

Chapter 18

Jasper

Our little group sat outside around the fire, laughing into the night. I hadn't been sure how this was going to go, with Dylan. But he seemed content to whatever feud we had behind him, and so was I. If I was being honest, I actually liked the guy. He was pretty fucking funny, and just as sarcastic as I was. He also obviously cared about Violet, and that was a big thing for me. I wanted people around her I could trust, and I knew he would never let anything happen to her if I wasn't around. He'd been transparently honest with me too, telling me how he'd hoped Violet was his mate before he found Brianne. It didn't bug me; He looked happy as Hell with her.

Brianne, I knew I could also trust. She was a sweet, kind of like a baby deer, but she also has a wild side, I was sure. They both seemed to warm up to me as the night went on, and we all got to each other on a friendly level. Part of me hoped Dylan would talk to Garrett, and get him to back off. The other part of me didn't really care however. I was happy with Vie, and if the kiss we shared earlier said anything, she was pretty happy too.

All evening, she'd been sneaking peeks at me, holding my hand when she wasn't busy eating or talking. Another little quirk I loved about her, she used her hands to talk, some might say too much, but I thought it was cute. She was very expressive, animated. It took a lot of focus to pay attention to anything other than her. Finally though, Dylan stood and stretched.

"We should get going. I have my first warrior training session tomorrow and I don't want to be late."

Brianne stood with him, but Violet stayed seated.

"I'll see you guys later. I'll text you tomorrow, Brianne, and we can decide where to go this weekend." She smiled.

"Sounds good. We'll see you guys later. Thanks, Jasper, for inviting us out. This was fun."

"No problem. You guys are welcome anytime."

They waved as they walked off.

"Should we walk with them to the border?" Violet asked me.

"Nah. We'd know if anyone was around. And didn't you say your mom sent extra warriors?"

"Yeah. You're right."

"Shouldn't you be going home too?" I asked as evenly as I could. I didn't want her to go, and she surprised me by grinning hugely.

"Actually, Mom said I don't have a curfew tonight." She leaned back, staring into the fire. "I was thinking you and I could hang out some more. If you want."

I returned her grin. "I'd love that."

"Want to go for a run?" She asked eagerly. I nodded just as excitedly. "Oh wait. I promised I'd tell Mom if we were going anywhere."

Her eyes glazed over for several minutes. I waited patiently. She blinked, her eyes going back to normal.

"My Mom would feel more comfortable if we ran within the borders."

"That's fine. We can shift here and head that way."

I walked inside, letting her shift in private. When I heard soft yipping outside, I knew she was done. I was barely out the door when Hala was in my face, licking me. I laughed heartily, putting my hand on her snout. Goddess, she really was beautiful.

"Hey Hala. You ready to run?"

She jumped back, crouching into a play position.

"You two have fun, okay?"

She snorted in response and I took my shirt off. I had a few extra clothes here, so I didn't care about my pants, but I liked that shirt. I tossed it into the cabin before closing the door and shifting myself. Ehno stretched his legs before trotting over to his mate. They sniffed each other, giving little licks. I could feel my wolfs thought process and spoke up.

"Don't even think about it."

"But she's my mate too." He whined.

"You can wait until after Violet and I have mated. Keep it in your pants."

"I don't wear pants though."

"Ehno!"

"Alright, alright! You're no fun at all." He growled lowly, making me snicker.

We took off, with me sitting comfortably at the back of my mind. I simply enjoyed the freedom of being in his form while he ran, played and hunted with Hala. We passed border patrol, who nodded at us. I was sure they weren't too far away, but they gave us space to be together, which I appreciated. Only once did I have to reprimand my wolf when Hala stretched, giving him a good view of her backside. He laid down, covering his eyes with his paw, grouching at me.

It was after midnight when we returned to the cabin. Violet went around the side of the cabin to shift while I shifted where I had before, quickly going into the house to find pants. She entered the bedroom as I was doing up the zipper, her eyes grazing over my bare chest until they met mine.

"That was fun." She said.

"Yeah." I leaned against the dresser. "What do you want to do?"

She pursed her lips, thinking. "You have a T.V. in the living room. Got any movies?"

"Tons."

She turned and I followed her out. Flopping down on the sofa, she curled her legs under her. I bent down in front of the T.V. stand, scanning the DVD's.

"What's your favorite genre?" I asked.

"Horror."

I looked at her. I had more than enough horror movies in here, including some old classics. "You're not into chick flicks?"

"Why? Do you want to watch one?" She teased.

"No, thanks. I've sat through my fair share with my mom." I shuddered and she laughed.

I picked a DVD, holding up the case. She nodded enthusiastically, so I popped it in the player and joined her on the couch. Grabbing the blanket off the back, I threw it over us. I'd left the lights off, so the only light in the room came from the T.V. About half an hour into the movie, I felt Violet snickering beside me.

"What?"

"No matter how many times I watch this movie, this part always gets me." She gestured towards the screen. "This chick is the definition of 'stupid'. Half of her friends are already dead, and her brilliant idea is to hide in a closet? Because that's not obvious." She giggled.

"There's always one dumb girl in a horror movie. And she always seems to fall down a lot too."

"And why is she always thin and blond?"

I shrugged. "Sex appeal?"

"She's only sexy until her heads get chopped off." She laughed. "I'm glad I'm smarter than that."

"Where would you hide?"

"Hide? Fuck that. If someone was killing my friends in a house, I'd leave the house."

Now I laughed. She was something else. We settled back in, occasionally making fun of the idiocy of the people on screen and commenting on how fake the gore was. Violet picked the next movie, another classic horror, but this time, she snuggled into my side as we watched. I was still shirtless, and her cheek created tiny sparks and tingles where it touched my skin. I draped my arm over her, completely happy inside.

We talked a lot, eventually forgetting the movie completely. It sounds corny, but I wanted to know everything about her, everything I didn't know already. Her favorite color was green, her favorite type of music was old rock n roll, her favorite foods and ice cream flavors, and where she liked to spend her time when she wasn't at home or with friends. After two hours of asking each question and laughing together, I felt closer to her than ever.

"So..."

"Yes?" She took a sip of her soda, looking at me sideways.

"Ehno says you're a Midnight Wolf."

Her eyes cast down and she nodded. "Yeah, I guess so."

"What is that, exactly?"

She tucked her hair behind her ears, suddenly looking self-conscious. "I'm not sure. Hala says I... we're... the first. Ever."

"Yeah, Ehno said that too..."

She bit her lip, still not looking at me. Then she spoke. "I don't get it. Why me? Why not Garrett?"

"What do you mean?"

"Like I told Hala, it should have been my brother. I'm not the one who's taking over the pack; I'm nothing special. So why give me this gift?"

A little bit of anger spread through my chest. She thought she wasn't special? I vocalized my question and she blinked at me, finally meeting my eyes.

"I'm the troublemaker. I sneak out, go to parties, get in fights. Goddess knows I'm always up to something behind my parents back, even if it's petty shit. If you have Alpha Blood, that would make me a Luna, but so what? I was never born to be the leader, any type of leader. Garrett was trained for that, not me."

I sat up, taking her face in my hands gently. I made sure she was looking into my eyes before I spoke, really wanting her to listen.

"Violet." Her name rolled off my tongue a bit harshly. "Don't say that about yourself."

"But it's-"

"No, it's not true. Yes, you get into trouble. Yes, you get into fights. But none of that makes you unworthy of what you were given. You know what I see? I see someone who stands up for what she believes in. You have never been in, or started, a fight that wasn't worth fighting. As for the rest, it's called being a teenager. Nobody is going to look down on you because you climbed out your bedroom window a few times to go to a party." I smirked. "But most importantly, you're doubting yourself as a leader? Come on. I've seen you step in and take charge a million times while your brother sat on the sidelines. I'm not saying he won't make a good Alpha, I'm sure he will. But you..." I shook my head. "You never needed to be trained for something you have inside you. People look up to you, they

admire you. They admire your strength, and your intelligence. So, no more putting yourself down. The Goddess knows what's she's doing. And I believe she chose you because of you are on the inside, an amazing, special, intelligent, beautiful person with a good heart and even better soul."

Her eyes were misty when I finished speaking, my thumbs caressing her cheeks lightly. She sniffed a little, opening her mouth, but no words came out. Never had I seen her speechless, but it was cute as fuck to watch. Finally, she nodded, a tiny smile forming.

"Thank you." She whispered.

I kissed her forehead. "Anytime."

She pulled my face down, connecting her lips to mine. And just like before, a jolt went through me, like a bolt of electricity. I never thought the mate bond could be so intense! Her hands were in my hair, pulling me closer to deepen the kiss, and I happily obliged. Somehow, we ended up with Violet lying on the couch and me hovering above her. The feel of her under me was driving me insane, and it wasn't as easy to hide my erection this way. It wasn't like I could help it, but I didn't want her to feel uncomfortable or think I was moving too fast. So, I gave her one more deep kiss before pulling away and sitting up. Her face dropped into a pout.

"Don't give me that look missy. There's only so much I can handle when it comes to you." I pulled the blanket over my lap and her cheeks turned pink as she understood.

She looked at me for a minute before looking down, playing with her fingers. "Can we uh... talk about that?"

"That?"

"Well.... Mom says if you can't talk about sex, then you shouldn't be having it." She glanced up at me.

I raised a brow. "Fair enough."

She took a deep breath. "I'll be honest with you. I'm not... ready yet."

"That's okay."

"And it's because I'm... a little scared."

I leaned one arm on the back of the sofa, my cheek pressed against my palm. "What are you scared about Vie?"

She blushed deeply now, her whole face turning red. It was amazing how well I could see in the dark now; Before my shift I probably wouldn't have noticed as much.

"You have... experience. I don't. I'm scared I'm not going to be good for you, that you won't like it with me." She rushed through the sentence, my mind replaying in slow motion to understand what she said. I almost laughed, but I was positive she would get angry if I did. Instead, I also took a deep breath, thinking through my words.

"I know you're expecting me to say this, but I'm going to say it anyways. You don't need to worry about that, now or ever Vie. And if you think about it, this is kind of my first time too, because it's with you, my mate. Anyone else, they meant nothing to me. Then, and now. If you want the truth..." Now it was my turn to blush. "I uh... I only ever slept with anyone else because I couldn't have you." Good Goddess, that sounded bad.

To my surprise, she didn't get angry. "You... liked me? I mean, before you knew I was your mate?"

"Violet, I've liked you since you punched that kid for making of fun me in school."

Her eyes widened, her hands covering her mouth. "You remember that?!" She squeaked.

I laughed. "How could I forget? You were badass." I took her hand in mine, smiling. "Does that make you feel better?"

She nodded. "It does actually."

"Good."

It wasn't like I didn't want her, obviously; I just wanted to move at her pace. I never expected she would jump into bed with me right away, regardless of the bond. When it happened, it be worth waiting for, because it was her.