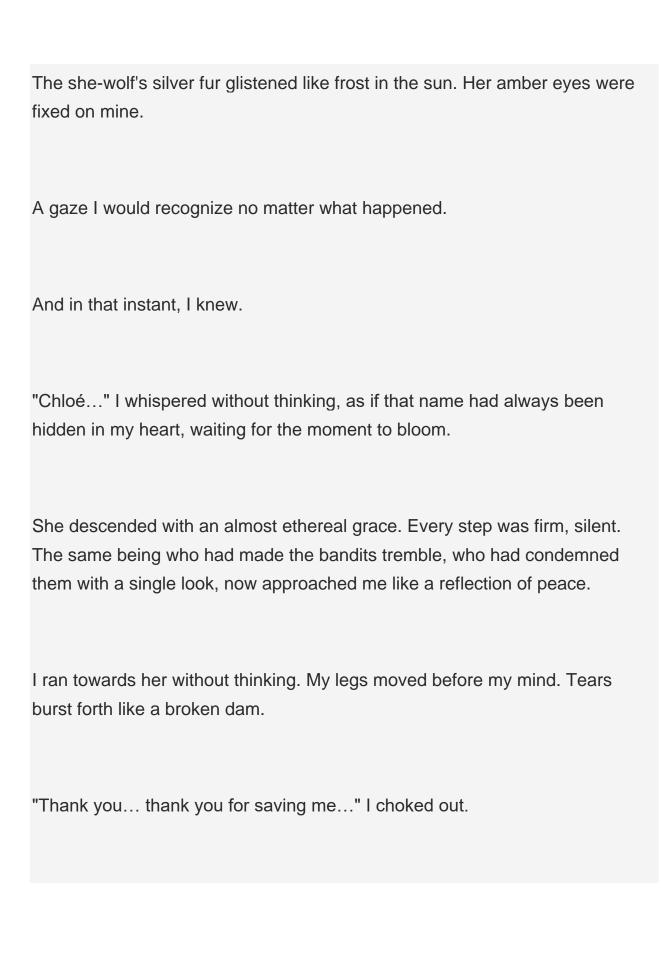
THE RISE OF A FROZEN STAR

Chapter 15: Two Souls

[POV Liselotte]
I followed the wolf for a short while, stumbling over damp roots and thick underbrush. The air was heavy with a strange silence, as if the forest itself was holding its breath.
And then it stopped.
The sun was just beginning to filter through the high treetops, staining the sky with brushstrokes of pink and amber.
On a small hill, silhouetted against the dawn light, its form stole my breath. Majestic. Serene. Strong.



Chloé didn't speak, but she didn't need to. Her eyes said it all. She nudged me with her snout, warm and firm, as if taking me under her protection. I sat down beside her, stroking her neck. For the first time since I arrived in this world, I felt protected. Alive. Not alone. I lay down next to her, my body exhausted, my heart beating slowly. The forest whispered with the wind, but it was no longer an enemy. Finally... I could rest. [POV Chloé] The forest was my cradle. My home. I was born under the whisper of leaves, on a bed of roots and moss. I was the second of five, strong from the start. Our mother was the soul of the pack. Our father, the alpha: a giant among his kind, steadfast and wise. Childhood was short. Life demanded from us from the first breath.

