

Chapter 30

ELLE

"There's a golden key in the second desk drawer to the filing cabinet in the corner. There's a safe in the bottom drawer. It requires my thumbprint to access," Alpha Andrew said with a sigh.

I could tell that he was only sharing this information because he was attached to life. There was no reason why he would do it otherwise. The bastard murdered his own parents for control, so there was no way in hell that he would give up the information to me if he had any other choice. He lacked control in this instance, and he knew that. It probably pissed him off that I was the one who held it all.

Kade got the key and tossed it to Gabriel who then led him over in order to get into the safe. There was a single folder in it which was handed over to me.

While I did want to know who I was and where I came from, part of me was also worried about what that knowledge would do to me. What if I had family who hated me and wanted nothing to do with me? What if my pack had been slaughtered in order to get me?

Kade turned my face and placed a featherlight kiss to my lips, steadying me, and reminding me that he was right beside me no matter what. We were in this together. I could never express to him how much that truth meant to me.

I turned my attention back to the folder and opened it up. The first thing I noticed was a photograph of me when I was a pup. It had to have been around the time they took me. My eyes drank in the

features of what I looked like that young. My hair was shoulder length but even curlier than it was now. It was currently wavy, but back then it was much more. My eyes had been so bright as if there was not a single care in the entire world. Oh, how I wished that I had been able to retain that part of myself.

The photograph was paperclipped to a sheet that had information on it, so I unclipped it and set it aside softly as if afraid to hurt that child. I felt Kade's awe as he stared down at it.

"Elle Mae Rosenthal," I said, testing the name. I was not sold on the last name because I grew up with the last name Croft. It was given to me by the woman who helped raise me for those brief three years.

'Eldest child of Alpha Shane Rosenthal and Luna Callista Rosenthal of the Shadow Creek pack. Alpha heir possesses strength and intelligence that exceeds her age. Birthmark of crescent moon with three stars within the moon confirms her identity as the Power Giver.'

My fingers itched to trace the birthmark that was on my shoulder blade. I had always found it interesting, but I did not realize that it was anything other than a random birthmark. It was that blasted mark which gave away my identity.

I pushed aside my negativity to focus on the task at hand. This was more important than that.

I flipped the page and saw another photograph that had to have been of my parents. I always wondered if I looked like my parents. Now, I knew that I did. I got my hair and facial structure from my father and my eyes from my mother. It was almost too surreal to even think about.

My eyes pulled themselves away from the file and were trained on the bastard who took me away from them. Although, if I had not been, then I would not have Gabriel or Kade in my life. I would never trade those two for anything, but that did not quell my anger at what he did.

"So, they found me for you. How did they get me away? Was anyone in my pack hurt because of it?" I asked with barely contained fury.

Thankfully, Kade was running his hands over my skin, distracting me with the sparks so that I would not be consumed by all of this. I relaxed back into him more because he was the only thing keeping me grounded right now. I inhaled his scent, letting it relax me further.

"They created a distraction in order to get you out. Nobody was harmed. Your capture was their only goal," he explained, swallowing hard because he saw the rage burning within me and knew I could end him if I wanted to. [1](#)

I closed the folder and set it aside for now because looking at it was making it nearly impossible to stop the thought of just slicing his throat open like he did his parents. I, however, would not need anyone to hold him down. He saw me fight Dulaney, so he knew what I was capable of, and that was nothing compared to what I could do.

"What did you do to my memories?" I asked calmly.

"I had a witch put a block on them. She couldn't extract or erase them because we had no idea what that would do to your power. I kept your first and middle name because your subconscious needed to have a connection to your identity so that was why only your last name changed."

I let loose a vicious snarl to him because he not only kidnapped me but blocked me from remembering my family and pack. A pack that thought Goddess knew what because I was there one minute and gone the next. I could not imagine the pain my parents went through in not knowing what happened. Thirteen years. Thirteen fucking years.

'We have someone in our pack that can unblock what was done, darling,' Kade linked.

My anger died down just as quickly as it came with that tidbit. I nodded my head and sent him all the gratitude that I could through the bond. It was amazing how easily he was able to pull me back from the edge. It was something that even Gabriel struggled with at times. 1

"Where's the pack located?" I asked.

"Thirty miles North of Richmond, VA."

That was about ten hours away from here. It was not too far but not too close either. My mind swam with the possibility to going at some point. Even if they wanted nothing to do with me, I had to at least set their minds at ease and let them know that I had survived.

"How did you find out about me, and who all knows because of you?" I snapped at him because my patience was nearing empty. 1

I did not want to even be in his presence any longer because he did something worse than what he did to me. He hurt my family, and that was something I would never be able to let go. I would still abide by his departure, but his life would be forfeit at some point.

"A prophecy from over two hundred years ago foretold you. A seer owed me a favor and was able to pinpoint what pack you'd be from. Nobody else knows because the witch and seer were taken care of already."

I looked towards Apollo to test how truthful the bastard was being, and he discretely nodded. I had not picked up on anything either. Sometimes my intuition helped filter out when someone was lying but not always.

"Anything else?" I asked him. He just shook his head in the negative. "Very well. I'll uphold my end because I honor my word. You'll still be punished in front of the pack, but the Council will strip you of your title and exile you afterwards. I highly suggest that you never show yourself around any of us again once you leave out because I'll kill you on sight. Please take him to the cells. If you share any of this information with anyone either here or somewhere else, I'll just kill you and be done with it. You don't know what I'm capable of," I said, dismissing him.

I watched as Thompson took him away. Silence fell over the room, but I had nothing witty or sarcastic to say.

My entire world shifted with that information. I spent so much of my life wondering what it had been like before I came here. I never imagined that I was an Alpha heir. Me ... the daughter of an Alpha. Who would have thought that? I supposed it did make sense though. Tyre mentioned that I was like an Alpha, but I doubted any of us had anticipated the truth in that statement. I also had many Alpha tendencies such as the strive to be the best at everything, an innate need to protect my people, and the way that I could stand against

any foe without blinking. I hated backing down, and I never submitted except to my mate.

If I was still with that pack, I would be training to take over an entire pack. I was unable to fully comprehend that thought. It did cause Faye to stand up proudly though. She was an Alpha wolf. As if she needed one more thing to feed her ego.

'I have to hold the ego for us both,' she huffed. 1

"Does anyone know anything about the Shadow Creek pack?" I asked, trying to break the tension in the room.

"They're a bit of a mystery actually," Diego said. I quirked an eyebrow at that answer. Talk about unhelpful. "They keep to themselves much like Nightshade does. Nobody knows why though."

That was interesting actually. There had to be a reason for it, but I was uncertain what it might be. I supposed the only way to know for sure would be if we ever developed a relationship with them.

"Was it always that way?" Kade asked.

"Yes. They don't even compete in the Alpha games," Diego answered.

The Alpha games were not obligatory, but most packs typically participated in them. They were our version of the Olympics. It was a way to showcase a pack's strength. It was also a way for packs to realize who they should not mess with, and which packs would be good to strike alliances with. Nightshade took first place the past five years. I was not certain about before that.

"What do you want to do about all of this?" Kade asked me, setting his chin on my shoulder.

That was a fantastic question. What did I want to do about all of this? I felt conflicted over what to do. It had been thirteen years since I was ripped away from their lives. What if they had finally healed from it, and then I showed up only to tear them back open? I was not the little girl in that photograph. She died a very long time ago.

What would they think if they knew the truth?

What would they think of me if they saw the stains on my soul?

Would they still look at me with love in their eyes if they knew how tarnished I was?

"Please let us have the room," Kade murmured, breaking me out of my thoughts.

He turned me around so that I was straddling him in the chair. He placed my hand over his heart and held it. There was such compassion in his eyes as he looked at me, seeing into me in a way that nobody ever had before. It was like he could see a part of me that I did not even know existed. What did that part of me look like to him?

"Do you honestly see yourself that way?" he asked me softly.

I had not mean for him to see those thoughts, but I could not take them back now, and I would not lie to him either. I would never lie to him because he was too important to me.

Tears poured from my eyes as I nodded. He pulled my face into his chest and held me while I cried. He did not condemn me for crying nor did he try to stop me. He just held me and comforted me while I did. That meant so much more than him trying to tell me that I was

being ridiculous or trying to deny my feelings.

One hand rubbed my back while his other hand laced its fingers with mine, allowing the sparks to also help center me. There was no telling how much time passed until my tears eventually dried up. He continued holding me until I was ready and would wait until that moment came. He was an incredibly patient person that never once rushed me but waited until I was ready. Never once did he ever demand anything of me. He chose to willingly accept what I gave him. 1

I placed a kiss over my mark, a silent vow to always do right by him. I did not deserve someone as good and caring as my mate, but I would be the best mate that I could be for him.

Kade pulled his shirt off him so that he could wipe my eyes for me. Perhaps he was also giving me some eye candy as well. He would not see me complaining though because he was droolworthy and all mine.

"Feel any better?" he asked.

"Oddly enough." I nodded to him.

Crying was one thing I always hated because it made me feel weak, and I hated that feeling more than anything. This time it felt therapeutic though as if it was healing part of me. I would not become a crybaby or anything, but it helped. The difference was the man in front of me. He was the change that was allowing me to heal. Faye healed my body, but only Kade could heal my heart and soul.

"Was this the first time you've had those types of thoughts about what others might think if they found out what was taken from you with your consent?" he asked me carefully as if he could already

guess the answer. 1

"No," I said quietly as I traced his collarbone with my finger to keep myself distracted as I spoke. He was someone that I could be honest with, and I wanted to be. "I also worry about what our pack would think if they found out. I'm supposed to be their future Luna ... what would that say about me?"

He placed his finger underneath my chin to raise my eyes up to his. There was only understanding in them. There was no shame or judgement or pity.

"My mother isn't here to tell you her story, but I know that she wouldn't mind me sharing it with you. She was born into a similar situation as you were in here. Her father had a gambling problem and ended up selling her to settle his debts. Let's just say that she suffered greatly because of that in every single way possible. She was sold when she was ten, and remained in that type of situation until she was twenty when my father found her," he began.

Kade continued rubbing soothing circles on my back which helped center me even further. I never imagined that Kade would understand all this, but he did. It hurt to think that his mother went through what I did.

I sat up straighter and laced my arms around his neck, giving him my full attention. I wanted to learn everything about his family because they were part of him.


"My father walked in on the Alpha taking advantage of her. That was their first meeting as mates. He was visiting their pack to discuss a treaty, much like I did here. He saw the tears and bruises as well as the blood that the Alpha caused. He didn't even have to ask if it was

consensual because he could tell that it wasn't. He threatened the Alpha's life if he didn't let her go. It ended up with my father challenging him and winning. My mother thought that he'd reject her because of everything, but my father believed very strongly in the mate-bond. She was a precious gift that the Goddess chose just for him. He brought her back to the pack, and she had many of the same fears that you do. My father convinced her that we all go through pain in life. He could never imagine what her pain was like, but she would be able to help others who went through what she did. She chose to take that to heart and began working with those who had dealt with trauma in their lives. It helped heal her, and in the process, it helped heal our pack. We've always taken in wolves who were truly innocent and had nowhere else to go. Many of them ended up needing my mother to help them. She taught them how to find true strength within themselves because they weren't victims, and they needed to learn that, believe that, and live that. A lot of the gifted wolves we bring in were mistreated by their packs. They could use someone like you to help them the same way they had looked to my mother."

My heart again felt like it was healing as I listened to his mother's story. There was no doubt in my mind that she was an amazing person that I wished I had gotten a chance to meet.

My lips met his in an unhurried pace because this was not about carnal desire. It was about so much more than that. This was about a connection that superseded everything in our lives. He was right that we all went through pain, but that did not discount his pain or mine. They were both unique but understood between us.

Tears once again fell from my eyes as we broke the kiss, but it was not for the same reason this time.

 +5 BONUS


"I'm sorry, darling. I didn't mean to make you cry," he murmured as he kissed the tears away.

"They're happy tears. Healing tears. I've felt that you've begun to help me heal from my past from the moment that I met you."

His radiant smile lit up his face with my words. The man was the embodiment of desire, but it was not just his looks that caused the desire. It was his heart and soul that did as well. He was my every desire, and I never understood that was what a mate was meant to be. He was the other half of my soul. I once feared that my soul was too tainted for a mate, but he proved me wrong.

"You've been healing me too," he told me, cupping my cheeks and kissing my forehead.



Shana Allen  Author

Elle finally got her answers. She also finally got some solace about her fears and worries.

 38



COMMENTS



SUPPORT