Ascension of a Gamma by C. C. Chapter 51

Part Two: Cures and Soulmates

Chapter 51 Jagged Scar

– Anna

I opened my eyes to meet an unfamiliar ceiling

How many more times must I wake up to this?

I could already tell from the colors around the room and the layout that this was neither back at the Red Claw Pack nor the White Lake Pack.

We were well on our way, with me crying on the backseat like a baby when from out of nowhere, wolves attacked.

Before I knew how to react, the car swerved out of the track, into the woods, before finally crashing into a tree. The impact knocked the air out of me.

Carson was quick on his feet. He hurriedly got out of the car and went to m y side to help me, but the door wouldn't budge so he ripped it out.

The rogues surrounded us. Five of them and two of us. As always, I was the

and two of us. As always, I was the useless one. He told me to stay close behind him, and he did what he could to keep me safe. The last thing I remember was lying on the ground after getting hiti n the head, my consciousness seeping out of ine, Carson's bloody face across mine.

He couldn't have died, right? He was strong. He was Beta. And yet, I couldn't shake the feeling that I might never see him again.

The door opened. I turned to my side. Without having to look, I knew it was an Omega here to bring me breakfast. Two warriors were by the door to ensure I wouldn't try to escape. I had the curtains drawn – looking at the unfamiliar faces outside further reminded me that I was being held captive. I was no one. What importance I held to them, only they knew.

The Omegas never talked. They merely shook their heads and ran out the door as quickly as they could. I hadn't given up. I'd get out of here, one way or another. Their Alpha was yet to show his face. I needed answers, but right now, I had to plan.

Once the door was shut, I got out of bed and ate breakfast. The food was decent and so far, none of them tried to do something to me.

Since I had nothing else to do with my time, I tried to practice what Lexy taught me. Apparently, her magic had limitations. She believed my blood was magic, and if I could channel it out of me, I could use it to heal the way she did with Liam.

So far, it wasn't working. I couldn't feel the warmth and cold and something about a pull that she talked about.

Pushing thoughts of Carson and Liam out of my head, I peeked out of the curtains to see what the pack was up to. .

It didn't appear to be a huge pack like the Red Claw, and it was smaller than the White Lake Pack

Whatever this pack was, they weren't looking to be in good shape. Less than twenty warriors were training by themselves on the front lawn, and most of them looked too young. Again, no one of rank showed up. No Head Gamma, no

ak showed up. No Head Gamma, no Beta, and no Alpha.

At least it was livelier during the day. At night, there would be a man out in the open drinking alone. He'd sing some songs I didn't recognize, and when I listened hard enough, I could make out the sadness in his voice.

Sighing, I moved away from the windows and to the closet. Whoever was keeping me here didn't think about undergarments – all it had were ankle-length dresses. I didn't bother with the tight-fitting dresses or those that revealed too much skin. At least most of these hid my scars.

I went to the bathroom and did my business. Staring at my reflection, Liann's mark stood out, sending a shooting pain a t my heart. I shook my head. He was happy now and that was all that mattered. As for me, I had to get out of here.

I froze by the doorway as a man stood in the room. With his back to me, the necklace dangled in the air as he held it by a hand, as if expecting it. 2

"Where did you get this?" he asked,

There did you get this?he asked, growling. His hair had gray streaks, but he appeared to be fit in the blue suit he wore.

"My father gave it to me," I replied. 1 wanted to snatch it from him. He had no business with what belonged to me.

"What's your father's name?"

It triggered something in me, and I was suddenly angry.

"I don't have to tell you. Who are you? What did you do to my friend?"

He chuckled dryly then opened the cap.

"Give it back!"

"Dear, I gave this to your mother," he said.

My eyes narrowed at him. He knew my Mother?

"Your Mom and I knew each other since w e were young. I loved her dearly."

Father didn't talk much about Mother. It always saddened him whenever he talked about her, except on times when he seemed to miss her so much that he'd tell

med to miss her so much that he'd tell me things.

"You knew my mother?" I asked slowly.

"She's my wife, my mate, my Luna. I loved her dearly until the day our link broke," he said, then turned to face me.

I gasped when I saw him. I'd recognize it anywhere – that ugly scar = roughly cut down his left eye. It haunted me for months.

«Hello, Bella." He smiled at me. "We finally meet."

Crows-feet lined the corners of his tired eyes. While he looked physically well, his face showed a different story. It seemed like he'd seen all the cruelties this world had to offer, and maybe he had, for his smile felt nothing less than genuine.

"Your mother wanted the name 'Bella' for you. She said it was the combination o four names, but I doubt it."

He laughed lightly after, and I was lost on how to react. He could be lying, but he was the only one who shared this much about her.

aboul Ter.

My mind cautioned me, this was the man who killed my father and Alpha Fraser. He was the reason I was degraded, but my heart ached to learn more about the woman I killed.

"I don't know her name," I replied, the words leaving my mouth before I could stop them.

"Arabella. She said the 'e' was mine, as in Emery," he said fondly.

Opening his arms, he stepped towards me. I remained frozen on the spot. He wrapped those arms around me. He smelled of aftershave and evergreens and sap. His hug was warm, tight, one long overdue.

"I thought I lost you both," he whispered in my ear. "I'm sorry, dear. I'm sorry I gave up on you."

This couldn't be happening. All my life, all this time, was a lie? My father... was not my father?

"I don't understand," I said weakly.

He pulled away from me and held me by my shoulders, leaning to level with me. I

shoulders, leaning to level with me. I kept my eyes down, staring at his polished black shoes. 1

"I see," he said softly. "Come. I have something to show you."

He held my wrist and pulled me out of the room. The guards by the door simply closed the door. Looking around, we were in an empty hallway.

"Where are you taking me?"

He looked back at me and grinned." You'll see."

He took me through turns until we came upon a wooden door.

"Go on," he said, motioning for me to enter.

I looked at him in hesitation, but I sensed no malice in his eyes. It was strange how I wasn't scared of him. He made me feel safe like a father did. Was it our bond? Was he really...

I shook my head and opened the door. It was a... library?

"This was her favorite place," he said as he closed the door behind us.

ALIONLEHTI LUUL OLTIIN

It had shelves upon shelves of books and more on the second tier. It was bigger than the one back at Liam's. There was a round table at the center, with books on top of it and one hardbound book opened. Near the tall glass windows was a loveseat, with an unfolded blanket. It felt cozy...

"She loved to read books, any kind of books as much as she loved collecting them. I had this built for her. She always told me you'd grow up here and I'd be searching the entire house for you only to find you here," he said, laughing.

At the table, to my right, I saw a painting mounted on a wall. It was of a woman. She had pretty brown eyes, a straight nose, and pink lips. Her heart-warming smile sent a jolt of pain in my heart, but I found myself smiling back at her. Long black hair that ended in curls bounced off her shoulders, a contrast to her milky skin.

"Your mother," he said quietly, confirming my thoughts. "You're the spitting image of her."

I shook my head at that. I looked nothing

ook my head at that I looked nothing like her. She was... she was really pretty, and I killed her.

"This can't be happening," I whispered." You're not my Father. She can't be my mother."

Pain flashed in his eyes and I almost regretted what I said. "Bella"

"Don't call me that! Only Carson can call me Bella!

Why am I suddenly mad?

He smiled gently at me and I felt guilty.

"Is he your mate? I can see that you've been marked."

My hand immediately went to my mark, but my mouth continued to spit words.

"He's my friend that your men beat up! Where is he? What did you do to him?"

"Calm down, dear. I understand you're upset but"

"Upset?" I repeated, cutting him off.

My voice rose as I screamed my thoughts. "I'm Anna Bella Fiora, daughter of the former Head Gamma of the White Lake

mer Head Gamma of the White Lake Pack, Aiden Fiora. I'm not your daughter and I demand to know where you're holding my friend hostage!

"We don't have him here," he said quietly. "You're the mission. You have my word that my men didn't kill him. We don't kill unless we have to."

They left him back there. He – he could still be alive. Carson could still be alive!

"Bella, I understand that this isn't easy for you to take. We've been separated for twenty years," he said as he took my hand and patted it with his free hand.

The veins at the back of his hand looked painful, bulging from the skin like that." I will never learn or understand why your mother betrayed me, but I've never been this happy in years. You, my daughter, are alive and well, and... and... look at you! You're all grown up now and you already found your mate and you

"You killed my father," I said icily as I pulled my hand back harshly. "You were the black wolf with that ugly scar who ripped my father's throat open and killed Alpha Fraser. And you would've killed me

ha Fraseri And you would've killed me if they hadn't sacrificed themselves. You're not my father. You are a murderer."

His eyes widened and his eyes avoided m e. I knew it.

"I'm going back," I said as I passed him.

I only have one father and I never knew m y mother.

He grabbed my arm, but I yanked it away from him.

"Leave me alone!"

"I have left you alone, Bella!" he roared." I've left you alone for eighteen years thinking you were dead. But you weren't. I've left you alone for two more years, thinking you had gone rogue. You were <u>al</u>ive this whole time and now you're here."

"I am not your daughter!" I yelled. Why was it so hard for him to understand?

"Do you why I killed this man you call father?" he asked with a cold calmness a s he stepped closer to me. Onyx black eyes kept me in place.

уло при непрасев

"Because he took my wife away from me when she was a month away from giving birth. She's a Luna. You know how dangerous it is for her to carry a child." 2

He stopped in front of me, his eyes never leaving mine. It was dangerous, but weren't those just stories?

It is said that bearing the child of a ranked wolf, especially an Alpha, posed additional risks to their mate. Her spirit is split, as a part of her is imbued unto the child. It was how the Goddess blessed us with our wolves. Just as She was our mother, so did our mothers bless us through birth. Sadly, it required immense energy from them, and it almost always took their lives. It was how Flynn lost his mother; it was how I lost mine.

Tears pricked my eyes, and I was forced to hold them back

"Did you think you killed her?" he snarled.

Father cared for me a lot and never made me feel that it was my fault Mother was gone. I kept it to myself for even as a child, it was what we were told. Flynn's

ild, it was what we were told. Flynn's mother was a Luna, and I was the Head Gamma's daughter. However, whenever h e spent some nights drinking himself to sleep as he held her necklace, I couldn't help but feel aversion towards myself for taking my own mother away from us.

"You didn't," he whispered then pulled m e into a hug.

He stroked my hair lovingly and I sobbed. He was the enemy – he kidnapped me, left Carson to die, killed... but he also felt like someone I'd known for a long time. He whispered sweet nothings in my ear and lifted the guilt off my heart. That it wasn't my fault. That my Mother loved me. That she wanted me.

Ascension of a Gamma by C.C. Chapter 52

Chapter 52 Dying Man

-Anna

"Thank you," I said to the Omega as she laid down two glasses of mango juice and a tray of treats. She smiled at me then left the two of us alone in the balcony of my mother's study. Much like the library, there were shelves of books here too, except that it didn't feel as stuffy.

It was a hot mid-afternoon, and Alpha Emery was seated across the round table from me. I took a sip of the juice, savoring the cold that ran down my throat. We sat in silence for a few minutes before he spoke.

"Here," he said, handing me the necklace. "Have you seen what's under the cap?"

I took it from him and checked what was under. I stared at the shaped "A" on the glass.

"A?" I asked, confused.

Emery softly smiled.

ery softly smiled.

"Your mother," he began, then cleared his throat before adding, "_ was wolf less."

I gulped at the juice, almost choking on it.

"Easy, dear. I know it's almost impossible, but it does happen on our kind," he said, chuckling. "She was amazingly unique in so many ways."

"She was wolf-less?" I asked. I could've been hearing things. Two wolf-less werewolves in succession?

The odds are astronomical!

"Yes, she was. But it didn't matter. I loved her far before I knew she was my mate," he replied. "Would you like to hear the story of how we met?"

I nodded, choosing a brownie.

"Hmm... are brownies your favorite?" he asked.

"Don't get comfortable," I answered coldly. I was yet to wrap my head around *this whole thing

"Arabella loved them. She used to have

rabella loved them. She used to have them almost every day when she was pregnant," he said, with a tone of sadness in his voice.

I shouldn't sympathize with this man. However, he had nothing to gain from lying

"They're my favorite," I said quietly as I nibbled on it. When was the last time I had one – I couldn't tell anymore, it'd been so long!

"It wasn't exactly romantic, how we met. As a young boy, I was already attracted to her. She was lively and kind, and she always had a smile on her that everyone around her admired, including me. I always saw her as a butterfly – a free spirit, she was. Ella was four years older than me, and so you can imagine how nervous I was when she was about to turn eighteen. I didn't know what I would do. What if she was mated to someone else? What was I going to do if she fell in love with someone else? As a young boy, I

couldn't tell her my feelings – not because I was afraid of rejection. I think I was more afraid... that she would misunderstand my feelings as that of a

isunderstand my feelings as that of a child's."

He reached for a brownie and finished it in three bites. Then he drank a quarter of his juice.

"What happened when she didn't shift?"

"She was... shocked. We all were. I could still remember how upset she was, standing in the middle of everyone, holding back the tears and forcing a smile. I was worried then, worried that my father, your grandfather —" he said, glancing at me as he emphasized the word, then adding, "- will banish her."

«Did he?"

Alpha Emery smiled.

"No. He walked up to her and announced t o the pack that we have a new healer."

"Healer?" Could this explain my blood?

He leaned closer to the table and I did the same.

"You have to promise me not to tell anyone outside of our pack. This is a secret known only to us. Can I trust you with it, Bella?"

WII, Denah

I nodded, dubious that he was trusting m e, a stranger... uhm... lost daughter with a pack secret two hours after he dropped this bomb on my true roots.

"In our pack, there have been eighteen werewolves who were born without wolves," he said.

I slowly pulled back until my back hit the backrest as I looked at him dubiously. Everyone knew those like me were... rare. So rare in fact that most believe we were just a story. Born millennia apart that there was almost no known fact about us. Stories even say that in the olden times, we used to be killed, because we had no use in war.

"It's true. The pack records prove it. Your great, great grandmother was a wolf-less Luna. And although they have no werewolf, they are gifts by the Goddess. Your grandfather told me they were healers, the most powerful there is," he explained.

"That's... impossible. They can't even heal themselves because they don't have a wolf. How can they be healers?" This could be a set-up.

www

CPLL up.

Does he know about my blood? Is this what he's after?

"It's their blood," he said, then drank more juice. He leaned back and sighed. He seemed to be growing more tired by the minute. 1

"Do you know the story of the witches, dear?" he asked as he closed his eyes.

It was one of the stories Father shared while he was drinking

"They used to be humans but their jealousy for the werewolves drove them to search for power. The Goddess's twin, pleased by their hatred, granted them power. She was jealous of her sister since the werewolves only knew to look up to the Moon. She was in the Goddess' shadow, the New Moon, the phase where nights are darkest and werewolves are at their weakest," I answered. It was a well known story, often told as bedtime

stories to children.

Alpha Emery inhaled deeply and loudly exhaled.

"My father said the witches only knew to destroy, and so the werewolves, who can

troy, and so the werewolves, who can only heal themselves, had to watch their own kin succumb to the witches' power. Our kind had enough. The first Alpha prayed to the Goddess to save his people. I tis said that he prayed as he held his deceased Luna who was carrying their child."

He fell quiet after, his chest heaving slowly.

Was he asleep?

As if on cue, his chin dropped. I waved a hand on his face. He really was asleep!

"He's been doing that more often," someone said behind me that I jumped on my feet. He looked to be at the same age as Alpha Emery, with a similar build and the same tired smile. Dark blue eyes stared back at me; too dark it could easily be mistaken as black. His aged face tired, and his peculiar eyes kind.

"I'm sorry. I didn't mean to scare you."

"I-It's alright. Who- Who are you?"

"David Nate. Beta of the Black Mist Pack," he said, smiling. "Could you..."

Pack," he said, smiling. "Could you..."

"Uh... sure," I said, awkwardly stepping t o the side. He crouched to his knees beside Alpha Emery, checking his pulse o

n his wrist.

"Is he..."

"He's asleep," he said. Standing, he positioned himself to carry Alpha Emery.

"It's me, old friend," he said when the Alpha stirred then went limp again. Beta David carried him inside the room and spotted the bed.

"Be a dear and lift the sheets, will you?"h e asked.

I did as I was told, and he laid Alpha Emery down before covering him with the comforter. When I looked at him, he had his eyes closed – probably talking to someone in a mind-link. I waited for him to finish before I asked, "What's... uhm... What happened to him?"

Beta David sighed. "He doesn't want you t o find out, but I think it's better if you know. You were taken here against your will. I'm sure you have a lot of questions."

I nodded.

1 nodded.

"First, I would like to apologize for kidnapping you and hurting your friend. We don't know how he is since you were our mission, but when we left him, he was still breathing."

"You expect me to take that as consolation?" I spat.

"If it's any consolation at all, yes. I won't justify our actions, but we don't kill for n o reason. Second, I understand that you want to get away from here as soon as possible. But I hope you will stay with him for now."

"With my kidnapper? A stranger who claims to be my father?" I said, my voice a little higher. "Sure. No big deal," I added in a sarcastic tone.

He sighed. "He is your true father. I understand it's a lot to take but this is your pack, Bella. You are an Alpha's daughter... and his sole successor."

"If I'm his daughter then why have I never known? Why was I born and raised i nanother pack by MY father?" I said in a hushed scream. Growing up, I watched other kids my age get called by their

other kids my age get called by their mothers. I watched how they were pampered. Most times, I'd visit Mother's grave just to talk to her, to make me feel better, or to simply cry.

The graveyard was a quiet place, and hardly anyone ever went there – it was where I met Flynn, the Alpha's son. He was rarely seen around the playground,

and the grown-ups said he was sick. Turned out, he was just the same as me – sneaking into the graveyard to meet with a deceased parent. I loved my father, but I wished I knew more about her...

"He thought he lost you. We all did," he said quietly. "That day, when your father felt the bond broke, he believed he lost his wife and child. He was never the same after that. Eighteen years... he sought vengeance. Then for the next two years, we waited... waited for you to return to the White Lake pack. We couldn't send spies, and you were never seen outside the pack territories or anywhere near the boundaries. Twenty years... and I never saw him as happy as he did when he saw you. Thank you, Anna Bella. You brought my friend back."

my friend back."

He knew I was his daughter when they attacked? But he...

"What happened, exactly? How did I end up in the White Lake Pack? How did you know I was leaving the Red Claw Pack?" I I couldn't have been a coincidence... unless they were waiting for it.

He scooted to a bedpost and leaned over it. "Will it change your mind if you knew?"

"Depends. I feel like I'm having an identity crisis, and this is supposed to be for middle-aged people," I said, shrugging

Beta David chuckled then sighed. "If you really must know."

He threw me a tired glance. "Twenty years ago, three of the biggest and strongest allied packs attacked. They claimed that we were abusing the children and that your father was abusing our Luna. It wasn't a rescue. It was a massacre. And their claims – their claims are just as ridiculous as their reasons behind it. I can't tell you what exactly happened that night, only your father knows since he was with her. She

– ows since he was with her. She betrayed me,' was all he said. Goddess knows he loves her still."

"I-I don't understand," I mumbled.

"She ran away with them," he said tiredly. "I will never know why. Your father has never talked about it. He didn't give up on her, on you. He searched for her nonstop, Anna Bella. He kept searching until the day the bond broke. After that, he was never the same. They took everything from him, and soon, the pack weakened and was forgotten."

"Father and Alpha Fraser would never attack a pack on baseless accusations!

"Alpha Fraser of the White Lake Pack, Alpha Lynall of the Red Claw Pack, and Alpha Tyler of the Blue Moon Pack. Ranked as the fourth strongest pack, the second, and the third... from our times. Now they're the top three and our pack is history," he replied. "At least your father and I lived long enough to watch them die. Think what you want of Fraser and your father. They kept this fact hidden from you since you were born – what does that say about them?"

es unat say about TTC

"Is that why you killed them?" I said slowly, my nails digging into my palms." I was there. I remember that scar. I remember the blood. I remember everything that happened like it was yesterday. What am I doing here anyway? You said I was a mission. Why? What do you want from me? To fill my head with these stories... these lies?" I questioned, my voice getting higher, but I didn't care. "What do you want from me!"

Alpha Emery groaned. I covered my mouth while Beta David opened his eyes.

"It's me, old friend," he said. "It's just m e."

The Alpha turned to his side, still asleep.

"Our mission was to kidnap the Luna of the Red Claw Pack, who goes by the name Anna Bella Fiora. We were to hold you hostage until the plan was executed. Don't concern yourself with it. Your father and I will take care of it. With you being the Alpha's lost daughter, this changes everything."

He stood to close the doors that led to the balcony. With his back to me, he

cony. With his back to me, he continued.

"Over the years, our pack has lost many. Some in attacks, some left only to die. My wife... she left. Our pack was no longer safe to raise a child. Before I could find them, my wife died on the same day. She was pregnant with our daughter."

"I'm sorry," I whispered. He raised a hand to his face as he breathed deeply.

"My daughter... Marianne, she would've been five by now. Emery and I lived for the pack. Even after getting revenge, it did nothing to satiate the pain. We still lost our everything. But you're here now."

He turned around and looked me in the

eye.

"Emery is dying. His wolf has weakened. If you want to leave, you have my word that you can walk out that door and drive the car parked right outside and no one will stop you. But if you have, even the slightest bit of pity, please stay with him. I don't think he has a long time left."

I looked away and eyed Alpha Emery – m y maternal father. Was all that I had thought about my father, all this time, a

pught about my father, all this time, a

"Please think about it," said Beta David as he headed for the door. Who am !?

Ascension of a Gamma by C.C. Chapter 53

Chapter 53 Family Reunion

Anna

As if in a trance, I found myself standing and going for the door. I passed by the hallway, then found a set of stairs that led down. The place eerily quiet, my own breathing creating a piece of rhythmic music in my ears.

Somehow, I managed to find my way into the front door, and just as promised, there was a car sitting right outside. No guards in sight, not a single werewolf around. Just me, and a car that I didn't know if I could still drive. How long since I last drove one-two years, and I was a really bad driver. I crashed three of Father's cars, and all of those were during driving lessons. From on the road t o off the road and into a tree when all I was supposed to do was keep driving straight

Father. I should have only one, not two, and yet I did. Convincing myself that this was a lie only added to the weight on my chest. He was my father, my flesh and blood. I knew it within me regardless of what lies I kept telling myself.

WITH NO

PULITID

DET.

A dying man would have no reason to hold me captive in an almost nonexistent pack.

Instinctively, I fisted my right hand and felt something crumple – the envelope, now a dirty white from the passage of two decades. I didn't realize my hands were shaking until I looked down.

Freedom was a few steps away. I could put all this behind me and start anew. I forgot my phone, but I could find a way to contact Carson to check up on him. I wouldn't be able to visit my parents anymore, but... 1

I clutched at the vial around my neck.

I'm sorry I never visited you, Father.

He's dying.

You're the spitting image of her.

Their words resonated in my mind.

Goddess, why do you always make me do this?

Turning my back on the way to freedom, I made my way back up the stairs, into the hallway, then inside the library.

the hallway, then inside the library. Sitting around the table, I smoothened the crumpled envelope. My name was spelled in beautiful, cursive writing – Bella Black, a name I never knew until now.

Ripping the flap open, I took the folded sheets of paper out.

[Anna,

You must be all grown up now. I often thought about what kind of person you'll grow up to be. Beautiful, no doubt, both inside and out.

I understand that there isn't much I can do for you. Even as I write this letter, I cannot write a lifetime's worth in a few pages. I can't be with you to hold your hand when you're scared, hug you when you cry, and make you a brownie when you're feeling blue. I can't be there to tell you bedtime stories, sing you to sleep, and kiss you goodnight. I can't be there to cheer you on, push you further, and guide you as you grow. I can't be there to play dress-up, help you with lady talks, and gossip about boys you like. I can't be there to teach you how to cook, how to bake, and how to fight. There are so many

hke, and how to fight. There are so many things I want to do with you and say to you. Sadly, I cannot. 1

For this, I am sorry. I am sorry that you had to grow up without me. I can only imagine how hard it must've been for you, but I trust you have found a way tog

oon.

I hope you surround yourself with friends and family and find love like your Dad and me. There will be sufferings along the way, but I hope you can find it in your heart to stay strong.

When you feel like giving up, I hope you can be hopeful enough to keep going. When you feel let down, I hope you can be hum<u>bl</u>e enough to ask for help. When you feel like the world is against you, I hope you can be responsible enough to take control. When you feel like you are alone, I hope you can be vulnerable enough to trust the people around you.

I believe you have the heart of an Alpha. I hope you let it guide you when you are lost. Trust, and it will lead you to what you need.

Don't cry for me, my love. I have always

n't cry for me, my love. I have always been with you and your Dad and I always will be.

Happy 18th Birthday, Anna. My beautiful baby girl.

Love.

Mom]

"She was a kind soul, your Mother," said Alpha Emery

I couldn't reply. Tears blurred my vision, and my mind couldn't think of what to reply as Mother's words echoed in my head.

"I miss her every day since." He took my hand in his, rough and veiny. "I cannot force you to stay when you don't want to. But know that there was never a day when I didn't think of you and your Mother. I died the day your Mother passed away; the same day I thought I lost the two of you. When my wolf, Erthu, sensed that you were ours, I couldn't be any happier. You were alive all this time. I'm sorry I gave up on you. I'm here now. You're here now. I cannot change the past, but will you give me the chance to b

1

•

1. 2

st, but will you give me the chance to b

e the Father I couldn't be?"

Mom told me to trust my heart. It was conflicted but at this moment....

I threw my arms around him and buried my head in his chest. There was so much to clear between the two of us. I didn't know if I could ever forgive him. I was angry at Father and at Alpha Fraser for hiding the truth. I was angry at him, but it would be a lie if I told myself that I didn't feel our connection.