Chapter 63 Rachel's Backstory

Lila's POV

"Miss Lila?" A nurse said, walking up to us, before Enzo had a chance to answer my question. "I'm

sorry to interrupt your conversation. But Miss Rachel is asking for you. She just woke up and you're the first person she wants to see. She's calm now if you'd like to see her."

I stood up quickly.

"She's awake already?" I asked.

I wasn't expecting her to wake up this soon but the nurse nodded.

"We only gave her a small sedative that lasted less than an hour. It was just to calm her and it seemed to have worked," the nurse explained.

I glanced back down at Enzo who remained in his seat; he was staring at me with a darkened gaze.

I could tell there was stuff he wanted to say to me; perhaps he wanted to answer my question. But

he remained quiet and continued to stare at me. My heart flipped in my chest, but I had to go see Rachel, so I turned away from him and went with

the nurse to the backroom where Rachel's room was. Rachel lay in her bed staring at the ceiling, with tears staining her fair features. I could tell it was

My heart squeezed painfully in my chest; I couldn't imagine what she must have been going

taking everything she had not to lose control and start crying at that moment.

through. The amount of pain she must have been feeling.

I couldn't even fathom it.

"Do they know if he's going to be okay?"

The nurse left us alone and I wasn't really sure what to say so I sat down at her bedside and waited

her eyes.

sort of comfort.

for her to say something instead. "They won't tell me anything..." she croaked. "Last I saw of him he was crashing, and they were

thinking he was going to die... " "He's still alive," I tell her quickly, trying to shut down whatever thoughts were invading her mind.

She almost looked relieved; she closed her eyes and released a couple of stray tears that lingered in

explain. She doesn't say anything to that. I reach over and touch her hand, trying to provide her with some

"He's stable for right now; they are keeping him monitored and will know more at a later time," I

"Rachel... I'm so sorry..."I breathed. "I can't imagine what you are going through."

"You know... Ryan saved me..." she breathed, keeping her eyes closed.

"In high school," she answered

"In the fire?" I asked.

"I had no idea you've known him for that long."

"I was angry when I first met him," she admitted. "But he was always kind to me regardless of how

"How did he save you?"

"I don't know if I ever talked to you about my home life... but it's not a good place," she told me; she opened her eyes so she could peer over at me. "My father was incredibly abusive..."

and stared at her in shock.

angry I would get."

I couldn't help the gasp that came out of my mouth. I instantly covered my mouth with my hands

"He was an alcoholic and he abused me and my mother for most of my life. My mother ended up leaving... she left me behind..."

"Oh, Rachel..." I breathed.

My heart shattered for her, and I didn't know what else to say to her.

species.

"Bears are naturally known for their tempers and my father was incredibly temperamental. The smallest things would set him off. Living at home was like walking on eggshells. I could never do

anything right by him. I would go to school with bruises that just wouldn't heal." "Because bears don't have a quick healing ability like wolves do?" I asked.

There wasn't much I knew about bears; in fact, Rachel was the first bear shifter that I knew. There were a bunch of bears that went to our school, and they would be referred to as the weaker of the

"Right," she answered. "So, my bruises and cuts would be very visible despite how hard I tried to cover them up. I turned to drugs and alcohol to numb the pain... not the physical pain. The emotional pain. I just didn't want to feel anymore..."

"I never wanted anyone to know this," she admitted. "But Ryan found me lying under the bleachers of our school and he brought me to the hospital. I took a pill too much and almost died. I didn't

"I never knew this..." I whispered, gazing at the ground.

that I recognized from school and because I was so angry, I was cruel to him..." "Obviously you didn't chase him away seeming you are still together," I told her. She gave me a small and crooked smile.

"It wasn't always like that though. Like I said, I was very cruel to him. He tried to get me to talk to

even know who he was and he stayed by my side until I woke up. But because he was strange kid

him and to let him help me, but I refused all forms of help from him. He knew I was going down the rabbit hole of drugs and alcohol and he tried to get me to stop. He was a stupid boy, but his heart

was in the right place," she said as she shook her head at the memory. "He sounds genuine," I said in return.

don't think I have much of a choice in the matter.

She nods at my statement and then sighs. "I was never the one who believed in mates and falling in love. It was clear what Ryan's intentions were and I thought of myself as broken and unlovable. I told myself that I didn't want a mate... "

Her words struck a chord with me. It was like Enzo not wanting a mate. I wasn't sure if Enzo was the

mate that I wanted as well, but when it came down to it, he was my mate and unless he rejects me, I

But then again, if Rachel had no desire to have a mate when she was younger, but then changed her mind, maybe Enzo would change his mind too. Would it make me feel better if he did?

My heart ached at the thought, knowing that Enzo doesn't have any desire to have a mate.

chance?" "I admired his persistence for one... nobody has ever cared about me in that kind of way before. I

"What made you change your mind?" I found myself asking. "Why did you decide to give him a

stop crying." "Oh, goddess..." I whispered sadly. "The night before... my father almost killed me, and I was terrified to go home. I finally told him everything I endure at home, and he wouldn't let me return. He convinced his mom to let me stay

was sitting with him after school, and he wanted to walk me home and I told him no. He started to

ask me about my bruises and of course, I brushed him off... but then I broke down and I couldn't

He became my best friend, and I was falling in love with him... but I was so broken and I knew I couldn't be that person for him. I continued to use it throughout high school and at one point I almost died again... "

there. I found myself wanting to do better by him. I wanted to be the person he wanted me to be.

"You had to go back to the hospital?"

"What happened? You got clean, right?"

She paused to gather her thoughts and I sighed.

out if I didn't get help. She found this small rehab facility outside of town. I was afraid because I'd never been outside of our town before. I feared what would happen to me if I strolled too far from my comfort zone. As a bear, I'm vulnerable to attacks and I was worried that I would be victimized once again. But Ryan went with me to the rehab place... and he left me there."

"Ryan told me that he couldn't keep doing this and his mom told me that she was going to kick me

"Yes..." she said, but she sounded uncertain. "But I was the only bear there. There weren't many bears in that region and the rehab facility was made up of all werewolves."

She nodded once.

"So, you felt out of place?" She was quiet for a moment longer, staring down at her hands.

"They did some terrible things to me there. I was tortured beyond belief. Even by the nurses there.

They weren't sure how to help a bear because most of their treatments were for wolves... so they did a bunch of painful experiments on me. I didn't think I was going to live to see the outside world again. The only way I could survive was if I just stopped cold turkey. I wanted there to benothing to

treat...so they couldn't hurt me anymore... " "Rachel, that's awful. I'm so sorry this happened to you. What kind of cruel place could treat someone like that...?"

She didn't answer my question; she was hesitant.

"Where was that place?"

"It was in Elysium... "

"I vowed to never go back to that region ever..." she breathed.

She met my eyes and then her next words punched me in the qut.