
JAMES

Lycan Mating Games, Book Two

S. CINDERS



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This book contains fantasy themes appropriate for mature readers only.
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advocating any non-consensual sexual activity.

Chapter 1

James

“Fifteen seconds!” Ella’s voice was tense as she called out to me.

I frantically tried combination after combination of numbers trying to break the password of the final security gate. I didn’t think about the trail of mangled bodies we had left behind, now lying lifelessly on the unit floor. I was trained to focus on the end goal. To complete my mission or die trying, and I wasn’t in the mood to die today.

Another warning from Ella. “Ten seconds, James!”

“I can see the damn time, Ella!” I shouted back and immediately felt remorse. I shouldn’t have snapped at her and even taking those few seconds to speak was a waste of precious time. That was one of the many things we didn’t have—time. I took a deep breath, clearing my brilliant mind to focus on the task in front of me.

Maybe it was the Goddess smiling down on us or maybe we were damn lucky. But as I punched in the last set of digits, four lights turned green on the keypad. That was followed by the best

sound I had ever heard in my life—the sound of a bolt sliding free from the lock.

“Run!” I shouted to Ella.

She didn’t need to be told twice. Ella raced through the security door and immediately began fighting the shifter wolves who were working security. There were eleven of them to only one of her.

It wasn’t a fair fight, and I knew it as well as she did. I almost took pity on the poor bastards, but Ella would kick my ass if I interfered where it wasn’t needed, so I let her be.

She dispatched the last one with a sharp jab to the neck.

Turning to face me, she frowned and said, “Are you going to stand there all day? We need to get out of here!”

I almost cracked a smirk. That was Ella all over. It would be a grave mistake to underestimate the tiny woman. She couldn’t have been more than five seven or eight to my six five. But she was honed to be a deadly weapon; we both were.

“What now?” I asked, knowing that she would want to take the lead.

Her intelligent green eyes scanned the outside perimeter before she spoke. “This is too easy. There has to be something or someone else.”

I was inclined to agree, but as the words came out of her mouth, we heard movement behind us.

“Run!” Ella screamed.

We phased into our wolves and raced into the night, the desert sand whipping up at the beating of our paws. I could hear the packs behind us, pounding with all their might.

There had to be at least a hundred or more. Bullets rained down upon us indicating that not all the wolves were in their Lycan form. The only saving grace was that they were regular wolves, nothing like Ella and me. We outdistanced them within a mile and within two one could barely see them in the distance.

Not stopping, we raced across the land, miles of barren sand

stretched out before us. Neither one of us had been on the outside before, so the air felt strange as it wrapped around us.

The heat even in the nighttime was something I could never have imagined.

We ran all that night and the next day covering several hundred miles. We stayed away from the noises of humans and their cars and roads. All of this was confusing to us, and I felt a moment of fear because the goal was to escape. But now that we had made it—what next?

It wasn't until Ella dropped into the dirt with a resounding thud that I realized she had blood matted into her fur. I nudged her with my muzzle, but there was no response.

Shit! They had been firing at us, but I hadn't even considered the idea of her being hit. Sickened, I shifted and rolled her wolf over to get a clear view. I couldn't tell if it was her shoulder or lung that she had been hit.

Without thought, I quickly calculated the odds of her surviving if her lung had been hit and deduced that she would never have been able to run that far.

Ella's breathing was shallow, and she still hadn't regained consciousness.

I started to panic. What if she died out here in the middle of nowhere? We were supposed to escape the United States Lycan United Force, or USLUF, together.

"Hey! You there!"

I jerked around to see a large black man approaching. I went into a fighting stance, snarling as I exposed my teeth, not even realizing I was still in human form and buck ass naked besides.

"Whoa, wait a minute there," he said taking a step back with his hands raised. The man was big like me. It didn't do much to convince me that I needed to stand down. But I listened to what he had to say. "I am not going to hurt you. I was worried about the she-wolf. I caught the scent of blood a mile or so back, followed the tracks here."

“She is fine!” I snarled at him.

He raised a brow and commented, “She is bleeding and the wound doesn’t look fresh. Do you want me to help or are you going to let her die?”

I couldn’t lose Ella, not after everything we had been through. But how could I trust this man? Everything we had ever been told in this life was a lie. My ears strained to hear her labored breathing as I growled menacingly at the man. “You promise not to harm her?”

My eyes were narrowed as I did a reading on his body language. He seemed open and from what I could tell, not a threat. We had extensive training on such things at the USLUF.

“I won’t harm either of you,” he said. “My name is Clarence White, and this land is owned by me and my partner Mike. We have a, erm, club a few miles south of here. There are a few rooms that are open. Let’s get her there and see what she needs to heal.”

I hesitated once again, and Clarence let out a long sigh.

“Look, I can see that you both are young and most likely running from something.”

I frowned at him. “Why do you say that?”

A ghost of a smile passed over his face. “When I was your age I too had demons that I had to fight. Both literally and figuratively. I won’t tell anyone that you are here if that makes a difference.”

“Okay,” I said at last, agreeing to go with him. Regret filled me. *What if this man was a monster?* Shit, I was all over the place. I wasn’t putting my training to good use.

“Do you want to carry her?” he asked kindly. “We need to get back to my truck, and I will drive you over to Club Lycan.”

I glanced at him sharply needing to set boundaries. “You won’t touch her?”

His brows shot up in a mock surrender. “I swear, on my honor.”

I nodded once and crouched down to gather Ella into my arms.

“Shift,” I whispered the command and watched as her fawn colored wolf faded into my lifelong friend. Wincing as I saw the bloody wound, I was careful when lifting her from the ground into a standing position.

I turned to see Clarence staring at us—no, at Ella.

“What?” I growled the word as my incisors made an appearance. I didn’t like his gaze being on Ella.

He shook his head as if to clear it and glanced away. When he spoke, his voice was stilted. “Nothing, nothing at all. It’s only that your friend there looked a little familiar to me. Where are you from?”

“No questions!” I tugged Ella closer to me and glared at him.

Clarence blew out a frustrated breath but heeded my wishes. “All right, let’s get her home.”

It was a full-sized truck but with three of us in the front it made things rather tight. After laying Ella down on the bench seat. I glanced up in time to see Clarence throwing me a pair of grey sweatpants. “Put this on, not that you would look out of place in the club, but I don’t want your naked ass in my truck.”

I noted that Clarence hadn’t complained about Ella’s naked ass sprawled on all his front seat. Instead of arguing I grabbed the sweats and tugged them on. Even with our enhanced DNA, I was feeling the effects of our adventure. I needed to rest.

Climbing in behind Ella, I gathered her once again into my arms. I wanted her to wake up, needed her to wake up and tell me that everything was going to be okay.

We drove for a few miles, which was a strange experience to be moving at such a rapid pace inside of a vehicle. I had a million questions, and Clarence was kind enough to answer all that he knew. I could tell he was curious as to why I was asking them.

I wasn’t about to tell him that this was my first time in a truck

or that this was our first time out on our own. We had never so much as even spoken to a stranger before this night. I wanted to ask him lots of things, but I kept all of this to myself as he pulled up to a giant brick structure with a large sign lit from the back saying Club Lycan.

“Clarence, where in the hell have you been?”

I heard the man’s voice the minute that Clarence opened his door. The other man seemed on edge and that only brought out the defensive side of me that I had barely under control.

“Calm down,” Clarence said to his friend, but he kept his eyes on mine. “I am going to let my partner know what’s going on. He is safe. He will not bring either of you harm.”

The other man snorted. “What’s going on?”

Clarence continued to keep my gaze. “Mike is a good wolf despite being a gigantic pain in the ass. I would trust him with my life.”

I gave a curt nod before turning back to Ella. Her face was so terribly pale, and her lips seemed to be losing color by the second.

“Hang in there, Ella,” I whispered in her ear. “You will be okay, I promise.” I only hoped that I was telling the truth. Ella was my everything, I needed her to be okay.