

Chapter 0007

Neah

“You know my brother really likes you.” Raven smiles at me as she shoves a crumpet into her mouth.

My eyes flash up to hers across the breakfast table. She had been put on babysitting duty while Alpha Dane runs those errands he had mentioned. Clearly my comment about being alone had made him reconsider.

He hadn’t told me where he was going and I didn’t ask. I didn’t think it was my place.

“You are prettier than the last girl.” Raven mutters, distracting me from my thoughts.

“Last girl?” I almost choke on my juice.

“You are his contracted mate, right?”

I nod my head.

“Did you really think you were the first?”

It wasn’t something that had crossed my mind. I was more concerned about what Alpha Dane was going to do to me. He hadn’t made a move except for holding me against him while we slept. He hadn’t tried sneaking a hand between my thighs. He hadn’t insisted I sleep naked, nothing. And that only made it worse. Waiting for the unknown. He didn’t seem like a man that would wait.

“Hopefully, you will stick.” She adds, reaching for another crumpet.

“I will stick?” I wasn’t used to these phrases or the way she spoke to me so casually. Orders and abuse, that was what I was used to.

“I probably shouldn’t be the one telling you this but it’s better for you to be prepared.” She takes a deep breath. “My brother has been looking for his mate for a long time. He’s twenty eight. Doesn’t have an heir yet. The others, they stay no more than a few weeks, some run. Some are killed.” She tells me with a shrug of her shoulders, like it was normal.

“Because they won’t give him an heir?”

She shakes her head. “Because he loses interest.”

“Why are you telling me?” I whisper. I would prefer not to know if I was going to be killed.

“There’s something about you. He looks at you differently. I saw it at the hospital.”

Her words don’t exactly make me feel better. Everyone looked at me differently. They always had because of my strange scent.

“Your biggest concern will be if he finds his true mate.” She mutters.

Beta Kyle had been my true mate and he had rejected me the second I turned eighteen. Barging into the basement in the middle of the night and screaming his rejection at me. He had beaten me black and blue until I accepted his rejection.

“You have a mate, don’t you? I can tell by the way your eyes just flickered.”

“Had.” I whisper. “He rejected me.” I remember the pain I had felt and not just from the beating. It had felt like my heart was being torn from my chest. And because I had felt the bond, my brother had me bound for a second time. That is when I stopped being able to heal like everyone else.

“I know what that’s like. Mine rejected me too.” She sighs. “The moment he found out what pack I’m from and who my brother is, he wanted nothing to do with me. Anyway, like I said, my brother seems to like you, more than he has liked any of the other women.”

Is that supposed to make me happy? Knowing that I might just last a little while longer than the others. That because he likes me, he might keep me like a prized possession.

Raven takes me along to the hospital. She had to work and apparently Alpha Dane had told her to not let me out of her sight unless it was to use the bathroom. Maybe he thought I was going to be like some of his other brides and run. As if I had the energy to do that.

No one comes into the hospital. Raven spends most of the time doing inventory. It almost seemed pointless having a pack hospital. No one needed it, everyone could heal.

“Hey.” She smiles as she comes towards me. “I’m going to be here for a while yet, so I brought you some trashy mags to read.”

Raven dumps them on the table in front of me with a smile as I just stare at them. I had no idea who the people were in the photos, nor did I have a clue what was written about them.

“Not your thing?” she asks curiously.

I just shake my head, I didn’t want to admit the truth.

She stares at me from the other side of the counter, her eyes slowly narrow to slits. “You can’t read, can you?”

How did she know? I shake my head, feeling my cheeks flame

“I’m guessing you didn’t go to school?”

“No.” It was so embarrassing having to admit it. What twenty two year old couldn’t read or write?

“Does my brother know?”

“No.”

“Well at least now, I have something to do other than counting.” She smiles at me and sits in a chair next to me.

Hours passed and I still wasn’t getting the hang of it. But she was patient and kept trying. Suddenly, she grabs the pieces of paper and shuffles them all into a pile and shoves it into one of the drawers.

“My brother is back.”

“How do you know?”

“A pack thing.”

Seconds later and the doors swing open. Alpha Dane moves towards us. He looked angry. His crimson eyes were darker than usual. His brow creased and all of his attention is on me.

“I need a word with my mate!” He snaps at Raven.

“Sure.” she mutters and quickly escapes, leaving me alone with him.

He waits for her to be out of sight and turns to face me. My eyes drop to the ground as his voice rumbles through the hospital. “Where has Trey gone?”

“Huh?”

“Do I need to repeat myself?”

I open my mouth to tell him that I didn’t understand.

“There was no one there, Neah. No one.” I feel his glare on me.

That didn’t make any sense. How could there be no one?

“Homes empty. The packhouse, empty. Where have they gone, Neah?”

I shake my head, confused. “You… you went to see my brother?” I whisper, refusing to meet his gaze.

“Was this all a lie?” He gestures to me. “A set up so you could get some dirt on me?” He was so angry. “What does Trey want?”

I close my eyes like I always do. It was easier if I didn’t see the beating coming.

“NEAH!” His hand grabs my chin. “I said you would never have to fear me. But that was when I believed I was helping you. Open your fucking eyes and look at me!”

Tears creep out of my closed eyes. Raven was wrong, this was going to be the end of me.

Opening my eyes, his crimson ones are staring at me. Slowly his face starts to soften. “You don’t know what I’m talking about, do you?”

“No.” I mumble

He lets go of my chin, “The pack is empty!”

“Abandoned?” I whisper

“No, nothing is gone, everything is still present but there were no people anywhere. It was like they just disappeared and trust me, we searched. You said they don’t do pack runs, but they clearly do something.”

“I don’t know.” I gulp. “I have never left the pack until yesterday. I… I never went further than the gardens.” I frown “But sometimes, the house would be empty. If I wasn’t locked away, I would steal bits of food.”

“How often?” He questions

“Every couple of months, I think.”

If it weren’t for the times the house was empty, allowing me to steal food, I probably would have died of starvation years ago.

“No one talks about it?”

I shake my head.

“Are you sure, Neah?”

“They might, just not when I’m around.”

Suddenly, he holds a hand out to me, “Come, we are going home.”

His large hand envelopes my small hand as he pulls me up from my chair and against his chest. His arms lock tightly around me, squeezing the air from my lungs.

“You better not be lying to me, Neah. I don’t tolerate liars.”

“I promise.” I whisper, trying to ignore the pain from my wound, and instead of looking away, I couldn’t help but stare at him. Even without my Wolf, right now, I could feel his power and it was overwhelmingly intoxicating.