

Chapter 4

Rory's Pov

I heard so many different voices around me. Some were curious, some were confused, and some were concerned. None of them seemed like the voice I wanted to hear.

Why was I so upset over that man walking away from me? Why was I so upset over someone I didn't even know? I felt like I was breaking into a million pieces and my whimpers proved my pain.

Footsteps fell on the pavement around me and I curled up into an even tighter ball under the truck. I covered my snout with my tail and tried to be as small as possible. These wolves around me oozed dominance. They poured strength into the air and it was suffocating. It was overpowering. It made me want to roll my belly up and show them I was no harm.

I didn't know who these people were. I only knew we were at the Royal Pack lands and I was brought here for some important reason that I don't know.

I was surprised to see two females here when our gender is so low in population but my thoughts were overshadowed by pain, fear, and confusion.

The gravel around me crunched as a pair of shoes came into view. The man who took me from the zoo. He sank into a crouch, resting on his haunches.

"Come on out, little one."

I tucked my tail more and acted like I couldn't hear him. He wasn't giving me a command. Not yet. I wouldn't be able to ignore that. But for now, hopefully he read my body language and left me alone.

He reached his hand under the truck for me and I growled at him. I had never growled at anyone before and it shocked even me.

The man pulled his hand back before growling himself. My ears pinned back trying to ght back. I didn't want to submit to him. My wolf was angry and hurt couldn't he see that? Couldn't he see that I wanted to be left alone?

"JAMES." a strong voice shouted and the man immediately stopped his growling and stood at attention. More footsteps approached and I saw 4 pairs of feet. I could only guess it was the wolves from the porch.

"I apologize, Sir." James said sheepishly.

"Dad, can I try to coax her out?" I didn't see what was done or said but I was guessing there was a nod of approval.

"It might be benecial to be in your wolf form." James added. "I gave her the command to shift, but she couldn't. It might also be helpful to get Julianna here as well. She may be able to give us some insight."

Before I knew it a black wolf was crouching below the truck and crawling under it with me. I kept my ears pinned and my neck extended, feeling she was of a higher status and rank than me.

She huffed and her wolf licked my snout. She was giving me affection and it calmed me. I relaxed into the gravel and she nudged me along. She crawled to the edge and when I didn't move she nipped at my fur and pulled. She gave me the feeling that she was safe. That she wouldn't hurt me. That she would protect me.

I wasn't well versed in reading body language as I was just a pup when I was abandoned but I knew some from the schooling I had attended. I knew what I learned from Rosa and Alpha. I wasn't book smart but I was intelligent in the ways that mattered. Survival. And this wolf was showing me that she was safe. She was safe and she wanted me to follow her.

I crawled out of my hiding spot and stuck close to the black wolf in front of me. I hid myself under her and I heard a chuckle.

"Well done, Caroline." the man said as he reached down to pet the black wolf.

I watched her. She wasn't growling. She wasn't baring her teeth. She was completely calm and even leaned into the man's touch. She didn't show any signs of fear so I took that as my cue to relax the slightest bit.

He was a tall man. Tall, and well built but older. He had graying hair at the sides of his head but still had that dark color on the top. He had blue eyes and glasses sat on his face. The woman next to him had long brown hair, laugh lines around her eyes and green eyes that reminded me of the trees. She was rubbing the man's back and I realized they were mates.

"So it is true. There was a female wolf hiding at the zoo of all places?" the male that looked like a carbon copy of James said. He looked like a harsh man. His jaw was tight and clenched. He had dark black hair and blue eyes. He was more stocky and broader than James was. He looked like a seasoned warrior.

Gamma. The word jumped out in my mind. He looked like he could snap me in half if he wanted to but he made sure to give me space. He looked at me as if I was a spectacle that wasn't really there.

"No one knew. Charlotte works in administration. She didn't even know that we had called until Shawn put this plan in motion. Speaking of, what was up with that?" James asked and there was silence.

"I should go talk to him." the older woman said. She looked at me with kind eyes before crouching low.

"Welcome. You'll be safe here. My name is Samantha. I'll let you get settled and I'll nd you tomorrow." she said before walking away. Her voice was soft, and even. She looked strong don't get me wrong but she toned her strength down... for me.

The older man with us watched her walk away with longing in his eyes before he looked back at us.

"If anyone can get Shawn to talk, it is her. Stubborn woman." he said with a smirk.

"Yes, but you love her old man. Don't deny it."

"Without a doubt. Now what do you mean she can't shift?"

"I gave her the Beta command. She writhed like she was in pain and her cries damn near alerted the whole zoo." James said, looking at me with a furrow in his brow. "Perhaps you could try? You may not be king anymore Uncle Kasen but you are still an Alpha your command holds more bite than mine does."

They were going to try to force me to shift again? No. it hurt too much last time.

I started to back away and go back to my hiding spot before a hand grabbed my scruff. It wasn't painful, just startling and I whimpered and yelped. My legs gave out on me and I fell to my back and exposed my belly. My tail was tucked against my stomach.

The men looked at me with shock and the black wolf came over to me and sniffed me before stepping back and shifting. Before she could speak the older man beat her to it.

"An Omega?" he asked more to himself.

"How was an Omega allowed to be on her own, unprotected, and for so long without being discovered?" the Gamma asked. I lay there too afraid to move. I felt so weak. So pathetic.

"I don't have that answer. We need to nd out who she is rst. I should have picked up the scent sooner. Her submissive behavior is a clear sign but her scent is the tell all clue. This explains Shawn's reaction. I think, anyway. Samantha will confrm it." the man said before crouching down to my level.

To see an alpha of his size and status making himself appear smaller calmed my racing heart but I still couldn't bring myself to look him in the eyes.

"I promise, I won't hurt you. Not deliberately. The Alpha command can be more severe than James' but we need to try. Can you blink for me if you are okay with that, little one?" he asked and I didn't know what to do. I didn't want the pain. I didn't want to be hurt but at the same time, I couldn't just stay on four paws for the rest of my life. I knew his command wouldn't work but perhaps as an alpha, he may have more power over the spell.

Weighing the pros and cons, I decided to blink my eyes and clenched my snout waiting for the pain to hit me.

"Shift."