

Chapter 87

They shifted back and Seth is now kneeling in front of Sage, gently petting her gray fur. He smiles gently and reaches down, taking our white paw in his hand. Even though we're not a big wolf, I didn't expect our paw to seem so small in his hand.

"Benjamin's wolf has a white paw, too," he tells me. "I think it was the other side, though."

Sage stays curled up, not moving for fear of it causing more pain. He moves to pet our head and I move enough to rub it against his hand.

"It's OK to shift back. It won't hurt like shifting to your wolf does," he tells me and we nod a little. "I'll stay right here until you're ready."

I'm going to stand up now and shift back. I hope it doesn't hurt.

To my surprise, it doesn't hurt as badly as I was expecting as Sage slowly moves and stands up. She limps forward a little and shakes her head as she starts to shift back.

Suddenly, I find myself standing in front of Seth again as he quickly reaches out and grabs my arms, helping to steady me.

He looks down at me and smiles. "How are you feeling?"

"I'm so tired," I say, my voice barely even a whisper. "Everything hurts so much. I don't think I can walk."

He helps me to take a few steps to the side and sit on a bench as he quickly dresses and then helps me back into my pajamas. Seth lifts me into his arms and I lay my head on his chest, falling asleep before we ever even make it back inside the palace.

I wake up, every part of my body in pain. I realize that I'm in the meadow, lying in the lush green grass underneath the full moon. Sage is lying next to me, curled into a ball.

"We did it," I whisper with a smile and she lifts her head slightly, laying it right back down.

I hear a rustling nearby and turn my head, feeling pain all the way down my back, as I see Altair walking over to us. He stops and sits near us, watching over us. I close my eyes and drift off to sleep hearing the gentle sound of the running water in the creek.

I wake up and find myself back in the hospital wing with Seth in the same chair he was in before, sound asleep with his feet propped up on the bed, holding my hand in his. I smile at the sight. I notice he's still wearing the same clothes as when I shifted, giving me hope that it hasn't been weeks.

I squeeze his hand tightly in mine. "Seth," I say, my voice very hoarse, hurting my throat. I try to roll over but pain shoots through my entire body with every attempt to move. I squeeze his hand again, as tightly as I can. "Seth."

His eyes pop open and he quickly sits up. "Hey," he says quietly with a smile as he kisses me on the head. "You did it. How do you feel?"

"Everything hurts," I say, tears forming in my eyes. "How long has it been?"

"I know, Love. I can feel some of it through the bond. It's only been a few hours. Everything is fine," he tells me and his eyes glass over.

"I want to go to our room," I croak out. "I don't want to be in the hospital again," and I can't help the tears that begin to stream down my face. I feel ridiculous crying over it, but my emotions feel all over the place.

"I know," he says, kissing me gently. "Sofia checked and everything seems to have gone back where it should with the shifts. We just kept you here in case you didn't wake up for a while and you needed to be hooked back up. But you're awake," he tells me with a smile. "She's coming to check on you again and as long as everything is still good, then we'll go home."

There's a knock at the door and Sofia enters. A nurse also walks in behind her carrying a glass of water with a straw. She walks over to me and tries to help me drink, but Seth growls at her and reaches out, taking it from her. He gently lifts my head and helps me get the straw in my mouth. I sigh in relief after I take a sip, the cool water soothing my throat.

"Your throat shouldn't hurt from the shift," Sofia says, concerned.

Seth shakes his head. "She was screaming from the pain. I'm sure that's all it is".

Sofia nods once, taking my temperature and clamps something on my finger, frowning. "Your heart rate is a little bit high, as is your temperature."

My shoulders sag at her words, and I'm upset that it doesn't sound like things are going well for me

"Don't worry," she says with a small smile. "Your body went through a traumatic experience. It's not too bad, all things considered."

"So I can go home?" I ask, hopeful.

She looks at me and nods. "Prince Seth, you'll bring her back in the morning for us to check again. But yes, you guys can go upstairs." She turns to Seth. "I'm sure you were already planning to, but don't let her walk. The medicine you already have is sufficient. Give her one when you get upstairs."

Sofia turns and starts to leave, but sticks her head back in, looking at me. "Is it alright if I tell Benjamin and Lily that you shifted?"

"Yeah," I tell her with a smile and she walks out.

Seth leans over and rests his forehead on mine. "You did it, Love. You finally got your wolf."

"I did it!" I whisper back, smiling so much even my cheeks hurt now. "Can we go home now?"

"Yes, absolutely," he says with a kiss on my forehead. He uncovers me and gently lifts me, carrying me back the way we had come earlier today, though we don't pass anyone at this late hour. Every step he takes, even though he's being so careful with me, sends waves of pain all throughout my body.

Once back in our room, he sits me on the bed and looks down at me in sympathy. "Stay right here," he says and leaves the room. He returns quickly carrying my favorite water bottle from home and the medicine.

"You brought my water bottlr?" I ask him, trying to hold back more tears.

"Of course, it's your favorite," he says, handing it to me and a pill to take. I take a sip and promptly swallow the medicine, hopeful that it won't make me sick. "Honestly, your mom and Oliver packed everything. I didn't leave your side very much."

His honestly makes me smile as he turns around, walking to the bathroom. I hear water turn on and I find it weird, but he must have decided to take a shower. I start to move to get under the blankets, moving slow from the pain, when he walks back in.

"What are you doing," he asks, rushing over to me as I'm standing shakily, holding on to the side of the bed.

I look up at him confused. "I thought you were taking a shower."

"No, I started a bath for us. With salts and stuff that should help your muscles," he says, lifting me and carrying me into the bathroom. "It won't do anything for the bones or joints though."

"I'll be OK," I tell him as he sits me down on a chair in the corner.

"I know," he says with a sigh as he reaches into the water, checking the temperature. "I just hate that you're in pain at all. There's not really anything I can do to help, and I don't like how it makes me feel."

"You've already done so much," I tell him, as he lifts my shirt over my head. "Thank you for coming with me. I'm glad you were with me."

He helps me stand and slides my shorts off. "Thank you for telling me. Thank you for trusting me."

He carries me over and helps me into the tub, climbing in himself and sitting behind me, holding me up. "I've got you, Love. Just relax," he says as he rubs my shoulders, helping to ease the ache. His hands move down, rubbing my arms and my hips.

"Helping any?" he whispers in my ears and I nod, barely holding my eyes open. "It's been a big day for you. Just relax. I'll take care of you. Always."

I lean my head back against him, comfortable in his arms. The next thing I know, he's gently shaking me awake, kissing my neck softly.

"I need you to wake up so I can get you out," he says softly in my ear and I nod, acknowledging him. He helps me lean forward and stands up behind me, climbing out and wrapping a towel around his waist. Holding his hands out to me, he helps me stand and step out, wrapping me in the biggest towel I think I've ever seen.

"This is nice," I murmur, looking at the fluffy towel.

Seth chuckles a little. "You're fairly easy to impress."

He leads me into the bedroom and I sit on the bed as he disappears into the closet, coming back with new pajamas and helps me into them. He tucks me into bed and kisses my forehead, walking out to dress himself as I quickly fall asleep, comfortable in our home together.