

Banished With His Heir

Chapter 2: Broken Heart

Life really sometimes works in mysterious (and heartbreaking) ways. One day you feel like you're on cloud nine, and then the next, it's like you've been pushed and you're falling, falling, and falling until you've hit rock bottom and nobody is there to help you up.

You're all alone and you tell yourself that you can do it, that you can keep going, and sometimes it works. You do that. You keep pushing yourself.

But other times, the worse it gets, you realize that you were just fooling yourself and what you're doing isn't helping. It's just torturing you.

You're walking into your own downfall, your own demise.

So why not just give up? Why not just disappear? Wouldn't that be better for everyone else around you?

"Oh my goddess, Keira. I'm so sorry..." Elura whispered to me as she took my hand as if that would suddenly change the fact that every single one in our Pack just saw me get treated like shit.

To top it off, River didn't even care. He didn't say anything. Hell, he didn't even acknowledge me. All of a sudden, it was like I had disappeared right in front of him, or worse, he knew what had happened but chose to look away, to cleanse his hands from the dirt.

Ivy and he walked away like nothing had happened. He placed his hand around her waist and she smiled and giggled like they were in a romantic movie.

All while I sat there, feeling so ashamed and disgusting, figuratively and literally because salt and salmon were all over me.

And you know what's worse? You know what's the most awful thing about this whole situation?

River Colden used to look at me that way, too. He used to kiss me like he does Ivy and pull her close to him and wrap his arms around her.

To him just a few days ago, I was his world and he was mine. Until he found his mate and I was nothing but a piece of trash.

"Let's go outside, okay, Keira?" Zane linked to me and I nodded my head slowly because it's the only thing I can do.

I can't speak. It feels like my tongue has been tied and I can't even move, my feet glued to the floor until I feel Zane's hands around me and he helps me to move, pushing me towards the other exit away from everyone's prying eyes.

As soon as he closes the door though, as soon as I know there is nobody else but us, I collapse on the floor.

My vision was so blurry, eyes filling with tears by the second. I couldn't breathe properly, hyperventilating as my chest felt heavier and heavier.

Everything was all coming back to me like a ton of bricks dropping onto the ground and I was right in the middle of all of it.

It began two years ago. At least, when we publicly declared our relationship, but it was years before that did we feel something different when we were together and we just never acted on it. We kept telling ourselves that it wasn't right, that we had to wait for our mates.

But then, they never came.

River and I got our wolves around the same time. His was Gray, a fitting name for a wolf that was mostly white with streaks of black that blended with his fur, creating a gray color effect.

Mine was Fuyu, meaning winter in Japanese. As a kid who grew up around the white wolves, I hoped somehow that when I got my wolf it would have white fur on it, but I knew it was impossible. I wasn't born a White Howler, I was just... accepted as one.

Evidently, my wolf was the darkest black you could ever imagine. It was so dark that I was the best camouflage at night. Again, nobody discriminated on my color, especially River.

In fact, he would sometimes get a patch of snow and cover my wolf around with it to make it seem like I was the same fur color as him. He told me that white or not though, he likes my wolf for who she is.

Fuyu and I squealed like a smitten girl who was having her first love, though we forbade ourselves from doing anything more than internally crushing over him.

A year or so after we both shifted, neither of our mates came. It was River who felt disappointed at first and it was because there were so many more responsibilities hanging on his back.

He was to be Alpha and everyone expected an heir from such. His younger brother, Skye, was just ten years old so everything was expected of him.

It was a hard time. River came back to the White Castle at dawn most days as he would be going around the city and even out of the city to find his mate. He was tired and restless, but mostly heartbroken.

One night, he came home and went straight to my room. He cried in my arms that night saying that he will never find his mate and I was heartbroken for him, but I couldn't do anything. As much as I wanted, I was forbidden.

And then it happened. He kissed me. River Colden, Alpha of the White Howlers, kissed me.

But it wasn't just that. He confessed that he loved me and that he knew I loved him, too. I tried to fight it, to deny it, but eventually, I gave in.

From then on, we were inseparable. River didn't care about his mate when he had me.

And then... she came.

When Ivy arrived, River knew instantly that she was his mate. The mate that he had been searching for for countless years and the one he had given up on. All of a sudden, I was nobody to him.

Pushed to the curb and forgotten, I was heartbroken. I cried myself to sleep and I still am.

Though the pain doesn't just end there. It gets worse when Ivy realizes what River and I had before and she becomes jealous.

From then on she targeted me, making everyday of my life a living Hell. But the thing is, she never did it where others could see. She made sure to hide the way she treated me like shit, so why now?

Why would she suddenly do that? What could she possibly gain from it?

And then it hit me. It hit me how like a ten wheeler truck would feel like.

She wanted me to realize that River no longer cared about me. That nobody would come to my rescue even if I was humiliated in front of them.

Oh god. Oh god. Oh god.

I can't breathe. My chest is tightening and my heart hurts so, so much.

I wanted to scream. I wanted to cry out my heartbreak, but I couldn't open my mouth. I couldn't do *anything* and it made me feel so fragile.

I wasn't like this. I wasn't an emotional wreck. I was Keira Akari, the girl who was left on her own and survived days or weeks in negative temperature and lived to become a great wolf on her own terms.

I may not have been the same wolf kind as my Pack, but I made the best out of everything and saw the bright side each time. I kept going no matter how hard things became and that's how I got here.

I'm better than this. I'm— I'm—

“Keira, please. We should go before others get here. I don't want anyone else to see you like this.” Zane pulls me out of my thoughts, his hand holding tightly on mine as he stares into my eyes, worry, heartbreak, and desperation circling through them.

“Can you-” I sniffled. “He- help me u- up.” I could barely form a proper sentence as my emotions continued to drown me.

Nonetheless, Zane was quick to hear my request. He nods his head before sliding his arm on my waist and pulling me up. He pulls me close to him, and I hide my face on his neck at the same time resting my head on him, feeling tired and restless like I can't move my own body.

“I'm re- really s- sorry about th- this,” I manage to croak out, still holding on to him tightly.

He pulls me closer to him. “You don't ever have to say sorry to me, K, and it's not your fault. This was just a very fucked up play on fate.”

Fate, he said. Back then I used to think fate was on my side. That ending up with the White Howlers and meeting River was where I was supposed to be, but falling in love with him and vice versa was the best part about all of it.

Now hearing the word made me feel sick to my stomach.

When we reached the front door of my room, I remembered how this place used to be empty since I hadn't been here in two years.

When River and I publicly declared our relationship, he had asked me to stay with him. Of course, I was quick to jump to his proposition. It was the equivalent of moving in with your special someone, except we had already lived together this whole time in the White Castle so moving to his room was a big step in our relationship.

Zane pushed open the door and helped me on to the bed. It felt eerily cold even if it was technically my own room, a place I grew up in.

Everywhere I looked, the drawers, the bedside table, the cabinets – they were mine, but it also didn't feel like it. I've thought about it for the past week since I got back here that this place isn't where I belonged. I belonged in River's room *with* him.

A pained whimper escaped my lips once again and I pulled my knees to my chest, burying my face as I hugged myself. I didn't care that my clothes were getting wet or snot was coming out of

my nose. I couldn't care about anything when my heart felt like it was being ripped to shreds over and over again.

"I think it's best for you to get some rest, K..." Zane says as I feel his weight on the side of my bed.

He touches my arm, gently caressing it like he was telling me things through his touch.

It sucks, I know. It's fucked up, but it's going to be okay. I'm right here. I'll always be here.

He doesn't say it, but I can feel it. Every time something happens between River and I, a disagreement or a miscommunication, Zane is always the first to help sort things out. He's somewhat a buffer in our relationship and in a few hours, it's like River and I never even had fought in the first place.

I couldn't help but cry harder when I realized that this time, it wasn't something he could fix. No matter what Zane does or says, this was different. It wasn't a misunderstanding that could be fixed with an apology or a hug.

This was finding out the man I have loved for so many years has completely abandoned me.

I move away as I lay down on the bed. The cold and unfamiliar sheets wrap around me, but it was all I had. I turned around in order for Zane not to see me even more broken. It was more than enough that he heard my whimpers and desperate cries, I could at least spare myself what little left I had of my dignity.

I felt his weight on the bed disappear and I tighten my grip on the pillow, using it as a release for everything I was feeling.

"I'll talk to him, okay? I'll try to knock some sense in him. I'm sure he was just a little overwhelmed, but he'll snap out of it, K. He cares about you. For now, just get some rest. When you wake up, it'll be better, I promise." Zane's words are heartfelt and hopeful, but mostly, it just felt like an empty promise.

I love the way he tries to see the good in things every time, the way he makes me smile through all the bad, but he doesn't understand. He might have been rejected by his own mate and I'm sure that pain was excruciating, but he doesn't know what it feels like to see someone you love fall for someone else right in front of you.

I don't respond. I don't think I even can. My heart hurts. My chest is like being stomped on. My entire body is shaking and convulsing. My brain feels like it's being hammered as thoughts of my past with River keeps flashing continuously.

I hear a faint sound of the door closing and at that exact second, I break down.

Knowing nobody else was there but me, I screamed my frustrations out onto my pillow. I didn't care that my throat was starting to hurt, I just screamed and cried everything out.

“WHY?! WHY DID SHE HAVE TO SHOW UP?! WHY COULDN'T WE JUST BE TOGETHER?! WHY WASN'T RIVER MY CHOSEN MATE? MOON GODDESS, I HATE YOU. I HATE YOU WITH ALL OF MY BEING!”

I've never cursed at her. I've never cursed at the one that's given us life and protected us since the beginning, but this time, I couldn't help myself. I was so hurt by the betrayal that I continued to scream at her.

I was mad at her for not making me his mate, mad at her for making the most beautiful ice queen his mate instead, and mad at her for allowing me to end up here and meet River.

But most of all, I was mad at myself because the truth is, it wasn't the Moon Goddess that had made me fall for River Colden. It was all me, and I was mad that I fell so hard, *so* irrevocably hard for a man that I wasn't meant to fall in love with in the first place.

I don't know how much time had passed since I got to my room and screamed all my heartbreak out, but eventually, my body began to feel even more restless and my eyelids heavier.

Maybe when I wake up, this will all just have been a cruel nightmare and things will be back to normal.

Maybe...

Hopefully...