

## Chapter 12

Rory's Pov

I knew venturing out of my rooms was dangerous. Well not dangerous, but the chance of running into someone was extremely high. That's why I gured later in the evening it wouldn't be so busy. I was out of tea in my room and I was craving herbal avors to help with sleep. My room, my den was my safe space and I hated leaving it. This was the rst time and I had been itching to get back.

I heard noises coming towards me. I knew I should have ed but my wolf kept me in place. My skin burned with desire and the scent of cinnamon hit my nose. I had been craving the taste of cinnamon and had added a splash to my tea.

When the Alpha rounded the corner I squeaked, not realizing who he was at rst. The mug dropped from my hands and shattered on the oor. Oh no. Would I be in trouble for this? Would I be punished for breaking a glass?

I didn't know how to act around the others. I didn't know what was acceptable to me and what wasn't. My mom had made sure I had the best education I could before the night we had to ee but only so much could be taught. Submission, respect, and manners had been instilled in me since day one though. I didn't mean to break the alpha's things, he startled me though. His eyes burning with desire and hatred confused me. I knew he didn't want me but why did his eyes heat every time he looked at me? He was handsome though. His blonde hair looked like butterscotch and sunlight. His ember eyes nearly glowed in the dimly lit kitchen. He was tall. Taller than any alpha I had seen but I hadn't seen many in my life thanks to my parents sheltering me and well, life.

It didn't take long for me to scent his anger though. His hatred mixed with lust oated towards me. It smelled intoxicating but terrifying at the same time. He was angry. Very angry. His chest rumbled and I don't even think he realized he had been growling.

I bared my neck in submission to show I was no threat and his dominance poured from his skin. His alpha genes demand my respect and submission. My knees wobbled and I couldn't stop myself.

I fell to the oor, my knees digging into the broken glass on the hardwood around me. The gasp ew from my lips without permission but I still didn't look the Alpha in the eyes. I knew a challenge when I saw one and I knew that would be the rst way to insult him. My wolf preened in my show of respect for our mate but he wasn't ours. Not really. He had made that very clear.

I could feel the blood dripping from my knees and I knew the moment he scented it. His nostrils ared and his eyes darkened before they zeroed in on the glass embedding itself in my skin.

With a growl, he lunged for me and I couldn't stop the inch. I was terried I had done something wrong but I was shocked when I found myself tucked against the Alpha's chest as he carried me like I was the most precious thing through the house.

He smelled so good. His scent, his aftershave, his soap all of it was driving me and my wolf wild. I took a risk and pressed my face into his neck and he purred in response. I smiled a bit while biting my teeth. I loved his purr. I loved the way it made me feel. I love the way it made me relax in his hold.

We walked through the house until we went to a room I hadn't been in yet. It was clearly his. The smell nearly made my eyes roll into the back of my head.

The walls were a pale gray with hints of navy blue and white and gold accents. His bed was larger than mine and It looked big enough to t an entire hoard of people on. There was a setup similar to mine with a few lounge chairs and a sofa with a TV mounted to the wall. There was a small kitchen like mine but I didn't get to examine my surroundings for long as he rushed me to the bathroom and set me on the counter.

He reached for a rst aid kit and pulled the silk nightie up my legs a bit to get a good look at the damage. When my hands covered it feeling unsure he growled.

"Let me look." he said. His voice was low and growly and it brought goosebumps on my skin.

He took the gauze pads and carefully dabbed at the blood leaking from my knees. He was gentle. His caress was light against my skin. When I jumped from the pain he purred louder, when I whimpered from the sting of the alcohol wipes he hummed. He was being completely opposite of what I saw in his oce. Could he have just needed a bit of time? I still haven't looked him in the eyes though. I was almost too scared to try. What if it was perceived as a challenge? I shook my head though.

When I looked up and chanced a glance in his eyes they were nearly black. His wolf was in control. That was why he was acting the way he was. My heart cracked a bit though I knew I shouldn't have expected anything more from him. He wasn't being kind to me because he wanted to. He wasn't taking care of me because it was his desire to do so. His wolf was in charge. His wolf was forcing him to take care of me.

I felt a tear forming in my eye and I internally cursed myself for being so weak, for hoping that maybe I would get a happy ever after. His hand cupped my cheek and I turned away from his touch knowing he didn't want it. His wolf did. His wolf wanted me, but he didn't.

He sighed and I felt the air around me change. I knew his wolf had backed off and Shawn was back in control of himself. He put large bandages over my knees before cleaning up his surroundings. I kept my eyes trained on the oor refusing to look at his stupid beautiful face.

"You need to be more careful." he ordered and I nodded.

"Yes, Alpha." I said, though he wasn't my alpha. Not truly. I hadn't been inducted into the pack. I hadn't had a ceremony tying me to the royal pack. I had no mind link connection, no bond with the pack. Technically I was a rogue on his lands.

"What were you doing in the kitchens?" he asked and I stiffened.

Was I not allowed? His mother made it seem like I had free roaming access anywhere in the pack house and lands. I felt my breathing quicken and my anxiety rise. Would I get in trouble? I just wanted some tea.

With my eyes trained on the oor, I saw two shoes come into my line of sight. He was right in front of me. "You were alone in an unfamiliar place, you broke the glass and hurt yourself, you..."

"I'm sorry alpha I didn't mean to. I... I'm sorry." I whispered quickly hopping off the counter.

My feet protested against the added weight with the pain of the wounds on my knees. My healing was kicking in but it was a slow process. He backed up and I took the opportunity to run from him. I knew that was dumb. Running from an alpha. It would initiate a chase especially with me being his mate but I had to get away.

I heard his growl and had to force myself to keep moving. I heard footsteps behind me and I ran faster. I followed my nose to my room which wasn't far from his own. Just a little further. He was catching up, I knew he was from the sound of his steps, the sound of his breaths.

I nearly cried in relief as I got to my room and threw the door open before slamming it and locking it and collapsing against it and sinking to the ground with my knees to my chest.

I heard a bang on the door and felt it rattle behind me. I squeezed my eyes shut.

'Please go away. Please leave me alone. I'm not strong enough to face you right now.' I thought to myself. I just needed to be alone.

I crawled away from the door, away from him to my bed where I had arranged a pile of pillows and blankets to my liking. My nest. Mine.

I ung a sherpa blanket over my head and cried into the fabric beneath me praying to the goddess that he would give me a reprieve and just leave me alone. That was what he truly wanted anyway, wasn't it?