

## Chapter 40-2

I turn around, zipping my jacket, and he takes my hat from my hand, placing it on my head in a way that reminds me of Seth doing the same last night. He offers me his arm and I happily take it as we head out. I follow him, letting him show me whatever he would like to. He leads me through the area where their cabin is located that is full of pine trees, telling me about all the different kinds. A bit further past there there are fewer pine trees and a greater variety of trees- even some sugar maple trees!

“Do you make syrup?!” I ask excitedly, already planning to research the how to’s of syrup making.

“I used to, long ago. I haven’t for quite some time, but there are some wolves around that do,” he tells me with a chuckle at my excitement. “I’m sure they’d be happy to teach you.”

We continue to walk, not as quickly as I normally would, but it’s a perfect pace to look around and spend time together.

“I assume you wanted to look around to find a spot for the marking, tonight,” he says and I nod slowly.

“She said under the moonlight. I’m not sure exactly what that means, but there are trees everywhere and I don’t think that’s it.” I tell him, worried.

“There’s a field up ahead that you used to love when you were little. You’d sneak off and run in the grass for hours, usually coming home soaking wet and muddy from jumping into the creek,” he says with a wistful smile at remembering such precious memories. “I think it’s perfect for you.”

The grass on the ground gets thicker as we walk and there are far fewer leaves on the ground now. I can see the bright sun ahead of us and as we step through the last of the trees, I see the most beautiful meadow. I take a few steps out into it and turn to say something to Benjamin when I realize that this MY meadow- the one from my dreams, with the little wolf. I go to the spot where I usually wake up and there’s a large rock there in real life that isn’t in my dreams that has some old faded painting on it. “Molly” and “Andrew” and on there in purple and green paint, faded and chipped away, but still there.

“We buried Andrew here,” he begins to tell me. "The two of you would play out here for hours. We wanted his body to rest at the place he was happiest,” he says, sitting on the rock that is now a headstone for a brother I don’t remember.

I try so hard, but I can’t contain the tears forming in my eyes as I sit next to him. I’ve been careful about what I tell people about my wolf and the dreams, but I know that Benjamin only wants to protect me, even if I don’t know him well.

“I have dreams about this place,” I whisper. “Mom says they’re not dreams, but my subconscious.”

“She’s correct, we have a place in our minds where our wolf lives. You said you’d seen a wolf?” he asks and I nod. “That’s probably her trying to reach you. I’d suggest having your mate mark you here. It may be important.”

I nod to him in agreement. I always wake up in this exact spot, but this rock isn’t here,” I say quietly and he just continues to sit there with me, listening. “The first time was after I got hurt. The wolf was there, licking my finger. I think she was trying to help ease the pain. After that though, she was on the other side of the creek and couldn’t cross. Altair was heart broken last night when he couldn’t get to her.”

“Who is Altair?” he asks me, a quizzical look on his face.

“Oh, it’s Seth’s wolf.” I tell him and quickly realize from his face that it’s not normal for him to be able to be there.

He just looks at me for a moment, inspecting my face closely. “Seth’s wolf can be with you in your dreams?” he asks and I nod. “That is peculiar, but perhaps it is the magic. It’s unusual for someone to have a wolf and magical abilities, so there’s just not much information about everything.”

“I keep forgetting about the magic,” I say quietly, unsure if he’ll be offended.

“Of course you do, you can’t access it, yet,” he says, yet again comforting fears I’ve not spoken. “When I first met your mother I tried to deny the mate bond. I couldn’t believe I was mated to someone who wasn’t a wolf. Then, I tried to use her powers for myself, in an attempt to regain my pack and leave the rogue land. It’s honestly amazing she never left me in the beginning- it took me quite some time to accept her for who she is and not just for her magic.

You’re lucky that you know your mate wants you for you, and not the strength of your wolf or your magic. That man is clearly very smitten with you though. I may have my issues with his father, but I have no doubt that he’ll care for you and protect you.”

This morning is turning out to be substantially more emotional than I thought it would be. I’m trying to control my emotions as much as I can, but it’s terribly hard. “He didn’t want me at first. He tried to find someone who would be a better queen than I would with a broken wolf.”