

## Chapter 34

I woke up to the groan of the ancient car door opening. My blurry eyes blinked several times, but all I could make out was the silhouette of Sebastian and the brightness of his amber eyes inspecting me. I let out a soft hu , shutting my eyes again when I felt the seat belt being undone, thinking that I could just go back to sleep.

"We're home," Sebastian murmured to me.

I let out a whine and shied my body away from him.

"I can carry you inside, if you'd like," he offered.

The thought made me feel warm and fuzzy on the inside. I could have his arms around me, feel his chest against my cheek and breathe in his incredible scent as he used his strength to get me inside. It all fit into my dream rather well.

But, I had never been one of those girls and holding hands and being carried around were two completely different things. I forced my eyes open more and stretched a little before shooting him a sleepy smile.

"I got it," I said, sliding out of the car, onto the gravel driveway. "Man, I didn't think a hike like this would take all my energy."

I felt steady enough on my feet, but I must've looked wobbly and exhausted because Sebastian wrapped a hand around my arm for extra support.

"It's a hot day and you didn't drink a lot of water. Plus, you conquered your fears and that can be emotionally exhausting as well," he mused, helping me into the garage. "If I didn't think you were bad ass before I certainly think you are now."

There, I gave out a groan when I had to bend over and untie my shoes. My body already ached so much, I was worried what tomorrow would bring. I wouldn't even be able to get out of bed at this rate. My feet sang in relief once my shoes were kicked off haphazardly and I let out a sigh.

"I'm sorry, I didn't realize that I would be pushing you so hard. I just think that it's a really beautiful hike and I wanted to share it with you. Every time my mom comes here in the summer I take her there, it's her favorite. Sorry, I should've asked first."

"Don't apologize. It was a gorgeous view," I agreed, but my aching feet didn't know that. "I can see why she would like it so much."

"Next time I'll take you to a tea house, beautiful view but less walking and lots of people to keep predators away. Plus, the best chia lattes and the don't look like swamp water."

Nothing was said as we moved into the house together. Sebastian was a pace behind me, giving me space but seemed to think that my legs might give out at any moment. But my brain was now occupied with other things beside my stiff muscles and body parts that would likely never move again.

When we reached my bedroom door I spun around to face Sebastian and those amber eyes watched me with something I would almost call adoration.

"Do you think your parents would want to meet me?" I blurted, before I could talk myself out of it.

Sebastian didn't miss a beat. The corner of his mouth turned up and he tucked a stray strand of hair behind my ear. "They would love to meet you, I'm sure."

"Then, let's plan something," I pushed.

"Oh?" He no longer seemed so certain of himself and his hand dropped to his side.

"Unless, that not what you want," I added. Damn it, we had a wonderful day and here I was ruining it by being too forward. "I totally get it. It's too soon. I just thought that because we're werewolves and mates we're pretty much married. I mean, not that we are married, but, you know, it's more of a sure thing," I rambled.

"Char, it's not about you or where we are in our relationship," he chuckled, taking my hand with confidence he hadn't had before today. I watched him as his thumb stroked along the back of my hand. "We are a sure thing," he agreed, "Well, now that you've decided you want me. The problem is with me and what I do. There's so many people who hate me, who, like you, didn't understand what I did. I can't just have my family over for dinner and risk them like that."

"Oh," I whispered, feeling selfish and thoughtless immediately.

"How about I call my dad tonight, okay? I can't promise you anything because they haven't planned to come out, but I can at least try."

"You don't have to if you don't want to," I retracted, still feeling foolish.

"Of course I want to," he said with a grin. "How could I not want my family to meet my girl?"

I could only blink and gawk at him in shock and awe when he brought my hand to his lips and pressed a soft kiss on the back of my knuckles.

That night I dreamt of his lips, his scent, and the woman who offered constant comfort.

~~~Question of the Day~~~

If you could be any fictional character who would you be and why?