

Chapter 2



After stepping out of the cold bath, I wrap myself with a towel. A faint knock echoes through the bathroom and I open the door. Rylan stands there, a grim look on her face. I quirk an eyebrow at her, but let her into the bathroom. I have grown up with Rylan and she feels like my sister. I towel off my hair and slip into a pair of leggings and an oversized sweater. Rylan sits patiently while I brush out my hair.

"Did they catch the rogue?" I ask, still not over being told to sit out. She catches my gaze in the mirror and smirks.

"Yeah, your dad caught him. Apparently he was forced from the Night Claw pack."

"They said they are going to interrogate him after the ceremony." I frown and tie my hair up into a high ponytail. Striding out into my bedroom, Rylan follows with a sigh. She crosses her arms and watches as I tug on a pair of leather boots.

"Are we going to run our daily rounds?" She asks more to herself. I stand and nod with a smile. Every day Rylan and I do a run of the perimeter of the pack lands. We search for anything out of the ordinary, and with a rogue on our lands it is setting me on edge.

I pull open the door and walk past Bruce with my head held high. He stands up fast and hurries after Rylan and I.

"Kira! Kira! Stop!"

I speed up as I step outside into the courtyard. Rylan is at my side as we make our way to the small shack on the edge of the forest. Rylan and I use the shed as a place to keep our clothes for when we shift and patrol. Just feet from the door, Bruce's useless yelling quiets and I turn to see my father emerging from the house red-faced. I smirk and step inside. I can hear my father cursing my name, and Rylan sends me a worried look. I roll my eyes and lean against the wall, looking bored.

The door soon slams open, sending a cloud of dust into the air. My father is standing in the doorway with Bruce at his shoulder. I look at my father disinterested. He seems to visibly radiate anger.

"Kira, get your ass back into the house." He snarls. My father can be intimidating when he doesn't get his way, but I have grown up with it. It doesn't faze me anymore.

Rylan flinches at his tone, but I merely meet his gaze. With as much steel as I can mutter, I sneer.

"No."

In the seconds after the word leaves my mouth, everyone in the shed freezes. I simply raise my chin higher and glare.

"It is my job to patrol these woods. I will not let a rogue keep me from my duty. Anyone else would have been out hours ago because of the rogue." I say. My father visibly stiffens and turns to Bruce.

"Take your daughter in to get breakfast, we will be inside in a few." Rylan bows her head and follows her father, Bruce, out of the shed.

"Dad, I know you want to protect me but-"

"Actually, I know you can handle yourself. But with the ceremony coming up you need to be at your best. And a run in with someone else could be a disaster for your chances of staying with the pack."

I growl lowly, but he continues talking down to me as if I am fragile.

"Plus, I already sent out guards to make rounds every half hour."

I glare at my father, but he stares at me evenly.

"So you think I can be replaced with a group of wolves?" I laugh.

"Dad, you know I am the best in this pack. I have the strongest sense of smell, I am the fastest, and I am the best fighter." Crossing my arms I raise an eyebrow, asking him to refuse my truth. He simply shakes his head and turns for the door.

"You are not allowed to patrol until you have secured your place in the ceremony. Now, go eat breakfast with Rylan and get ready to let guests in. They will start showing up at five for the dinner." With that, he leaves me in the musty shed. I growl in frustration. I cannot disobey my alpha, even with the Alpha Gene.

I stomp out toward the house after I know he is long gone. I pause, just barely inside the garden and inhale deeply. Something smells off today. Ignoring my father's words to go to breakfast, I wind my way through the flowers following my nose. I stop in the shadow of a small maple tree and look around. The smell is stronger here than before, but it seems to cut off abruptly. Irritated, I spin in circles trying to catch the scent again.

Then, I realize where I am standing is right by the only window leading to the dungeons. Moving toward the window, I inhale. I catch the scent again, and brush away some of the ivy from the small six inch window. The glass is so crusted with filth that I cannot see inside. But the smell is familiar, something I cannot put my finger on.

Leaves behind me crunch and I whip around to see Rylan behind me, her hands resting on her hips.

"I thought your father said to come to breakfast."

I frown, and flick on last glance at the window. Standing, I walk over to Rylan. She sniffs, but doesn't seem to catch the smell. This doesn't surprise me, I have the best nose in the pack.

"Come on," I grumble, pushing past her. The scent stays stuck in my nose, but I try to brush it off as we head into the house.