

The Challenge Two Alphas, One Girl Chapter 7

Chapter 7: Apologies and Announcements

Friday's POV

Thaddeus looked so broken all of a sudden. I pulled his head down towards mine, pressing my forehead against his. He touched the tip of his nose to mine.

How could I have thought this was a prank orchestrated by my cruel brother? My brother, Fang, was a Beta not a supreme being. He could not command two Alphas to behave like this.

A knock on the door broke us apart.

It was Astrid, Fang's mate. She despised me. She stood there in a matching yellow tube top and short shorts. Her makeup was expertly contoured and her hair was in an elaborate bun.

attention and before she discovered she was my brother's mate, she had already thrown herself at all the alphas, betas and gammas she had encountered. She loved being high up in the pack hierarchy and she hated me, the wolf-less lowest ranking she-wolf. She would be livid that two Alphas had challenged each other for me. That was probably her dream. I really just wanted one mate who truly loved me and I hoped Thaddeus or Maze could be that one.

"I have to steal Friday," she drawled. "She has to be properly attired for the Celebration so she can look she like the prize two Alphas would compete for."

Thaddeus stiffened, picking up on her thinly veiled insult regarding my looks. I grinned. Thaddeus was such a cool alpha, so perceptive and considerate.

"She already is that," Thaddeus said. "But, I'll let you dress her up, even prettier." He winked at me. I kissed his cheek.

Astrid led me to a room in the pack house I had never seen or even heard of before on the same Alpha floor. It was a walk-in closet filled with formal wear for a woman. Gorgeous gowns lined the walls. There were also headpieces, crowns of jewels, flower crowns and wreaths.

"This is the dressing room for the future Luna," she said, eyeing me as though I was clearly not the future Luna. Her drawn-on eyebrows did not match her angry expression.

She put me in a dress that was short in the front but long in the back. The material was a pastel pink but was laced with gold thread so it would sparkle in the moonlight tonight. My hair was really wavy, almost curly. She curled it into loose ringlets and actually loved

it but I did not say anything because she looked so p****d off. She put a huge beautiful flower crown on my head. I marvelled at it. The pink and gold roses matched my dress perfectly. I was given heels that were clear as though they were made of glass. They were surprisingly comfortable. She did my makeup a lot less heavy than hers but it suited me. I was shocked at how pretty I looked. I could scarcely believe it. I really looked like a Luna two Alphas would be fighting for.

Thaddeus' POV

After that scantily clad woman with the strange eyebrows took my little Luna away to get dressed, I also got ready for the ceremony. The men would wear blazers and shirts with trousers. The women would be all decked out in flowers and beads and whatever else.

I met my Beta, Theo, downstairs in front of the packhorse. There was a huge bonfire and the entire Marigold pack was gathered on the grounds, all chattering excitedly. She-wolves were eyeing me hungrily.

I looked around for my mate. Alpha Maze came into view. Ugh that son-of-a-b*tch. If it weren't for him, I would be heading back home with my Luna tomorrow. I had to stay in Marigold two more weeks and then Maze's Beta, Fang, was leading the most beautiful woman I naa ever seen towards us. It was my Luna, Friday, all dressed up, crowned with flowers for the Celebration and Challenge Announcement.

Even though Fang was my mate's brother, she seemed extremely uncomfortable around him so I didn't really care to get close to him. He would not be that sort of brother-in-law. They seemed to have a terrible relationship which I was sure was mostly or rather entirely his fault as the elder and more influential of the two.

Fang led Friday to Maze and myself. I linked my arm with Friday's right arm and my challenger, Maze, was on her left.

Maze's POV

I drew a sharp intake of breath. There were gasps from my pack members as they recognised Friday, the shunned wolf-less she-wolf, adorned in flowers and shimmering fabric like a queen. She looked so beautiful. I sighed, noticing Thaddeus immediately link his arm with hers. Her left arm remained at her side, where I stood. I took another deep breath. I still was not sure why fate had aligned me with this wolf-less girl but it was now or never.

"Friday," I whispered to her. She seemed surprised I was addressing her. She looked up at me, her eyes wide. I remembered how crest-fallen she had looked when I had rejected her and felt a pang of guilt. If I had wrapped her in my arms and marked her immediately, Thaddeus would have missed his chance and I would not have this whole challenge to deal with.

"I'm sorry for rejecting you," I said softly. Her doe eyes grew even wider with shock. "I take it back. I hope you will choose me and stay in Marigold where you belong," I said.

Thaddeus was clearly listening to our conversation. "You look like a goddess, Friday," he said. "I can't wait to worship you!" Friday blushed and looked at the ground, away from both of us, overwhelmed by all the attention.

Fang addressed the crowd, in his most powerful Beta voice, "Welcome, werewolves of Marigold, to the Peace Treaty Celebration!"

The pack members cheered. The visiting warriors hooted. Beta Theodore was clapping.

"We welcome our allies from the Berryndale Pack, Alpha Thaddeus Hawthorne and Beta Theodore Rosewood," boomed Fang.

The cheers were deafening. Many she-wolves in scantily clad festival outfits were whispering. I could tell they had heard that neither I nor Thaddeus had a Luna. Well, they were about to have their gossip updated.

"Tonight is a very special night, not only do we celebrate our allies but we also welcome a peaceful challenge between allied packs," continued Fang.

There were gasps and murmurs of excitement. "Alpha Maze Mason of Marigold was fated to mate Friday Fenestra," Fang said. The crowd gasped collectively. The shock was tremendous. "...whom he initially rejected yesterday," continued Fang.

More reactions came from the crowd: shock, sympathy for Friday, sympathy for me, agreement with my rejection of a wolf-less girl.

"Today Alpha Thaddeus Hawthorne of Berryndale discovered he was fated to mate Friday Fenestra, her second chance after rejection," said Fang.

Thaddeus' POV

"Alpha Thaddeus accepted Friday as his mate and Luna and Alpha Maze rescinded his rejection of Friday, also accepting her as his mate and Luna," said Fang, enjoying the rapture of the crowd though his sister was caught in the middle of this debacle.

I would think a brother would be much more protective and frankly disgusted that his sister was being fought over like a delicious piece of meat or a desirable woodland territory. My heart went out to my little mate. I had to get her away from this place.

The crowd was in uproar, all wondering what the conclusion to Fang's tale would be.

"I know, I know," Fang said, prompting the crowd to quiet down so they could hear the rest.

“Both Alphas have agreed to enter into a challenge marked by this full moon and ended by the next full moon. They have a month to win Friday’s heart and allegiance as Luna. The first two weeks of the challenge, including this very ceremony, will be held in Marigold and the last two weeks and ending ceremony where Friday gives her answer and chooses her Alpha and mate will be held in Berryndale,” Fang summarised.

The crowd cheered, satisfied with this drama and the conclusion which promised more drama. There were some murmurs of disappointment that they were hosting the beginning ceremony, and not the ending ceremony, where they would learn who Friday chose, but they knew the gossip would reach Marigold at the speed of lightning so they were not too worried.

Friday was still looking down. She seemed uncomfortable. “You ok, Friday?” I asked her. “I wonder if I could sit down,” she said softly. “In a moment,” said Maze gently. “She sits now,” I said dangerously. Maze glared at me.

I led Friday over to a row of five chairs for the pack leaders several yards away from the bonfire. The crowd parted for us. Maze followed us. I helped Friday into the middle chair and sat on her right. Maze sat on her left. Theo sat on my right at the end and Fang sat on the other side of Maze at the other end.

“Better, little Luna?” I whispered in her ear. She blushed and nodded. Friday’s POV

I was sitting between two alphas and the whole pack had their eyes on me. Yesterday I was banned from the pack house twice, once by the beta, my own brother, and then by the alpha, my own mate who rejected me on the spot. I was an emotional wreck but I had no time to process any of it. It was all so

surreal. The auras of the two alphas were overwhelming me. I felt something stir inside me. Thaddeus’ rainforest smell mingled with Maze’s orchard smell. I smiled a little.

“What are you dreaming of, Friday, tell me so I can give it to you?” Whispered Thaddeus, making me tremble.

I bit my lip. “You smell really nice,” I whispered to him. He chuckled. The pack members were dancing to the beating of drums now. The feast was being set up, buffet style, in the field and light refreshments were being served on huge platters for the while. I had not been to any pack celebration in more than two years, including the alpha ceremony last night. The pack members were gleeful: two parties consecutively!

They were having the time of their lives. The platters came our way, bearing a variety of treats.

“What’s this?” I asked politely, smiling at the server who was holding out a platter of small yellow

"It's quiche," the server said, looking at me strangely. "Same as last night, Miss."

"I wasn't there, sorry," I mumbled, trying one. I didn't like it. Thaddeus finished it for me. Alpha Maze was looking a little guilty.

"You should have been allowed at my welcoming ceremony," he whispered in my other ear. "Your brother was too harsh and I agreed with your ban only because...I couldn't handle being near your smell and...still...resisting you. You...smell delicious."

I felt a little tingle in my stomach at being complimented by Maze, but was it really necessary to resist me at all? Thaddeus accepted me immediately. I had thought that it would be impossible for an alpha to be proud to have me until I saw Thaddeus' reaction. I realised the world was much bigger than Marigold and their ideas.

"Thank you, Alpha Maze," I whispered back.

I suddenly had to use the bathroom. I realised I did not even know where that was. I was so unfamiliar with the pack house.

"I really need to use the bathroom," I whispered to no one in particular.

Thaddeus sprang to his feet, offering me his hand. "Do you even know where the bathroom is?" Asked Maze, rolling his eyes. "Of course I do, my bathroom is adjacent to my room," said Thaddeus simply. "You're taking her all the way to the alpha floor to use one of the master bathrooms?" Retorted Maze. "Which other bathroom would the Luna use?" Spat Thaddeus.

He was right. If they did indeed both wish me to be their Luna, I should be allowed to use the alpha floor but my heels were starting to bother me. I was not so sure about the five flights of steps.

"Thank you, Thaddeus, but my heels," I mumbled. "I'll carry you up the stairs, baby. It'll give us some much needed alone time," he said suggestively.

I blushed. Maze looked furious. He sprang to his feet and got in Thaddeus' face. "I'll escort her to the nearest bathroom," offered Fang.

The alphas both nodded.

"If so much as a single shiny hair on her beautiful head is harmed, I will personally ensure that there is no more peace between us," warned Thaddeus, his tone deadly.

Whoa. Thaddeus suspected that my brother was mistreating me. It was common knowledge among my actual pack members but no one really cared and they had been putting on a show for the visitors since I had suddenly become important.

Fang nodded. "Of course, Alpha Thaddeus, I wouldn't dream of doing anything like that. She's my baby sister!" He protested.

I snorted with laughter, unable to hold it in. Fang glared at me. I looked down, my go-to move to avoid wrath.

Alpha Maze surprised me by adding, "Be careful with her and bring her back quickly, Fang."

I smiled at him. I wanted to kiss Thaddeus on the cheek as I had done the last time we parted but I was afraid to start a war. Thaddeus seemed to guess my thoughts. He was very good at that. He blew me a kiss and Theo winked at me. I was so grateful they had suddenly burst into my lame life. That reminded me of someone I needed to check on! My cat, Saturday. I was sort of a Luna now. Maybe I could try to give

a small command. I was scared but I loved my cat. .

Thaddeus smiled. "We have a kid already, baby, a fur baby. Hey, it's not the alpha heir I wanted but I'll put that in you soon enough," he joked.

Maze looked like he was ready to kill. "Yeah, we'll go get the cat and come back," muttered Fang.

He led me into the pack house. It was decorated beautifully in gold and green. The alpha ceremony and the treaty ceremony had made the pack committee go all out. There were streamers and balloons everywhere. Glitter was all over the floor. I snatched a stray gold helium balloon, giggling. Fang looked at me like I was an i***t but he did not say anything. The pack house she-wolves' bathroom was like a mall's restroom with multiple stalls and a long line of sinks under a wall-long mirror. Everything gold and green. I quickly relieved myself and washed my hands, still shocked every time I caught a glimpse of myself. Around this time last night, I was crying myself to sleep on a mattress on the floor in a thin nightgown. Now I was dressed up like a princess, nervous but very much coddled by everyone all of a sudden. I was happy for all the times I felt like giving up but did not. Life was full of surprises, even for the most downtrodden.

"Friday!" Fang called, snapping me out of my inner monologue.

Thurried outside, treading lightly and carefully in my heels on the tiled floor, before he could destroy the she-wolves' bathroom. I was shocked when I saw him flanked by my other brothers, the identical twins, Fargo and Fallon. My parents adored them almost as much as their first-born Fang because the pack felt twin warriors were good luck.

"Hey, Friday," said Fallon. He was the least mean. "We all wanted to say sorry actually, for treating you not great for being wolf-less."

"We hope you stay," added Fargo. "Sorry."

"I'm sorry, too, Friday," said Fang, his apology surprising me the most. "I hope you stay in Marigold and become Alpha Maze's Luna."

It made sense now. If I left with another Alpha, Maze might put the blame on my family for mistreating me and they would not be as well-liked in the pack if the Alpha withdrew his favour. My choice would affect them and their status.

"Ok," I said, not certain of their sincerity.

"Mom and Dad would have come to say sorry for kicking you out too but they're drunk already at the celebration," Fang added.

I resisted the urge to roll my eyes. Both of my parents had a drinking problem that worsened when my father transferred the Beta position to Fang. The Beta position was the only thing for which he would get cleaned up and sober.

"Thanks," I said. "Good," the twins said in unison. "Great," said Fang. "Let's go get Sunday!" "Saturday!" I said indignantly.

"Whatever," said Fang.