

## Her Brother, Her Mate Chapter 18

Parker POV

This was why I didn't want to tell her yet. Why I wanted her to find out after I at least showed her how much I wanted this now. I can see her brain in overdrive and can feel her clamming up and shutting down. I grip her hand tighter, despite her releasing her grip completely.

"Carli, say something," I begged her, pulling on her hand so she would face me.

"So we're mates?" She asks quietly.

Carli won't meet my eyes completely. She's staring blankly right below them, and I'm desperate to know what is going on inside her head.

"Yes, we are." I tell her quietly, trying to gauge how she is taking the news. Not good, I suspect, but it's hard to tell.

She looks down and nods, then looks out to the ocean, staring at the surf and sun glistening off the waves. Her hair looks vibrant red in the sun's strong rays, like red wine. I tuck a loose strand behind her ear, but she doesn't react. She just kept staring out at the ocean for several minutes.

"What are you thinking?" I finally asked, not able to take the silence much longer.

"Your father rejected my mother. It took him 4 years to go back and claim her. When I talked to him this morning, his lack of integrity astounded me. It seemed like he just wanted her because at that point in her life she was seeing my real father, and they were getting serious enough to be expecting me. Is that what this is now? Did it take 4 years to approach me because you heard I'd be moving, and won't be within your reach anymore?"

"What?" I was completely shaken by her assumption, not expecting to hear her have such a warped perception of me. "How can you think that?"

"4 years," she says softly, trying to drop my hand, but I continue to hold it firmly, scared about what she will do if I let it go. "4 years and you wait the week before I turn 18 and leave the pack forever to try and get close to me again. You have known I was your mate for 4 years, Parker. You had 4 years

to come and fix our relationship. I just,” she bites her lip and shakes her head, then finally turns to face me, “I just don’t see how a man who claims he wants to give me the world could wait 4 years before even offering to give me his time.”

I’m frozen in fear. Why the heck did I wait so long to see her, to meet her and try to get close to her again? Why was I such an i\*\*\*t to run away from the mate bond 4 years ago? I can feel her resolve, and see the wall she is building between us once again.

“Carli, don’t....”

“Don’t what?” she scoffs, jerking her hand out of mine, “I’m not my mom, Parker. I’m not some ignorant floosy who needs a man to make me feel complete. I’m not going to fall at your feet and start worshiping the ground you walk on just because of something as menial as a mate bond.”

“Menial? What are you even saying? The mate bond is everything to werewolves,” I stood there in disbelief.

“Then why did your father throw it away? Did you know he rejected my mom? He found her before you were born, but rejected her. He threw her away, just like you did to me 4 years ago when you learned I was your mate.”

“I thought you were my sister!” I cried out, “I thought there must have been a mistake.”

“Does the moon goddess make those kinds of mistakes?”

“I don’t know! I was scared. I didn’t know what to do. You were just 14 and my baby sister. How would you have felt in my situation?”

“So finding out I’m your mate was an upsetting situation?” she sneered.

“NO!” I pulled on my hair, desperate to go back 10 minutes before this whole conversation started. We were doing great. She was accepting me, finally. She was looking at me as something more than a brother, finally. Now, she is throwing me into the same category as my father.

“Your father didn’t even know what my name was,” she whispered, looking back at the ocean, pulling a stray, windblown strand of hair out of her face. “He called me Clarissa. I lived with the man for 14 years and he didn’t even

know my name. Even if I wasn't his daughter, I was still my mother's. He couldn't be bothered to learn the name of his mate's daughter. I don't want a mate like that."

"I'm not my father," I reached for her shoulders, trying to get her to look at me again, "I'm not like him. I've always loved you, Carli. I was just scared of how that love changed so suddenly."

"Did you love me when you were sleeping with other girls, knowing your mate was desperate to hear back from you? Or when you answered the phone to tell me to leave you alone while you were balls deep in some chick?"

"Carli, it wasn't like that."

"It's okay. I get it," she smiled at me, but her smile didn't reach her eyes. "I'm not even 18 yet, and I can feel the pull of the mate bond. It's not strong, but it clouds your judgment, almost taking your free will. I hated you, Parker. I hated you as much as I hated your parents for at least 3 years. The year before that, you hurt me so severely with the way you abandoned me, I swore to myself I was going to write you off with the rest of them when I could finally be free from their control. I got that. I'm no longer their child or your sister. We are all free to live our own lives. I don't have to submit to this mate bond, and you can go on with living your life without having the shame of being mated to your sister."

"So you just want to throw away the mate bond?" I scoffed in disbelief.

"You already threw it away 4 years ago," she says softly, staring at my chest, still not meeting my eyes. "I'm going to find my own way home," she mutters, then walks past me, going the opposite direction of my truck.

This is why I didn't want to tell her. This is what I was so scared of. She isn't going to accept me as her mate.