

Chapter 8

MIA

I look at Sasha, who has anger in her eyes, but she doesn't speak.

I watched the woman place our food down and look between us. Sasha gave her a nod and left.

Picking up my burger, I took a bite and savored the taste. I haven't had a burger in a long time. I place it down and look at her.

"Tell her everything," Lyla murmurs in my head. "I will keep quiet. This is your story." I ignored her as I swallowed the burger. I began to speak. "Chole. Her name was Chole," I said, making Sasha look at me confused, but I continued. "She came to the pack for a better start. She came with her mother and sister. Her sister left after ending her mate at a gala ball."

I sighed as I leaned back in the seat. "The pack holds them every year, and when they arrived, Chloe acted strange. She acted jealous of everyone and wanted everyone to think she was special. That night, she drew her sights onto me, and she decided right there and then that I was the one she was going to hurt."

"She started making snarky comments about my appearance and bringing me down whenever she could," I said, feeling my stomach turn as I told her more about what happened to me. "After a while, Chole did everything to destroy me more by telling people whatever she could to get them to listen, and when they did, they started to bully me like her. Some pack members despised me and even got in on the act of whatever she did to me that day. She wanted me out of the way. Some of the things she was saying were not true, but some were from behind closed doors, only my father would know."

Sasha's face hardened, but she said nothing.

I picked up a french fry and ate it, but somehow lost my appetite. My thoughts went to what my friends did to me. "Aidan the young Alpha was my best friend and boyfriend at the time. His best friends were Darren and Lee," I say.

Some memories ached through from before all the torment started. I remember them protecting me every time my parents would ght in the kitchen when they thought no one was listening but everyone was. They would either take me outside or even turn up the TV.

"So it all started with one girl," Sasha murmured, looking slightly concerned. "I also take it your father was telling her things to hurt you."

I gave her a nod as I continued. "My friends all turned against me as soon as Chole joined the pack. Aidan never hurt me, but he never stopped them. Darren was my cousin on my father's side but he believed everything that my father and Chole said without fault. Lee was always following them but both of them would either hold me while Chole incited the pain or even join her in the assault."

A lone tear escaped. "No one knew what was happening at home, they all blamed me for something that wasn't my fault," I say. I took another bite of my burger and looked up to nd that she had nished her food.

This is the rst time I have ever opened up to anyone about the abuse that has taken place at the pack. I had no one to talk to, and some probably wouldn't care about what happened to me. Not even my so-called friends.

Clearing my throat, I carried on. "My father told everyone one evening in the pack house that I was the cause of my mother leaving him as I was human," I whisper. Sasha gasped. "Why would he..." she asked but stopped when she stared at me when a lone tear escaped.

Sasha placed her nger on her lips. "Carry on," she whispered against her nger.

Without saying anything, I continued again. "I didn't know what happened between my parents, as I was with Aidan at the time at our favorite spot. When I got home, my father was standing there with a smile, but there was no sign of my mother," I say as a shiver rippled down my spine at the sadistic smile my father wore on his lips.

"Once Aidan left, my father dragged me inside and waited till Aidan was out of earshot. He gripped me tight and told me that she was gone and never coming back. Over the years, I knew something was going on with them, and I had a rough idea of why my mother left, but I had no proof. The night she left, she said she loved me, and that was it," I say as I gulped down some lukewarm coffee. "My father was angry, but he told me that we would be moving out of the pack house. When we did, he got the smallest cabin he could nd and far away from everyone in the pack."

"When we moved in, that's when it all started," I muttered, looking down at the plate. "It would start with a few punches to the stomach at rst. He would repeat everything every night, and I changed overnight. He made sure no one could see the bruises as he would hit me where no one could see them. He made up excuses about me not wanting to come to the pack house. Everyone didn't care because they started to believe everything Chloe had told them. I changed from an outgoing girl to a coward overnight due to two people." I say.

"My father would beat me badly and then leave for most of the time by staying at the pack house.

There was a rumor that he was with someone, but I never found out who it was," I whispered. "One evening, I recovered from his beating, and he turned up very, very drunk. He must have drunk eight bottles of whiskey, as when he came home, he punched me and made me drop to the ground. This is the rst time he ever brought a weapon home with him from the cells."

A growl in my head erupts as Lyla comes closer. She hasn't said a word since I started to spill my guts to Sasha. When he started to bring weapons home, I would block her.

Sasha growls, pulling me back from my thoughts to look at her. "Mia, you don't have to tell me what happened," she says.

I look at her and shake my head. "This is the rst time I have ever opened up about any of this to anyone; I need to get it out," I say with a shaky voice. Her face goes blank for a moment, but she comes back. "I just mind-linked the pack that we may be another hour late or so."

I stared at her and nodded.

I stayed quiet for a bit and watched as Sasha helped herself to some of my food. I couldn't even take another bite of the fries after the burger.

Sasha looked at me. "Mia, did they stave you there?" she asked, but I didn't answer her. Her eyes stayed on me, but she never said anything for a moment as she got her answer.

"That explains a lot, Mia. Your stomach has shrunk, and you can only eat some amounts," she says as her face gives an angry expression. I stilled.

Was she angry with me?

Sasha's eyes softened, and she shook her head. "This anger is not aimed at you at all, my friend," she murmurs. "It is aimed at all those at the pack."

I gave her a small smile.

Footsteps came from the side, making me look up and spot the waitress from earlier. I said nothing as I watched her take the plates away. I look at the older woman, who looks at me with pity when she looks back at me.

"She has been listening in on your story, Mia," Lyla whispers. "She's a wolf and I think she is part of the pack."

I stare at her. I thought we were an hour or so away. How would a pack member be here?

"Here, my dear, have a cookie on the house," the older woman says, pulling me from my thoughts and handing me the cookie.

Taking the cookie from her, I stare at her as she moves away with the plates and carries them back to the counter.

Looking back at Sasha, she smiles at me. "Shall we go to the pack?" she asked. "How is she from the pack?" I blurt out, making Sasha still as she watches me.

Sasha sighed. "Some pack members work and live, on and off the territory," she said. "We have a lot of land. More than your pack."

I said nothing as I stared at her. Sasha moves out of the booth and looks at me. "You're very brave, Mia," she says. "It must have been hard to blurt it all out to me."

Keeping my eyes on her, I gave her a nod.

Sasha looked up and then back at me. "We will go to the pack," she said. "I think you need to feel safe."

Lyla was close by and sighed. "She is trying," she whispers.

I move out of the booth, follow Sasha out of the cafe, and head to the car in silence. As we approached the car, I looked behind Sasha and stared at the cafe.

The woman is not by the door and stares at me.

Something about her seems familiar, not that I am looking at her. But that can't be?

"Where does the pack start?" I blurt out as I remembered what Sasha just told me. I looked at Sasha, who smiled. "Just before the sign, that's the start of the north side clearing," she said and looked over

her shoulder at the cafe. "The cafe is owned by Alpha Sam's parents," she says. "They bought the cafe as a retirement job."

Her eyes went back to me, but I looked over at the door and spotted the old lady standing outside the door, smiling at us.

I watched as she walked over to me and stopped not too far from me. The old lady places her hand and grabs mine, making me tense at the touch. "I'm Alpha Sam's mum, Luna Sarah," she says. "My husband and I retired from the pack, but I like to keep busy. This cafe is ours. You are more than welcome to come here anytime dear."

I shake her hand and give her a small smile. "It is nice to meet you, Luna, I say.

The Luna Sarah laughs a little. "Nonsense, when it is just us three, just call me Sarah," she says, making me look at her confused. "I don't think the new Luna, Luna Sadie, would think too highly of me having my old position back."

I look confused at both of them.

Luna Sarah was the old Luna, making Luna Sadie—Alpha Sam's mate.

"It doesn't matter, Mia, Luna Sadie, and Alpha Sam are waiting for you and also someone else," Luna Sarah says, making me look at her even more confused.

"Who?" I asked, looking between Sasha and Luna Sarah. I watch their exchange, but when they look back at me and say nothing.

"Let's go," Sasha said as she opened her door to the car.

Stood rooted to the spot, Luna Sarah looked at me and smiled. "You know where to nd me, Mia," she said. "I look forward to seeing you again." I gave her a nod and watched as Luna Sarah turned around and headed back into the cafe.

I look at her but open the car door and climb inside. I closed the door and looked over at Sasha, trying to gure out what the hell was going on, but she laughed. "It will all make sense when we get to the pack house," she said, starting the engine. "And don't fret, we won't be long getting there."

I said nothing, but Sasha grinned and continued. "I think my brother will have a eld day knowing his car was in the safest hands ever."

My eyes widened but couldn't help but burst out laughing. "This is your brother's car," I ask as she nods and smiles. "Yes, we both share it. Even though my brother believes the car is more his than mine."

I nod. Sasha turned the car around and straightened up. I look in the side mirror on the outside and notice an older man standing next to Sarah; his expression looks familiar, but I don't know where or how.

The old man must be Alpha's Sam's father—the old alpha. He looks happy and sad at the same time. He has his hand on the glass as Luna Sarah walks in but he looks back at the car and is still looking right at me.

The car drives away and I watch the cafe disappear into the distance.