my boy toy,” I growl lightly. “He’s not my anything.”

“Yet!” she sings around the mouthful of food.

Huffing, I look in the direction she pointed to, and I almost choke on my tongue. Fuck sakes, why does he have to look so fucking delicious?

Zayne jogs over to the bench with his helmet under one arm.

When he gets there, he puts the helmet down and picks up a water bottle.

I watch as his throat bobs with each gulp he takes, and my cock twitches.

When he’s done, he uses some of the water to spray his face and the top of his head before shaking it out, reminding me of how he looked this morning.

“Damn, dog, you have it bad.”

I don’t even bother denying it, as I can’t seem to take my eyes off him. Thankfully, me creeping on my stepbrother isn’t as obvious as they start to practice harder and he runs around.

I manage to eat my food without even realizing it. Or maybe Pru ate it? Either way, when the coach blows his whistle, telling the players to hit the locker room and go eat, I don’t see it on my lap anymore, just the trash left behind.

“Let’s go, we can walk the gardens until lunch is over,” Pru suggests, standing up.

As we’re heading down the bleachers, Zayne spots me. He smirks, giving me a wave,

and I almost trip over my damn feet and down the bleachers.

As we make it to the bottom and throw our trash away, I hear someone call out, “Prunes! Think fast!”

My eyes snap over Pru’s shoulder to see a football coming toward her face. My hand shoots out, grabbing the ball out of the air just before it hits her face.

“Holy shit,” she breathes, stumbling back into me. “Fucking Tony!”

“Is this guy for real?” I snarl, anger filling me at the fact that this fucking asshole would purposely hit someone, a girl, my new friend.

With my lip peeled back, I take the football and throw it back at the jackass with all of my wolf’s strength. The guy’s eyes widen, but he doesn’t get much of a chance to reach for the ball as it slams into him, knocking him on his ass.

“Wow.” I hear Zayne say nearby, sounding shocked.

“Well, I’ll be damned.” Someone laughs. I look over to see the coach jogging over to us. “Hey, new kid, you like chasing balls?”

My brows furrow. “What?”

“Never mind,” he chuckles. “You’re on the team. Next practice is tomorrow after school. See you then. Zayne, get your brother up to speed.”

I’m stunned. What the hell just happened?

“What was that?” Zayne asks, still looking half shocked.

That's what I'm wondering. All I wanted was to eat lunch, and now I'm on the football team? So much for lying low and blending in.



## Page 4

*Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 10:16 am*

ZAYNE

I have no clue what the hell happened today.

One minute, I'm on the field at lunch practicing with the guys.

The next, Asher is pegging Tony with the ball so hard he fell on his ass from the impact.

Who knew he had an arm like that on him?

Alice and Dad never mentioned him playing sports in their old town, or that he was even interested in them.

Now I'm in charge of getting him up to date with plays and the team.

Usually not a big deal, but he's kinda odd and doesn't talk to me much. I'd rather be chatting with my buds or trying to find myself a nice warm pussy to sink my cock into.

I pad down the hall with the playbook under my arm and knock on Asher's bedroom door.

"Come in!" he calls, and I push open the door slowly.

He's lounging on his bed, surrounded by random pages of the playbook binder Coach let him borrow.

All of us on the team have one, but since Asher was a spur-of-the-moment add-on, Coach gave him the assistant coach's personal binder until he could print Asher his own book to keep.

"You're taking this seriously, huh?" I cross the room to the foot of his bed and sit down on the edge. "Coach was super impressed with your arm today. If you're as good on the field as you were at lunch with Tony, you'll probably take my spot as captain."

He quirks a brow at me and purses his lips. "If my being on the team upsets you, I won't join. I don't want your spot as captain, but football seems like it could be fun."

I can tell by the look in his eyes and the tone of his voice that he's serious. "No, man, you're good. If anything, you're going to make me step up my game and play harder."

"Cool. That's good," he says, looking nervous as he changes the subject. "I think I know the plays. I'm a fast learner and have an excellent memory. Not to mention I have insane speed, agility, and strength; a nice perk of being a wolf."

We chit-chat as I quiz him on the plays, and he's right, he knows them all by the end of the night.

Luckily, he knows the positions and what they do, even though he's never actually played.

I didn't have to start with the basics, which made this whole process a hell of a lot faster.

I still have time to text what's-her-name from the next town over or catch a game of Apex with the guys.

“Thanks for helping me out and getting me up to speed on all the team stuff.” Asher starts putting the papers back in the binder, not looking at me as he does. I don’t say anything in response, just nod my head and pick up my book, leaving him on his bed.

“Are you riding to school with Prudence tomorrow again, or do you need a lift?” I ask as I get to the door.

“Pru is picking me up. Thanks, though.”

They really hit it off already. Good for him.

I’m sure it makes it easier to transition to a new school when you have a friend right away.

I was supposed to be that person, but even tonight, Asher only spoke to me when I asked him which play was which, or what play does this.

Otherwise, he was quiet and avoided even looking at me unless totally necessary.

When I get back to my room, I grab my phone and message...

Cassie? Cami? Courtney? Courtney! That’s it!

A few weeks ago, she found my SuperGram and messaged me.

We’ve been flirting back and forth in messages and tonight I’m hoping to get some pictures or maybe even a video for my personal collection.

Sending her a message, I ask what she’s up to as I turn on the Xbox to play with the guys while I wait.

I'm laying in bed in that state of sleep where you're asleep but the littlest thing can wake you up, when I feel the blanket move slightly.

Suddenly, there are two hands on either side of my boxer brief's waistband.

Lifting my hips slightly, I allow the briefs to be pulled down my legs in one fluid movement.

I moan as a hand wraps around my shaft in a firm grip and strokes up and down.

Courtney doesn't waste any time getting what she wants. She did say in our chats that she loves sucking dick. Once my cock is fully erect and pulsing with need, two warm lips take the place of her hand, causing me to grunt. "Fuck!" I curse as she takes me to the back of her throat instantly.

No warm-up or preparation, just taking me in until my tip hits the back of her throat.

She swallows around me, and I absentmindedly fist the sheets, I'm so turned on.

Pulling off my length until it almost falls from her mouth, she takes me back down until her nose bumps my pubic area.

Over and over she does this, picking up speed until I'm thrusting up into her mouth, trying to keep her on my cock.

This has got to be the best blow job of my life, and I might have to think about keeping Courtney around if this is how she is in the sack.

Shit, she might even have me considering the whole relationship thing, which I don't do.

I'm more of a love-em-and-leave-em type of guy.

But with a mouth like this, I could be persuaded to change my mind.

The little minx reaches a hand down in between us and cups my sack, rolling my balls in her hand.

Her mouth pops from my dick and peppers kisses down to my balls, kissing them gently.

She jerks my cock in her hand while her tongue roams over my balls before she sucks one into her mouth. "Damn, baby. I like that."

Then the dirty little bitch that she is puts a hand on each of my thighs and pushes my legs up, so I'm bent almost in half like a pretzel.

I take her lead and wrap my hands around the backs of my knees, holding my legs where she wants them.

Then her hand is once again on my dick, moving in long, languid strokes.

Something wet and warm touches my tight hole, and I gasp as my head lifts off the bed in shock.

I've never had my ass played with, but I can't say that I hate it.

"Fuck, that's good." I let my head fall back against my pillow as she continues to eat my ass while jacking me off.

My magic is hovering at the tip of my fingers, just ready to burst out at any moment.

“I’m gonna cum!” I cry, and she quickly suctions her lips around my cock hard as she moves slowly down my shaft, deep-throating me once more.

That’s all it takes for me to squeeze my eyes shut, moaning as my orgasm takes hold.

Rope after rope of hot cum releases from my dick, and she swallows every last drop.

“Your turn,” I growl, ripping the blanket off, ready to eat her pussy so good that her taste is branded on my tongue forever. However, when I look down, it’s not Courtney’s brown hair and feminine face I see. It’s Asher, my stepbrother. “What the fuck?”

I jack-knife awake, covered in sweat, my heart racing and my cock so hard it feels like he could burst apart at any moment.

Why the fuck would I have a dream about Asher sucking my dick?

Better yet, a dude sucking my dick at all?

I’ve never been into guys and sure as hell have never had a dream like that about anyone with a cock.

I sit on the side of my bed, just trying to figure out what the hell is going on. It has to be because we were together last night working on football shit and then I got that nude from Courtney. I was waiting for her to video chat me, so we could play together, but I passed out waiting for her.

Yeah. That has to be it. Just two incidents that my brain subconsciously melded together, nothing more. Plus, Asher is chasing after Prudence. Although, now that I think about it more, I swear Prudence batted for the ladies’ team, but obviously, she just needed someone like Asher.

I get up from the bed and make my way to the bathroom to shower.

Not only is there school today, but a cold shower will help this boner from hell go away.

I stand under the cold spray, just letting it beat down on my back and shiver as it slides over my body.

I wash my hair and condition it, but still, little Zayne is hard as stone and ready for action. God dammit!

Washing my body while I let the conditioner sit, I decide I'm not able to handle the icy water anymore, so I use my magic to turn the handle to hot and let the water rain down on me. After rinsing the soap away and washing the conditioner out, I'm still erect and begging for release.

Giving in, I pour a dollop of conditioner in my palm and wrap my hand around my cock.

I pump up and down as I lean my forehead against the wall of the shower and picture Courtney on her knees in front of me sucking my dick.

It doesn't take long for my cum to paint the wall of the shower as I grunt my release.

Rinsing my cum down the drain, I turn the water off and step out of the shower. Shit, I forgot to turn the fan on, so the mirror wouldn't fog up. Holding my hand in front of the mirror, I heat it up and let warm air blow on the mirror, clearing the fog so I can see myself.

Finished in the bathroom, I shut the light off and pad into my room, going straight to my closet. I get dressed and head out to the kitchen to grab a bagel for breakfast

before I need to leave for school.

Today, we have practice after school and I hope it's not awkward when I see Asher.

I also pray to the Goddess that this was a one-time deal, and now that I've got my dick to calm down, I never want to picture Asher sucking me off again.

It's not right; he's my stepbrother, and I'm not into guys. Right?



## Page 5

*Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 10:16 am*

ASHER

The first week of school has gone better than I thought it would. So far, no one has really given me any trouble about being a wolf shifter among a school of mostly witches and warlocks.

Joining the football team wasn't something I planned on doing because sports have never really been my thing, but practice has been good, even kinda fun. While I don't fully understand all the rules just yet, the guys have been great at helping fill in the gaps.

The only person who hasn't been much help is Zayne. I thought he was fine with me joining. He was very helpful going over the playbook with me and seemed like he was on board, but it's almost like he's been avoiding me.

He's gone when I wake up and always out with his friends when we're not in school. The only time I see him is at practice, and even then, he seems to try everything not to be near me.

Not going to lie, it kind of hurts. I'm not sure if I did anything to offend him, but if I did, I didn't mean to.

Tonight, he's not going to be able to avoid me because it's Sunday supper.

Dexter and Mom have asked that we take time at least once a week to sit down as a family because everyone has busy lives with work and school.

I think it's a good idea, but I'm not sure how awkward it's going to be with how Zayne's been acting.

There's a knock at my door, and I pause my song and take out my earbuds. "Yeah?" I shout.

The door opens, and my mom pokes her head inside. "Supper's ready," she says with a smile.

"Thanks for coming to get me. You could have texted," I tell her with a chuckle as I get off the bed, slipping my phone into my pants back pocket.

"I know. I just haven't seen you all day, and I wanted a moment with just us to see how you were doing."

"I'm good."

"You are?" she asks, her eyes searching mine.

"Promise." I give her a reassuring smile. "So, is this okay to wear, or should I change into something else?"

"You're fine in that. It's just family supper."

Nodding, I follow her out of the room and down to the dining room. When we get there, Dexter and Zayne are already sitting at the table.

"There he is," Dexter says.

Mom and I join them, and it isn't long until Mom starts asking us all how our day was as we dish out the veggies and chicken. My stomach growls as the smell of

roasted meat and buttery veggies hits my nose.

Zayne raises a brow at me, and I just shrug before taking a big bite. I moan at the taste. Chicken is my favorite. When in wolf form, we eat them whole... and raw, but I like it this way too.

There's a choking noise that has me looking over at my mom and Dexter, but they're having a conversation, so my eyes flick over to Zayne. He shifts in his seat as he takes a bite of his own food.

My nostrils flare, and I swear I can smell the faint scent of arousal. What the hell?

"So, Asher, tell me about this lovely lady who keeps picking you up for school and when do I get to meet her?" my mom asks me.

At the mention of Prudence, I smile, only to get a glare from Zayne. I don't know what his issue is with Pru. I know she's not everyone's cup of tea, but she's really an amazing person.

"Her name is Prudence. We met when Zayne took me to hang out with his friends. She's a really sweet girl. I like being around her. She's funny. A bit of an oddball, but that's what I like about her most."

"Wow, I think that's the most I've heard you talk," Zayne mutters to himself, but I have wolf hearing, so I easily catch his comment.

Brows furrowing, I shoot him a look. But he's not looking at me, too busy playing with the food on his plate with his fork.

"She sounds wonderful," Mom says with a warm smile.

I'm about to answer her when Zayne's chuckle cuts me off. "Oh, yeah, she's so wonderful that Asher here has made her his whole world in one week. Isn't that nice?"

Why does it sound like he's jealous? Is he upset because I haven't tried to get to know him better? I would have if he wasn't the one avoiding me.

"How about the boys? Anyone cute catch your eye?" my mom asks playfully, nudging me with her elbow. Zayne's eyes finally snap up in interest.

I clear my throat. "No, not really," I lie. There has been one guy who's caught my eye, but he is very much off limits and kind of acting like an ass right now.

"You will find someone. You need someone better than that Mathew." Mom makes a disgusted face. "He was always an asshole to you. That is not how you should treat your boyfriend."

Zayne lets out a choked noise. "I'm sorry, what are you talking about?" he asks, his eyes flicking from me to Mom and back to me.

"Mathew. He's my ex-boyfriend from my old pack," I say and wait for his reaction.

His brows furrow. "Boyfriend? Are you bi?"

"No." I shake my head.

"But... I thought you were dating Prudence!" he says forcefully. "You're like glued at the hips, always smiling, laughing, hugging, holding hands."

"It's a wolf thing. We're very affectionate. Constant touching calms our inner wolf and helps us avoid feral moments." I give him a casual shrug.

“Are you sure?” Zayne asks, narrowing his eyes. “I could have sworn you two were all hot for one another.”

“Nope.” I look him right in the eyes. “I am one hundred percent into guys. I like dicks, not chicks.”

“Asher!” Mom scolds me.

“Sorry, Mom. But it’s true. I thought everyone knew,” I say, taking a bite of my food as I look over at her and Dexter.

“I knew, your mother told me. She wanted to make sure to let me know right away that if I had an issue with it, there was no chance for us. She loves you, and you always come first for her.” He gives my mom a smile full of love.

“He’s right,” she says, a slight blush on her cheeks. She has no idea how much that means to me. I’ll have to let her know when there are no other people around.

“I didn’t tell Zayne because it wasn’t my place to say. But I knew he would be okay with it because his best friend is also gay.”

I look at Dexter, a little slack-jawed. “Thank you,” I say. “That means a lot to me.”

“Of course.” Dexter smiles.

“So, you’re gay?” Zayne asks.

“Yes...” I raise a brow. Did he not hear me before?

“You like guys. Not girls?”

“That’s what being gay means.” Is he okay?

“Okay.” Zayne nods, looking back down at his food, and I’m not sure I like how he dismisses me.

“Is that a problem for you?” There’s a little bit of a defensive growl in my tone.

His eyes shoot back up to me. “No, of course not. As my dad said, I have a best friend who’s gay. I’m a firm believer that people should love who they want.”

I feel myself deflate as I nod, not saying anything else.

We finish eating and I excuse myself to go freshen up and text Pru that we’re done eating. Then I head outside and meet up with her.

As I slip into her car, movement out the front window has me looking out. Zayne is in his bedroom window, watching the car for a moment. We lock eyes, and he pauses for a second before closing his curtains.

I have no idea what is going on and why he was acting that way at supper, but the reality is that I really don't know much about this guy.

I'm not one to judge someone without getting to know them, and part of me wants to get to know him better, but maybe that's just the part of me who is attracted to him. Hopefully, things get better from here.

## Page 6

*Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 10:16 am*

ZAYNE

I'm in the locker room with the rest of the team after school and I'm beat.

I didn't sleep well last night, and Mrs. Watts was tough on us today in PE.

The sticky layer of sweat already covering my body is proof of how hard we all worked, and now I have football practice.

I'm going to sleep like a fucking baby tonight.

"Yo, Zayne! Where's your brother? I wanted to give him shit about him dating Prunes," Mario smirks as he talks to me.

Looking around the locker room, I don't see Asher, but that's nothing new.

Since he joined the team, he's been changing in a bathroom stall and not in the main area like the rest of us.

I thought that was just all part of him being shy and, ya know, not wanting to be naked in front of people.

But now I'm wondering if it has to do with what I learned at dinner last night.

He's into guys, which is cool, and no one in the school would have issues with it.

Supernaturals don't confine themselves to one sex—or hell, even one person,

sometimes—when it comes to being intimate.

“Not sure, man. Maybe he went out to the field already?” I tell him.

Part of me feels bad for not defending him about dating Pru, but that’s his story to tell, not mine.

I may be avoiding him like the plague because that dream still has me freaking the hell out, but I’m not going to out him to the rest of the team.

Mario just shrugs and sits on the bench to lace up his cleats, while I head to the water fountain to grab a drink and take a herb capsule for this pounding headache I can feel coming on.

Human medicine doesn’t work for supes so Alice made some ginger, turmeric, and white willow bark capsules to help with pain relief.

I’ll tell you what, I don’t know how my dad snagged her, but while I’m having my own issues with Asher right now, his mom is a sweetheart and I already adore her.

As I stand back up after getting my drink, I see someone coming out of a bathroom stall.

I turn to head to the field when my eyes lock with Asher’s.

My magic instantly starts to simmer under my skin, and I feel like one false move will accidentally unleash a wave of power.

It’s like I’m a brand-new warlock, just learning how to control my powers.

Why does Asher make my magic act so unruly?



He gives me a small smile and steps up beside me. “Are you okay, Zayne?”

“I’m fine,” I force out through clenched teeth.

“Are you sure? You look uncomfortable or mad. Is it about dinner last night?”

“No, Asher. You like who you like, and that’s fine with me. I meant it when I said it doesn’t bother me. I just have a headache and Watts made us run the 5K today, so I’m just worn out already, and now we have practice,” I tell him, and my magic begins to settle once more.

“Okay. I just wanted to be sure. We’re family, so I don’t want any problems between us. My mom is really happy here with your dad, and I’m starting to settle in too.”

“There’s no problem. Just a headache, but we better get out there before Coach has our asses.

” He breezes past me out of the door and I follow.

His woodsy, citrus scent fills my nose, and it’s like my headache instantly dissipates.

What the hell? No, it wasn’t him or his delicious scent, it was the capsule Alice gave me. It has to be.

As soon as we burst through the locker room door onto the field, I jog to the center where Coach is and my temples begin to throb again. Fuck! What in the hell is going on with me?

“Zayne! Asher! How nice of you to join us! We’re going to start with some shuttles and then run a few plays to prepare for our game next Friday. Zayne, you’re the captain, so lead the team in their warm-up.” He blows his whistle, and we all stand,

moving to the first line.

“Alright, guys, let’s get this over with, so we can move on to the actual practice!” I holler. The guys all cheer, and when I see everyone on the starting line, I give the signal before taking off to the next line.

An hour later, Coach blows his whistle once more and we run to the sideline to get a drink before meeting him once more in center field.

“Settle in, gentlemen. We’re gonna run a few plays and when you have them down pat, then you’re free to go.

Until then, your asses are mine. Now, I wanna see I Back Pitch .

Take the field!” His whistle sounds again and we take our places on the field.

I take my place behind our center and take a deep breath. “Blue forty-two. Set. Hike!” Ro hands me the ball, and I take a few large steps backward. My eyes scan the field for my running back, there he is . My eyes meet his chocolate ones, and somehow I know he’s smirking even under his helmet.

Sending the ball down the field to Asher, I watch as he leaps into the air, catching it before Mario can make contact with him.

He cradles the ball in his arms, and takes off down the field, dodging and weaving the defense until he’s in the end zone.

Touchdown! Too bad this is practice and not the real deal.

This goes on until we have the I Back Pitch , R Screen Pass , and the Q Diamond Power down pat, and there isn’t one player on the team not drenched in sweat. “Good

practice, guys! See you tomorrow at lunch. Hit the showers!”

At Coach’s words, we hurry back to the locker room.

I sit on the bench, unlacing my cleats, and quickly tear off my practice clothes.

Wrapping a towel around myself, I head toward the shower.

I hang the towel on a hook and turn the water on.

Instantly it’s hot, and I step under the spray. Damn, today was a rough fucking day .

We killed it in practice, and if we play our games as well as we do in practice, I have no doubt we’ll be champions this season.

Ready to be home and in my bed, I hurry through my shower.

Once the water is off, I step out to the dry end of the shower stall to get my towel, but it’s gone.

One of those bastards took my towel. Not being one to be modest or really give a fuck, I pad to my locker stark naked.

As I stand next to my locker, I call out to my asshole teammates.

“Thanks to whoever took my towel. I’ve been meaning to show you all I have the biggest cock on the team. ”

No sooner than I finish my sentence, Asher steps out of the bathroom, his eyes locking on my cock.

His eyes widen, and my dick twitches at the fact that he's staring.

What the hell is going on with me? If I didn't know any better, I'd think Asher was the warlock in this dynamic, and he cast a spell of some sort on me.

But I've heard him howling in the woods behind the house a few nights a week, and Alice has mentioned him letting his wolf out to run.

Asher blushes and for some reason that annoys me.

Not wanting him to know how he affects me until I figure out what the fuck is happening, I hurriedly slide my shorts on to cover my cock and pull my shirt over my head.

Asher isn't there anymore when I look up, but I easily find him by his locker, putting his cleats away.

Slamming my locker shut, I strut his way and lean against his locker with a smirk on my face. "Like what you see, little brother?"

His cheeks darken even more, and he shuts his locker, hurrying away from me and right out of the locker room.

I follow him, wanting to ask him what the hell his deal is.

Does he have the hots for me? I mean, I get it, I'm a catch, but I'm his brother.

We now pretty much share a mom and dad, so what does he think is going to happen?

Why am I even thinking about this? I've never been into men, and I'm still not.

I don't think? But then why did I like it when he stared at me like that?

I'm about to grab a hold of him to make him face me and get some answers when my name is called. "Zayne, Asher. Boys! I'm glad I caught you!"

"Mom, what are you doing here? I told you Pru would give me a ride home," Asher tells her as he wraps his arms around her in a hug.

"Prudence is a doll. I met her just a few moments ago. I told her I wanted to take you boys home, so she left, but we exchanged numbers. You were right, Asher, she's sweet as pie."

"That doesn't answer my question, Mom. What are you doing here?"

"I was driving home from doing some errands, and I thought I'd stop to take my boys out for ice cream," Alice explains with a smile.

"Mom, you make it sound like we're ten," Asher laughs.

"You know what I mean. I just want to do something with the two of you together, just us. Just me and my boys." She playfully slaps Asher's shoulder. "So, do you wanna go or not?"

"Yeah. I could go for ice cream. Zayne?" Asher and Alice both look my way. I'm slightly taken aback that he spoke directly to me to ask.

"Sure. Let me just text Mario that I'm leaving with you." I pull out my cell and shoot a text off, following Alice back to her car as she fumbles with the locks.

"Sorry. Still learning how to work this thing. I love it, don't get me wrong, but it has a lot of bells and whistles to learn."

” She finally gets the Mercedes unlocked, and we climb inside.

I take the back, letting Asher ride beside his mom.

Dad bought her the Mercedes a few days ago, even though she insisted the rust bucket she and Asher showed up in was fine.

It’s one of the reasons I like Alice so much.

She’s not with my dad for his wealth or his status as leader of our coven.

She pretty actively tries to avoid him buying her gifts or upgrading her things.

Treating me like her son, same as she does Asher, is the biggest reason, though.

Everyone has seen the evil, mean stepmoms in television and movies.

So I’m glad that Alice is the exact opposite.

Fifteen minutes later, we’re pulling up in front of Cream and Sprinkles, and Alice parks the car.

She slowly exits, and Asher is right on her heels.

This isn’t the first time I’ve noticed this behavior.

He is very protective of his mom, and while it’s honorable, I have a feeling there is more to the story than what I know.

I hold the door open for Alice and Asher, and they both give me a thank you, to which I just nod in response.

We stand in front of the ice cream machines looking at all the flavors, trying to decide what to get.

Alice goes for pineapple, Asher fills his bowl with plain vanilla, and I decide to go with my tried-and-true Tiger's Blood.

Once we're at the toppings bar, Alice puts on some cherries, sprinkles, and like three gummy worms. Asher piles the Oreos and caramel syrup on his, and I roll my eyes at how simple his dessert is.

When it's my turn in with toppings, I dump a ton of fresh strawberries and Reese's peanut butter cups in my bowl before meeting the others at the checkout.

We weigh our bowls and, as usual, mine is the heaviest. Alice hands over two twenties and tells the young girl behind the counter to keep the change. She then leads us over to a table by the window, and Asher sits beside her. "I'm so glad you boys could join me. How is football?"

"It's good. So far I like it, and I'm glad I joined. Pru is going to come to the game next week. I told her she could sit with you and Dexter since she said she usually sits alone. I hope that's okay?" Asher tells his mom.

"Of course, baby. We would love to have company at the game. I ordered a jersey with both your numbers on it, and it says 'Those are my boys on the field'. Zayne, I hope that's not crossing a line.

I just wanted one for Asher, and you're my son now too, so I wanted to represent you as well.

" Alice looks at me nervously. I peek over at Asher to find he's staring at me with a threat in his eye.

Like if I don't answer his mom how she wants, he's going to rip my head off.

What he doesn't know is that no one has ever done something like that for me.

Sure, my dad has never missed a game, but he's never gone out of his way to make a shirt or anything with my name on it, announcing to the world I'm his.

Swallowing hard, my eyes dart between the two of them. "I'm more than okay with that, Alice. I-I-I'm just caught off guard. Not in a bad way, more like... I-can't-believe-you-thought-to-add-me kind of way."

"Of course I would, Zayne. When I married your dad, you became my son. While I never want to or would try to take the place of your biological mom, I'd love to have a special place in your life, too." She smiles softly at me, and I return the gesture.

"Thank you for the ice cream, too. I've enjoyed it," I tell her.

"Good. I love that you two are getting along so well. I was worried you'd be enemies." She quirks the side of her mouth in a half smirk as she looks between us.

"Yeah, we're figuring out our dynamic," Asher says coyly, and I raise my brows at him.

"Fantastic." Alice claps. "We should get going or your dad will worry." She gets up from her chair and heads to the trash to throw her bowl and spoon away.

"Figuring out our dynamic?" I ask when she's out of earshot.

"Yeah, what was I supposed to say?" He shrugs. "She's the most important person in my life, and she's happy. I wouldn't say we don't get along, so I enhanced the truth to not upset her. Deal with it!" he snaps the last part at me, and I raise my hands in



surrender.

Standing up, I throw my trash away and follow Alice to the car. Asher is a confusing man, and I'm not sure what to even think of him anymore.

## Page 7

*Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 10:16 am*

ASHER

“Fuck!” I shout as I slam my bedroom door shut. Grabbing handfuls of hair, I pace the room. My mind is a mess, and I don’t know what to do about it.

He’s all I think about. I crave him. His attention. I want him to just look at me; his laugh and his smile are things I get excited for.

It shouldn’t, but avoiding him hurts me. It sucks, and I hate it. I want to get to know him better, but the thoughts I have about him aren’t something I should have about my stepbrother.

I’ve never felt like this before, not even with Mathew. I’m so confused and my emotions are all over the place.

I’ve been shifting and running more than usual, but every time I shift back, I’m outside under his window. It’s like even my wolf is obsessed with him. It’s wrong, and I need to stop.

But I can’t. And fuck, seeing him naked in the locker room opened a whole new set of feelings I don’t want to deal with.

I shouldn’t have snapped at him like that when we were out getting ice cream. But he’s trying to blow off the fact that he’s been avoiding me and wants me to act like we’re best friends for my mom. I can’t. I can’t lie to her like that. Or to myself.

My body is in hyper-drive, and the more I think about Zayne, the harder my cock

gets.

“Damn it,” I growl, pulling my shirt off and locking my door. Grabbing my phone, I connect it to the Bluetooth speaker and turn on some music, blasting it loud enough to drown out any sounds I’m about to make.

I’m too worked up, and I can’t think straight. I won’t be able to until I get my fucking dick to at least go down.

Undoing my pants, I strip them off until I’m naked, standing in the middle of my room, cock bobbing, painfully stiff as pre-cum drips from the tip.

Grasping my length, I hiss as I stroke it from base to tip, gathering the pre-cum and rubbing it down my cock, using it as lube.

My knot is aching just as bad as my dick. Giving it a squeeze, I thrust into my hand.

“Not enough,” I grunt, heart pounding in my chest while it rises and falls quickly.

Storming over to my dresser, I bend over to the bottom drawer and pull out something I don’t want to have to use. It’s a backless fleshlight, and it’s the only thing that gives my knot proper relief.

Mathew never took my knot, always leaving me aching even after I came. So I ordered this online and hid it, only using it when I had to. And now is one of those times.

Grabbing a bottle of lube, I coat the fleshlight and my cock.

With one hand on my dresser for support, I use the other to slide the fleshlight over my shaft. “Fuck,” I moan, hanging my head as my knees threaten to buckle. It’s not

as good as a tight ass, but it's better than my hand.

Holding it still the best I can, I pound into it. As much as I don't want it to, my mind conjures up an image of Zayne, as if this was his perfectly toned, tight ass strangling my cock.

"That's it," I snarl. "Take it. Take my fucking cock like the dirty boy you are. Then I'm going to lock my fat knot inside your ass and make you scream my name as you cum all over the floor like a dirty whore."

When it comes to sex, the feral side I normally try to suppress surfaces, the wolf inside of me coming out to play.

While I'm usually quiet and keep to myself, it doesn't mean I'm a meek, shy person.

There's something dark lurking inside me that I struggle to keep locked up every day.

It's the main reason why Mathew and I didn't work out.

Outside of his toxic behavior, he couldn't handle me in the bedroom.

I had to hold back who I really am, and I hated it.

It was best to leave him before I lost control and hurt him or myself .

But fucking Zayne... why does he have to be so fucking hot, so off limits, and drive me fucking insane?

It doesn't take long before my balls, my knot, my whole fucking body tingles.

Pretending it's Zayne's ass I'm ruining, I fuck the toy harder syncing my hand with

each thrust. The fleshlight hits my knot with each thrust and on the next one, I push it down hard enough to lock it in place.

“Fucking hell!” I shout, the pressure on my knot feeling so fucking good.

I thought I locked my door, I know I did , but I guess the lock doesn’t work because just as I’m about to get the relief I really need, Zayne walks in.

He looks at me, then down to my hand, my cock being strangled by the sex toy. I should stop, push him out and slam the door in his face. But, when his eyes lock on mine, I lose it.

Lips parting, I let out a long pained growl as my body locks up, and I cum the hardest I ever have in my life. My cock jerks painfully hard, sending long thick ropes of cum splashing onto the floor by my feet, emptying my balls of every last drop I have to give.

Chest heaving, heart pounding, my lips peel back as I stare at a stunned, frozen Zayne. “Get the fuck out!” I roar, snapping him out of it.

“I-I’m sorry,” he rushes out. “ Fuck . I’m sorry.”

He stumbles backward, almost tripping over his feet, and closes the door behind him.

With my knot locked in the toy, I’m stuck with it. I feel gross and disgusted with myself.

My knees buckle, and I fall to the ground.

Tears sting my eyes as I bring my knees up, wrapping my arms around them and burying my face in them.

I won't cry. I deserve to feel like this, to feel the shame.

But fuck, it hurts. I don't know how much longer I can live in the same house as him if this is how I am after just one week.

If it comes to it, I'll leave, go back to the pack. I'd never ask my mom to come with me, I wouldn't want her to. I survived my dad this long, I can keep going, right?

I can't fuck this up for Mom, I can't be the one who ruins her happiness, her safety.

The next morning, Prudence can feel the change in my mood when she picks me up for school. It's sweet of her, how hard she's been working to see me smile, but no matter how silly my best friend gets, I just don't feel it.

After a long, sleepless night, I had to force myself to get ready for school. It's been hell all day. I almost fell asleep a few times and had no appetite for lunch.

Now it's time for practice, and I have to face Zayne. This time, it was me going out of my way to avoid him. He tried to talk to me a few times in between classes, but I ran away from him. I couldn't look him in the eyes.

He must think I'm a freak. I mean, jerking off isn't uncommon for teenage boys, but I locked eyes with him and almost passed out from cumming so hard. How fucked up is that?

I wait until everyone leaves the locker room before slipping in and getting changed for practice.

By the time I make it out, everyone is already out on the field.

"Asher, get your ass out there now!" Coach shouts from the sidelines.

I nod and start to jog over to the others. After a moment of watching, I catch on to what everyone is doing and slip in.

“Chad!” I shout to my teammate. He tosses the ball to me, and I run with it. But the other defense has me blocked, so I toss it to Rob.

“Asher, would you just talk to me?” Zayne appears at my side.

“Why are you trying to talk to me now? Too little, too late,” I snap.

“ Please ?”

“No,” I say and run away from him. I can hear him curse, but I ignore him, putting all my frustration into practice.

I feel bad for body checking a few of the guys, but I’m on a roll. Coach is shouting praises, and I just roll with it.

“Asher!” Chad shouts. My head snaps over to see the ball flying at me. Grinning, I jump up and snatch it out of the air. The moment my feet hit the ground, I’m running for the end zone.

My blood pounds in my ears, heart racing so fast it’s giving me a high. I see the line, and I’m about to earn us the winning point for this practice when I’m tackled from behind.

I hit the ground hard with a grunt. Pain splinters through my body, and I’m pissed. My wolf surges forward, and I let out a low snarl.

Rolling over, I’m about to curse out whoever the fuck caused me to lose the point when I see it’s Zayne on top of me.

We're both panting heavily, eyes wide with adrenaline.

And then it's like time slows down to almost nothing. It feels like I'm underwater, voices around us muffled as reality comes crashing in.

My wolf breaks through my thoughts, saying one word that makes sense of all the weirdness of everything. Why I'm so obsessed with Zayne. Why can't I get him out of my head? Why do I crave him more than anything else in this world?

Mate .



## Page 8

*Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 10:16 am*

ZAYNE

One moment I'm laying there, chest heaving as I stare down at Asher, the next I blink and he's shoving me off of him.

The coach's whistle screeches across the field, splitting through my fog of confusion as Asher bolts as I scramble into a sitting position just in time to see fur flying and claws tearing up the grass. He's running like his ass is on fire.

What the hell just happened?

One second, we're practicing, and I just took his ass out, and then bam—he's wolfed out right in front of me. No warning, no explanation. Just a flash of dark fur and claws, right there in the end-zone.

Coach is yelling, his voice cracking as he blows the whistle again. "No shifting on the field!"

It's school policy. Pretty much the only rule they enforce without any exceptions. And now Asher has just shredded it along with his practice uniform.

The rest of the team is either laughing or shouting in surprise, but I just stand there, frozen, trying to process what just happened.

The coaches are probably ready to start handing out detentions left and right, but my thoughts are with Asher, imagining him running off into the woods, alone and...

obviously upset. He's been moody and restless, but I never thought it was this bad.

I jog toward the locker room, my cleats clicking against the asphalt as I go.

I need to get out of this uniform and find him.

There's an ache under my ribs, like I'm just as freaked out as he is, though I don't really know why.

Maybe it's the fact that he bolted without a word to me.

But he's been refusing to speak to me at all lately.

I haven't felt this...left out? Is that the right word? Since...well...forever.

The door slams behind me as I reach my locker, and I don't bother with being careful or organized.

I yank off my jersey, throw it to the side, and fumble with my phone.

My fingers shake as I scroll through my contacts until I hit "Alice." She's been like a second mom to me—ever since she married Dad, she's been all in.

"Come on, pick up, pick up..."

After three rings, she answers, her voice calm and collected as usual. "Zayne? Everything okay?"

I swallow, trying to get a grip. "Um...not really. Asher just shifted. On the football field, mid practice. He...he just ran off. I think he went into the woods."

Her pause is barely noticeable, but I catch it. “Don’t worry, Zayne. I’ll be there soon, alright? You don’t need to worry about Asher—he’ll be fine. I know you’re concerned, but let me handle it.”

“Okay. Thanks, Alice. I’m just...gonna wait for you in the parking lot.”

I can hear a distant howl echoing from somewhere behind the school, like Asher’s lost in his own world. It stirs something in me, makes me want to call him back or reach out. But even if I could track him down, I’m not sure he’d want to see me right now. I mean, what could I even say?

The smell of pine and fresh-cut grass fills the air as I wait by the parking lot, my heart pounding in my chest. It’s a smell I’ve come to associate with Asher—the way he smells after a run. I shouldn’t notice these things about him, but I do.

The moment Alice pulls up in her car, I slide into the passenger seat, slumping back against the leather. She doesn’t ask any questions, just gives me a steady, understanding look before turning her gaze back to the road.

“Thanks for coming,” I say, breaking the quiet.

She nods. “Of course. He’s my son. I’d do the same for you, Zayne.”

That simple statement twists something in my chest, making it ache.

Alice turns onto a side road leading to the edge of the forest. “He’s probably near the river. Back with the pack whenever he was upset, that’s usually where he went.”

I nod, feeling a small bit of relief. It’s a place I know well here, a place I spent my childhood.

I used to spend hours there, skipping rocks and talking about everything and nothing with Harley.

We'd stay down there building forts and playing all sorts of games until it was dark and Dad would call us home.

The car bumps along the dirt path, and I'm suddenly grateful for the silence. Gives me a moment to get my thoughts in order. Because I've been... feeling things for Asher that I probably shouldn't. And it kills me a little every time he puts up another wall between us.

As we pull up to the edge of the treeline, I feel a sense of urgency. Asher's howl echoes through the trees, and it sounds closer, more desperate. Like he's calling out.

I look at Alice. "I'm going to look for him too. I can't just sit here and wait for you, okay?"

She nods, squeezing my hand. "Be careful, Zayne. If he shifted spur of the moment, his wolf is in charge and not thinking clearly."

I slip out of the car, heading into the woods. The trees close in around me, and the scent of pine fills my lungs, grounding me. I hear the rush of the river up ahead, and a small shape darts through the trees, just at the edge of my vision.

"Asher!" I call.

I know he hears me. I feel it in the way the air shifts, a prickle of magic brushing against my skin, mixing with the traces of his wolf energy.

When I reach the riverbank, he's standing there, his back to me. His midnight fur ruffled and tense, muscles bunched as if he's ready to flee. His entire stance is rigid,

ears angled back, tail low. He seems to be wrestling with something, emotions barely contained within his powerful, wild frame.

Asher lets out a low, guttural growl, the sound rough and filled with primal energy. But somehow, I understand him, clear as if he'd spoken words. "Why are you here, Zayne?"

I freeze, blinking in confusion. What the hell is this? I speak wolf now? Like...Harry Potter with Parseltongue? The realization sends a shiver down my spine.

I don't have time to think about that right now. Right now I need to know what's going on with Asher. Why did he shift like that and just run away?

I take a slow breath, letting the cool forest air fill my lungs. "Because you ran. And you didn't say anything. What the hell happened back there?"

"You wouldn't understand."

"Then explain it to me. Help me to understand." I step closer, feeling that familiar, unsteady beat of my heart. He's close enough to touch, and that makes this whole moment more surreal. "Asher, please. We're supposed to be brothers. Your mom is worried about you. Hell, I'm worried about you."

He finally turns, his eyes flashing with that golden light, piercing through me. "Do you really think you can handle this, Zayne?"

My throat tightens. I want to reach out, to touch him, but I hold myself back. "Well, I won't know if I can until you tell me."

Whatever he's hiding, whatever he thinks will drive me away—I want to know.

He looks at me, his gaze softening, and I can feel the tension between us shift, like something fragile yet unbreakable. I step closer, my hand reaching out, hovering just inches from his snout.

“Asher,” I say gently, my voice barely above a whisper, “just...shift back and come home. Alice is out here, looking for you. She’s worried.

” I see his ears flick back at the mention of his mom, a slight twitch of his tail, but he doesn’t move otherwise.

“The team’s freaked out, man. You know we see shifters, sure, but not like that—wolfing out right after a hard tackle?

” I try to keep my tone light, almost joking.

“Coach is probably gonna have you in detention for a month.”

He lets out a low, rumbling growl, almost like a huff, but his eyes stay locked on mine, and I catch a brief, unmistakable hint of sadness in them.

“You need to come back with us,” I press, hoping my words can cut through whatever walls he’s put up. “If you don’t want to talk to me, fine. But talk to your mom. Hell, call up Prunes.”

Asher looks away, but his gaze snaps back to mine with an intensity that makes me catch my breath. There’s something in his eyes—a spark that stirs a strange warmth deep in my chest, something I’m not ready to name.

Our eyes lock, an intense stare that sends heat rushing through me.

My heart pounds; everything’s been different since Asher showed up.

I'm questioning everything—him, myself. But right now, none of that matters.

I can't ignore this pull between us, like he needs me here, like we're connected in a way I'm just beginning to understand.

## Page 9

*Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 10:16 am*

ASHER

My wolf is in full control right now. All my primal instincts are screaming at me.

He's my mate. He's mine .

All I want to do is pin him to the ground and sink my teeth into him, marking him as mine.

Get a hold of yourself, Asher.

"I don't know what's got you so worked up, but whatever it is, we can talk it out, okay?" Zayne tries to coax.

"Just shift back. You have your mother worried. And to be honest, me too." He licks his lips, running a hand through his hair.

"I don't understand any of this," he whispers more to himself, rubbing the spot over his heart.

"It hurts, you know?" He looks back at me with wide, confused eyes. "To see you hurting. I don't know why."

The same reason seeing him worked up and upset makes me want to rip the world apart.

Mine. Mine. Mine.



The wolf inside my head screams. We might be one in the same, but right now the shifter blood inside me is trying to take full control.

Ripping my gaze away from him, I pace, my paws pressing against the cold earth below me. All I want to do is run. To take off through these trees and run until my legs give out on me. To get out of my head and let the wolf take control.

Only I know if I did, all I'd do would run right back to him. My Mate.

Fucking hell, my stepbrother is my mate.

"Asher, please." The anguish in his voice has my steps faltering. Attention snapping back to him, I let out a low whine.

My body starts to shift from wolf to man and a moment later, I stand before him. With my chest heaving, naked as the day I was born. I lock eyes with Zayne.

His eyes drop to where my cock is inconveniently hard, thanks to the hormones racing through my body right now.

The way his cheeks turn bright red, my wolf can't help but preen over the attention of his eyes on my body.

"Ah..." He blinks rapidly, clearing his throat as he averts his gaze from me.

"It's a naked body," I grunt. "Can't tell me it isn't something you haven't seen in the locker rooms before, can you?"

"Yeah." He clears his throat again. "But this... this isn't the same thing."

Now I'm just pissed that he's refusing to look at me.

What is wrong with me?

“Asher, love.” Mom steps out from behind the tree, a hand over her eyes and a stack of clothes in her other outstretched hand. “Here’s a change of clothes.”

“Thanks,” I mutter, stepping forward, eyes still on Zayne, who continues to avoid looking at me, as I take the clothes from her, pulling them on. My fingers fumble with the buttons of my jeans as I try to dress myself with shaky hands.

It fucking hurts, and I hate I feel this way. It’s because of all these new damn emotions overwhelming me. My wolf is taking this as rejection, but the poor damn guy doesn’t even know what he is to me.

Then my mind races. How is he going to take this? Is he going to panic, call me a freak, hate me? He’s not even into men. I’ve seen how he is with the girls at school. He’s never looked twice at a guy.

Just my fucking luck to be mated to a straight man.

My heart aches so damn much, but I ignore it as I roughly put my clothes on.

“Zayne, love, do you mind waiting in the car? I need to talk to Asher. If that's okay?”

“Oh.” Zayne looks at my mom. “Okay, yeah, sure.” He lets out a breath, running his hand through his brown locks. “I’ll, ah, I’ll meet you at the car.”

Zayne’s eyes flick over to mine, causing me to take a step forward before he takes off toward the car.

Balling my hands into fists at my side, I breathe heavily as I battle the war going on inside my head. Inside my damn heart and soul, too.

As soon as Zayne is out of sight, Mom swings her pitying gaze to me. "Asher, baby." Her voice is soft. "Why didn't you tell me?"

"Because I didn't know." I scrub my face with my hands, frustration and confusion coursing through my veins as I pace again. "It just happened. One minute I was playing football, the next my wolf was screaming at me that he's my mate. I panicked, shifted and took off. And here we are."

Mom's brows furrow. "You didn't know beforehand? Nothing to indicate there could be something more?"

With my head in my hands, I take a few deep breaths to try and calm myself. Do I tell her about the fact I haven't been able to stop thinking about him? That I've touched myself to the thoughts of all the dirty and fucked up things I wanted to do to dear old stepbrother?

No. Because it's fucked up. It's wrong. All of this is fucking wrong.

"I've been attracted to him since I met him," is all I admit. "But I didn't think anything of it, apart from the fact that he's good looking."

"Oh, honey." Mom steps forward, wrapping me in her arms.

She's so much smaller than me, but right now I feel like a little boy who's hurting and in need of his mother's comfort.

"What do I do?" I rasp out, voice thick with emotion.

"Tell me what to do, Mom? Because I'm freaking the fuck out because he's straight, Mom."

And, not to mention, he's my stepbrother.

I don't want to cause any issues between you and Dexter.

I really like the guy. He's a good man, and honestly, a better father than I could have ever hoped for. I don't want him to hate me."

She steps back, giving me a soft smile as she cups my face between her small, soft hands.

"Mates trump everything, my sweet boy. Dexter adores you, he could never hate you. He understands how this works. It might not be something that happens often with warlocks, but he knows all about how shifters can mate anyone in and outside their own species. He's not going to hate you or be upset.

And even if Zayne wasn't your mate, if you chose to explore something between the two of you, we wouldn't be against it.

You're both adults, eighteen now, and you didn't grow up together.

You can't help who you catch feelings for, and you sure as hell can't help who you end up mated to.

" She gives me a soft smile, running her hands up and down my arms.

"That's the thing, Mom, did you miss the part where I mentioned the fact that he's not into men? Therefore, he's not into me!" I growl in frustration.

She gives me a small smirk. "I think you need to talk to the boy before you go thinking the worst of all of this. Follow your heart, Asher. Give into what destiny planned for you. Dexter and I, we will support you guys no matter what."

“I’m scared, Mom.” I hate to admit it, feeling so small in this moment.

“Oh, honey.” Mom wraps me up in another hug and I cling to her.

We stay like this for a long moment before she pulls back and takes my hand. “Come on, love, let’s go home.”

My stomach is in knots as we walk to the car. Knowing Zayne is there. I’m going to be so close to him and not be able to touch him.

Unable to look at him for fear of what my wolf might do, I keep my eyes forward as I slide into the front seat of the car.

Mom gets in and starts the car. She gives me a light pat before pulling out onto the road.

I can feel his eyes on me, watching me. It sends a shiver down my spine and right to my damn dick.

Closing my eyes, I concentrate on my breathing, on keeping myself under control.

When we get back, I have to talk to him. I have to tell him what we are.

And I pray to whatever god is listening, that he doesn’t hate me. That he’s not disgusted with me or our destiny.

I can take a beating from my dad, but I’m not sure if I could handle Zayne’s rejection.

## Page 10

*Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 10:16 am*

ZAYNE

The car ride home is silent, the tension in the car is thick. The only sounds are the hum of the engine and my own ragged breathing, which I can't seem to control.

I keep stealing glances at Asher, trying to ignore the way my body feels when I see him.

He's sitting in the front seat, his posture stiff, his eyes glued to the window.

It's like he's trying to put distance between him and everyone in the car.

I don't know what the hell is going on inside my head, but it's not normal. I can't stop thinking about him.

I keep replaying the image of his wolf in my head.

His wolf, when he shifted, was magnificent.

Massive, dark, and sleek, with eyes that glowed like embers, fierce and wild.

It was like a part of me recognized it—felt a strange pull, but that can't be right, can it? This isn't how I'm supposed to feel.

I've never thought of another guy this way. Hell, I've never thought of another guy, period. I'm straight. But when I saw Asher, when I saw him shift, something inside me twisted in ways I don't understand.

He's my stepbrother. And yet here I am—heart pounding, body on fire for him. First, I'm having sex dreams about him, now this?

What the hell is happening to me? This isn't supposed to feel this way.

I try to shake it off, tell myself it's just the adrenaline, the proximity, or maybe the fact that he's in my space all the time now.

But the truth is, none of that explains why every time he looks at me, my stomach flips.

Or how, when he shifts, I can't tear my eyes away from the way his muscles move, the strength radiating off him.

No, this is something else. Something I don't know how to deal with.

I push the thought aside as best I can, focusing on keeping up, not letting him see just how messed up I feel.

I shift uncomfortably in the back seat, trying not to let Alice see the war going on inside me. She's quiet too, her eyes flicking between me and the road as we drive through the thick trees that surround our family's property.

When we pull into the long gravel driveway and reach the porch of our log home, I feel the stress in the air. My dad's tall figure is leaning against the porch railing, waiting for us. His gaze is steady, and a soft smile pulls at his lips when he sees us.

The usual comfort I feel when I see my dad isn't there, though. Something feels off, like the air has thickened, and I'm suddenly too aware of everything around me.

Will he sense these strange new thoughts I'm having of Asher?

What if Asher tells him I was staring at his cock when he shifted back to his human form?

Fuck. Fuck. Fuck.

Asher is still sitting silently in the front, I steal one last look at him before my hand tightens on the door handle. I feel a knot in my stomach, an unsettled feeling I can't shake.

"Boys," Alice says softly, pulling my attention back to her. She reaches for my hand and squeezes it lightly. "Let's go inside. We need to talk."

I nod, my mind still reeling from everything that had just happened.

Asher doesn't move until Alice gets out and reaches his side of the car.

Dad's standing on the porch, his smile warm as he greets Alice with a kiss on the cheek, but my focus is elsewhere.

Asher's right behind me, and every step he takes sends a shudder through me.

He smells so damn good—like rain and forest, like something wild and free, something untamed that calls to me.

I can't understand why that's affecting me so much.

The silence in the house feels louder than ever. Alice motions for me to sit at the kitchen table, and I do so without a word. Asher hesitates by the door, his eyes on me, like he's unsure of what to do next.

"Asher, love?" Alice calls softly. "Come on, sit. Dexter, you too."



Dexter sits beside Alice, his gaze shifting between Asher and me. It's like everyone's waiting for something to happen, like they all know something that I don't.

But they don't. They can't

They don't know what's going on inside me. They don't know how I dream filthy hot dreams involving my stepbrother. How, ever since he shifted on the field, my skin burns with this gnawing need I can't explain.

Asher takes a seat next to me, but he's still distant. I want to say something to him, but the words feel stuck in my throat. I feel like I'm losing my grip on something I can't even name.

And then it happens. Asher calls my name, his voice barely a whisper, yet it cuts through my thoughts like a knife to butter.

"Zayne," he says.

I look up, my eyes meeting his, and I see something there—a flicker of vulnerability. A flicker of... something else. He inhales sharply, his body tense. "I need to talk to you. Alone."

Alice glances at Dexter, her expression unreadable, before she speaks. "Why don't you two go out on the porch and talk? I need to speak to Dexter anyway." Her voice is calm, but there's a weight to it that makes me feel like this conversation is more than just casual.

Dad nods, his gaze shifting between Asher and me, but he doesn't say anything. Asher and I exchange a brief look, then both of us stand, the sound of our chairs scraping the floor almost too loud in the quiet room.

We make our way to the door, the cool late autumn air greeting us as soon as it swings open.

I step onto the porch, my senses instantly heightened.

The sky is growing darker, a swirl of purples and oranges as the day slips into night.

The air feels charged and I can't shake the feeling that something is on the verge of changing.

I sit on the porch swing, trying to relax, but I can't. There's a tension between Asher and me I can't ignore. Asher paces in front of me, his fists clenched, like he's struggling with something.

I want to reach out, to tell him it's okay, but something holds me back. I'm not sure what's happening, but I feel the shift in the air, the unspoken words between us.

Finally, Asher stops pacing, and when he looks at me, his eyes are dark, stormy. There's a crack in his usual coolness, a vulnerability that makes my breath catch. I wait, heart pounding in my chest.

"Zayne..." he starts, his voice barely above a whisper. But then he falls silent, like he's trying to find the words.

My stomach tightens. I don't know why, but I feel like this is important—whatever it is, I have to hear him out.

However, I'm about to lose my fucking patience.

He's not talking, and I feel like he's keeping something from me.

My whole body feels like I'm about to be set ablaze and being this close to him and alone has my cock hardening painfully in my pants.

"I..." he starts again, his voice shaky this time. "I need you to understand something."

"Asher," I snap, my voice steady but sharp. "Spit it out. I need to know what the hell is going on."

He looks at me and the world around me seems to fall away, and all I can focus on is him—his breath, his eyes, the way the air between us crackles.

"I don't know how to say this," Asher mutters, his eyes flickering to my lips and then away. "But I need you to know that... I'm your mate."

The words hang in the air, and for a moment, I don't know how to respond. My chest tightens, and I feel like I've been sucker-punched. Mate? I can barely process it.

My mind goes blank, confusion flooding in. "What the fuck did you just say? I?—"

"I'm sorry," Asher interrupts, his voice trembling. "But it's the truth. My wolf... He knew you were meant to be mine. And I can't deny it. We're mates, Zayne."

My mind goes blank. It doesn't make sense. This doesn't make sense. I'm straight. This is insane. But then, everything inside me starts buzzing with his words—his wolf chose me. What the hell does that even mean?

"You're... you're what?" I choke out. My thoughts are scrambled, and there's this heat building up inside me, like anger and confusion mixing into one giant knot in my gut. Everything feels off, out of control.

Asher steps forward, his expression painful. “I know it’s a lot to take in, Zayne. Believe me, I’m trying to figure it out too. But you can’t fight fate. I can’t fight it. I don’t want to fight it.”

I swallow hard, the air thick between us.

Heat rises in my chest, tightening my throat like a vice.

This isn’t happening. It can’t be. He’s my fucking stepbrother.

What the hell am I supposed to do with this?

I want to punch something, scream, break everything in sight, but I can’t.

I don’t know how to handle this—how to handle him .

He’s a he. What’s more, he’s not some random guy. He’s Asher. My stepbrother. This is so fucked.

I take a deep breath, but it doesn’t help.

My body burns with this gnawing desire I don’t want to feel.

I shouldn’t feel it. But when I look at him—see the pain in his eyes, hear the sincerity in his voice—I start to believe him.

My hand twitches, wanting to reach out. The feeling pulls at me, tempting, dangerous.

I nod, though I don’t know why. It’s like my body’s reacting before my brain can even catch up. My heart races in my chest, blood thundering in my ears. Fuck, what’s

happening to me?

And then, my mouth opens, and what comes out surprises the hell out of even me.

“Okay,” I say, my voice rough.

## Page 11

*Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 10:16 am*

ASHER

I blink at him, confusion taking hold. Did he just say: okay? I just told him we were mates. That his gay stepbrother was his mate. To him, a straight man.

“Okay?” I ask him slowly, searching his stunning blue eyes.

He swallows hard, holding my stare, and nods slowly.

Well. This was... unexpected. I thought he was going to lose his mind, shout at me, call me names, tell me my wolf is wrong and that he's straight.

For a moment, he looked like he was going to react that way. I could see the panic in his eyes as the words registered in his mind.

I was waiting for his rejection, the pain that would come with it.

It's not something I'd ever allowed myself to think about. Any of it. Finding a mate, settling down, falling in love, being happy.

Happiness was just a fairytale to me until I saw what it really looked like when Mom met Dexter.

Never did I think I'd find it for myself, so the idea of actually meeting my mate and having them reject me was never a thought.

Until today .

Once the dust had settled, and my mind wasn't a jumbled mess, I spent the car ride here letting all the possibilities take hold of my mind.

What if he rejected me? How badly would it hurt?

I've heard stories of people being rejected, that it was like getting their heart ripped out, a phantom pain of something lost.

Would that be how it would be for me?

He lets out a heavy sigh. Raising a shaky hand up, he runs his fingers through his dark brown locks, looking away towards the tree line.

He's nervous, and I can smell the fear coming off him in waves. I want to pull him into my arms, tell him everything's going to be okay. That I'd make sure it was.

I don't, fisting my hands at my side as I wait for him to say something, giving him this time to process.

Before, when I was fighting my attraction to him, I told myself that it was wrong. That I was fucked up for thinking that way about my stepbrother.

After finding out he's my mate and talking to my mom, I no longer think that way.

I want him. So bad it's taking everything in me not to claim him as mine, like my wolf is demanding me to do.

"I'd be lying if I said I haven't been having some sort of... attraction to you." His confession is soft, a low whisper that if it wasn't for my impeccable sense of hearing, I'd have missed it.

My heart stops, excitement swelling inside me. Maybe I heard him wrong.

But when he turns his big blues over my way, my heart kicks back into full force, nearly beating out of my chest at the intensity in them. My eyes drop to his throat, watching as his Adam's apple bobs as he swallows hard.

"You have?" My question comes out as a harsh rasp. I'm trying to hold it together right now, but all of this is new to me. It sure as hell is new to him, too. I don't want to say the wrong thing, to scare him away.

He nods. "I don't know how to explain it. I've never had thoughts about another man before. Ever. No offense." He winces.

"None taken." My lips twitch, a grin almost breaking free.

"But ever since you came to live here, that's been slowly changing.

And I don't mean suddenly I'm finding men attractive, because I don't.

That hasn't changed. It's that I ah..." A blush breaks out across his cheeks, making the dusting of freckles below pop.

Fuck, he's so damn edible. "I find... you attractive."

The smile breaks free, unable to hold back. "You do?"

He rolls his eyes. "Don't go get a big head about it."

A chuckle breaks free. "I'll try not to." I raise a brow.

His eyes widen at the double entendre.



“That’s not what I– I didn’t mean—” he splutters.

I save him from himself. “I know,” I say. “Keep going.”

He blows out a breath, scrubbing his hand over his face. “This is weird. Really fucking weird.” He peeks at me through his fingers. “No offense.”

“You keep saying that.” Facing him sideways, I lean against the porch swing, my arm laying across the top, fingers nearly grazing his arms. “But I can tell you, you’re not offending me. This is all new for you. You have the right to feel the way you do. To process it how you see fit.”

He nods. “I just don’t want to say anything to upset you.” He cares and damn it, that means something.

“So far, how you’re taking it. It’s not upsetting me.”

He turns his attention back out to the forest. We sit in silence again and I take the time to admire him.

His sharp jaw, the few day stubble. How is it possible to have both young and rugged features? Crazy what a bit of facial hair can do to change one’s appearance.

My fingers itch to scrape my nails across it.

After a long while, he turns back to me. “I like you, Asher. You’re kind, caring, and a good person. A little broody,” he chuckles and I grin. “But I like that about you, too. You don’t talk much, yet I don’t feel like we always need words to enjoy one another’s company, if that makes sense?”

It does. I nod.

He already gets me. That gives me hope.

My tongue pokes out, swiping across my dry lips. His eyes drop, watching the movement and my cock twitches when his eyes darken slightly.

The breath he lets out is shaky. “I’ve had dreams about you,” he whispers, slowly meeting my eyes.

My breaths come quicker.

“What kind of dreams?” The words are a little more raspy than I was trying for.

He swallows hard. “Dreams I shouldn’t be having about my stepbrother.”

Fuck. Fuck! I want to know what they are. To do every dirty thought he’s had.

“Does it bother you? That we’re stepbrothers?”

“Not really,” he admits. “I think I’m more stuck on the man part, you know?”

Slight disappointment hits me. “If this isn’t something you want, if it makes you uncomfortable, you don’t have to accept it.” The words feel like razor blades crawling up my throat as they leave my mouth.

“What?” His brows furrow.

“I’m not going to force you to embrace the mate bond.

You have the right to reject it.” I don’t mention how much it would hurt me.

He’s a warlock. They don’t feel it the same way a shifter does.

At most, he would feel a bit of longing, but it would fade over time for him.

The gaping hole in my chest and the loss of my will to live would be my fate.

A wolf losing their mate can be deadly.

“No.” He shakes his head, eyes widening. “No. I don’t want to reject you, Asher. That's the last thing I want to do.”

I can’t hide the visible relief as my shoulders relax. “You don’t?”

“No,” he says sternly. “I like you, Asher. I want to see where this could go. I feel something between us. All I ask for is time, you know? Time to wrap my head around all this new information, these new feelings swirling around inside me. I’m not sure if I’m bi, or if the only man I’m attracted to is you. Either way, I like you, Asher.”

A deep rumbling growl of satisfaction threatens to slip free, but I swallow it down, not wanting to scare him off by the overwhelming need to possess him. Soon, but not yet.

When my sweet little mate is ready, I’ll show him just how much he means to me.

“So, what does this mean for us?” I ask, needing to know where his mind is at right now.

“We hang out, get to know one another. Test the waters. I’m not saying we go slow.

” That blush finds its way onto his cheeks again as he licks his lips.

I can smell his desire and fuck, it’s nearly blinding.

I should get a damn award for the restraint I have right now. “Just a little time to absorb this.”

“Okay,” I agree.

“Okay?” he asks.

I give him a half smile and nod. “Whatever you need. I’ll do it for you, Zayne.” His eyes flick between mine. I can see the fear in his eyes. The vulnerability looking back. Allowing my hand to inch forward, placing it lightly on his shoulder, I tell him, “Everything’s going to be okay.”

“Thank you,” he sighs, closing his eyes.

No. Thanks for giving me hope you might be mine. He won’t regret this, I promise.

We head back inside, and the sound of Alice’s and Dad’s laughter drifts through the hallway. They’re still at the table, wine glasses in hand, the conversation light and carefree.

"Boys, come in here!" Alice calls.

I freeze, a knot of unease tightening in my stomach.

My heart beats faster than it should. What if Dexter is pissed that I’m mated to his son?

What if he doesn’t want a gay son? A gay stepson is one thing, but his own flesh and blood?

And mated to his brother? I can’t let him throw Mom out—she’s so happy, so in love.

I won't let anything destroy that.

Taking a deep breath, I push forward, steeling myself for whatever comes next.

I force myself to sit down next to Zayne. Dexter looks at me, his face calm, a slight smile tugging at his lips. My mom raises an eyebrow, but says nothing, letting the silence stretch between us.

"I told Dexter that you're mates with Zayne," she says softly, her voice filled with a mixture of support and care.

I swallow, hard.

I look at Dexter. He doesn't say anything right away. He just reaches out his hand.

"Asher, I'm so happy you found your fated mate," he says, his voice steady, warm even. "I know how serious that is in wolves. To my knowledge, my son hasn't been with a male, so... take it easy on him."

I stare at his outstretched hand for a beat before I shake it, my grip firm, though my nerves are on edge.

He nods at me, then looks over at Zayne, his gaze softening.

"This is serious, son. I know you probably have a lot of questions, and I don't have all the answers, but I'll do my best. And Alice is here, too.

Just go at your own pace. Don't just shut it down.

Having a fated mate is a powerful thing, even if we don't have them as warlocks. "

Zayne gives a small nod, his voice steady despite the anxiety I know he's hiding. "I will."

Dexter looks between us one more time, his expression full of understanding. "Good. We'll leave you two to it. You have some things to figure out, I'm guessing." He stands, glancing at Alice. "Come on, Alice baby. We can go watch Hope Floats in our room, and I'll rub your feet."

Alice stands with a smile, walking toward Dexter. "You two take care of yourselves. Don't stress too much, okay?"

With that, they leave the room, the door closing softly behind them, leaving me and Zayne alone in the sudden quiet.

## Page 12

*Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 10:16 am*

ZAYNE

I'm lying on the couch, flipping through my phone, when I hear footsteps behind me. The familiar creak of the floorboards gives it away—Asher. He always does that. It's funny how even the little things he does have become something I'm more attuned to now.

“Hey,” he says, leaning against the doorframe. I glance up, and he's standing there, looking effortlessly casual in a way that drives me insane. “Got a minute?”

“Always for you,” I say without thinking, offering a grin I can't hold back.

He chuckles, running a hand through his messy hair, looking almost nervous.

It's a rare sight, and it makes me wonder if he knows the effect he has on me.

“So, uh...” He hesitates for a second, then his words spill out quickly, like he's been rehearsing them in his head for hours.

“Pru and Harley are going to the movies tonight, and I was thinking...” He trails off, waiting for me to catch on.

“You want me to go with you guys?” I ask, trying to keep my voice neutral, but my pulse betrays me, picking up a little speed.

“Well...” He scratches the back of his neck, his blue eyes meeting mine with that familiar glint. “I was thinking maybe we could go... as a date.”

I blink, feeling my heart skip a beat. Did he just say that? Asher wants to go out with me... on a real date? It's not exactly a just us date, but it's almost like a double date, and I'm getting ahead of myself.

"A date?" I repeat, trying to play it cool, but my voice comes out a little breathless.

"Yeah," he says, stepping closer, his gaze softening. "If you're free. I mean, I get it if you're busy. But..." He shrugs like he's trying not to care, but I can see the hope in his eyes.

It hits me all at once. I don't even have to think about it. The butterflies are already flapping in my stomach, and I can't stop the smile creeping onto my face.

"I'm free," I say, barely able to contain the excitement in my voice. "I'd love to."

Asher's expression changes, and for a moment, it's like the world slows down. His lips curl into a grin that's so wide it almost makes me forget how to breathe. "Yeah?" He's practically glowing, and I realize, in this moment, how much I've been hoping for this—hoping for him .

"Yeah," I repeat, my smile matching his. "It's a date."

His grin widens. "Great. The movie starts at seven."

"Perfect," I say, feeling a warmth spread through me I can't quite explain. It's more than just excitement; it's hope. Hope for something more between us.

As he turns to leave, I catch his eye one last time. "Asher..."

He pauses and looks back, waiting for me to finish.



“I’m looking forward to it,” I say, my voice quieter now, but the words feel like they hold more weight.

“Me too,” he says, his smile softening, and then he’s gone, leaving me with nothing but the sound of my racing heart and the feeling that this is the start of something real .

A few hours later, Asher taps on the door to my room, his usual calm demeanor hiding the fact that I can practically feel the nervous energy between us.

“You ready?” he asks, leaning against the doorframe with his hands in his pockets. His shirt fits just right, hugging his muscles in that way that drives me insane.

I swallow hard. “Yeah, let’s go.”

I grab my jacket, trying not to think too much about the movie night we’ve planned. It’s just a movie, right? Just a casual hangout with Prunes and Harley. Nothing to get worked up about. Except, my heart’s pounding like I’ve just run a marathon.

Asher and I ride together, the drive smooth but charged with an energy neither of us is willing to acknowledge—at least, not out loud.

Every time his gaze flicks over to me, I feel it.

That undeniable pull. He knows. Hell, we both know what’s going on between us, even if we’re pretending like we don’t.

I catch him looking at me again, his lips curving into a half-smile that’s way too confident for my liking. “Stop looking at me like that,” I mutter, my voice teasing, but my heart racing in a way that betrays me. “I’m not going to make out with you in the car.”

He chuckles low, the sound sending a shiver down my spine. “Who says I want you to?” His voice is smooth, like he’s in control, but there’s an edge to it, something playful that’s almost daring. I know he’s not oblivious. He’s waiting for me to break.

“You wish,” I shoot back, but the words feel like they’re out of my mouth before I can even think them through.

And then, my mind wanders. I picture leaning over, closing the distance between us, and feeling the warmth of his lips against mine— soft, urgent, everything I’ve been holding back.

The thought is enough to make my breath catch in my throat, and I have to quickly push it away before it gets too real.

He smirks, sensing it. He’s always been able to read me, even when I think I’m hiding everything. “You’re not fooling anyone, Zayne,” he says quietly, his tone still light but with an undercurrent that promises something more. “Not even yourself.”

I glance at him, my heart skipping a beat. “Maybe I’m just giving you a little taste of what you can’t have,” I tease, even though we both know I don’t mean it. Neither of us can resist this pull, and we both know it. The only question now is when we’ll finally stop pretending.

We get to the theater and spot Prunes and Harley waiting by the entrance.

Harley waves us over, her smile wide and bright.

She’s always been like that—full of energy, always knowing how to make people feel at ease.

But there's something different now. An edge to her smile that suggests she knows

something I don't, and I'm not sure I like it.

"You two took forever to get here," Prunes teases, raising an eyebrow at us. She's already laughing, the glint in her eyes that tells me she knows exactly what's going on. "Did you stop to have a quickie?"

I give her a quick glance, not bothering to smile. "Shut up," I mutter, my tone flat.

Prunes just grins wider, unfazed. Asher chuckles, like nothing's out of the ordinary.

But the tension between Prunes and me is palpable.

She's always had a way of getting under my skin, and I can tell she's enjoying it more than she should.

I stay silent, my gaze flicking toward Harley, who's the only one I'm willing to engage with right now. Prunes can keep her teasing to herself.

We find our seats, and the movie starts.

Asher and I sit next to each other, our shoulders brushing for just a moment.

The instant contact sends a jolt of heat through my core, and a slight shiver ripples down my spine.

I glance over at him, but he's focused on the screen, like he doesn't even feel it.

Prunes and Harley are seated on the other side of me, with Prunes next to me and Harley at the far end.

The proximity of our bodies makes the space feel smaller, charged with an energy

neither of us is willing to acknowledge.

But he has to feel it. He has to . My heart's racing.

Halfway through the movie, my fingers brush against his—just the lightest touch, but enough to send a spark up my arm. I freeze, and I'm sure he does, too. Neither of us pulls away. It's like we're both waiting for the other to make the move, but neither of us does.

"You two are killing me," Prunes mutters, loud enough for us to hear but not for anyone else to catch.

Harley laughs softly. "It's the fingertips for me," she teases, her voice dripping with humor. "Isn't that just the best way to start a secret romance?"

Her eyes flick to Prunes, a subtle softness to them. There's something unspoken there, something I can't quite place. But it's not my business. I keep my attention on Asher, where it belongs.

I sink lower in my seat, trying to hide the blush creeping up my neck.

Asher chuckles, but he's not pulling away, either.

His fingers remain where they are, a gentle brush of warmth that sends a spark straight to my core.

If anyone else saw, they'd probably think we were just two guys sitting too close. But we know better.

"You need to get laid too," Prunes jokes, nudging Harley's side. "It's fun. Believe me."

Harley shoots her a quick, almost defensive look, but there's something else behind her eyes, something I can't quite place. She's not laughing this time. She's blushing.

"I don't—" Harley starts, but Prunes just smirks and raises her hands in mock surrender.

"Whatever you say."

"Shut up," I mutter, but it's playful, not serious.

Asher's grin fades into something a little more intense, his eyes darkening for just a moment before he clears his throat. "Yeah, no one's supposed to know yet," he says quietly, keeping it just between us.

Prunes rolls her eyes. "You two are adorable," she says. "Honestly, just kiss already."

The movie plays on, but I can barely focus. The air between Asher and me is thick, charged. Warmth from his body pulls me in, impossible to resist, and I want nothing more than to close that tiny gap. I've never wanted anything as much as I want to touch him.

"I know what you're thinking," Harley says quietly, her voice low enough not to interrupt the movie.

I glance over at her, frowning slightly. "What?"

"You're thinking about kissing him. You can't hide it." She smirks. "It's okay, Zayne. We're all rooting for you."

My breath hitches. "Harley..."

“I won’t say anything. Promise,” she adds quickly, but there’s an unmistakable knowing look in her eyes. “But you should probably act on it sooner rather than later. You’re not fooling anyone. And you’ve never been one to go slow.”

“Yeah,” Prunes adds, “if you two don’t get together soon, I’m going to have to start charging for the therapy sessions. Watching this slow burn is killing me.”

I let out a breath I didn’t realize I was holding, and glance at Asher. He’s smirking, and my stomach flutters. I’m not freaking out. I’m not pushing him away.

And just like that, the weight of it all presses down on me.

Maybe Harley’s right. Maybe it’s time to stop pretending like I’m not completely aware of what’s between me and Asher.

It’s not just attraction—it’s something deeper, something real .

But it’s also new for me. I’ve never had feelings for another guy before.

I don’t know how to do this, how to move forward with it.

But no matter how much I try to talk myself out of it, I can’t keep running from this pull.

I nod, trying to steady my nerves, but every part of me is screaming to just give in. To lean over and kiss him, to feel the heat of him against me without worrying about the world.

The movie continues, but it’s all background noise now.

I’m lost in the way Asher feels next to me, in the way his fingers brush against mine

again, this time lingering for just a second longer.

I want to pull him into me, to press my lips to his, but I hold back.

This is new. It's forbidden. And I don't know what to do with it yet.

But I know one thing for sure.

I'm not going to be able to play it slow much longer.

ASHER

Zayne's hand brushes against mine, his fingers barely grazing my skin, but it feels like an electric current.

I glance at him, his eyes dark with desire, the weight of his gaze heavy on me.

Slowly, he shifts closer in his seat, his breath warm against my cheek.

I can feel the tension in his body, the way his muscles are coiled, ready to snap.

My heart thunders in my chest as I lean in, my lips only inches from his. His eyes flicker down to my mouth, and I know he's feeling it too—this pull, this magnetic force that draws us closer with every passing second.

Without thinking, my hand reaches up, cupping his jaw, my thumb brushing over the curve of his lips. His breath hitches, and that's when I know—this is it.

I close the distance, tilting my head as I press my lips to his.

The feeling of his lips against mine has my heart in a tailspin. Fire licks up my spine, slowly spreading over me like a blanket.

Raising my hand, I bring it to the back of his head, tangling my fingers in his soft brown hair.

The tiny moan that leaves Zayne has a possessive growl bubbling in my chest and all



the blood in my body rushing south. I'm painfully hard, cock straining against my jeans, demanding I spin my mate around, bend him over and take him right here, right now, everyone else in this theater be damned.

"I hate to break this up." Prudence taps my shoulder, another growl for a whole different reason threatening to break free. "Because, like I encouraged it and everything," she whispers. "But people are looking and you're giving off PG-13 vibes with the intention of going R-rated."

Breaking apart with a low groan, I can't hold back any longer, my eyes open and lock on Zayne's.

He licks his lips, swollen from our kisses, making my cock jerk. Fuck, he's so gorgeous it's hard to look at him, even in the darkness of the theater.

His lips twitch into a shy smile, blazing eyes telling me he really likes what we just did.

So did I. More than what's probably appropriate.

"We should probably watch the movie," he whispers.

And just like that, my anger for being interrupted is gone.

Letting out a breath, I nod, but I sneak a quick peck on the lips before sitting properly in my seat.

I can see Zayne grinning out of the corner of my eye, his fingers lacing with mine.

Picking our hands up, I kiss the back of his before shooting an unimpressed look at Prudence.

“Be mad at me all you want, wolf boy. If I didn’t stop you two, you’d be facing public indecency charges.”

Rolling my eyes, I bring them back to the screen.

There’s no point in trying to pay attention. All I can think about is my mate next to me, his hand in mine and how his lips felt. I can still taste him. I want more. So much more .

But I won’t push. This is all new for him, and we’re taking it at his pace. He makes the moves, whatever he’s comfortable with.

Once the movie is over, Zayne is up out of his seat, my hand still in his as he pulls me through the aisle.

There’s this sense of urgency, like he needs to get out of here now.

I look behind me, brows furrowed, and see Prudence wave goodbye, a massive grin on her face.

Confused as hell, I let Zayne lead me out of the theater, through the building and out to the parking lot.

“Are you okay?” I ask, trying to keep up with him. He says nothing and I panic. That is until we get to his car and he pushes me up against it.

I’m taken by surprise as his lips crash into mine, a moan slipping free as he kisses the air clean out of my lungs.

“Sorry,” he rasps, his chest heaving. “All I could think about for the last half hour was doing that again.”

A slow grin takes over my lips as my stomach does somersaults.

“Same,” I murmur.

An adorable blush creeps onto his cheeks. Oh, this is going to be so much fun. Who knew the superstar football player Zayne got shy?

The drive home my hand is in his the whole time, like neither of us wants to let the other one go.

Once we're home, we walk up to the house, hands still joined.

We stop at the door and face one another. “I'd guess this would be the part of the night where one of us says goodnight, let's do this again and end it with a kiss?” I tease, stepping closer.

“Yeah,” he murmurs. “Only we're both going to the same place.” He chuckles.

“Still. Let's do this again.” My fingers brush a lock of his wavy hair off his forehead. He visibly shivers and I can't help the satisfied feeling as I suppress a grin. I love that I affect him this way.

I worried he wouldn't want this. Our mate bond. Me . I'm beyond thrilled that it's not the case.

“Yeah. I'd like that.” He smiles softly. We both take a moment, the air crackling around us. I can feel it, the connection growing between us. It's both thrilling and terrifying. I thought it might be a little awkward, but it's not. It feels right. Meant to be.

“Asher.”

“Yeah?”

“Kiss me again?”

A purr rumbles in my chest, making Zayne’s eyes widen in surprise. Cupping his face, I lean down and kiss him. He sighs, his body swaying into mine.

I keep the kiss short and sweet, even though my wolf screams at me for more. Pushing the instincts down, I step back.

Zayne’s eyes stay shut for a few moments, lips still in position of the kiss before his eyes flutter open.

Grinning, I reach up and brush my thumb over his lips. “We should get inside.”

“Yeah.” He nods. “Yeah. Inside. The house. That we both live in.”

Laughing at his dazed state, I open the door and let him in before I follow.

As we part ways once I get to my room, I watch Zayne head further down the hall before pausing at his own door.

“Goodnight, Asher.” He smiles.

“Goodnight, Zayne.” My voice is rough as I try to hold myself back. It’s not easy, that’s for damn sure.

Before I say fuck it and potentially scare my mate off, I open my bedroom door and head inside.

I lock the door, as if that’s going to do any help.

Stripping everything off until I'm down to my boxers, I crawl into bed.

I won't be able to sleep with this erection ever since Zayne's lips touched mine.

Closing my eyes, I slide my hand under my blanket, then into my boxers. Wrapping my hand around my shaft, I pleasure myself to the thought of my mate and all the dirty things I can't wait to do to him, cumming with his name on my lips.

I'll wait a lifetime for him to be ready for more. Because what I care about the most is having him. Everything else is just a bonus.

It's been about a week since we've gone out to the movies.

I've always thought it was stupid when people spent all their waking hours with their partner when getting into a new relationship because life goes on and you can't just change everything to revolve around that person.

Clearly, I was the stupid one because that's exactly how things have been with us. Not that we're in a relationship. I'm not really sure what we are, to be honest.

We're dating, we're mates, but is he my boyfriend?

I want him to be.

Not wanting to pressure him, I haven't brought it up.

It feels like we are. I can't remember a moment where Zayne and I haven't been together. When we're at home, we're hanging out.

When we're at school, we're eating lunch together or spending the small time between breaks finding places to hide away for stolen kisses. Each one carved into

my soul.

Like right now.

Zayne has me pressed up against the wall, hiding in a dark corner in a dead part of the school, his lips on mine, tongues tangled together. We've upgraded to full on makeouts and every time my brain short circuits.

"We should get going," he groans, taking a step back.

I don't like that. He needs to come back here right now.

I've been such a good boy, keeping the urge to take control, to dominate him, under control and let him set the pace.

And I'm going to continue to do so until I know he's ready because I know, the moment he is, there's no holding back on my part.

There's just no way I'll be able to. This man, while he doesn't know it, fucking owns me.

We've spent hours getting to know one another. Everything I learn about him, I love, no matter how small or silly.

It's not just the bond that has me consumed by this man. It's the man himself. Zayne is an amazing person. He's kind, funny, and caring. He's outgoing; even though I'd rather hide in the shadows, he's as bright as the sun.

Not to mention talented and smart. Can't forget drop dead gorgeous. My mate is literally anyone's dream man.

“Or, we could stay,” I rumble, my hand itching to reach out and pull him back.

His grin has my heart racing. It’s a fucking sight to behold every damn time. “We could. But we would also risk detention if we’re caught.”

“Fine,” I grumble. “For the first time, I just want to skip school.”

“Gasp.” He puts his hand to his heart. “Mister Goody Two Shoes wants to be a bad boy and skip?”

Pushing myself off the wall, I step closer, towering over him. His pupils dilate. Bringing my face close to his, I say, “Trust me, baby. I’m not a good boy. Not even close.”

He lets out a shuddering breath when I lift my hand up, brushing my thumb against his cheek. “And when you're ready, I'll show you just how bad I can be.”

“Fuck me.” He blows out a breath. Then his eyes widen as if he just realized how that sounded.

I chuckle, giving him a bit of space. “Oh, I’ll be more than glad to.” I grin. “But not now. Not yet. You're not ready.”

His brows furrow. “How do you know I’m not ready?”

My brow rises. “Are you?”

His shoulders slump, eyes casting to the ground and there’s that cute little blush on his handsome face. “No,” he murmurs.

“Don’t be disappointed.” I grip his chin, lifting it up so he’s looking at me. “We have

all the time in the world, okay? I'd wait a lifetime for you."

"Really?" he whispers.

Nodding, I kiss his forehead. "Really. Now, let's go. You're right, we need to get to class."

On cue, the bell rings and we both curse, our ass kicking into gear as we race down the hall.



## Page 14

*Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 10:16 am*

“Oh, before we go,” Zayne says when we stop next to his class. “I promised the guys I’d sit with them at lunch. Is that cool?”

Doing my best to hide my disappointment, I nod. “Yeah.” I force a smile. “Of course.”

“Awesome.” He grins. “See you later.”

“Yeah,” I whisper as he disappears into his class. “Bye.”

Guess I could always have lunch with Prudence. I feel like a bad friend because we haven’t hung out since the movies.

She insisted she’s fine with it, that I should enjoy this honeymoon phase. She’s been an amazing friend about all of this. Zayne said Harley has been as well.

Neither one of them were surprised about the fact we were mates, and said they could see it from a mile away. I don’t believe them.

By the time lunch rolls around, I’m starving.

Grabbing a tray, I get in the lunch line. “Six pieces.” Prudence laughs. “Damn, boy. Should have just asked for the whole pie.” I would if I thought they would let me.

“I’m over six feet and part wolf, what do you expect?” I chuckle as we head toward the table we would normally sit at.

“Okay, true, you got me there.” She grins.

Just as I’m about to take my seat, I hear my name being called. Looking over to the football table, I find Zayne waving me over.

“Go,” Prudence urges.

“But—”

“Go,” she insists. “We’ll make plans soon, promise. In the meantime, I’ll keep sending you stupid memes.”

Chuckling, I shake my head. “Thanks.”

“Any time.” She hugs me.

“Hey,” Zayne says, pulling the chair out next to him for me to sit. “How come you didn’t come over here first? Are you avoiding me?” he asks, but there’s a playfulness to his tone.

“Never.” I give him a half smile.

I might be a part of the football team now, but I don’t feel right sitting here without an invitation. These are Zayne’s friends. He’s known them his whole life. He’s the outgoing one, me, not so much.

I listen to the guys all talking about things I have no interest in as I eat my pizza. Watching Zayne with his friends, laughing and smiling, I like it. I enjoy seeing him happy, at ease.

“So, are you two coming to the party tonight?” a guy on the team named Tyson asks.

“I wasn’t planning on it,” I reply at the same time Zanye says, “Hell yeah we are.”

Zanye’s eyes shoot to mine. “What? Really?”

“I mean, I could go.” If he wanted me to, I would. Parties just aren't something I'd volunteer to go on my own to.

“It could be fun.” He grins. “Who am I kidding, of course it will be. All our parties are killer.”

His excitement has me wanting to please him, so I find myself nodding my head in agreement. “Okay, why not.”

The party has already started when we get to the beach. Everyone is in great spirits, and so am I. The smile over our win hasn’t left my face since.

It was amazing. The pure adrenaline I feel when I’m out on that field is insane. I’m not suddenly a football fanatic, but I don’t hate the game as much as I had before.

Zayne and I were on point, working together as a perfect team. It just added to the thrill of the entire night.

Once we get to the crowd of people, we grab a drink and start our night.

Like I knew I would, I’m not overly chatty, answering questions when asked, but not actively trying to insert myself into conversations.

I don’t mind standing by and listening. It’s a lot more entertaining than it sounds.

“Dance with me?” Zanye asks when a song he seems to enjoy comes on the bluetooth speaker someone has hooked up as our form of entertainment of the night.

“Ahh, I don’t really dance.” I scratch the back of my head, looking around awkwardly. I’m two drinks in, while Zayne is about four.

He’s a little tipsy and it’s cute. His cheeks are flushed, eyes lidded, and the way he looks at me, he doesn’t seem to care about the fact he looks like he wants to devour me.

I wouldn’t object if he tried.

“Oh, come on!” He pulls me into the crowd of people. Prudence is there, so is Harley.

Deciding to say fuck it, if it makes him happy, I’ll dance.

Surprisingly, I don’t make a fool of myself.

“I’m going to get a refill,” Zayne says, his words a bit of a slur.

Me, I’ve stopped drinking because one of us has to drive. And I’m not a big drinker, anyway.

“I’ll come with you.” The urge to take care of him is heavy as I follow him toward the keg. He’s a little off center, and my hands shoot out a few times when I think he’s about to faceplant it.

“I think maybe a refill isn’t a good idea.” I chuckle, grabbing him around the waist.

He squints up at me. “Maybe you’re right.”

“Come on.” I grin. “Let’s go sit down, maybe have some water.”

His lips curve into a smile. “I have a better idea.”

Grabbing my hand, he pulls me away from the crowd of people. Wanting to know what my tipsy mate is up to, I follow him.

When we're out of sight from the party goers, he pushes me up against a tree. I grunt as my back hits it, surprised by his move and don't get a chance to even think before his lips are on mine.

We both moan as the kiss quickly turns into a heated make-out session.

My whole body is on fire, cock straining against my jeans. His hands roam my body, touching me everywhere. I grip his hip as I thrust my tongue down his throat. He whimpers, his hand moving between us to cup my erection.

I growl, rocking into his touch. Fuck, that feels good. Too good.

"I want you," Zayne pants against my lips before kissing me again. I groan and it takes everything in me not rut against his hand.

Before we both do something we might regret, I grab his hand and entwine my fingers with his. My back presses firmly against the rough bark of the tree. Chest heaving, I shake my head, bringing his hand up to kiss the back of it.

"Not like this. We've both been drinking.

And you deserve better. When we take things to the next level, I want both our minds to be clear.

I want to make sure it's good for you. Trust me, I want you.

Badly. So don't think I don't. I just think my mate deserves his first time exploring a man to not be drunk at a party with people around. "

The pout he gives me makes it hard to say no. He's so adorable right now.

"Fine," he sighs heavily.

Smiling, I tug him away from the tree. "Ready to go home?"

"Yeah," Zayne answers just before he yawns wide. "I could use some sleep."

"I wouldn't have guessed." I chuckle.

"Hey, don't make fun of me. Today was a long day."

"I'd never make fun of you." I wrap my arm around his shoulder. "And you're right, it was. But it was a good day."

"The best day." He grins up at me, stopping my heart.

Helping Zayne into the passenger seat, I take the driver's.

We're hardly down the road from the party before he's snoring away.

Laughing to myself, I turn the radio on low and drive us home.

"Zayne." I rub his arm. "Baby, we're here." The name just slips off my tongue, but I like it.

"Five more minutes," he murmurs before letting out a loud snore.

"Oh boy." I chuckle. Getting out of the car, I make my way to his side.

He's out cold, so trying to get him to walk to his room is not an option.

So, I scoop him up and, with some effort, manage to get him in the house and up to his room.

Placing him on his bed, I take his shoes off and tuck him in. I'd put him into something more comfortable, but it's not a fight I'd want to try for right now.

"Goodnight," I murmur, kissing his forehead. "Thanks for tonight."

He mumbles something in his sleep before snuggling into the blanket.

Smiling, I stand there for a moment longer, watching him so sweet and innocent right now, looking so cute.

This man, yeah , I'm a total goner.

The thought both excites and scares me, but I won't let fear ruin the best thing that's ever happened to me.

*Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 10:16 am*

ZAYNE

I wake up to the taste of stale liquor and regret. My head is pounding, my body feels like I got hit by a spell gone wrong, and best of all—I can still feel Asher's mouth on mine.

Fuck.

I groan, rubbing my face as flashes from last night replay behind my eyelids. His lips. His hands in my hair. My hands on his body. We didn't just kiss.

We've been making out nonstop; whenever I can get him alone or vice versa, we're lip locking.

It's hot as hell. It's so fucking good.

And it pretty much confirms I'm bisexual. At least, for Asher.

I should feel guilty .

I should feel something .

Instead, all I can think about is how much I want to do it again.

I'm so screwed.

I force myself out of bed, wincing at the dull ache in my skull, and stumble into the



hallway.

The scent of coffee hits me first, then the sound of him moving around in the kitchen.

I hesitate. I could go back to my room, pretend last night didn't happen.

Pretend I don't want to drag him against me and pick up where we left off.

I make my way to the bathroom, brushing my teeth quickly, trying to shake off the fog from the night before. The familiar motion helps clear my head, offering a small sense of control before I have to face him.

But instead of gathering myself, I head to the kitchen like a fucking idiot.

Asher stands at the counter, shirtless, his sweatpants hanging low on his hips. His back is all smooth golden skin and lean muscle, shifting as he reaches for his mug.

For a second, I just watch him.

Then he turns, his golden-brown eyes locking onto mine.

Neither of us says anything at first.

I wonder if he's thinking about last night, too. If he remembers the way I grabbed his hair, the way he moaned into my mouth.

Instead of addressing any of that, I clear my throat and force out, "What're you up to today?"

Asher takes a sip of coffee like he isn't the reason my brain is short-circuiting. "Going for a run."

I nod. My body is still sluggish, my head still throbbing, but fresh air sounds like a damn good idea.

His eyes flick over me, slow and assessing. “You think you can keep up?”

A challenge. Shit . He knows I can’t back down from one.

“Try me.”

A smirk tugs at the corner of his lips, and fuck, I want to kiss it off him again. But I don’t. Instead, I grab a water bottle, ignore how my pulse picks up, and head toward the door.

But then I stop in my tracks and glance down at my pajamas. Barefoot. I can’t run like this. “I need to change first,” I say, swallowing the frustration. “Can’t exactly run barefoot and in my pajamas.”

Asher chuckles, nodding. “Good call.”

I turn toward the hallway, then head back to my room, my footsteps slow as my thoughts scatter in every direction. I can feel his eyes on me, the way he watches me without saying a word. It’s like he knows how much it’s messing with my head.

Inside my room, I kick off my pajama pants, pull on a pair of running shorts, and tug a simple T-shirt over my head.

I grab my sneakers from under the bed, slipping them on with a little more haste than usual, not wanting to waste time.

The entire time, I can’t help but picture Asher, waiting just outside.

Once I'm dressed, I take a moment to catch my breath, wiping a hand over my face. I'm not sure if I'm more nervous about keeping up with him on this run or how close we'll be when we're running. Either way, it feels like the tension's only building.

When I finally head back down the hallway, I make my way back to the kitchen, where Asher's waiting, now holding a second cup of coffee in his hands. He looks at me with a raised brow.

"You ready?"

"Let's do this." I don't even wait for him to lead the way.

We step outside together, the air cool and crisp. Asher's already a few feet ahead, his long legs carrying him at an effortless pace, and I jog to catch up. We don't say anything as we head down the driveway, the only sound is the crunch of our feet against the gravel and the rustling of the trees.

Behind him, I fall into stride, keeping pace as best as I can. It's harder than I thought—hell, the guy's practically made of muscle—but I'm not about to let him show me up.

The second we hit the tree line, Asher shifts.

I've seen it before, but it still gets me. His body shudders, stretching, twisting, muscles rolling under his skin. Fur erupts over his arms and chest, his spine curves, and in a blink, he's fully shifted—a massive black wolf standing where my stepbrother had been.

He shakes out his fur, then looks at me.

Cocky bastard.

I take off running first, knowing damn well he's about to make me pay for it.

I'm fast—magic enhances my stamina—but he's faster. Within seconds, he's at my side, massive paws silent against the earth as we move. The air is thick with summer heat, my shirt clinging to my skin as I push myself harder.

But Asher doesn't just run.

He plays.

He bumps into me, nipping at my heels, darting ahead only to double back, teasing me. A growl vibrates in his chest, not threatening but taunting. Every time I think I'm gaining ground, he cuts me off.

I fucking love it.

I shove him back, laughing as I almost trip, but then—I actually do.

I go down hard, dirt and leaves sticking to my sweat-damp skin. Before I can react, Asher pounces.

A hundred and something pounds of wolf lands on top of me, pinning me flat to the ground. His fur is warm, his breath hot against my neck.

I'm laughing, breathless—until I feel it.

His cock.

It's pressed against me, even through his fur, and my entire body locks up.

What. The. Actual. Fuck.

My pulse slams in my ears. Asher freezes too, his massive frame tensing before he suddenly pushes off me, his claws digging into the dirt as he bolts.

Gone .

I sit up, chest heaving, mind racing.

I should be freaked out. I should be disgusted.

But all I can think about is the way his weight felt on me.

I swallow hard and run a hand through my hair, trying to make sense of it. I can't.

And that scares me more than anything.

Back at the house, I shower, hoping to scrub away whatever the hell that was. It doesn't work.

Asher shows up a little while later, human again, dressed in nothing but low-slung sweatpants. His hair is damp from his own shower, and when he meets my eyes, I see it—the same thing I feel.

Tension. Uncertainty. Something way too dangerous.

“You okay?” I ask, keeping my voice casual.

Asher runs a hand through his hair, exhaling slowly. “Yeah. Just—” He pauses, choosing his words. “I get a little more primal when I'm shifted. Not as in control.”

I nod like that explains everything. Like that makes what I felt okay.

“Needed a minute to collect myself,” he adds.

I swallow. “Right.”

Silence stretches. It’s not awkward, but it’s thick. Heavy .

Then he shifts on his feet and says, “Wanna watch a movie?”

A perfect distraction.

“Yeah,” I say, grateful for something—anything—to break whatever weird spell we’re under.

We settle onto the couch, but I can’t focus on the screen. I barely register what’s playing.

Because Asher is right next to me.

His arm along the back of the couch. His body heat soaking into mine. Every shift, every breath, every tiny movement—I feel all of it.

I tell myself it’s fine. It’s normal. We’ve sat next to each other like this a thousand times before. But my body doesn’t believe me.

Not after last night.

Not after today.

Not after... that.

I try to focus on the movie. Some action flick, explosions, gunfire—shit I usually

like. But my mind keeps dragging me back.

To the feel of his wolf pinning me down.

The weight of him, pressing into me.

The heat between us, too much, too close.

The way my body reacted before my brain could catch up.

I shift in my seat, restless. My skin won't cool down.

Asher glances at me, his gaze flicking over my face. "You good?"

No. Absolutely not.

"Yeah, fine. Just, uh, enjoying the movie. Love this part."

He doesn't look convinced, but he doesn't push either. Just nods and turns back to the screen.

I watch him from the corner of my eye.

The sharp line of his jaw. The way the glow from the TV catches the golden flecks in his eyes. His lips—the same ones that had been on mine last night.

Fuck.

I shouldn't want him.

I shouldn't want this.

But I do. And now, it's even worse than before.

Because now, I know what he feels like.



*Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 10:16 am*

ASHER

I'm not sure if Zayne knows this, but I'm hyper aware of his eyes on me. My body hums with need. The need to reach over, pull him into my lap and fucking devour those tempting lips of his.

Lips that have been the only thing on my mind since last night.

I wanted him so damn bad. It took everything in me not to give in to his needy little pleas. But I denied him because I wanted us both to be fully sober when we crossed that line and did something more than just kissing.

Running with him today was exhilarating. Seeing him laughing, enjoying himself, I knew my mate was a good fit. At least for this aspect of my life.

He can't shift like me, but he keeps up.

I hope running is something we can do more of.

The only thing that ruined the whole moment was when I got a little too excited. I couldn't help it. The blood pumping through my body, my heart racing. Seeing him run, the primal part of me wanted to hunt him, trap him and, well... fuck him.

In all the years I've been running in wolf form, that has never happened. The look in his eyes, the realization of what was happening in that moment, I panicked and bolted.

When I got back home, I shifted and felt like complete shit for leaving him out there. But I needed time to cool down.

I was embarrassed and worried he'd be freaked out, maybe even repulsed.

Thankfully, he didn't seem off when I came down from my shower and found him back in the house.

When he asked me how I was, my damn heart did a little dance. He cared about me. How I was feeling. I should have asked him the same thing, but I was worried about bringing it up. That actually talking about it would be what turned him away.

If I had any doubt that his feelings for me had changed, I don't have them now. The way his arousal is coming off him in waves has my cock painfully hard, pressing against my sweatpants.

Shifting, I try my best to cover the evidence of my own arousal.

"You good?"

Clearing my throat, I swallow hard. "Yeah, fine. Just, uh, enjoying the movie. Love this part."

As if the universe wants to call me out on my bullshit, a cry comes from the TV, catching my attention. My eyes widen as I watch as the dog on the TV gets shot in the head.

"Ahh, really? Damn, Asher, that's some morbid shit." Zayne's voice is thick with amusement.

I shoot him a glare. "Oh, fuck off."

He bursts into laughter.

Grumbling, I shut the movie off and stand.

“Where are you going?” Zayne asks.

“Shower,” I mutter back, not looking his way because if I do, he’s going to see the raging hard on I’m sporting.

“But didn’t you just shower not too long ago?”

Fuck. He got me there. But if I don’t get out of here right now, I’m going to snap and possibly do something that could fuck this all up.

I’m trying my best to take things slow, to go at his pace.

There’s only so much I can do. I’m a wolf. Slow isn’t really something we do in our world. Everything is fast-paced, and when we meet our mate? Ha, good luck with that. They become our whole world for the first little while. Often the female goes into heat and it pretty much turns into a fuck fest.

Seeing how Zayne isn’t an omega, or a female, I don’t have to worry about that. It still doesn’t take away the primal urge to fuck him into submission and breed him.

“It’s late anyway. We should get some sleep. School tomorrow.”

“What? Dude, it’s noon. Asher, come on. What’s up? Did I do something wrong?”

The uncertainty in his voice has me stopping at the bottom of the stairs, my whole body going rigid. Everything in me screams to go over and comfort my mate, but I know the moment I touch him, all bets are off. I’m doing this for both our sakes.

“No.” My voice comes out in a rasp. “You didn't do anything wrong.”

“Then why are you running from me?”

“I’m not running,” I sigh heavily, closing my eyes as I let my head fall back.

“I’m giving myself space because all I want to do right now is pin you to that couch and devour you.

To take your cock into my mouth and suck you so good I fucking drain you,” I growl, nails digging into the wooden banister.

I can hear his sharp intake of breath from here, his arousal making its way over to me. A low, feral growl rumbles in my chest. Fuck, this is going to be a lot harder than I thought.

With every passing day, my control slips. Every cell in my body is desperate for him. The need to be with him in every way mates are is almost too much.

“Just— just give me a little bit. Then we can have some lunch.”

“Okay,” he whispers, and my fucking heart shatters.

It’s not his fault. It’s my issue and I’m hurting him. That fucking kills me.

Without a second thought, I race up the stairs, not stopping until I’m under the cold spray of the shower.

A full body shiver wracks my body, but I let the bite of the chill take over, trying to will my fucking cock to go down.

Cursing when it doesn't, I change the water to warm and lean my arm against the tile wall. Placing my forehead against my arm, I close my eyes as I wrap my hand around my cock.

A groan leaves my lips as I thrust into my hand, working it over my aching shaft.

I'm lost in the feeling when I hear the door open, my whole body tensing.

Chest heaving, I stand there under the water, waiting for Zayne to say something. I know it's him, I can fucking feel him in my soul.

"Need some help there?" he asks, his voice a light teasing tone, but I can hear the nervousness shine through.

"Zayne." I say his name as a low warning growl. I don't want to be an asshole, but right now is not the time for jokes.

My breathing comes in heavier with every breath, the grip on my cock almost painful, but still I don't move, afraid to.

Zayne doesn't say anything and for a second, I think he left.

The door to the shower opens, every one of my senses on alert.

"Asher." His voice is nearly drowned out by the water, but I hear him. He runs his hand over my shoulder, sending a shock right down to my cock.

My jaw clenches so tight I think I'm going to break a damn tooth.

"Zayne." This time, his name comes out as a plea. For him to keep touching me, or for him to back away, I'm not sure.

“Look at me.” He grips my chin, forcing me to look his way.

As soon as my gaze lands on his bright blue eyes, swimming with curiosity and need, I’m done for.

With a snarl, I grab Zayne by the neck, wrapping my hands around his throat. Shoving him against the wall, I pin him in place before taking his lips with mine.

The needy moan against my mouth is my fucking undoing.

I kiss him like he’s the last bit of oxygen, forcing him into my lungs. His hands are all over me, sliding up and down my slick body. I grunt, rolling my hips forward.

That's when I feel the burning heat of flesh against my cock. Ripping my mouth from him, I greedily suck in breaths of air, eyes wide as I look down to see that he’s got no clothes on.

Nothing keeping his body from mine. The sight of him has a feral growl ripping free as I stare back up at him, deep into his damn soul. “Tell me this isn’t too soon.”

He shakes his head frantically. “It’s not. I want you, Asher.” His lips open and close, he’s hesitating.

“But,” I growl.

“I-I’m not ready for umm...” A deep blush takes over his cheeks, matching the pink of his kissed, swollen lips.

“For me to fuck that perfect ass,” I grunt, thrusting forward, rubbing my cock against his naked flesh as I tighten my hold on his throat.

He gasps, eyes fluttering closed. “Y-yes. But I want everything else.”

My lips take his again, unable to get enough of the taste of him. With my free hand, I reach between us, wrapping my hand around both of our cocks. I swallow Zayne’s needy little moans as I work our shafts together. Pleasure creeps down my spine and right to my fucking balls.

Zayne slides his hands into the back of my hair, grabbing a handful and pulling as he kisses me back with just as much eagerness.

I growl, pulling back, panting heavily as I stare into my mate’s eyes. “Is this okay?”

“Yes.” He nods, eyes just as wild as mine. “So good, fuck, Asher. I—” He squeezes his eyes shut, hips thrusting up. “I need more.”

A grin tugs at my lips. “Does my mate want me to wrap my lips around his cock and suck him dry like I threatened before?” I ask huskily, working our cocks faster, pre-cum dripping from the tips and onto my hand.

His eyes snap open. “Please,” he whimpers, and it’s enough to make me drop to my knees.

“Oh god,” Zayne groans, my hand still working his cock.

“No god here, sweet boy. Only me . Your fucking mate.”

Keeping my eyes on his, I lean forward and wrap my lips around his cock, needing to see him fall apart for me.

And he does so nicely.

He whimpers, his knees threatening to buckle as he tosses his head back in pleasure.

Fuck, he looks so fucking gorgeous. And his cock, fucking delicious. But I want his cum.

Moving my hands, I glide them up his thigh muscles and around to cup his ass. He thrusts forward when I give it a squeeze, forcing me to take his full length down my throat.

“Shit, fuck. I’m so sorry.” He looks down at me in horror.

I grin around his length and swallow around his cock, my nose nuzzled nicely in the curly dark hair.

“Holy fucking shit,” he cries out. “Oh fuck. Asher, shit. I– fuck. That feels so good.”

Hollowing out my cheeks, I bob my head.

Watching Zanye come undone, listening to his cries of pleasure is fucking everything I didn’t know I needed. I want to take my time with him, explore every inch of his perfect body.

But not here.

Bringing one hand back to his shaft, I use the other to grip my own.

As I work Zayne over, I jerk myself off, pleasure growing deeply with each flick of my wrists.

Pulling off him with a pop, I lick my lips and suck in some air. “You’re doing so good, baby. How does it feel?”



“Like I never want you to stop,” he whispers, chest heaving as his eyes plead with me to keep going.

Lifting his cock, I lean forward, taking one of his balls into my mouth. His hand shoots out, tugging at my hair as he moans loudly.

Letting it go, I do the same to the other, swirling my tongue around it before moving back to his cock.

Taking him in again, I slowly suck him down, keeping his cock buried down my throat. My nostrils flare as I swallow around his cock again and again until he’s a blubbering mess.

He catches me off guard, making me grunt and gag as he grabs my hair with both hands, holding me still while he fucks my face.

My hand works faster over my own cock. I’m so turned on, I don’t think I’m going to last long. And seeing my mate feel comfortable enough to take control and take what he needs has me barreling toward the edge.

“Fuck. Oh fuck, Asher. Your mouth feels so fucking good. So warm, fuck! I’m close, I’m—shit shit shit !” he screams, forcing his cock down my throat again as he tosses his head back. He lets out one of the sexiest moans I’ve ever heard as he unloads himself.

His cock jerks, sending thick ropes of cum down my throat, and I eagerly swallow down every drop he gives me.

My own orgasm takes over, hitting me hard and fast. Growling around his cock, my own starts twitching in my hand, spurts of cum splashing on the shower floor.

“I’m so sorry,” Zayne rasps, pulling my head back as if he just realized what he was doing.

“Don’t be.” My voice gravelly, throat a little sore, but fucking hell, it was worth it. “That was the hottest thing of my life.”

His eyes widen, brows jumping. “Really?”

Licking my lips, I press a kiss to his cock, loving the little whimper he gives me in truth before climbing to my feet.

“You’re amazing, Zayne,” I murmur before kissing him. This time, it’s sweet and I feel it all the way down to my toes. I want to meld my body to his, never let him leave my side.

I’m not sure if he knows what he’s unleashed, but I’m officially obsessed with my mate. He’s mine and I’ll fucking kill anyone who dares think they can take him from me.

The smile he gives me hits me in the heart, warmth filling my chest. “So are you.” He licks his lips and my eyes drop to follow the movement. “I—I didn’t think I’d like it as much as I did.”

“What can I say, I’m a master with my mouth.” I grin and he huffs out a surprised laugh.

“Yeah, I’d say so.”

My eyes darken. “Just wait and see what I can do with my cock.”

He swallows thickly, but I don’t say anymore, not wanting to put him on the spot.

“Was it too much?” I ask, taking a step back and instantly wishing I was pressed back against him.

“No.” He shakes his head. “It was amazing.”

“Good.” I grin. “I’m sorry if I came on too strong. But to be fair, I did warn you. You’re a brat, you know.”

His eyes widened. “What? Me? No I’m not.”

I snort out a laugh, grinning at him. “Oh, trust me, you are. I don’t hate it. But you came in here knowing just how to get to me.”

“Okay, fine.” He blows out a breath. “Because I wanted you. Wanted this.”

“Yeah?” My smile grows soft.

“Yeah,” he whispers.

We stare at one another, something changing between us. I can feel his magic in the air, charging the energy of the room. He’s powerful and I don’t think he understands just how amazing he is.

That's okay, I'll make sure he sees it for himself. I'm not going anywhere.

*Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 10:16 am*

ZAYNE

Tonight was...wow.

My magic tingles at the edge of my senses, the undeniable buzz of power confirming what I already suspected. He doesn't even bother hiding it — just a smug little grin, like he thinks no one will call him out. But I know better. Magic never lies.

His smile, the way his eyes light up when he wins a round, it makes me feel like maybe I don't need to figure everything out tonight. But as we wrap up the last round, the tension is still there, lingering beneath the surface.

Dinner was something else. Alice made chimichurri steak sandwiches with fresh-cut fries and mango slices.

Everything burst with flavor, and I couldn't help but eat way more than I should've.

Asher sat next to me, his knee brushing mine beneath the table, but neither of us said anything about it.

There was something unsaid between us—something that feels different now.

Afterward, I excused myself. I needed space to breathe, to get my head clear. Homework seemed like the best distraction, though I knew it wasn't about school. It was about him. About what happened. But here I am, lying in bed, staring at the ceiling with my mind running a mile a minute.

I keep replaying everything in my head. How he sucked me off. It was easily the best head I've ever gotten.

A dude sucked me off.

I can't stop thinking about it. How he made me feel. How talented he was with his mouth. I can't believe that I'm even thinking about it, but I am. I've felt nothing like that before, and it's all I can focus on.

God, school tomorrow. How am I supposed to sit next to Asher in class? How do I focus on math—or any of the other crap we're supposed to be learning—while his sexy body is sitting right there, those piercing eyes locked on me? I'm screwed.

Heat creeps up my neck as I turn over in bed.

I can't stop thinking about what happened, and the way he had to make himself come, how I got everything, and he had to settle.

Selfishness is not my intention. I don't want to be the guy who takes and doesn't give.

I've never thought of myself like that before, but now, I can't avoid it.

I turn onto my side and stare out the window, my mind racing.

This isn't something I can just let go. I have to make it right.

He needs to know I'm not in this just for myself.

I want him to see how serious I am—how much I care.

I want to be a good lover, not the kind of guy who only takes and never gives.

The butterflies in my stomach feel like they're slamming against my ribs. It's hard to breathe, like there's a weight pressing down on my chest. But I know what I need to do. It's the only way I'll feel okay.

Without another thought, I throw the covers off and stand up. My heart's pounding as I walk down the hall. I don't even know why I'm doing this, but it feels like the only thing that makes sense. Like if I don't, I won't be able to move forward.

I stand at his door, my hand trembling as I reach for the knob. For a moment, I hesitate, but then his voice drifts through the wood.

"I can smell you standing out there. Come in."

I don't hesitate anymore. I open the door and step inside. Asher's sitting on the edge of his bed, his gaze meeting mine. His brow furrows with concern, but his eyes—there's something unreadable there, like he's waiting for me to say something. Or maybe he already knows.

"Zayne? What's up? Are you okay? Do you have regrets? Fuck! I'm so sorry."

I shake my head, the words spilling out before I can stop them. "No, I don't regret any of it. But... I feel like I need to make it right." I pause, then say, "You only had your hand, and I want you to feel what I did. I need you to see how serious I am. I want you to feel good, too."

"Zayne..." Asher's voice softens, like he understands something I don't want him to. I hate that. "You know I'm fine. I got exactly what I wanted."

"No," I snap. "I didn't give you enough. I haven't received and not returned the favor

to any girl, and I'm sure as hell not gonna change it just because you're a guy."

Asher growls, his eyes darkening. "Don't talk about your past fucks," he growls.

"Don't. I want to believe I'm the only mouth that's been on that smooth cock.

The only one who's tasted your sweet nectar.

"His voice drops lower, rougher. "And I'll sure as hell be the only one who ever gets in your ass. "

The heat that floods through me makes my knees weak. There's something possessive, almost primal, in the way he says it, and I'm powerless to fight it. My stomach tightens, my breath quickens, and I'm left standing there, frozen in place.

I open my mouth to say something, but nothing comes out. I want to tell him how I've never felt anything like this before. But I can't find the words.

Asher watches me for a long moment, his gaze intense, searching mine. The air between us is thick, and it feels like something's breaking, something's shifting. I know we can't go back now.

"Are you sure you want this?" His voice is low, strained.

Swallowing, I fight to maintain my composure. "I'm sure," I whisper. "I just want to give you the same thing. You deserve it."

His eyes soften for a split second, but then the mask slips back into place. And I know—this is happening.

I step closer, the familiar scent of him filling my lungs. "Show me," I whisper.

He shifts to standing, his movements fluid, confident, like he's in control of every inch of this moment. Without hesitation, he unbuttons his jeans, his gaze locked on mine the entire time. There's a challenge in his eyes, a dare .

"I'll only ask this once more," he says, his voice rough with barely contained need. "Are you sure?"

I nod, swallowing hard. "Yes. Please."

The moment stretches, and I can feel the tension building. It's not just about the physical anymore—it's about us. What we are . What we could be . I take a deep breath, my hands trembling as I move forward. This is something I need to do—for him, and for me. I won't back down.

I drop to my knees, my heart racing in my chest. Confident and nervous at the same time.

I look up at him through thick dark lashes and his breath hitches.

His cock, thick and beautiful, standing proudly under the soft glow of the moonlight.

My cheeks flush with heat as I realize just how much I want to worship this part of him.

Asher's eyes, dark and stormy, hold a mix of desire and something deeper— trust . I take a moment to drink him in, the sharp angles of his jaw, the way his chest rises and falls with anticipation.

I reach for him with trembling fingers, grazing his throbbing length. Asher's breath catches again, and it sends a thrill coursing through me.



“Zayne,” he murmurs softly, almost a question. Encouragement laces his voice as if he’s silently urging me forward, guiding me into uncharted territory. “You don’t have to do this if you’re not ready.”

But I am ready. My magic hums inside me, pulsing with an undeniable energy, urging me to embrace this bond we share—to explore every facet of our connection. I nod, determination surging within me as I lean closer, my heart pounding like a drum against my ribs.

“Show me,” I whisper, my voice barely above a breath.

Asher’s lips curl into a knowing smile that sends shivers down my spine. He reaches down to tangle his fingers in my hair, anchoring me as he guides my head closer to him. The scent of him envelops me—woody and musky, with a hint of warmth that makes my mouth water with desire.

“Wrap your lips around my head. Just taste me to start,” Asher murmurs.

I lean in closer, pausing a moment as I inhale him—the heady aroma intoxicating and primal. He lets out a low groan as I trace my tongue along the sensitive tip, tasting him for the first time—a mix of salt and something uniquely Asher that makes my heart race even faster.

“Just like that,” he encourages softly, his voice thick with arousal. “You’re doing so good.”

The praise ignites something deep within me—a primal urge to please him that pushes aside any lingering nerves. Emboldened by his words, I take more of him into my mouth, savoring the way he fills me while exploring every contour with my tongue.

Asher's fingers tighten in my hair as he guides me gently, but firmly. "Suck. Slowly," he grinds out. "Yes. Good boy."

I can feel the heat radiating from him, the steady thrum of his heartbeat pulsing beneath my touch. Each flick of my tongue sends shivers through him, and I revel in the power of knowing that I can elicit such pleasure.

I pull back, letting my lips trail off the tip, teasing him with soft kisses before diving again. My mouth glides over him like a warm wave, and I can hear Asher's sharp intake of breath above me. The sound is electric; it fuels the fire inside me, urging me onward.

"Harder," he whispers, his voice thick with lust. "Do what you like, Zayne."

I take him deeper this time, feeling the weight of him as I hollow my cheeks and suck hard, just as he instructed.

The sensation is overwhelming—the taste of him.

A salty tang on my tongue drives me wild.

It's unfamiliar territory for me, yet it feels so instinctual, as if every part of me was meant for this moment.

I pump up and down faster and harder, letting instinct take over as I nip gently at his sensitive skin while sucking hard.

Encouraged by his praise, I double my efforts. My tongue swirls around the head of his cock, teasing the sensitive area before plunging back down his length. His cock twitches in response, and I know I'm onto something.

I hum around him, sending vibrations through his length that draw out a deep growl from his throat.

“Gods, baby boy, suck my fucking dick,” he gasps, eyes rolling back for just a moment as pleasure overtakes him.

His voice is raw and primal; it resonates deep within me and heightens the heat pooling in my belly. Every flick of my tongue brings forth another sound of approval—a guttural mix of encouragement and desperation that drives me wild.

“Your mouth feels so good.” He pushes my head down, forcing his cock to the back of my throat. I gag and he instantly frees me as I pull back on a moan.

“Such a good little cock sucker. Take me in your throat again.”

I open my mouth wider and relax my throat as best as I can.

Inch by inch, I bring him into my mouth until he reaches the back of my throat again.

I can feel the base of his cock on my lips.

His cock is so thick it’s stretching my mouth wide.

I bob up and down on his length. My tongue swirls around the head of his cock and teases the slit on the tip.

Asher groans above me, and I can hear the strain in his voice as he tries to hold himself back from cumming too soon. His hands are tangled in my hair, guiding my motions, but not forcefully. It’s like he’s letting me explore and learn what feels good for both of us.

“You like this, Little Warlock?” he pants, his grip on my hair tightening ever so slightly.

Nodding, I feel proud to bring him so much joy.

I relax my throat and open my mouth wide enough for him to slide his thick shaft inch by inch into my waiting mouth.

I moan around his cock as he bottoms out at the back of my throat.

His cock is rock hard and throbbing in my mouth, leaking pre-cum which mixes with my saliva. The taste of him only spurs me on more.

“W-wrap your hand around your cock and jerk off with me.”

I obey his command, freeing my aching cock and stroking it in sync with Asher’s moans. The sight of him above me, eyes squeezed shut and jaw clenched as he tries to hold on, is enough to send me over the edge.

“Zayne, I’m... I’m gonna cum,” he groans, his hips flexing involuntarily as he tries to hold back from thrusting into my eager mouth.

“You don’t have to swallow. Get a rag or I’ll cum on my belly.”

I look up at him and wink before sucking him hard and he moans so loud it rivals a howl.

“Cum with me, baby boy,” he growls out before he erupts in my mouth, filling it with his hot seed. I swallow greedily, savoring the salty sweetness of his release as it coats every inch of my tongue.

The salty taste of him mixed with our musky scents only heightens the pleasure coursing through me as I unload all over my stomach.

Asher's orgasm subsides, his chest heaving with exertion. "That was..." he pants out, unable to find the words to describe the intensity of what just happened between us.

He pulls me up by my hair until our lips meet in a messy kiss that tastes like him—like us, and it's everything I've ever wanted from a kiss.

"You did so good, baby. But you made a mess of yourself." He chuckles. "Let me clean you up."

He moves like lightning, tossing me onto my back on the bed as he crawls down my body to where my cock and belly are coated in my cum.

With deliberate slowness, he lowers his mouth to my belly, his tongue darting out like a playful serpent, lapping up the slick evidence of our shared pleasure. Each stroke sends electric pulses through my body, and I arch into him instinctively.

"Fuck. You're going to be the death of me," I sigh, my voice barely a whisper as he continues his ministrations.

The sensation is overwhelming—his warm tongue swirling around my sensitive skin, teasingly cleaning every droplet away as if savoring the taste of me.

I can feel my arousal swelling again, blood rushing back to my cock as I watch him work with an intensity that makes my heart race.

Asher's gaze never leaves mine; there's an intoxicating mix of dominance and tenderness in the way he cleans me. I can see the way his pupils dilate with desire, how he revels in the act itself. He kisses down my stomach, each soft press of his lips

igniting a fresh wave of longing within me.

“God, Asher,” I gasp as he finally reaches my throbbing cock, taking it into his mouth with an eagerness that makes me groan. The heat envelops me, and I sink deeper into bliss as he swirls his tongue around the head, then slides down until I’m fully wrapped in his warmth.

It doesn’t take long. My hips twitch, breath hitching as pleasure crests and crashes through me. Asher doesn’t stop—he takes it all, slow and steady, until I’m spent and trembling.

He pulls back with a wet pop, a trail of saliva still connecting us as he smirks up at me. “Now we can sleep, baby.”

He helps me further up the bed, tucking the covers around me before sliding in beside me and pulling me close. His strong arm wraps around my waist, pinning me to his chest as he nuzzles my hair.

“Goodnight,” he whispers, pressing a soft kiss to my head.

“Night,” I murmur, eyes drifting shut as sleep pulls me under—in the arms of my brother... my mate.

*Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 10:16 am*

ASHER

“Asher,” he gasps against my lips. “We have to go. We’re going to be in so much shit if we’re any later.”

“Fuck them all,” I growl, kissing him again. He moans as our lips move together.

It’s easy to say I’m fucking addicted to my mate. His scent, his taste, everything. I can’t get enough of him.

“Asher.” He laughs breathlessly, pushing at my chest. “We really do have to go. And I’d rather not fuck them.” He grins. “You’re the only one I want to fuck.”

My heart stops as my grip on his hips tightens. “Careful what you say, Little Warlock,” I growl, brushing my lips against his, loving the way he shivers. “Don’t fucking tempt me. I’d much rather be balls deep in that tight, perfect ass of yours than out on that field.”

He looks up at me with wide lust filled eyes as he swallows hard. “Asher.” This time, my name comes out more of a needy plea.

“Alright, you two horn dogs.” Prudence’s voice has me growling in annoyance. “You can suck face after you win the game. The coach is asking about the two of you.”

“Damnit,” I mutter, taking a step back from Zayne. He blows out a breath, running his hand through his messed up hair. Thanks to my hands. I smirk, he narrows his eyes, pointing at me.

“No.”

I huff, grumbling. “Let’s just go get this done and over with,” I mutter, turning around and heading toward the field before I say fuck it and, well, fuck my mate here and now.

The only reason why I haven’t is because the idea of someone seeing my mate naked makes me want to rip their throat out with my teeth.

Since we crossed the line in the shower that day, all bets have been off.

He’s in my bed every night, wrapped up in my arms. I don’t think we’ve gone more than an hour without one of us kissing or touching the other. He’s the perfect drug I’m more than happy to be hooked on.

Our parents have been nothing but loving and supporting of us.

I’m glad, because I really didn’t want this to get in the way of my mom finding happiness.

After everything with my monster of a father, that woman deserves the world, and I would do anything to make sure she got it. Just like she does the same for me.

But it’s nice to be with Zayne and not have to sneak around with him. At least, at our place. All of this is still so new for him, we haven’t really told anyone outside of the people closest to us.

So the team and other people at school don’t know yet. I hate it because I have to keep my hands to myself and find stolen moments throughout the school day, but I care about Zayne and his feelings, so I’ll continue to wait.



I've had years to come to terms with my sexuality. I want Zayne's experience to be a hell of a lot better than mine ever was.

Thankfully, by the time we reach the field, my boner has gone down. These pants leave nothing to the imagination and all I need is this team making a joke out of me.

I've gotten used to working as a team, but I'm still not the biggest social person. I don't know these people outside school, but I don't want any bad blood with anyone.

"Where the hell have you two been?" Coach yells. "You know what, nevermind, we don't have time for that. We have a game to win."

Coach starts talking to the team, doing his little pep talk, I sneak a look at Zayne. He grins at me and winks before going back to listening to what the coach is saying.

It does shit to my chest. The more time I spend with him, the more I know I'm falling in love.

And fuck if that doesn't scare the shit out of me and thrill me all at the same time.

The clock runs out and our team wins. A massive grin takes over my face as I slow down to a stop.

Heart pounding, blood pumping, I'm feeling pure adrenaline.

It was a close one, and for a little bit I thought we weren't going to win.

But I should have known better. Zayne is a fucking beast on the field and it's a huge turn on.

I may have gotten hard. Sorry to the guy who tackled me, that wasn't for you.

Wanting to celebrate the win with my mate, I search for him. When I find him, my stomach drops. My hands curl into fists, rage bubbling to the surface.

There's a fucking girl all over him. Not just any girl, the girl from the party he brought me to when I first got here. The one who seems to be obsessed with him. Lena.

Well, fuck her. Zayne is mine.

A deep guttural growl sounds in my chest as my wolf demands to be let free. It's taking everything in me not to go over to the bitch and rip her limb from limb.

How fucking dare she put her hands on what's fucking mine!

The thing that has me even more fucking pissed off is that Zayne is all smiles, laughing with the people around him as he continues to celebrate, not even seeming to care that this girl is all over him.

I watch as she grabs his face and kisses him.

I take a step forward, my growl growing louder.

"Hey, hot stuff. Awesome game. Good win," Prudence says, bouncing over to me.

She stops, face falling. "What's wrong?" she asks, brows furrowing. She looks to where my gaze is locked and sighs. "Ash, it's not what it seems like. She's like that with all the guys. It means nothing. She's a succubus."

"It does to me," I snap, making her jolt. I feel like shit for scaring my friend, but I'm too far gone. My skin itches and I know I'm seconds from shifting. I need to get out of here, now. Before I make a big mess of everything.

Hurt, betrayal, but most of all, pure jealousy fills me. He didn't kiss her, she kissed him. I watch him push her away, but he should've done that way earlier. If he would have, she wouldn't have been close enough to kiss him.

I'm vibrating right now, chest heaving with harsh breaths. "I gotta go," I tell her, eyes flicking back over to Zayne's.

He's looking at me now, brows furrowed in confusion. He's fucking joking, right?

As if he can read my mind, he looks down at the girl still hanging off him. His eyes widen and I see him curse before pushing her away again. They argue, his eyes flicking over to mine every few seconds.

I don't stay and wait. I know I should talk to him, but now is not the time.

Breaking out into a jog, I run off the field toward the tree line and away from everyone. As soon as I'm blanketed by the night of the forest and its greenery, I shift.

My paws meet the cold ground, and I take off running, letting my animal side take over.

I don't stay in the woods for a run, heading straight for home. It's late, and while I'm mad, I don't want Zayne being at home worried about me.

Once the house is in view, I shift back into my human form, not caring about being naked. Grabbing a pair of sweats I have stashed for when I go for my runs, I slip them on and head into the house.

Mom and Dexter aren't home. They're off doing something for Dexter's work. So it's just me in the house. Good, I'm not in the headspace for my mother's questions, no matter how good her intentions are.

The run did nothing. I'm still fucking vibrating. My skin is crawling. I want to scream, to fight, to tear someone apart.

To tear that bitch who put her hands on my fucking man apart.

I grab a bottle of water from the fridge and jog upstairs. My plan was to hop into the shower, try to wash some of this tension away, but as soon as I walk into my room, I'm hit with his smell.

My cock turns to stone as I growl. Fuck!

That anger comes back to me full force. I pace my room, running my hands through my hair as I grab at the strands. I feel like I'm losing my fucking mind!

The sound of the front door closing has me stopping. My heart pounds against my rib cage, breath coming in heavy pants.

Pulling the door open, I stumble to a stop when I nearly crash into Zayne.

He takes a step back, his eyes boring into mine. "What the fuck?" he asks. "Where the hell did you go? You just took off with no warning."

My lip peels back as I officially snap. Grabbing him by the shirt, I yank him into my room. Slamming the door shut, I shove him up against it.

"What the hell, Asher!" he shouts.

I get in his face, growling. "You're fucking mine. Do you understand me, Zayne?"

His lips part as he blinks rapidly. "Y-yes. I know that."

“Then why the fuck would you let another person put their hands all over you?” I’m an inch away from his face now, hand still clutched in his shirt. “I saw that girl all fucking over you. You didn’t push her away until after you saw me watching. She fucking kissed you!”

His face falls. “It’s not like that, Asher. I swear. I was caught up in the moment of the win. I didn’t even notice she was there until she kissed me. And I pushed her away. I told her not to touch me. I promise.”

I can see the truth in his eyes, but it does nothing to calm the storm raging within me.

My eyes flick between his, my breath still coming in quick pants.

He raises his hands, cupping my cheeks. “What can I do to make this better?” he asks me, his voice soft. “You’re worked up, I can see you practically trembling.”

“What I need from you, you’re not ready for,” I answer him, my voice thick.

His eyes flash with understanding, and he swallows. “Take me, Asher. Remind me who owns me.”

My whole body goes rigid. “You don’t know what you’re asking Zayne,” I growl. “I’m not in control right now. My wolf is right there on the edge. Your first time shouldn’t be like this. I can’t do soft or slow.”

“What makes you think I want soft and slow?” he asks, licking his lips.

“I don’t have the patience to prep you,” I rasp.

“You don’t need to.” He bites his lip. “I may have already done that myself.”

My eyes narrow. “What do you mean?”

He lets out a heavy breath. “I’ve been thinking about us taking things further pretty much since the moment you sucked my cock and rocked my world.

” He laughs. “I’ve done a little research and might have bought a few things to prepare.

” He closes his eyes and groans. “And one's inside me right now.”

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*Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 10:16 am*

Pulling him off the door, I shove him toward the bed. He lets out a grunt as I throw him onto the mattress. He doesn't even get a chance to speak before I'm pulling his pants down and spreading his cheeks.

"Asher!" he shouts, trying to cover his ass with his hands.

No point, I already saw the shiny silver metal between his cheeks. My cock twitches as pure hunger for him takes over.

My finger trails over the plug before pushing on it. He moans, arching his ass in the air for me like a good fucking boy.

"A butt plug," I growl, twisting it before pushing on it again.

"I wanted tonight to be the night, no matter what. After the win, I was going to bring you back here so we could be alone."

"You had this in all day? At the game and everything?"

"Yes," he whispers.

I chuckle. "My Little Warlock is a dirty boy, aren't you?" I growl.

"Stop," he grumbles. "Just fuck me, okay?"

He lets out a yelp when I slap his ass. "Enough sass out of you. I'm only going to ask this once. Are you sure? I won't go easy."

With a smirk, Zayne raises his hand, his fingers flicking in a subtle gesture. My sweats suddenly drop down to my mid-thigh, lowered by magic. I glare at him, eyes narrowed.

“Yes, I’m sure,” Zayne quips, voice low. “I want you.”

That's all I needed to hear. Honestly, I wasn't planning on fighting him on it. I need him too fucking bad, need to make that ass mine.

Flipping him over onto his back, I pull his pants off the rest of the way before grabbing his knees and pushing them up to his head.

His cheeks turn an adorable shade of pink.

“You're so fucking perfect,” I growl, pulling my sweats all the way down, I fist my thick cock, groaning as pre-cum drips from the tip. Ridding his ass of the plug, I quickly replace it with the tip of my cock. “Breathe, Zayne. Relax for me.”

He lets out a breath, body going slack. Then I'm pushing in.

“Oh, fuck!” he cries out, tossing his head back as his hands fist the sheets.

“Breathe. You're doing so good,” I groan, eyes rolling back as his tight hole clenches around me. He's so fucking warm and tight. Pure fucking heaven. “So good. Such a good fucking mate. God damnit, Zayne, you're so tight.”

With one thrust, I force my way in.

Closing my eyes, I try to gain some sort of control as I allow him a moment to adjust.

“Fuck,” he whimpers. “You're so fucking big.”



“Are you okay?” I ask, panting as I feel myself lose control every second I’m inside him.

He licks his lips, chest heaving as he nods. “Fuck me, Asher. Please,” he whimpers. “I’m yours, claim me .”

His words make me snap. A savage snarl fills the room as I grab his thighs, holding him in place. Pulling all the way back, my hips snap forward.

He moans, eyes rolling back. Knowing I’m making my mate feel good has me picking up the pace.

It doesn’t take long before I’m in a full-blown rut. I’ve never felt like this before. Like I can’t get deep enough. I want to fuse my body with his.

The sound of our skin slapping together as I pound into him fills the room, mixing with the sounds of our combined pleasure. I know I’m being rough, but I can’t bring myself to stop. Leaning forward, I cover my body with his.

He wraps his legs around me, hands clawing at my back as he screams my name over and over again.

“Yes, Asher. Fuck. Oh gods. You feel so good. Fucking hell!” he screams, arching into me.

I snake a hand between us and wrap it around his cock, pumping with my thrusts with a tight grip. He pants as I play with him. His magic crackling and snapping around us shows me how much he likes this.

My mouth finds his neck. I suck and nip, growling and grunting. I’m close, so fucking close. But I don’t want this to be over. It can’t be. I just got inside him. I

never want to leave.

“I’m going to cum. Fuck, fuck, fuck!” he shouts and then I feel his cock twitch where it’s trapped between us, warm sticky cum covering his stomach and my hand.

I don’t stop, claws extending as my own pleasure builds.

His smell makes my head dizzy, his touch makes my knot throb.

The need to lock myself to him is overwhelming. To sink my teeth into his skin and mark him as mine permanently is soul consuming.

And because I have no one here to tell me no, I do both.

With one hard thrust, I shove my knot into his ass, making him scream. In pleasure or pain, I don’t know.

I’m too far gone, my wolf screaming at me to make him ours. “Mine.” The growl that leaves me is pure animal before I bite down hard, making him whimper as my own cock throbs, sending wave after wave of cum deep into his ass, marking him as mine.

We stay like that for a while, no one saying a word, just locked in each other's embrace as I remove my teeth and look at his new mate mark.

Seconds pass, reality comes seeping in.

My head snaps back, and I look down at him in horror. “I’m so fucking sorry, Zayne,” I rasp. “Shit, shit shit.”

“Hey.” He smiles up at me with a sleepy look. “It’s okay. Shh. It’s okay.”

“It’s not okay. Nothing about that was okay. I should have been more careful with you, treated you better. I was too far gone. I told you we shouldn’t have done this. I forced my knot into you.” My voice cracks. “I bit you.”

“It was good.” He sounds drunk. “So good. So so good.” With each word, he sounds more and more out of it.

His reassurance helps me relax a little bit. I look at my mark on his neck and possessive pride fills me.

Now, whenever someone looks at him, they will know he’s a taken man. Taken by me .

Zayne passed out, breathing slow and steady. When my knot deflates, I carefully pull out. Leaning back on my knees, I bite my hand as I try to smother a growl as I watch my cum spill from his ass.

Going to the bathroom, I grab a warm cloth and clean him up, careful not to wake him before climbing into bed next to him. Grabbing him, I pull him close, wrapping my arms around him and nuzzling my face against his neck.

“You’re mine, Zayne,” I murmur softly. He’s so fucking gorgeous. And mine. All fucking mine. “And from now on, you will spend every night in my bed. Where you belong.”

ZAYNE

A week.

That's how long it's been since Asher finally gave in; since I let him have me, ruin me, claim me in every way that matters. Since I felt his teeth sink into my skin, his knot locking us together while he growled my name like I was the only thing in the world.

And now?

Now, I sleep in his bed every night, wrapped up in him like he's the only thing keeping me breathing.

Every night, his arms curl around me, tight and possessive, like he can't bear to let me go. But that's all he does—holds me.

No kissing. No touching. No talking about what happened.

I know he's thinking about it, though—I can feel it. The hesitation in the way his fingers trace my skin when he thinks I'm asleep, the way his breath hitches when I shift too close. He's worried. That him knotting me, marking me, was too much.

But it wasn't.

I loved it.

Once again, he proved every other partner I've had was fucking trash.

I want him—in every way.

To live in my ass.

To knot me nice and slow, taking his time, claiming me the way we both know he needs to.

I want to know if I can fuck him.

But he won't talk about it. Won't let himself have me again.

And I'm done waiting.

He thinks I can't handle him.

Like I wasn't made to take him.

I hate it. The space he's put between us. The way he's pulling away when all I want to do is get closer.

So now I'm here, at this stupid bonfire, watching him from across the flames, stewing in my own frustration.

And then I see her.

She's got her hands all over him. Laughing, flipping her hair, touching him like she's got a chance.

My stomach turns to stone.

My Magic snaps to life, sparking beneath my skin like a second heartbeat. Fingers curl into fists. Vision tunnels.

Mine.

I move.

It's not a decision—it's instinct. My body slices through the crowd, my blood pounding in my ears, the fire at my back turning my shadow into something long and wild.

When I reach them, I don't stop.

I shove the girl away—not hard enough to knock her down, but enough. Enough to make it clear she doesn't belong here, touching him .

She stumbles back, gasping. “What the hell?”

I don't even look at her.

I grab Asher by the front of his hoodie, yanking him in before he can so much as breathe. His eyes go wide just before my mouth crashes into his.

He stiffens for half a second—shocked—but then his hands are on me, gripping my waist, pulling me closer, like the tension between us has finally snapped, like he's been holding back just as much as I have.

I kiss him hard, all teeth and claiming, because I'm done letting him pretend we're anything less than this.

The bonfire falls into a stunned silence.

Someone whistles. Then another. Then the entire place erupts.

Prunes is screeching, jumping up and down. “Holy shit! That’s right!”

Laughter. Cheers. Hoots from our team.

I don’t give a damn.

I step up onto a log, towering over everyone, my chest heaving, my lips tingling from kissing him.

“Listen up, Sugar River!” My voice rings out, loud and absolute. “Asher is mine. He’s off-limits. Don’t fucking touch him.”

The crowd loses it.

The team is laughing, hyping me up. Someone howls. Someone else shouts, “Zayne’s gone feral!”

I don’t care.

I jump back down, landing in front of Asher. He’s staring at me like he doesn’t know what to do with me. Like he wants to be mad but can’t be.

I grab his wrist, dragging him away from the fire, away from the noise.

“Zayne—”

I spin around the second we’re out of earshot, pressing him against a tree. “Why are you acting like you broke me?”

His throat bobs. “I?—”

“You didn’t.” My voice drops, rough with everything I’ve been feeling. “I can handle you. I want you.” I drag my fingers over his stomach, feeling the tension thrumming beneath his skin. “You think I regret it? That I didn’t like you knotting me?”

His eyes flash, pupils blown wide. His breath comes out sharp. “Zayne?—”

I press in closer, chest to chest. “You don’t get to pull away.” My voice is almost a growl, my magic curling around us like static in the air. “You’re mine, Asher. I’m yours. You don’t get to act like that night didn’t change everything.”

His breath hitches. His fingers twitch like he wants to grab me, wants to take me.

I lean in, mouth brushing his jaw. “So stop acting like you hurt me.” My teeth scrape lightly over his skin, and I feel the way he shudders. “And next time?” My lips curve. “Don’t hold back.”

His restraint snaps.

His hands fist in my hoodie, and then his mouth is on mine again—hot, rough, claiming me back.

Asher’s fingers curl into my hoodie, trying to hold on—but to what? His control? The lie that he can keep his hands off me?

I don’t give him the chance to decide.

I tilt my head, deepening the kiss, pouring everything into it. Need. Frustration. Love—because that’s what this is. It’s not just wanting Asher. It’s loving him. Every grumpy, brooding, stupidly self-sacrificing part of him.



The air around us crackles, my magic thrumming under my skin, a low hum of energy that rises with every second I spend touching him. I feel it build, pressing outward, seeking him, like it can't help but reach for him.

His lips part on a gasp, and I take it—take him—shoving my hands under his hoodie, finding the heat of his skin.

Electricity zips between us, tiny sparks jumping from my fingertips to his ribs, skimming over his spine. His entire body shudders, and I feel the way he reacts to it, the way my magic winds through him, sinking into his bones.

He growls, low, but he doesn't push me away.

I press closer, letting my magic unfurl, wrapping around him like invisible threads, dragging him deeper into me. "You want me?" I whisper against his mouth.

He squeezes his eyes shut, shaking his head. "You know I do."

"Then take me." I drag my mouth along his jaw, my magic pulsing with every word, curling around him like a command. "No more holding back. No more running."

His grip tightens—so tight I know I'll feel the bruises later. "I don't want to hurt you." His voice is wrecked, torn apart by everything he won't say.

"You didn't." I bite at his pulse, feeling the rapid beat of his heart against my lips. "I want more. I want you always."

The energy between us spikes, a sudden rush of power that crackles in the air, making the leaves tremble, making the embers of the bonfire in the distance flare. My magic is pushing, pulling, demanding.

He makes a choked sound, like I've just ripped something out of him. Then, suddenly, he's flipping us, slamming me into the tree.

My head spins. My body thrums.

His eyes burn into mine, dark and wild, pupils blown so wide his irises are just a thin ring of color. His chest heaves, like he's barely keeping it together, like he's standing at the edge of a cliff and I'm the only thing keeping him from falling.

"You don't get it." His voice is low, dangerous. "I need to hold back, Zayne." His fingers dig into my hips, his grip searing hot against my skin. "If I don't—" He swallows hard. "I'll ruin you."

I smirk, tilting my head. "What if I want to be ruined?"

The moment the words leave my mouth, my magic erupts, a slow, molten pulse that slides over both of us. Sparks dance over my skin, tiny bursts of energy crackling between my fingertips, running down my arms, wrapping around him like invisible chains.

He snaps.

His mouth crashes into mine, crushing, desperate, like he's trying to consume me, to make sure there's no space left between us.

I moan into it, grinding against him, feeling the solid press of his body, the heat of his skin. My magic curls around us, sinking into him, wrapping tight, binding.

He lets out a ragged breath, his hands sliding under my hoodie, skimming my stomach, his touch electric. His fingers find my ribs, trace up my chest, and when his thumbs brush my nipples, I gasp.

The energy between us explodes, sending a sharp crack through the air.

All I know is him.

His body against mine. The way he's touching me. The way he's taking me, finally, finally, giving in.

My magic pulses, feeding off his energy, dragging him closer, sealing him to me in a way that feels irrevocable.

And I know, without a doubt, that he's mine, just as much as I'm his.

Forever.

I'm gonna prove it to him.

He's mine. He didn't break me. None of him—his strength, his bite, his knot—scared me. I want it all, again and again, until he understands there's no such thing as too much when it comes to him.

I pull my magic deep into myself, a slow, simmering hum beneath my skin, and I focus it. I let it pool at my fingertips, a pulse of energy that seeks him, that wants to claim him just as much as he's already claimed me.

I grab his cock through his jeans, fingers closing over the thick length of him, and he groans, hips twitching into my touch like he can't help himself.

"I want more," I whisper, watching his reaction. "Questions that need answers. Things I wanna learn."

"Yes," he gasps, body already trembling against mine.

My magic curls at his neck, dark and pulsing, waiting for my command. I focus, letting it latch onto his skin, watching as it seeps in, as his breath hitches, as his hands tighten where he grips me.

He hisses, shoulders twitching.

“Shhhh, Asher,” I murmur, sliding my other hand up his chest, feeling his heart hammering beneath my touch. “Just wait.”

His lips crash into mine, desperate, almost wild, but I don’t let myself get lost in it—not yet. I focus on the magic, on the heat where it sears into him, on the way it burrows deep, embedding itself beneath his skin.

My mark.

A magic-born brand of possession.

I break the kiss, still buzzing, and reach up, turning his head so I can see my creation. A slow, satisfied smirk curls at my lips.

He frowns, lifting a hand to touch it. “What did you do?”

“I marked you,” I say simply, feeling my magic hum, thrumming with its claim. “Warlocks don’t have fated mates, so we give mate marks. I want the world to know you’re mine. I want you to know you don’t scare me. That I want everything you have to give.”

His fingers skim the edges, tracing the raised skin, the way my magic still flickers like embers beneath the surface.

“What does it look like?” His voice is quieter now, almost reverent.

I grin. “It’s a Z with little firework-like bursts around it.”

He swallows, fingers still pressing against it. “Feels like a brand.”

“It is, I guess.” I slide my hand back down his chest, letting my fingertips trail his abs, feeling the way his muscles twitch beneath my touch. “I burned you with my magic.”

His head snaps up, eyes going dark, pupils blown. A low, rumbling growl vibrates from his chest, and then his mouth is on me again, all teeth and tongue and possession.

I moan into it, letting him take, letting him claim me right back. My magic flares, responding to him, wrapping around us, sinking into the spaces between.

Then he pulls back, breath ragged, lips wet. “Time to go home, Little Warlock.” His fingers grip my hoodie, tugging me closer. “You have things to learn.” His eyes burn into mine. “And I apparently have questions to answer.”

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*Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 10:16 am*

ASHER

When we pull up to the house, I throw the car in park and shove open my door.

“Asher.” Zayne’s voice sounds from behind me. I pull at my shirt, yanking it over my head. “What are you doing?”

I spin around to face him, eyes wild, showing him just how feral I’m feeling right now.

There’s too much pent up energy running through me. I haven’t shifted or gone for a run in a week.

My skin still aches where he marked me, branded me with his magic. I’ve been hard ever since, his possessiveness over me pushing me to the edge.

“I’m going for a run,” I tell him as I make quick work of my jeans, shoving them down my legs, taking my boxers with them, leaving me fully naked in front of my mate.

I watch as his pupils dilate, the thick smell of his arousal making my cock twitch. He licks his lips before slowly dragging his eyes up my body. He’s eye fucking me and I love it.

His eyes finally meet mine. “You’re just leaving me? I thought...” he trails off, looking toward the house.

My lips twitch with a smirk. “Thought we could come home where I could fuck you? Shove my fat knot deep inside that tight little hole of yours as you come undone for your mate like a good boy?” My voice is thick with need, wanting to do exactly that to him.

His eyes snap up to mine. “Jesus, Asher.” He blows out a shaky breath, running a hand through his brown locks. “The way you speak sometimes.”

“You fucking love it.” My chuckle is deep and husky. “Your cock is a dead giveaway.”

His eyes drop to his erection pressing against his jeans and I love the blush that creeps onto his cheeks.

“Don’t be embarrassed, Zayne. I love that you're a needy little slut for me.” I wrap my hand around my cock, growling as I slowly jerk myself off.

I can hear a small whimper slipping free as he bites his lip, watching me touch myself. I love that he doesn’t correct me.

Cocking my head to the side, I look him up and down.

“What?” he asks, voice shaking.

“How drunk are you?”

His brows furrow. “I’m fine. Why?”

“Think you can run?”

“Why?” he asks slowly.

I grin. “Because I feel like hunting tonight.” I lick my lips.

“A little game of cat and mouse. Or, wolf and warlock, in our case. And you wanna know what I’m gonna do with you when I catch you?

” I ask, taking a step forward, pre-cum dripping from the tip of my cock and over my hand. I need him so damn bad.

“I know how much my mate likes to be chased. Only this time, when I catch you, I don’t plan on letting you go.”

“What are you going to do with me?” he asks in a whisper.

“Claim you,” I growl and then my body is contorting, my bones breaking, body shifting into one of fur.

My paws hit the ground and I toss my head back, letting out a long howl before lowering my head to look at Zayne.

His eyes are wide and he’s stumbling back. Run, Little Warlock , I push into his head. He sucks in a breath at hearing me again—still not used to my voice in his mind—before turning around and running toward the tree line.

A low growl rumbles in my chest as I pace back and forth, giving him a bit of a head start.

When I can’t wait any longer, I let out another howl before I’m taking off in the direction he went.

His scent is thick in the air, his arousal making it very easy to track him.



As I run through the dark forest, I let my nose lead the way. It doesn't take long before I find him.

He's running, his breathing heavy and labored. He's fast for only being on two legs and I grin inside my mind when I see the little cheat is using magic to give him a boost, his hands glowing green, my ears picking up a low murmured chant.

It doesn't matter, unless he uses his magic to distract me by slowing me down, I'm still faster than him.

Not wanting this to be over so soon, I keep back, letting him take the lead.

He looks over his shoulder, spotting me, and curses. But I smell the spike of his arousal in the air.

He's loving this, getting turned on by the primal need I have inside me to chase my mate then pin him down and fuck him until he remembers who fucking owns him.

We dodge trees and jump over fallen logs, long off the beaten trail. These are parts of the forest I've never been to, making it even more exciting.

Zayne lets out a grunt, and I watch him as he tumbles to the ground. A spike of pain hits me, and I know it's the brand he gave me. It's as if I can feel his pain.

Skidding to a stop next to him, I breathe heavily, my muzzle open, eyes blazing as I stare down at him.

He's laying on the ground, his chest heaving as he stares up at me.

The way he's looking at me with pure want, his cock pressed against his jeans and his scent so damn strong it's nearly choking me, I know he's okay. Better than okay.

My mate is a needy little whore for me.

I'd be a bad mate if I left him wanting, wouldn't I?

"Asher," he whimpers, my name filled with pure want, and I'm done for.

Shifting back into my human form, I'm on him in the next second, pinning him to the ground with my body.

Lips crashing into his, I devour his lips like he's the fucking air I need to breathe as my hands frantically work to free him from his pants.

Finding myself impatient, I let my claws grow just enough for me to be able to cut the fabric, keeping me from my mate's sinfully sexy body.

"Asher," he gasps, but I shut him up with a kiss. He moans into my mouth as I get him naked.

Breaking the kiss, we suck in air and I'm flipping him over on his stomach. He grunts as I grip his hips and yank his ass into the air.

He wanted me unhinged, to not hold back when it comes to my need for him.

"Be a good little slut for me, and lay there while I fuck this tight perfect ass," I growl, my cock leaking pre-cum as I stare down at his needy puckered hole.

"Please," he pants out breathlessly. "Fuck me, Asher. I need you."

Leaning down, I swipe my tongue over the tight ring of muscle, loving the way he moans for me like a bitch in heat. I do it again, this time slipping my tongue inside.

“Oh fuck,” he whimpers and I grin before I eat him like my favorite meal. He whimpers, whines and begs me as I turn him into a shaking mess.

Once I’m no longer able to hold back, I get to my knees and place the tip of my cock to his entrance. “Scream for me, mate,” I snarl, pressing forward. “Scream for me while I split you in fucking two.”

“God, yes,” he cries out as I shove forward some more. “More, Asher. Don't hold back. Fuck me, make it hurt.”

Gripping his cheeks, I snarl. I’d never hurt my mate on purpose, but right now, with him desperate for it? Who am I to deny him when he asks me like a good little cock slut.

Slamming the rest of the way forward, I growl deep in my chest.

A haze starts to cloud my mind and I can feel my primal instincts taking over.

“I’m going to fuck this ass,” I groan, pulling back before thrusting forward again.

“I’m going to fill this needy little hole until it’s leaking with my cum.

Gonna stuff you full and remind you who you fucking belong to. ”

“Yes. Yes, do it!” he screams as I pound into him.

My nails dig into his perfect creamy skin, the only sounds around us are his cries, my growls and our flesh slapping together.

“So fucking tight,” I pant. “Mine. This is my fucking ass.”

“Yours,” he sobs out. “Only yours.”

“My perfect mate. Fuck, I’m so lucky to have you.”

He claws at the ground, his body writhing under me as he pants heavily, his face pressed against the dirt.

I take my mate like it’s my last day on earth. “Pure fucking heaven. I want to live inside you, Zayne.” My eyes close as I focus on the ecstasy that’s coursing through me.

I can feel his magic in my veins, lighting me up inside. I feel high, he’s fucking intoxicating.

“More,” he whimpers. “I need... I need... Fuck,” he sobs.

“You need to cum don’t you, baby?” I lean over him, placing my hand on the ground next to his head and using the other one to reach under him, wrapping around his thick leaking cock.

The sound he makes as I pump his shaft has me nearly coming undone.

Not yet, I’m not done with him. I’ll never be satiated.

As I pound into him, I work him over. “Such a good boy,” I praise him, kissing his spine just below the back of his head. “Taking my cock so fucking good. Listen to you, so damn needy. Can’t get enough, can you?”

“No,” he whines. “Never.”

“Good,” I growl, then before I know what I’m even doing, I sink my teeth into his

shoulder. He cries out as I let out a savage growl. My cock pulses inside him violently, emptying myself deep inside his ass as his cock jerks in my hold, spraying the forest floor with his cum. I'm almost jealous, I wish it was down my fucking throat.

"Fuck. Fuck. fuck," he chants out. "I—I think I'm gonna pass out."

Letting my teeth retract, I lick the fresh mate mark.

"Don't do that." I press a kiss to the spot, grinning with pride.

Zayne groans beneath me as my knot swells, locking us together.

I lean forward, breath ragged, pressing a kiss to each of his shoulders as he trembles beneath me.

"So fucking pretty," I murmur. We're stuck like this for now, our bodies still connected, so I shift carefully and pull him back against my chest. He cuddles into me with a soft hum, and I wrap my arms around him, holding him close until the tie eases.

I love this, laying here with him in my arms, the feeling of his warm body against mine. Being with him is a happiness I can't describe. Like I'd die without him. I'll burn the world down for him. And if he leaves me, I know in my soul I'll follow after him.

"You bit me...again," he murmurs, kissing me on the peck.

I grin, kissing the top of his head as my hand rubs up and down his arm. "I did."

"Why?"

“Because you're mine,” I murmur. “And my wolf wanted to make sure you and the world knew that too.”

“I know I’m yours. And you're mine.”

“I am.” A warm fuzzy feeling swirls around inside me. We lay there for a moment, just basking in the afterglow. “Go on a date with me?”

“What?” Zayne tilts his head back to look up at me.

A nervous feeling takes over, but I push forward. “A date. I want to take you out, show you off. Have fun.” I shrug.

His lips kick up into a grin that has my stomach dipping. “Okay,” he agrees. “I’d love that. Any ideas?”

“Ah, no, not really. I kind of just came up with the idea on the spot.”

He chuckles, snuggling back into me. “It doesn’t matter. As long as I’m with you, that's good enough.”

And just like that, I’m falling in love with my stepbrother. My mate . And it fucking thrills me.

ZAYNE

The sunlight filters through the open windows as I lean against the doorframe, watching Asher struggle to figure out the ancient-looking juicer my dad refuses to get rid of.

His broad shoulders shift, muscles flexing beneath his fitted t-shirt.

The sight is almost enough to make me forget the pathetic groan of the machine as it sputters in protest.

“Zayne, is this thing cursed?” he grumbles, slamming the top of the juicer down with a little too much force. His wolfish ears might not be visible, but the irritation flickers across his face clear as day.

I bite back a grin. “It’s not cursed, just old. How’d you know I was here?”

His sharp glare softens the second our eyes meet. "Your magic always leaves this... trace. And besides, I could hear the way your heartbeat changed when you saw me."

I step in, brushing his hand with mine as I gently adjust the juicer’s settings, making sure everything clicks into place. "At least one of us knows how to work a juicer," I tease, enjoying the slight tension that builds between us.

He watches me, his amber eyes glowing faintly, the quiet admiration in his gaze always stealing my breath. Even after him marking me twice, being Asher’s mate still feels like magic in itself.

“So,” he starts, leaning against the counter as the juicer hums to life, “I was thinking we could have that proper date today.”

I raise an eyebrow. “You mean just the two of us? No Harley? No Prudence?”

“Nope. Just me and you,” he retorts, leaning closer and kissing me softly.

“Alright. Where are we going, then?” I say smugly, enjoying the way he narrows his eyes at all my questions.

He chuckles, the corners of his mouth curving into a grin that makes his dimples appear—a rare, endearing sight. “It’s a surprise. But dress comfortably.”

The winding forest road opens up to a sunlit meadow, the tall grass swaying lazily in the breeze. Asher rolls down the windows, letting the fresh air fill the car. The earthy scent of the trees mingles with the faintest trace of rain from last night’s storm.

“So, what’s this all about?” I ask, glancing over at him. There’s a mischievous glint in his amber eyes as he keeps his focus on the road.

“Patience,” he says with a grin, his voice low and smooth. “You’ll see soon enough.”

I raise an eyebrow, intrigued, but not wanting to push for answers.

When he turns off the main road and heads toward town, I sit up a little straighter. “This isn’t a camping trip, is it?”

He chuckles, shaking his head. “Not this time. Trust me, I’ve got something way better planned.”

My curiosity peaks as we drive into town, and the car eventually pulls into a parking



lot with a glowing sign that reads Rider's Alley: Bowling and Games .

I can't help the laugh that escapes me. "No way. You're kidding, right?"

His eyes glint with that devil-may-care sparkle I've come to love. "What? You don't think I can be fun?"

"I think you're all business, usually," I tease, eyeing the neon lights of the bowling alley. "But, alright. I'm game."

Asher grins, his eyes twinkling with mischief as he opens the door and steps out. "You'll see. I've got a few surprises up my sleeve."

We walk into the alley, the familiar sounds of bowling balls rolling, pins clattering, and cheerful laughter filling the air. The scent of fresh popcorn mixes with the faint rubbery smell of the lanes. I follow him up to the counter where a worker smiles at us.

"Shoes, please," Asher says, his voice light but confident as he leans on the counter.

I glance at him, a playful smile tugging at my lips. "I'm pretty sure I'll be able to beat you at this," I say, nudging him with my shoulder.

He shoots me a sly grin, his eyes gleaming. "You think so?"

I grin back, feeling that familiar rush of competitive energy. "I know so."

The competition is lighthearted, with me pretending to struggle as he gets strike after strike. I make exaggerated efforts with my throws, barely managing to hit a few pins. Asher, on the other hand, doesn't miss a beat, effortlessly sinking his ball into the perfect spot.

“You’re showing off,” I tease, sticking my tongue out at him.

“Just proving a point,” he responds with a smirk, his eyes following me as I take my turn. “But go ahead, impress me.”

I try to focus, determined to at least match his moves. But every time I look over, his grin has this dangerous charm, distracting me just enough to miss my shot.

When I finally score a half-decent turn, I throw my hands in the air. “Victory!” I shout, earning a laugh from him.

“You’re cute when you’re excited,” he murmurs, his gaze lingering on me with that intense warmth. “Did you cheat your way into winning with magic?”

I roll my eyes. “Don’t flatter me. And I would never!” I fake being appalled.

As we finish our game, I glance at him with a mischievous smile. “Alright, so what’s next, Mister Surprise Planner?”

“Follow me,” he says, his tone suddenly turning serious in a way that sends a shiver of anticipation down my spine. He pulls me toward the Laser Tag Arena inside the bowling alley, and I can’t help but laugh.

“You’re determined to wear me out, aren’t you?”

“Only if you’re up for the challenge,” he says with a wink.

We’re handed our laser guns and told to wait as the arena’s lights flicker on, painting the space in neon blues, greens, and purples. The music thuds in the background, making the atmosphere electric.

“I’m not going easy on you,” I tell him, sliding the vest over my shoulders, trying to hide the grin tugging at my lips.

“I wouldn’t expect you to,” he replies, that familiar smirk of his that tugs at the corners of his mouth, making my heart race in all the right ways.

The game begins, and we’re off, darting through the maze of glowing obstacles and tight corners. I’m determined, focused, but Asher’s always one step ahead. His movements are sleek, strategic, like he’s spent years perfecting this, and it’s driving me crazy.

“Gotcha!” I call out when I finally land a shot on him.

“Not bad,” he calls back, ducking behind a pillar as I try to track him down. “But I’m still winning.”

We dart around the arena, running, hiding, and aiming for each other in a game of cat and mouse that keeps me on edge. His precision with the gun is impressive, and for a second, I almost doubt my chances. Almost.

But then, a mischievous thought crosses my mind, and I decide to level the playing field. A subtle flick of my fingers beneath the safety of my vest, and I channel a little of my magic—just enough to give myself an edge without him noticing.

The next few minutes are a blur. I’m faster, sharper, my movements undetectable as I anticipate his every move. He’s still good—hell, he’s amazing—but now I’m always one step ahead, landing shot after shot.

“Gotcha!” I call again, a little louder this time, finally taking him down for the count.

Asher stops, blinking in surprise. “What the hell?” he mutters, glancing at me. I see

the flicker of realization in his eyes, but he says nothing.

The game ends, and we both collapse against the wall, out of breath and laughing. My chest is heaving, the exhilaration of the win still buzzing through me.

“You’re good at this,” I say, flashing him a breathless smile, a smug satisfaction curling in my chest. “I told you I’d beat you.”

Asher shoots me a knowing look, his golden eyes soft but filled with a mix of admiration and mild annoyance. “You cheated, didn’t you?”

I raise my hands innocently. “Me? Cheat? Never.”

“Uh-huh.” His smirk returns, but this time, it’s accompanied by a laugh. “You’re lucky I love you.”

The words hit me like a shockwave. My heart stutters in my chest, and I freeze for a second, unable to speak. I’m staring at him, wondering if he truly meant it or if it was just a casual phrase, the kind people say without thinking.

Did he just say he loves me?

The world feels like it’s slowing down. I swallow, unsure of how to respond, my mind racing.

We’ve never said those words before. Never even come close.

I always thought we were in this place where things were...

not tentative, but maybe unspoken. But now, the weight of his words lingers in the air between us.

I open my mouth, but nothing comes out. My heart beats faster, suddenly aware of how much I want those words to be true, how much I want him to feel the same way I do.

Asher's eyes flick to me, narrowing slightly, as if he's waiting for something. A reaction. A confirmation. And for a moment, I wonder if he knows exactly how much those words have shaken me.

"You know," I finally say, voice barely above a whisper, "I think I'm pretty lucky, too."

The weight of the moment lingers between us, but the sound of the bustling crowd outside the arena pulls me from the daze. Asher's gaze softens, and after a beat, he stands, offering me a hand.

"Come on, I've got something else planned," he says, the playful spark returning to his eyes.

Without another word, he leads me outside, guiding us through the cool evening air. The city hums around us, but soon the noise fades, replaced by the gentle rustling of leaves as we drive to a nearby park.

Asher parks the car and steps out, moving around to the trunk. He pulls out a blanket and a picnic basket, flashing me a grin. "Come on," he says, nodding for me to follow.

He leads me down a narrow, grassy path to a quiet spot by a pond, nestled between two weeping willow trees. The sky has darkened, the first stars just beginning to twinkle above us.

Asher unfurls the blanket on the grass, his movements easy, confident, and steady.

We settle down close together, the soft hum of the town fading into the background, leaving only the sound of our breathing and the quiet intimacy between us.

I lean against him, feeling his arm naturally wrap around me. The night feels perfect. We've shared laughs, playful competition, and now this—a quiet, intimate moment where nothing matters but being here, together.

I can't help but notice the small basket Asher had packed, the subtle aroma of fresh bread and cheese mingling with the night air.

He'd thoughtfully picked up a selection of deli meats, fruit, and a few chocolate-covered strawberries.

We eat in contented silence, savoring each bite, the kind of easy, comfortable quiet that only deepens as the night goes on.

"You know," he starts, his voice low and thoughtful, "I think I might actually be having more fun than I thought I would."

"I'm glad," I reply, my heart softening as I look up at him. "This was a good idea. You were right."

He looks down at me, that same intensity in his eyes. "I'm always right when it comes to you."

I smile, my fingers brushing against his hand. "You're perfect, you know that?"

He leans in, brushing his lips against mine in a kiss that's slow and tender, the kind of kiss that feels like the world has slowed down just for us. His hand finds my waist, pulling me closer, and the moment feels like it's stretched out in time, just for the two of us.

“You make me feel like the luckiest guy alive,” he whispers against my lips.

I pull him in for another kiss, knowing that, with him, I’m exactly where I’m meant to be.

After a few more minutes of silence, we begin to gather the remnants of our meal, packing everything back into the basket.

The moon is now fully risen, casting a silvery glow over the park, and the soft crunch of the grass beneath our feet accompanies us as we stand and make our way toward the park’s exit.

We walk hand in hand through the town square. The moon is high in the sky, painting it in swirls of yellow and indigo. Asher’s thumb lazily strokes over my knuckles, and I catch the faintest trace of a contented smile on his lips.

It’s the kind of peaceful happiness I’d do anything to protect.

But then, the atmosphere shifts. The sound of low, murmured voices drifts from the group approaching us. I can feel Asher’s body stiffen next to me, his eyes narrowing, his expression darkening before I even hear the words.

“Well, well. If it isn’t Asher.”

Three males stand before us, their broad shoulders and bitter glares cutting through the air. The scent of hostility clings to them like a shadow. Wolves.

My old pack. We went to school together, he speaks in my mind.

“Didn’t think we’d ever see you again,” one of them sneers, his lip curling in that familiar expression of contempt. “But then again, you always were full of surprises.”

Asher doesn't respond right away, his eyes flicking briefly to me before he murmurs, "Let's keep walking." His voice is low, controlled, but I can hear the edge of something there—something like fear, or maybe anger.

I glance at him, unsure, but he doesn't seem to want to engage. Still, the guys aren't done.

"Guess it makes sense now," another one says, his voice dripping with disdain. "You were never much of an alpha. No wonder you ran off and settled for... that." His gaze sweeps over me, clearly disgusted, as if I'm somehow the cause of all Asher's failures.

Something inside me snaps, a hot surge of protectiveness for Asher coursing through my veins.

I can feel the pulse of my magic under my skin, ready to flare.

But it's not just that—it's the look on Asher's face that makes my blood boil.

He's trying to hide it, but I see the weight of their words pressing down on him, shaming him.

"Say another word," I growl, stepping forward, my voice low and threatening. The air around us thickens, crackling with energy, and I can almost feel the weight of my own power.

The man falters for a moment, his smirk dropping.

"Zayne," Asher says quietly, his voice strained, but I'm not backing down.

"You don't get to talk to him like that," I snap, stepping closer. "You think your



hatred and your narrow-mindedness make you stronger? Newsflash: it doesn't. But love ? Love is strength. And Asher has more of it than any of you ever will."

The silence that follows is deafening. The wolves exchange uneasy glances, clearly caught off guard by my words, and their bravado begins to crack. They're used to intimidating, to pushing people down. They're not used to being challenged.

Without another word, they turn away, their shoulders stiff with barely contained rage. But I don't care. Asher's eyes are wide, full of something that makes my chest tighten.

"You stood up for me," he whispers, his voice trembling with disbelief.

I cup his face in my hands, brushing my thumbs along his jaw gently. "Of course I did. I'll always stand up for you."

He smiles, a soft, radiant thing, and when he leans in to kiss me, it's like the whole world melts away. The tension, the anger, the weight of the past—all of it disappears in that kiss. All that matters is us, right here, right now.

And that? That's all we need.

*Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 10:16 am*

ASHER

We're almost home, and what happened back in the parking lot is still affecting me.

Seeing people from my old life, the pack that made me miserable, was not the way I wanted to end my epic date with my mate.

It was perfect. I don't think I've laughed and had so much fun in my life. And seeing Zayne smiling as he had a good time made me feel proud, like I was doing something right by making my mate happy.

Then those fuckers had to show up and ruin it.

They weren't anyone important to me, honestly I don't even remember their names, just their faces. And the fact that they're wolves in my father's pack.

The way they acted about me being gay didn't surprise me, it's not something my father allowed.

What did surprise me was how Zayne stuck up for me. Not that I didn't think he would, just that it made me feel really damn good that he did.

"Hey." He gives my knee a squeeze, catching my attention. I blink a few times, needing to pay attention to the road and not the thoughts running rampant in my mind. "You okay?"

"Yeah." I smile over at him, lacing my fingers with his before bringing his hand up so

I can kiss the back of his hand. “I’m good.”

“You don’t look it. You’re not still upset about those assholes, are you? Because they’re not worth the energy.”

“I know. It’s just, I forget people are like that, you know?” I glance over at him. “I was used to it before we moved in with you guys, but everyone at our school has been pretty chill about it.”

“Because they’re not raging assholes like those dicks. Are all the people in your father’s pack like that?”

“Yeah, pretty much.” I blow out a breath, rubbing my thumb against the top of his hand. “There were a few people who were pretty chill, including my best friend.”

“Your best friend? You’ve never mentioned a best friend?”

The thought of Tyler makes my chest clench.

“Because we left things on bad terms. He felt like I was betraying him by leaving him behind when I left with mom. I couldn’t stay there.

If I did, I’d die. Whether it would be by my father or my own hand, one way or another, I wasn’t going to make it there much longer. ”

The car is silent for a while.

“I’m glad you left,” he tells me, kissing the back of my hand this time. “If you didn’t, I don’t think we would have found one another.”

A grin curves up and I shoot him a wink. “I am pretty amazing.”

“Shut up.” He laughs, pushing lightly on my arm.

“I’m glad I left too,” I whisper, eyes moving back to the road.

The car grows quiet again, only the low hum of the radio to fill the space between us.

We’re almost home, and the closer we get, the more I see Zayne watching me out of the corner of his eyes. Every time I turn to look at him, his eyes flick away from me and down to his phone, pretending like he wasn’t looking.

When I catch him doing it again, I laugh. “Alright, now it’s your turn to spill. What’s on that sexy mind of yours?”

His eyes snap up to mine, a little wide, and he swallows hard. “What? Nothing, nothing’s wrong.”

“Zayne?” I raise my brow, eyes back on the road for a moment, before turning back to him. “Don’t lie to me.”

He lets out a big breath, eyes cast down as he starts to fiddle with his fingers. For a second, I don’t think he’s going to answer. Then he blurts, “When do I get to fuck you?”

My eyes widen and I let out a choked sound before chuckling.

“Don’t laugh at me,” he groans, burying his face in his hands.

“Hey, hey.” I smile. “Don’t you hide on me.”

He’s down right adorable right now. He honestly took me by surprise.

“Well, don’t laugh at me when I ask you a serious question.” He pouts, slouching in his seat.

“I’m sorry.” I squeeze his hand. “You took me by surprise, that’s all. Is that something you want to do?”

“Yeah,” he mutters. “Wouldn’t have asked you if I didn’t.”

“Hey now,” I growl playfully. “No need to be bratty with me. Keep acting like that, and I’ll put you over my knee and punish you.”

My words backfire because a wave of his arousal fills the car and I have to bite down a moaned growl as my cock swells, pressing against my jeans.

Licking my lips, I shake my head, trying to concentrate on what we’re talking about.

“Yes,” he says again. “It’s something I want to try.”

Nodding, I take a deep breath. “I’ve never bottomed before.” I flick my eyes over to his and see his shoulders slump. “But—” I continue and his eyes glance up to meet mine. “If that’s what my mate wants, that’s what he will get.” I wink.

“You don’t have to agree because you think you have to.”

“I’m not,” I insist. “For you, I’m willing to try anything, okay?”

“Really?” I see that little spark of hope in his eyes. He really seems to want to try this. It’s not that I’ve never used toys on myself before. They feel good, and I came pretty damn hard while using them. I’ve just always been the more dominant one.

“Really.” I nod.

“Okay.” He licks his lips. “Then yes, I want to try.”

As we round the corner, I see Zayne shifting in his seat, pulling his arms into his hoodie as he shivers. “Are you cold?”

“Just a little bit,” he tells me, smirking. “Not all of us have big wolf bodies to keep us warm.”

“You should have told me, I’d have put on the heat.”

“It’s fine. We’re almost home.” He tries to blow it off.

“No. It’s not fine. I’m going to run you a bath when we get home, okay?” I squeeze his knee before rubbing my hand up and down his thigh to help warm him up.

He smiles over at me. “Okay.”

I love that he doesn’t fight me when I try to take care of him. I like it, to see him happy, to make sure he’s comfortable.

Pulling up to the house, I’m out of the car and rushing over to his side before he has the chance to open the door and I do it for him.

“Thanks.” He chuckles and gets out. Wrapping my arms around him, I lift him into my hold.

“What are you doing?” He laughs as he wraps his arms and legs around me.

“Carrying you inside, keeping you warm as much as I can until we get to the bath.” I grin as we walk toward the house.

“You're crazy, you know that?” he says in amusement.

“I know. Crazy about you.” I kiss him on the nose, loving the way his cheeks turn pink.

*Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 10:16 am*

ZAYNE

The second we step into the house, Asher sets me down and is already peeling his shirt off, stretching his arms with a satisfied groan that sends a ripple of arousal through me. He drops the keys onto the entryway table, his eyes dragging over me before he turns and heads upstairs.

“You coming, or am I bathing alone?” Asher calls.

I exhale slowly, already knowing I’m in trouble.

By the time I enter the bathroom, he’s got the tub filling, steam curling around him like an invitation.

He leans against the counter, wearing nothing but that smirk and a promise of trouble in his eyes.

My magic stirs beneath my skin, responding to him the way it always does—like a current drawn to lightning.

“I could get used to this,” he murmurs, reaching for my hoodie and shirt and tugging them over my head. His hands linger on my shoulders, his thumbs tracing idle circles over my collarbones. “You, naked, wet, at my mercy.”

I snort. “You think I’m at your mercy?”

He grins, tugging me closer until I’m flush against his heat. “You want to test that



theory?”

I don't get the chance to answer before he's kissing me, deep and slow, like he has all the time in the world to unravel me. His tongue sweeps against mine, coaxing, teasing. My fingers dig into his hips, nails biting into his skin just enough to make him hiss.

I tug at the waistband of my pants. They slide off easily, but as I kick them aside, I notice Asher's eyes tracking every movement, the heat in them only growing. His gaze lingers on my cock as it springs free, and fuck if that doesn't stir something deep in me.

The bath is nearly full when he finally pulls away, pupils blown wide. “Get in,” he orders, and fuck, I love when he uses that voice.

I step into the tub, hissing at the heat before sinking in, letting it work its magic over my sore muscles. Asher follows, settling down behind me, his strong arms looping around my waist as he pulls me back against his chest.

“You tense, baby?” he murmurs, pressing a kiss to the curve of my shoulder.

I hum, letting my head tip back onto his shoulder. “You could say that.”

He chuckles, hands gliding over my chest, tracing every ridge. “Let me take care of you, Zayne.”

His hands slide lower, teasing over my stomach, fingers grazing my skin in slow, torturous motions that have me gripping the edges of the tub, teeth clenched.

“Relax,” he murmurs against my ear, nipping at my earlobe.

Relax. Right . As if that's possible when he's touching me like this; his hands sliding beneath the water, fingers dipping lower, brushing over my cock in a featherlight touch that has my breath catching.

"Asher," I warn, but it comes out more like a plea.

He grins against my neck. "Yes, my little warlock?"

I love when he calls me that. It makes me feel like something he wants to claim, something he wants to own. And fuck, if I don't want to be owned by him.

The teasing doesn't last long. It never does. Asher is all hunger and impatience when he finally strokes me in earnest, his palm wrapping around my length, pumping slowly as the water sloshes around us. His breath is hot against my ear, his teeth scraping down my throat.

"You get so fucking hard for me," he mutters, his grip tightening. "You like when I touch you like this? When I take my time playing with my little warlock?"

I groan, my hips jerking up into his fist. "Yes. Fuck, yes."

Asher growls, low and primal, and then his other hand dips lower, fingers teasing at my entrance. My whole body tenses, pleasure coiling tight as he circles the sensitive ring of muscle.

"Please," I whisper, shamelessly.

"Not yet," he says, voice dark with amusement. "I want to watch you fall apart first."

And fall apart I do.

When we finally drag ourselves out of the bath, my legs are barely steady beneath me.

Asher tosses a towel at me, but neither of us get the chance to use them before the towels drop, and we're on each other again, wet skin sliding against wet skin.

I push him back against the mattress, crawling over him, but he flips me effortlessly, straddling my hips.

His cock is hard and leaking against my stomach, and he grins down at me like he's won something.

"What are you doing?" I ask.

"Didn't you say you wanted to top?" He grins before licking his lips.

"I did."

"Didn't I tell you I'd give my mate whatever he wanted?"

"Yes," I rasp.

"Then I'm gonna fuck myself on that big dick of yours while you stroke my knot and I cum all over you. Do you understand?"

"Fuck," I whine.

He grabs the lube but doesn't open it. Instead, he wraps his lips around my dick pumping, one... two... three times before nipping my angry mushroom head. Then he pours some lube in his hand and coats my cock as he strokes me from root to tip.

“You’re mine tonight,” he murmurs, sinking onto me in a slow, agonizing motion.

I hiss as I enter him. He’s so fucking tight.

"I thought you've never done this," I gasp between breaths.

"I haven't, but I've used toys. Now, shut up and let me fuck you."

My head falls back, a moan slipping from my lips as he takes me, inch by inch, until I’m buried inside him.

“Fuck, Asher.”

He moves, slowly at first, rolling his hips, hands braced against my chest. His muscles flex, his breath coming in ragged pants as he rides me. I grip his hips, guiding him, urging him to take what he needs.

“So fucking good,” he groans, throwing his head back. His hands find mine, fingers intertwining as he grinds down harder. “You’re deep, baby. So fucking deep.”

He stops grinding and uses his knees that are either side of me to push himself up and down, bouncing on my dick.

“Fuck. You are a filthy fucking wolf,” I growl. “I want you to fuck me in wolf form.”

I reach between us, wrapping my fingers around his cock, stroking him in time with his movements. He curses, hips stuttering, and I know he’s close. I can feel the way his body tightens, the way his thighs tremble.

“Come for me,” I command as I grip his knot and squeeze, and he does, shuddering around me as he spills onto my stomach. The sight alone is enough to send me over

the edge, pleasure crashing through me as I come deep inside him.

We stay like that for a moment, panting, sweat-slick and spent.

Then, Asher chuckles, low and knowing. “Did you mean what you said earlier?”

I blink, still coming down from the high. “What?”

He leans down, nipping at my lower lip. “About fucking in wolf form.”

My breath catches. “I’ve thought about it since the first time we ran together. Since you tackled me with a hard-on.”

His grin turns wicked. “Don’t tempt me, little warlock,” he murmurs, dragging his teeth over my jaw. “I’d love to know you in wolf form.”

I groan, rolling us over, pinning him beneath me. “Fuck, Asher.”

He smirks. “Maybe later, baby. For now, I want you in my mouth.”

I’m caught off guard by his request, yet the thrill of it sends another rush of heat through me.

Asher leans over to the nightstand, grabbing a wipe from the nearby pack and running it down my length with one practiced, lazy stroke. “Can’t skip the cleanup,” he says with a wink. “Hygiene is hot.”

I take a moment to drink in the sight before me: his broad chest rising and falling with anticipation, the way his muscles glisten slightly from our fucking. The tension between us crackles like electricity, and the desire pooling in my gut is hard to ignore.

Suddenly, he moves so that he's once again hovering over me, but this time his face is between my legs and his thick cock bobs above my head.

My fingers trace along the length of him, feeling how hard he is against my palm.

He wraps his lips around me slowly, teasingly at first.

I lean up and lick his slit. His taste is intoxicating—sweet and salty all at once—and as I take him deeper into my mouth, I hear him gasp above me.

“Zayne...” he breathes out, voice thick with lust, “just like that.”

I pick up the pace gradually, taking him deeper still while letting my tongue swirl around the sensitive tip. He's lost in it now; every moan that he makes drives me higher. The vibrations adding to the sensation of him deep throating my cock.

Asher's mouth works me with a fervor that sends shivers racing down my spine. I take him deeper, lips stretching around his girth.

“Zayne,” he gasps, his voice a low growl that reverberates through his chest. “You have no idea how good you feel.”

“Want to feel you cum in my mouth,” I murmur, the words thick with urgency.

His breath hitches at my words. “Then let me feel you too,” he urges, his voice laced with desperation.

I move up, taking him deeper than before while I wrap my fingers around his base.

“Fuck, yes... just like that,” he grunts, thrusting into my mouth as I hollow my cheeks around him. His hips roll instinctively.

My throat tightens around him as I push myself further onto him, feeling the weight of his cock pressing against the back of my throat. He lets out a strangled growl that sends shockwaves through me.

“I’m so close,” he warns between ragged breaths.

Asher’s body tenses before he releases an animalistic growl that echoes through the room. Warmth floods my mouth as he spills—pulsing jets of heat filling me as I swallow every drop eagerly.

The taste of him does me in and I jerk with a cry as I cum, filling his mouth with my release.

When he finally pulls away, panting, his eyes are dark with desire. Asher moves in a flash, flipping so his face is inches from mine, his hand wrapping around my throat as his lips crash against mine.

His tongue pushes into my mouth and my own release comes with. I startle for half a second, the taste of myself flooding my tongue, but his low growl sends a pulse of heat straight to my cock. I groan, pushing it back into his mouth in a heated exchange that has my whole body on edge.

He pulls back just enough to look down at me, his pupils blown wide with hunger. “Open,” he commands, his voice dripping with authority.

I obey without hesitation, my lips parting.

Asher smirks, then spits my cum back into my waiting mouth, his grip tightening in my hair. “Swallow.”

A fresh wave of arousal courses through me at his words, making my cock twitch,

like he hasn't already wrung me dry three times tonight. I swallow obediently, my throat bobbing as he watches, his gaze dark and approving.

"Such a good little warlock for your brother," he murmurs, his tone softer now. He presses a lingering kiss to my lips, his tongue sweeping over mine in a slow, possessive glide before pulling away.

Sliding off the bed, he grabs a damp towel from earlier and begins cleaning me up with gentle strokes, his fingers warm despite the cool fabric. The remnants of his earlier release are harder to wipe away, but he does the best he can, his touch lingering longer than necessary.

"We'll shower in the morning," he whispers.

I nod, too spent to respond properly.

Asher climbs into bed beside me, pulling me into his arms, his warmth enveloping me completely. His scent, a mix of sweat, sex, and something distinctly him, lulls me into a hazy, satisfied sleep.

The last thing I feel is the steady rhythm of his heartbeat against my cheek before sleep takes me under.



*Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 10:16 am*

ASHER

My phone goes off, letting me know I've gotten a text. Pressing the play button on the car screen, listening as the robotic voice reads Mom's message, asking me to pick up a list of random ingredients, that makes me laugh.

When the car asks if I want to reply, I say yes and voice that I will.

I'm driving already, on my way home from practice and it's on my way. Pulling off the main highway, I turn toward downtown.

Zayne stayed behind to do some weightlifting. At practice, he was grumbling about me having wolf strength when I easily tackled one of the guys and complaining I get off easy because everyone else has to work out.

He was teasing me, but he's not wrong. Even though I still work out, it's not as much as everyone else on the team.

The difference is, my enhanced abilities are something I'm born with, it's in my DNA. And while magic is in Zayne's DNA, it can be controlled, unlike my abilities.

I was going to stay behind and watch, but he kicked me out after he almost face planted on the treadmill because I couldn't keep my eyes off his bobbing dick in his workout shorts and was distracting him.

What does he expect? He has an amazing cock. One I love to have in my mouth.

But I agreed to leave, kissed him and was on my way.

Pulling into the grocery store, I park and head inside. Grabbing a cart, I start toward the dairy section but slow down, deciding to grab a few more things we might need.

I was thinking of asking Zayne if he wanted to have a stay at home date, watch a movie, snuggle on the couch and eat some junk.

Of course, he's going to bitch about having to work hard to get the extra calories off, but he's going to eat it anyway because the man loves his sweets.

And me, I like hearing his groans of pleasure when he bites into a chocolate for the first time, or the smile on his face when he sees one of his favorite snacks.

One of the elderly cashiers greets me as I walk past her. I smile and give her a nod before continuing on with my shopping.

So much has changed since moving here. And all of it has been good.

I was apprehensive at first, not sure how the town would react to having a strange new wolf in their space. But it didn't take me long to see that they are nothing like the town I grew up in.

The warlocks and the wolves might've been enemies once, long before my time—but around here, that history feels like a ghost. No tension. No sides. Just people—supernatural or not—finding ways to live together.

Dad is the problem in this situation, despite years of him trying to get it in my head, and everyone else in that pack, that wolves are superior.

It's because of his ego and the need to be better than everyone else, the need to prove

he's bigger and badder than everyone that started it. Dexter said they hardly have any issues in town.

Reality is, magic is more powerful than the strength of a wolf. No matter how much my father doesn't want to believe it.

They just chose not to flaunt what they have, to shove it in everyone's faces. Honestly, half the time I forget most of the people around me aren't wolves. They are just enjoying their lives.

That's why seeing Zayne use that little spark of power is so hot.

It's crazy to think that sweet, loving Dexter is really the most powerful warlock on this side of the country. You never could have guessed. And Zayne is set to be the same when he gets older.

My man is a badass. One day, I'd like to see what he can do. I've gotten a small glimpse and I already know he's strong.

Once I'm done grabbing everything I need, and some that I want, I head to the front and check out.

With the bags in hand, I head out of the store. I'm on my way to the car, when I hear someone call out my name.

I pause, head whipping around, trying to see who's speaking to me, senses on high alert. I'm still not familiar with many people around here, and everyone I do know is back at school working out. And the voice came from a man, so it's not Prudence or Harley.

My name is called again, and this time I register the voice. I'd know that voice

anywhere.

An uneasy feeling settles over me.

Turning my head, I stare over at the person I hate the most in this world. My father.

He's parked a few spots over, leaning against the same shitty pickup truck he's had for years.

He loves that thing more than he ever loved me.

That alone should have told me enough about what he was like.

Who he was. But stupid me held out hope that he would see me one day, love me like a father would.

It didn't last long. The older I got, the more I saw that he was just an angry man who hated the world and loved to blame everyone else for his problems. I'd never be good enough for him.

Sadly, it took me being gay and the cold dead look in his eyes when he found out for me to fully see it.

Jaw clenched, I fist my hands around the bags and head toward my car with the intent to ignore him.

He doesn't like that. "Don't you fucking walk away from me, boy!" he barks, loud enough to be heard across the parking lot.

I stop, not wanting him to cause a scene because knowing him he would. He shouldn't even be here. Him stepping foot over the town line is breaking the rules

Dexter set for him when he married Mom.

Taking a deep breath, I turn toward his direction and walk over to him.

“What are you doing here?” I ask, stopping a few feet in front of him.

I don’t want to look him in the eyes, seeing his face makes me want to shift and claw his eyes out.

But if I don’t he’s going to think he has control over me, that the lack of eye contact would be in fear, not in repulsion.

“I heard you ran into some of the pack the other day.” His eyes harden as he glares at me. “They had some pretty interesting things to say.”

“I bet they did,” I mutter. “I don’t see how anything I do is of any concern to you, or anyone in the pack. I’m no longer a part of the pack. We left—”

“You are still my son,” he growls, nostrils flaring as fury masks his face, taking a step forward. “If you think I’d just let you leave the pack, you’re more stupid than I gave you credit for. You are blood. You will never be free of the pack.”

“You need to leave,” I tell him, brushing off his pointless words. “There’s an agreement in place, and showing up like this already breaks it. There’s still time to walk away. I need to get back—Mom’s waiting.”

I go to take a step away, just needing to be done with him. He’s toxic, and I can feel myself being infected by him just by being around him like this.

“I don’t give a fuck about that whore,” he snaps.

The way he talks about Mom has a growl building in my throat.

I can't hit him, it's what he wants, but fuck, right now I really want to rip him apart.

"What I do care about is my son parading around with another man," he spits, pure disgust in his tone.

"He's not just any man." I spin back around, canines exposed. His lips twitch with a smile, loving the fact he's gotten to me. But fuck him. He can say whatever he wants about me, but if he brings Zayne into it, I won't stand by. "He's my mate."

His lip curls as he takes another step forward. He's too close for my liking but I won't back down. Not right now. Not about this.

"Over my fucking dead body, will you be mated to a man. Not only a man, but a warlock," he spits. "This has gone too far. I won't allow this any longer."

I'm confused by what he's talking about. Allow? Like I give a fuck about what he thinks. He has no say or control over my life, who I'm with or what I do. We moved on, we're done with him.

I don't get much longer to think when something smashes into the back of my head. Pain radiates through my skull and the last thing I see is my father's sleazy grin before everything goes black.

*Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 10:16 am*

ZAYNE

I kick the door shut behind me, sweat still clinging to the nape of my neck from practice.

My duffel bag lands with a thud on the hardwood floor, the smell of football and damp fabric spills out.

My limbs ache—the good kind of ache, earned from pushing myself harder than usual.

Coach says I've got potential and I really want to take our team to state this year.

The wards I put up after our date hum softly, reacting to my signature.

Magic recognizes magic, after all. I didn't tell anyone I warded the house but I'm sure Dad could tell since he's a more experienced warlock than me.

Asher looked shaken after the run in with his old pack members.

I could sense the hatred rolling off of them, so I put a few protection wards on the house just to be safe.

“Asher?” I call, dragging myself toward the kitchen, my only thought to see my mate and inhale every carb I can find.

No answer.

The house isn't empty—there's a soft clicking sound coming from the dining room. I walk in and see Alice leaning over the table, rearranging crystals my dad gave her in a pattern I've seen a hundred times but still can't figure out what she's doing.

She doesn't look up. "Hey, honey."

"Hey. Where's Asher?" I yank open the fridge, looking for something microwavable and sweet.

"Oh, I sent him on a quick errand after practice," she says, picking up an amethyst. "Dammit. I still can't get this right." She drops the purple gem to the table.

"What are you trying to do?" I ask, grabbing a Dr. Pepper and cold strawberry butter braid.

"Your dad gave me these crystals to practice making little spells and such. I am trying to do this fertility one and I can't."

"Fertility?" I ask, raising a brow, popping the top on the soda.

Alice blushes. "I haven't said anything to anyone. Not even your dad. But I always wanted more kids. I'm still young, ya know. And well, this is TMI, but you're my son and you're mated to my son...that sounds weird when I say it out loud."

I laugh, but let her continue.

"Anyways. We've not used protection...me and your dad, and nothing has happened. So I'm worried something is wrong with me or I don't know, that piece of shit ex of mine did something to block my reproduction."

"So you want to give me a little brother or sister?" I stuff a piece of the butter braid in



my mouth.

Alice looks up at me and smiles. “If that’s alright with you and Asher. I wouldn’t do anything to hurt you two. You’re my first priority.”

“No, I think it’s awesome. I’d love to have a little sister. You should talk to Dad, though. I’m shit at crystals, that’s his thing. Between you and me, he always talked about giving me a sibling, so I bet he’d be eager to please.”

“Thanks, Zayne.” She sets a hand on mine and smiles. “And don’t worry about Asher. He probably ran into Prudence and you know how they get when together.”

“Yeah, you’re right. He just didn’t say much after practice. I stayed after to get in an extra workout and he was distracting me, so I told him to head home without me. Figured he’d be here by now.”

“He’ll walk through that door any minute. But Zayne, baby. I love you, but you smell like a gym sock. Why don’t you take a shower?”

“Awww, thanks, Alice,” I snort and carry my treats upstairs. Halfway up the stairs a weird tightness coils in my chest, something sharp and unfamiliar. I brush it off as post-workout dehydration or too much sun.

Probably both.

I finish eating in my room, scrolling through my phone absentmindedly, waiting for a text from Asher.

Nothing. I check the timestamp on his last message—hours ago.

Weird. He’s usually all over texting me about everything.

He saw things. Smelled things. Some weird squirrel even tried to square up with him on his run.

I take a quick shower, hoping it'll settle the creeping unease that's starting to slither beneath my skin. Hot Water. Good smelling soap. Steam so thick I can't see my hands in front of me. But the minute I step out of the shower and wrap a towel around me, it slams into me.

My heart.

It tightens—hard—like I've been shocked by a car battery. I stumble into my room, catching myself on the edge of the bed, and stare at my reflection in the mirror on the back of the door.

My chest rises and falls too fast. Sweat beads at my temple, and my ribs ache like something is inside of me and trying to claw its way out.

What the fuck is happening to me?

I breathe in through my nose and out through my mouth. Again and again. It doesn't help. It's like someone has hooked those little paddles at hospitals to me and keeps hitting the zap button over and over.

Panic runs through me and I drop the towel, throw on a shirt and some sweatpants, and flop onto my bed. Maybe I just need to sleep. Maybe it's just?—

Another kick to the chest.

My whole body flinches.

This is not normal.

“Asher,” I whisper, grabbing my phone. I call him. Straight to voicemail. I text him three times.

Me: Where are you?

Me: Call me NOW!

Me: Something is wrong with me.

Nothing.

I pace. Back and forth. Fingers tangling in my dark hair. The feeling only gets worse.

I’m dying.

I’m not crazy. But this...this isn’t right.

I don’t think. I move.

Downstairs, the lights flicker as I hit the last step, my magic reacting to whatever is happening inside of me.

“Dad!”

He’s in the den, a book hovering midair in front of him, his reading glasses sitting low on his nose even though he doesn’t need them. Old habits die hard, especially for old warlocks who grew up pretending to be human.

He looks up and sees my face. Immediately setting his book down.

“What’s wrong, son?”

“I think I need to go to the hospital.”

He blinks. “What?”

“My heart’s been racing for the last hour or so, and it’s feels like—like I’m being defibrillated, over and over again. I can’t breathe. It hurts. I think—think I’m having a heart attack. I’m only a fucking senior in high school.”

His face shifts instantly, concern wrinkling the corners of his eyes. He crosses the room, grabbing my shoulder with one hand, grounding me.

“Hey. Look at me, son. Breathe, Zayne. Just breathe.”

“I am!” I snap, tears threatening because I don't know what else to do and I never cry.

Dad’s mouth tightens. “Alice!” he shouts.

She’s already halfway in the room. “What is it?”

“Have you heard from Asher?”

“No,” she says quickly, grabbing her phone and dialing, her brows furrowing.  
“What’s going on?”

Dad pulls me closer, his arms around my shoulders. It helps. A little.

“Zayne thinks he’s having a heart attack. He’s not, but his body thinks he is.”

“Is that why the lights are flickering and it feels like magic is filling the house?”

“Yes. Did Asher answer?” Dad asks.

“No, and he’s been gone for awhile. I only asked him to stop at the store and get a few things.” She dials the phone again. “He’s not answering. What is going on?”

“They marked each other,” Dad says softly. “And that mark connects them more deeply than anyone realizes.”

Alice’s eyes widen. Her phone slips from her hand and crashes to the floor.

“No,” she gasps, tears filling her eyes as she drops to her knees.

“What?” I ask. “Why does that matter?”

Dad turns me gently, guiding me toward the mirror over the fireplace. I stare, confused, until he brushes the collar of my shirt down. That’s when I see it.

The mark Asher gave me that night when things got so heated is shimmering. Faint. Like moonlight soaked into my skin.

My breath catches.

Dad’s hand stays steady on my back. “That connection is screaming at you right now. Because something isn’t right with Asher.”

The room spins. “No. No, he’s fine. He’s just...taking too long. Maybe his phone died or?—”

“Zayne,” Alice says gently, “You wouldn’t be feeling this unless it was serious. The mark is tethered to his wellbeing. If he’s in pain, your body will respond.”

My knees buckle. Dad catches me, eases me to the couch.

“What do we do?” I whisper. “How do I fix it?”

Dad doesn’t answer right away. He grabs his case of spell ingredients and kneels beside me, sorting through herbs and stones, lips moving silently.

“We need to locate him,” he says. “But I need something of his. Something he wore recently. Or bled on. Or?”

“His hoodie,” I say, scrambling up. “It’s in my laundry. He threw it in there this morning when we went to school.”

Alice races upstairs and returns with the soft, dark hoodie that smells like pine and heat and the woods behind our school. She clutches it, murmuring as she hands it to Dad. He lights a candle without even moving. The flame jumps straight into being.

I feel like my heart’s going to explode, and I keep checking my phone. No new messages. No call. No “hey, babe, I’m fine just ran into a bear while on my run lol.”

Dad frowns. “He’s alive. But... I can’t get a lock on him.”

Alice goes still. “What does that mean?”

He pulls out his phone. “Good ol’ technology,” he mutters. “The car’s near the grocery store. Northern end of town.”

“I sent him there,” Alice whispers, her voice trembling. “I just wanted vanilla ice cream... with sprinkles, caramel, cherries, cookie dough bites... oh, and pickles.” She’s rambling now, blinking fast, like if she keeps talking she won’t start crying.

“Alice!” my dad snaps. “He’s going to be fine. We know he’s alive, that’s what matters, right? We’ll get our boy back.”

“I’m going,” I say, already halfway to the door.

“No,” Dad says, voice hard.

“You have to let me?—”

“No, Zayne. You’re too worked up. You can barely stand.”

“I have to find him. You don’t understand—this feeling—” My voice breaks again, the raw fear of it catching in my throat. “It’s like I’m breaking. I can’t breathe without him.”

Alice nods slowly, rising. “That mark won’t let him rest until he sees Asher with his own eyes.”

Dad hesitates. His jaw flexes. Then he grabs his keys and hands them to me.

“You’re not going alone,” he says. “We go together. I’ll drive. You focus. If he’s in danger, we’ll handle it.”

Alice’s hands tremble as she hands him the keys.

Mine do the same as I head outside to the SUV—not from weakness, but adrenaline, magic, and love.

Because this isn’t just some casual hookup.

This is the real thing. The cosmic, terrifying, fate-sealed kind of love.

And it’s tethered to my skin, to my soul.

And right now, it's in pain.

I will tear apart every tree in the goddamn forest if I have to.

Asher, I'm coming.



## Page 27

*Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 10:16 am*

ASHER

Throbbing in my head forces me awake. My eyes feel heavy, my body groggy. What the hell happened?

When I open my eyes, I'm met with black.

Going to the store. Getting food. Coming out to find my dad in the parking lot.

It all comes back.

"Fuck," I groan as my head spins, my hands pressing against my eyes as I fall back to the ground.

It's cold in here, wherever here is. And smells of dirt and mold, making my nose run.

I want to say I can't believe my father would do something like this, but really, I can.

He didn't have control over something he wanted to control, and found a way to get it.

What is he trying to accomplish? Does he think this is going to get me to come back to the pack?

Why would he even want me to? He clearly hates me and doesn't accept who I am.

But, of course, he's not just going to let me get away and go off to be happy

somewhere else. Not when he can have me in his clutches to control me and make me miserable. It's what he's best at. Been doing it my whole damn life.

Trying again, but slower this time, I manage to get to my hands and knees.

For a moment, the pain is almost too much to handle. The only things I can hear are the sounds of my heavy breathing and the blood from my racing heart beating in my ears.

Opening my eyes, I try to get them to adjust to the dark, but it's pitch black in here.

"Hello!" I call out, wincing as the sound of my loud voice makes my head pound.

I wait and listen. No one responds but I can hear sounds, like feet shuffling. And, is that someone breathing?

Is there someone with me? My head looks around at nothing.

"Is anyone there? Dad? Hello!"

For the first time in a long time, I feel fear running coldly through my veins.

It only amplifies when the light turns on, and everything around me comes into view.

The hairs on the back of my neck stand as every muscle in my body stiffens.

My eyes lock on my father's from across what looks to be a dirt pit, not a dirt cell like I thought.

Not just any pit, but the pack fighting pit. The one that has seen blood spilled more times than I can count. The ground is more dried blood than anything else.

My breathing picks up as anger fills me. “What the hell is this?” I ask, raising my voice and ignoring the pain in my head.

He takes a step forward and glares down at me. “No son of mine will like dick,” he growls. “So if I have to beat the fucking straight back into you, I will.” His lips curve into a sinister grin. “Or, should I say, we will.”

Fingers curling into the loose dirt below me, I raise my lip in a growl. “You can’t be fucking serious? Do you really believe that’s going to work? I can tell you now, no matter what you do to me, I’m still gonna like dick.” I smirk. “Preferably my mate’s dick.”

A growl rips from his chest as he takes another step forward and kicks me in the face.

I grunt, trying to breathe through the pain as blood fills my mouth.

He grabs the back of my head by the hair and yanks it backwards. He leans in close and my stomach rolls at the smell of his rancid breath from chewing tobacco and beer. What the fuck did my mother ever see in this monster? He’s nothing but a vile creature, inside and out.

“I’m very fucking serious. Sure as hell doesn’t hurt to try, now does it?

” he chuckles. “The other alphas are gonna be here any moment now, and I know they’re just as eager as I am to remind you where your place is.

Here. On the fucking ground at my feet like the dirt you are.

I hope you have the strength to fight them all off.

” He laughs again. “Even if you don’t, at least make sure you die trying.

Don't wanna go out like a weak little bitch now, do you?

Either way, you won't be leaving here ever wanting to look at another cock again. We'll make sure of it."

He lets go of my hair and takes a step back.

My heavy head moves to the side to see the door open.

One by one, men make their way into the room and surround me until I'm trapped.

There has to be a good fifteen to twenty men in here. Some of them I recognize, ranging from early twenties to mid forties.

I'm truly fucking screwed.

Whatever they gave me after I passed out is still in my body. My limbs feel weak, my thoughts are fuzzy.

I don't have the strength to even stand, let alone fight these men.

"What's wrong?" a guy taunts. "Too much of a little bitch to fight?" He kicks me hard in the stomach, and I grunt. They laugh as I curl in on myself, pain blooming through my ribs.

Gritting my teeth, I try to get back to my hands and knees, commanding my body to get the fuck up, to fight them. I don't want to go down like this, I don't want to give him the satisfaction of winning this easily.

I swear they wait until I'm almost to my feet before someone kicks me again.

I drop hard and they all laugh.

The taunts start then, and the names.

They kick at me, spit on me, call me every derogatory name in the book.

I feel like a pathetic failure. I'm going to die here; I'm not stupid enough to think he's going to let me live. Not after he thinks I've embarrassed him.

He wants me gone, and he wants it to be at his hands.

As I lay on the ground, curled into a ball, I think about Zayne.

My sweet, carefree mate.

And my heart breaks because I don't want to leave him behind. I don't want to cause him pain.

I just found him. We just started our lives together. I'm not ready for this to be over.

I'm not ready to say goodbye.

Tears fall from my tightly shut eyes, giving them another thing to laugh about. They call me a pussy, a stupid little bitch.

They're all sad, pathetic little boys who hate their lives and get off on other people's pain.

They don't know what it feels like to be loved, to be wanted. To be someone's whole world, or have someone be theirs.

But I do. And even if it was only for a short time, I wouldn't change it for the world.

I hope he knows I didn't want to leave him. I'd never choose to leave him.

Please, forgive me. I love you, Zayne.

ZAYNE

I can feel him.

Even before we roll into the empty parking lot behind the old gas station-turned-market, I know this is so much worse than we thought. Asher's fear pulses through me, not new—but worse now. More urgent. My chest aches like it's being hollowed out from the inside.

The SUV lurches as Dad throws it into park.

I jump out before it stops completely, shoes hitting the cracked asphalt hard.

Alice's car is there. Driver's side door open.

Groceries scattered across the ground like someone dropped them mid-motion.

A bag of cherries has burst, red fruit rolling out in all directions like little witnesses.

“What the fuck,” I breathe, half to myself, half to whoever's listening.

Alice's face drains of color. She presses a trembling hand to her mouth.

“Asher,” I say. My voice breaks on his name. I swallow hard, push past the panic, and kneel beside a jar of broken pickles. No blood. No signs of struggle... but I feel it. Like a tether pulling at my ribs. He was here. Taken from here.

Dad watches me, his eyes dark. "Zayne?"

"We need to go south," I say, already turning back toward the truck. "Now."

He doesn't question me. He shouldn't. Not when it comes to Asher.

Alice slides in the backseat this time, pale and silent.

Her hands twist the hem of her sweater. Dad starts the engine and peels out of the lot.

My fingers twitch with the need to do something more than ride shotgun.

I close my eyes, pull in a breath, and open myself to the bond.

Magic and instinct tangled up in something stronger than either of us ever expected.

"Left," I say.

Ten minutes later: "Another left."

The roads blur. Pine trees whip past the windows, dark and thick. I guide us like a damn GPS. Every flicker of connection, every faint tug, I follow.

An hour in, Alice gasps.

Dad glances back at her, then at me. "You sure, Zayne?"

I nod. My pulse is a drumbeat. "Yes. Why?"

Alice's voice is barely a whisper. "This is Pack Canton territory."



My stomach flips. Cold spreads down my spine.

"This is where we lived," she adds. "His dad still does."

My mouth goes dry. "Shit."

Alice looks back at us, eyes wide and glassy. "He can't be here. His dad...We thought we were far enough away. Laid low enough. But if they find out who he really is...they'll hurt him."

"We ran into some of the pack not long ago. They talked shit. About me. About him being with me."

A flicker of static cracks at Dad's fingertips, the air around him humming with restrained magic.

"They probably ran back to Billy. Told him everything. He'd be furious," she says. Then louder, with sudden panic, "We have to get to my son. Now!"

We drive without words. The air inside the cab fills with unspoken dread.

We pull off the road near an abandoned service depot, swallowed by moss and vines. Dad kills the headlights. It's too quiet. Not even crickets chirping can be heard. Alice clutches the door handle. I reach across and touch her arm. She jumps.

"He's gotta be okay," I whisper. A shimmer builds under my skin.

"We need to go in discreetly," Dad says, voice low. "No one can know we're here."

I nod, watching the tension coil in his shoulders as he steps in front of us.

He closes his eyes, lifting a hand. "This might tingle."

Magic stirs. The air shifts around us. Dad murmurs the veil spell, each word sharp and sure.

“ Umbrix tenebrae, audi silentium, claude vestigia. ”

The shadows bend, wrap around us like a second skin. Scent, sound, presence—masked.

Even Asher wouldn't be able to sense us like this.

Dad leads. I follow. Alice brings up the rear.

We move through the pack lands like ghosts.

The spell clings to us, hiding our presence as we pass houses with moss-covered roofs and porch swings swaying on their own.

Children play near a creek, splashing water at each other, giggling.

A pair of women hang linens on a line between trees, chatting softly as the moon filters through the branches.

I see a man repairing the steps to a cabin, a toddler perched beside him with a toy hammer. It's jarring—so much normalcy while Asher and Alice described this place to be a cage...a prison.

We pass an old cemetery tucked between two oaks. The stones are cracked, some leaning, others totally demolished. A raven watches us from the archway like it knows we're not supposed to be here.

The houses thin out as we near the edge of the pack homes.

The land changes slowly. Grass grows taller here, untended and patchy.

The road turns into more of a dirt path, with weeds pushing up between old tire ruts.

The trees crowd closer together the farther we go, branches hanging low like they're trying to block us from moving forward.

We pass a rusted-out swing set, the chains swaying though there's no wind. A plastic toy is tipped on its side in the dirt, half-buried like it's been there a long time. No more kids laughing, no more laundry flapping on lines. Just stillness.

And then, just beyond the last crooked fence post, we see it.

The building is decrepit, skeletal beams poking through collapsed roofing. But there's light flickering from inside, pale and orange, like firelight. We creep closer.

I narrow my eyes, heart pounding. "What is this place?" I whisper.

Alice answers on a broken sob, "The fight pit. It's where Billy sends wolves to fight to the death... or to just be beat on to teach them a lesson."

Something hot and sharp pierces through the bond—panic, pain, exhaustion. It punches the breath from my lungs. My knees almost buckle. I double over for a second, gripping the rotted fencepost beside me like it might hold me together.

Then I hear it—shouting. Not words, just rage. Frenzied, ugly. And somewhere underneath it, the brutal, sickening rhythm of fists on flesh.

Alice stumbles back, pressing both hands to her mouth. "Please no," she cries, her

voice cracking. “Anywhere but there.”

Dad pulls her against his side, holding her tight. “He’s gonna be okay, honey,” he murmurs. “We’re going to get him out.”

“Why couldn’t he just leave us alone?” she sobs. “Leave him alone? He was happy. He was thriving.”

“Shhhhhh, honey,” Dad soothes. “We’re going to fix it.”

Her cries mix with the chaos I feel pouring through the bond. But the fear—the fear that’s been clinging to me—it’s gone.

Now, I’m pissed.

My blood boils. My magic doesn’t simmer anymore. It’s a raging inferno clawing at my insides, demanding release. I’ve never felt power like this. It pools under my skin, hungry, furious, ready .

We slip in through a broken panel. The stench hits me first—sweat, blood, fear.

At the center is the arena. Crude ropes, dark with old stains, are strung between rusted posts, forming a ring. The dirt floor inside is splattered with blood, some fresh, some old and blackened. It’s not just a fight pit—it’s a fucking slaughterhouse.

Men circle it, jeering and barking like animals. Their eyes gleam with bloodlust. Every single one of them wears that same smug sneer, the kind of expression people wear when they believe no one will stop them.

And in the middle of it all—Asher.

He's on his knees, swaying like he might collapse. A mess of bruises and blood covers his face, one eye swollen nearly shut, jaw hanging slack. His shirt hangs in tatters, soaked with sweat and crimson, clinging to the lines of a battered chest. Trembling fists stay clenched at his sides.

But he's still alive.

Around him, six—no, seven—wolves in human form circle like jackals. They take turns lunging in, landing punches, kicks. One grabs him by the shoulder and slams him into the dirt. Another laughs and spits on him.

I clench my jaw so tight my teeth ache.

Beyond them, more bodies lie sprawled on the dirt floor. Eight? Nine? Unconscious or worse, already taken down by the same man they're trying to break.

Asher's still fighting.

My pulse roars. My vision narrows.

Something inside me uncoils.

How dare they touch my man...my fucking mate!

The fury doesn't come in waves—it explodes. Heat tears through my chest. Magic lashes out before I even realize I've moved. The lights flicker. The air pops and crackles like a thunderstorm. My fingers twitch and the magic answers—rushing out in a surge so violent the floor trembles beneath us.

A pulse of force tears through the air, invisible but brutal. Two of the wolves go flying, their bodies slamming into the posts with bone-snapping impact.

The shockwave shatters, the invisibility cloaking me, ripping the magic apart.

“HEY!” someone shouts, but it’s too late.

I step into the pit like death itself.

“Get away from him!” I yell.

“Who the fuck are you?” someone asks.

Another flick of my wrist. Three more drop.

A man storms out of the shadows, holding a gun, his face twisted in rage.

He’s big—broad shoulders, thick arms, tall like Asher, but that’s where the resemblance ends.

His face is rough and hard, like he’s never smiled in his life.

His eyes burn with something dark and mean, and there's a kind of madness in the way he moves, like he's barely hanging on.

I don’t know him, but I know who he is.

He’s got none of Asher’s warmth. No kindness. Just anger. Control. Like hurting people is how he feels powerful.

"You!" he snarls.

“Me.” I smirk.

A crack of light splits the room. The gun flies from Billy's hand before he can even blink. Dad steps forward, eyes glowing, voice like thunder.

"Don't ever point a weapon at my child."

Alice is already at Asher's side, sobbing. Her hands flutter over his battered body. "Billy, you fucking monster ! What did you do to my son?"

Billy snarls. "He's mine. I was fixing him. You let him get soft. He thinks he's into men."

"He is !" she screams. "He always has been!"

Billy shakes his head, frothing at the mouth. "He can't be. He's in this pack. No son of mine is a dude fucker."

Dad steps between Billy and Alice. "Well, he's mated to my son, and you won't ever speak of him like that. He's my son now. Not. Yours," he roars.

Billy shifts. Fur explodes from his skin, bones cracking, body twisting into a massive black wolf. He lunges.

Alice screams.

Magic and muscle collide. My dad meets the wolf mid-air, and it's like watching a spell go off inside a tornado.

They crash with a deafening thud, fur and magic clashing in a blur.

Spells crack and whip through the room, lighting up the shadows like lightning flashes.

Howls echo off the walls. Snarls and roars and the sharp snap of bone hit my ears like cannon blasts.

My hands are sore from casting, my magic flaring wildly as I knock down anyone stupid enough to try getting close to Asher.

Alice is crouched low over him, shielding him with her body like a lioness.

And then— CRACK.

Everything stops.

No more howling. No more spells. Just breathing. Heavy and uneven.

Dad stands tall over the huge black wolf crumpled on the ground. His chest rises and falls in harsh gulps, his shirt torn open and smeared with blood and dirt. One of his hands still glows faintly with leftover magic, flickering at the edges like an old flame.

The wolf doesn't move.

Alice doesn't take her eyes off Asher. Her hands are still on him, trembling.

I move across the blood-soaked floor, falling to my knees beside him. He looks at me with one swollen eye, the other hidden beneath a bruise that spreads across half his face. His gaze is raw and tired—but still him.

Still my Asher.

Dad steps over slowly and kneels beside us. He ruffles Asher's hair gently, and Asher winces, trying to hold in a hiss of pain.



"You're safe, son," Dad says, his voice softer than I've ever heard it.

"Thanks," Asher rasps, voice barely there.

Dad looks at him for a moment longer, then his eyes shift toward the lifeless body of the wolf on the ground. "I'm sorry," he says quietly. "I know he was your father."

Asher turns his head, just enough to see. He blinks slowly, face unreadable.

"Don't be," he says. "He might have helped bring me into this world, but he was never anything more than that."

I slide my arm around him, careful of his ribs. He leans into me like his body can't fight anymore.

"Let's get you home, baby," I whisper.

He tries to smile. It twitches at the corner of his mouth, then fades.

Alice helps me lift him. We move slow, steady.

Dad glances back toward the pit and the still-standing wolves, then lowers his voice. "We need to get out of here. Fast ."

I glance around. The wolves are tense, shoulders squared, faces hard. They're watching us with clenched jaws and fists, like they're one breath away from coming after us.

My chest tightens. I adjust my hold on Asher, keeping him close. My hand—my free one—starts to glow as magic flares. Fire flickers at my fingertips, small and angry.

“If even one of you takes a step toward us,” I say, loud and clear, “I’ll bring this whole place down. Then your pack. I’ll burn it to the ground—with your families inside.”

They freeze. Nobody speaks. The fire crackles like it’s daring them.

Then a voice cuts through the quiet. "Leave them."

I turn, and there’s a guy standing near the entrance. He’s built like a wall, big and solid, probably around our age. His face is calm, but his eyes say he’s seen too much. He doesn’t look angry. He just looks... tired.

He glances at Asher, something soft in his expression—regret, guilt, or maybe just understanding.

He nods once.

We move past him. He doesn’t try to stop us. His eyes stay on Asher as we leave.

I don’t know who he is, and I don’t have the energy to wonder. I’ll ask Asher later—after he’s safe. After he’s healed.

Dad leads the way, keeping the path clear.

None of us look back.

The ride home is quiet. Asher is curled up in my lap, wrapped in my jacket, warm and breathing steadily. I keep my hand on his chest, feeling each breath rise and fall like it’s the only thing keeping me grounded

They took him from me once.

They won't again.

We're going home.

*Source Creation Date: August 3, 2025, 10:16 am*

ASHER

I'd have to say, one of the best things about being a wolf shifter is the quick healing.

Being in the pit, getting my ass beaten within an inch of my life, was the worst pain I've ever felt. Something I never want to experience again.

I hated that I was so weak, but the drugs they gave me didn't let me properly defend myself. It was a weak, pathetic move on their part.

It wasn't a fair fight, not by a long shot, but that's what he wanted.

He wanted me broken and beaten, to feel like I had nothing left. He wanted me to beg for my life so he could be the hero to give it back to me.

But I didn't, not once.

Not that I didn't want to, because I did. I wanted to live, I wanted to fight.

If I asked him for mercy, he wouldn't have given it to me. He would have kept me locked up where he could put me through more of his bullshit conversion mentality.

I'm such a fool for not giving Zayne the benefit of the doubt. I should have known he'd come for me. That he wouldn't just let me die.

I knew in my heart and soul that he was on his way. The closer he got, the more the will to hold on took over me.

And then he was there like an avenging angel.

I've never seen anything like him and his father using their magic.

Zayne was so brave and powerful, so fucking strong. Is it wrong of me to say it was pretty damn hot watching him go all beast mode?

It's early in the morning, the sun hasn't risen yet.

I've been awake for an hour now, unable to go back to sleep, too restless to even try.

Zayne's head is on my chest where he lays cuddled up to my side.

Playing with his hair, I watch him sleep, unable to look away. I almost lost him forever. More like, he almost lost me.

The idea of leaving him alone, to have to go on without me, makes my stomach turn. The loss of a mate is a pain much greater than what I went through back at the pit and I never want him to have to experience that.

I don't want to leave him, but I don't think I can sit still any longer.

The wolf in me is howling to get out. I'm too tense. I need to shift and run, stretch out my muscles and burn off some energy.

"I'll be back," I whisper against the top of his head before pressing a kiss to his dark, silky locks.

Carefully, I maneuver him off me. He lets out a grumbling sound before snuggling into the pillow I replace myself with.

With another kiss to the side of his head and a quick inhale of his scent to settle me, I

leave the room in only my boxers.

When I got home, I was a mess of blood and sweat. Zayne helped me shower because I was too weak to do it to myself.

It took everything in me not to break at the tenderness of his care. We didn't talk much apart from telling one another we loved each other. It wasn't the time for conversation.

By the time I was out and dried off, I was already starting to feel better than before.

Still, I was sore and so fucking tired.

I barely got my boxers on before I crashed in bed and fell asleep with Zayne refusing to leave my side.

Now, as I head out into the backyard, I'm practically healed.

I wouldn't want to get into any fights anytime soon, but I'm well enough to shift and go for a run.

As soon as I'm in my wolf form, I'm off.

Every slap of my paws against the cool forest ground feels freeing. The wind against my fur, the strong smells of the earth around me. It's all settling. Safe. Right.

By the time I make it back to the house, I feel like my old self. Physically, at least.

Breaking through the tree line, I halt when I look toward the back door, and find Zayne there.

He's looking around. The pull in my chest tells me he's looking for me. Giving the

bond a little tug, his eyes snap over to mine.

My mate is so damn sexy. His dark hair rumpled from sleep. He's dressed in a t-shirt and sweatpants. He looks good enough to eat.

And fuck, do I ever want to have a taste of him right now.

My heart starts racing for a whole new reason.

He can feel my arousal through the bond and I'm surprised to find him responding with his want for me.

My mate wants something only I can give. And I plan on doing exactly that.

If the last twenty-four hours taught me anything, it's to enjoy every moment you have because even though we might live longer than the average human, our lives can still be cut short at any time.

Zayne takes a step forward, his need for me lighting up the bond.

I take a step back.

He takes another forward. And I disappear back into the forest.

No way am I going to make it easy—I love a good chase. Working for the prize makes it that much better.

On stealthy paws, I sink deeper into the trees.

It doesn't take long until I see Zayne. He's followed me in, just like I wanted him to.

My mate has been wanting to try something for a while now, and I'm more than

eager to give that to him right now.

Closing off my side of the bond to not give anything away, I wait and watch in the shadows.

Zayne walks further in, every step getting closer and closer to me.

He stops and looks around, the sky slowly starting to change from black to a dark blue.

Shifting my weight, my paw presses down on a stick. The sound of it cracking fills the silent space around us.

Zayne's eyes snap over in my direction, but he can't see me.

But I can see him. I see the excitement on his face and I can smell the arousal coming off him in waves. My needy boy. So fucking desperate for me.

I watch as the anticipation grows within him before he turns around and starts running in the opposite direction from me.

My lips curve into a smile inside my mind.

Yes. Run, my little mate.

I give him enough time to get a head start before I take off, unable to hold back anymore.

As I race through the woods, I'm fueled by adrenaline and arousal.

The hunt is exhilarating.



I stalk my mate like prey, with every intention of devouring him when I catch him.

When I get too close, I slow down, hiding behind trees and rocks.

Zayne stops in a small clearing, bending over to brace himself on his thighs as he takes a moment to catch his breath.

When I take a step closer, his head snaps to the side, eyes locking with mine.

His pupils dilate, chest heaving, and another wave of his arousal hits me hard.

I let out a low growl, my cock fully erect and wanting.

All I can think about in this moment is catching Zayne, pinning him to the ground and fucking breeding him until he can't remember his name.

“Mine,” I snarl through the bond.

His eyes widen and then he's off again.

This time I don't hold back. I run. But he runs too.

He's giving everything he's got, using every ounce of energy he has.

When I get too close, I pull back just enough so he's out of reach.

He's panting hard now and I can hear how fast his heart is beating. Pure lust and excitement are pouring off him. It's the high of the chase that has both of us in our grasp.

I'm only able to hold out for another minute longer before I put this hunt to an end.

With a growl, I pounce, knocking Zayne to the ground.

He goes down with a grunt, landing on his stomach. His breathing erratic, his need nearly suffocating.

I'm fucking feral for him, my wolf instincts screaming to take over completely, but before I let that happen, I have to know he's okay with this.

"Are you sure?" I push through the bond as I press a paw against his back, pinning him to the ground.

He lays there, panting heavily, not even trying to escape me anymore. I can smell how much he wants this. But I need his verbal confirmation too. Even if it's through the bond.

"Yes," he answers back in the bond. "I want this. I want you."

That's all I need before my animalistic instincts take over.

I claw at his sweatpants, shredding the material that's between me and my mate. Zayne curses and whimpers as he tries to help me remove his sweats.

When his tight bare ass comes into view, I growl, low, hungry.

Zayne lays there, ass in the air. His face is pressed against the ground as he looks back at me with pure desire shining brightly in his stunning eyes. "Please," he whispers. It's needy and pathetic and so fucking sexy.

Bringing my muzzle down to his ass, my tongue darts out, lapping over his tight hole before thrusting past the ring of muscle.

"Oh fuck," he cries out, arching his ass, pushing himself deeper onto my tongue as I

eat him like the starved wolf I am.

I'm bigger in this form and this is the best I can do to prep him to take me.

I fuck him with my tongue until he's a sobbing mess below me.

"Please, Asher," he whines like the needy little cock slut he is. "I need you. Please, fuck me."

He tastes so fucking good.

Moving up his body, I open my jaw and latch it around the back of his neck, pinning him in place as I get into position behind him with a feral growl.

Thrusting forward, I try to get myself inside him. It's so slippery, I'm dripping so much pre-cum that it slips past his hole and slides through his crack.

I try again and again, but can't fucking get it where I need to go, and I growl in frustration.

Fuck. Now is not the time to have no fucking hands to position myself properly.

As if Zayne is reading my mind, he reaches back and wraps his hand around my cock.

I groan, thrusting into his touch as he brings my cock down where it needs to go.

He holds me in place, and I don't waste time thrusting inside him.

Zayne cries out, his nails digging into the dirt below as I let out a snarl.

Fuck. He feels so good, so tight. Need to fuck him. Need to breed him.

Shifting my weight, I get a better angle when he lifts his ass up a bit more and we both moan.

That's it. That's the spot.

Unable to hold back, I let go and start to fuck him savagely.

I'm lost to the pure blinding pleasure right now.

I don't need to check in with Zayne, to make sure he's okay, because I can feel him through the bond.

He loves this. I'm making him feel good.

That has me fucking him harder.

The quiet forest is filled with Zayne's moans, whimpers, and whines of pleasure mixing with my growls, grunts, and snarls as my cock glides in and out of his ass. He grinds against the ground for friction as he chants my name.

My knot bumps against his hole, and I want to thrust it deep inside his ass.

When Zayne thrusts back at the same time I thrust forward, it forces my knot inside him. "Oh god!" he screams as I lock myself in place.

It's too much. He's too tight. It feels too fucking good and I let go. With a loud, guttural growl, my cock pulses inside him. Rope after rope of cum fills his tight warm ass until it's dripping free.

"Fuck. Oh good. Oh, fuck," he whimpers below me. "I need to cum, Asher. Please. Let me touch myself."

In this position, he wouldn't have been able to slip a hand between him to jerk off properly.

My knot deflates just enough for me to be able to pull out without hurting him much and it slips free, still hard and hanging between my legs as my cum drips from Zayne's used hole. It's the best sight I've ever seen.

Biting at his shirt, I growl as I flip him over on his back. He's dirty, grass and dirt clinging to his shirt as he lays there, looking up at me with nearly black eyes as his chest rises and falls.

But that's not what has my attention. My eyes drop to his long, thick cock laying flat against his stomach. It's leaking pre-cum, smeared all over his abs.

My mate needs to cum, and I plan on being the one to make him.

Locking eyes with his, I lean down and lap at his hard cock.

"Fuck." He tosses his head back, arm thrown over his eyes as he thrusts up into my touch.

With a low growl, I lap up his shaft over and over again before curling my tongue around his heavy balls.

"Asher," he whimpers, moving his arm to look up at me with pleading eyes.

I lick faster, and his breathing grows heavy. He's close, so close. Just needs something to throw him over the edge.

I nip at the underside of his cock and he gasps, arching off the ground as his cock starts to pulse. Cum shoots out in thick streams, covering his stomach and abs. "Asher, fuck baby, yes, oh gods," he chants as his orgasm takes hold of him.

When his cock is spent and his balls have nothing left to give, he drops back down to the ground, groaning. “Holy shit,” he pants out.

Not wanting to waste a drop of his cum, I clean him up, getting a groan of approval from Zayne. When I'm done, I cover his body with mine and lick his face.

“Gross.” He laughs, pushing at me.

Shifting back into human form, I laugh with him as I collapse on top of him.

He grunts, and I wrap my arms around him, rolling us until we end up side by side.

We say nothing as we just lay there on the ground, looking up at the sky as it comes to life.

We don't need words, we can feel one another. Him happy, content. Me, in love, safe.

Pressing a kiss to his temple, I snuggle him closer when he shivers, moving onto our sides so that I'm mostly covering him with my body. Because of my body heat, it's pretty cozy.

After a while, in comfortable silence, I speak. “I love you. You know that right? You're mine, Zayne. I'm keeping you forever and I'm never letting you go.”

“Good,” he murmurs, pressing a kiss to my chest. “Because that was never an option. I love you too, Asher. You changed my life, for the better and I can't thank you enough for that. I can't imagine a life without you in it.”

My chest clenches, and my hold on him tightens. “You saved me. In more ways than you could ever understand. And for that, I owe you my life. I will spend the rest of our days together loving and cherishing you.”

“And I plan on doing the same thing with you, Asher. It’s you and me against the world.”

“Forever,” I murmur, kissing the top of his head.

“And always.”

I never thought in a million years I’d find this kind of happiness.

If I never moved to Sugar River, I’d never have met Zayne, and the idea of that makes me want to rip the world apart.

I was never meant to take over the pack for my father. That life was never supposed to be mine.

No. I’m right where I’m supposed to be.

With Zayne. My heart. My soul. My everything.

My mate.