

Darkness

The roar of the river echoed in Elora's ears as she felt her body being carried away by the relentless current. Numbness spread through her limbs, but the pain cutting through her body and soul was too great to ignore. Tears mingled with the icy water as they cascaded down her face, lost in the furious waves.

Each drop of cold water felt like a thousand needles piercing her skin, each gasp of air a struggle against the crushing weight of the darkness that threatened to engulf her. She could feel herself slipping away, her little strength leaving her with each passing moment.

In the depths of her despair, she felt a stirring within her, a faint whisper of her wolf's presence. With what little energy she had left, Elora turned her gaze inward, finding her wolf lying on the ground in agony, barely clinging to life.

"I am so sorry, Lina," she whispered, her voice barely a breath against the raging river. "You deserved a more worthy human."

But her wolf looked at her with sadness in her eyes, shaking her head gently. "No, Elora," she said, her voice a soft murmur in the chaos. "I would not trade you for anything in the world. It was a privilege to be your wolf."

With her last reserves of strength, Lina begged her, "You need to fight," desperation tinged her voice. "For me, for you, for both of us."

And as the darkness closed in around her, Elora's mind slipped into a great abyss, where she felt floating, like suspended in time.

As Elora drifted in and out of consciousness, she felt something heavy pressing down on her chest, accompanied by panicked voices swirling around her.

For a brief moment, relief washed over her. At least now, there was no more pain, no more anguish, no more betrayal. She welcomed the darkness that enveloped her, offering solace in its embrace.

But in the quiet darkness, a strange, persistent sound pierced through the silence. It was an annoying beep, relentless in its rhythm, echoing in her ears like a distant drumbeat. With each beep, it seemed to pull her further from the peace she sought.

Desperate to silence the incessant noise, Elora struggled to find the source of the sound, and she opened her eyes, her vision clouded by the blinding light that flooded her senses. Through the haze, a voice reached her ears, gentle and reassuring.

"Easy there," the voice said, its tone soothing and calm. "You are safe.", before she slipped again into the darkness.

Sometime later Elora's eyes fluttered open, her surroundings swimming in a hazy blur of confusion. For a fleeting moment, she wondered if she had crossed into the afterlife, but as her senses sharpened, shock rippled through her veins like a lightning bolt.

She wasn't in the familiar confines of a pack's hospital. Instead, she found herself lying on a sterile hospital bed, surrounded by the sterile scent of antiseptic and the soft hum of medical equipment.

Memories flooded back with the force of a tsunami, crashing against her consciousness like relentless waves. Panic clawed at her chest as she realized the gravity of her situation. She was in a human hospital, and she was alive! She made it alive!

Frantically, she reached out with her mind, calling out to her wolf Lina, but all she encountered was a vast emptiness, a void where her connection to her wolf should have been.

Just then, the door creaked open, and an elderly nurse entered the room, her warm smile a stark contrast to Elora's growing sense of unease.

"Oh, nally you're awake, sweetheart!" the nurse exclaimed, her voice laced with relief. "You gave us quite a scare. We were worried you might never wake up."

Elora's confusion deepened as she tried to make sense of her surroundings, her mind reeling with unanswered questions. How had she ended up here? And more importantly, what had happened to her wolf?

Her throat felt parched as she attempted to speak, her voice barely a whisper. The nurse hurried to her side, offering a glass of water with gentle concern etched on her features. Elora accepted gratefully, taking a few cautious sips to wet her dry throat.

Once her immediate thirst was quenched, she managed to croak out a question, her voice hoarse and strained. "What... happened? Where am I?"

The nurse regarded her with a mixture of curiosity, pity and sympathy, pausing for a moment before delivering her response. "You're at St. James's Hospital in Augusta, Maine," she began, her tone gentle yet firm. "You were found nearly drowned in a river by a group of campers. They spotted you floating in the water, so they saved you and called emergency services. They brought you here for treatment."

Elora's heart pounded in her chest as she absorbed the nurse's words, her mind swirling with disbelief and confusion. How did she survive? She knew that is impossible to survive as an omega considering what she experienced.

"What is your name, sweetie?"

The nurse's gentle inquiry about her name brought a moment of hesitation from Elora, her mind feeling foggy and disconnected. Finally, she managed to murmur, "Lora."

"Nice to meet you, Lora. I am Mary. Is there anyone we can contact for you, as I can bet that your family must be worried sick about your disappearance."

Elora's heart clenched with a wave of emotion, tears welling up in her eyes as she shook her head slowly.

"I... I... don't have anyone. I'm... I'm an orphan," she admitted in a small, tremulous voice, the weight of her words heavy in the air.

The nurse's expression softened further, sympathy evident in her gaze as she reached out to gently pat Elora's hand. "Oh, sweetie," she murmured, her tone full of compassion.

Before Elora could dwell further on her own sorrow, the nurse gave her a gentle warning that the police would likely want to speak with her now that she was awake. Advising her to rest, she offered a reassuring smile before quietly leaving the room, leaving Elora drifting back to sleep.

The next day, as Elora lay in her hospital bed, two stern-faced police officers entered her room. They asked her a barrage of questions, probing for information about her identity and how she ended up in the river. Elora's heart raced with anxiety as she maintained her fabricated story, insisting that she was an orphan and a drifter, and that she fell in the water by mistake, offering no further details.

The officers exchanged skeptical glances, their suspicion palpable in the air, but eventually, they concluded their questioning. Before leaving, one of them warned her, "You're lucky to be alive. You were in a coma for over two months."

Elora's breath caught in her throat at their words, shock and disbelief washing over her. Two months? How was that even possible? She struggled to comprehend the enormity of the situation, the weight of her lost time pressing down on her.

After they left, she lay there in stunned silence, the reality of her circumstances sinking in deeper with each passing moment. With trembling hands, she reached out once more to connect with her wolf, but once again, she was met with nothing but emptiness.

The familiar gure of Nurse Mary returned to her side, offering a small glimmer of comfort in the midst of her turmoil. "The good news is, you'll be discharged tomorrow," Mary announced.

Elora's heart plummeted at the thought of leaving the safety of the hospital, her mind racing with panic as she realized she had nowhere to go, no one to turn to.

"I know you must be frightened, especially as a rogue."

As Nurse Mary closed the door behind her, Elora felt a surge of panic rising within her. She looked at the nurse with wide eyes, her heart hammering in her chest as she struggled to comprehend what was happening. How did Nurse Mary know about the existence of werewolves and rogues?! The existence of the werewolves was a well-guarded secret, so she looked at her in shock.

Sensing Elora's distress, Nurse Mary offered her a reassuring smile. "Relax, dear. I mean you no harm," she said gently, her voice lled with understanding. "Not to someone who's already so weak, especially without a wolf."

Elora's mind raced with questions, "What do you mean, no wolf?". Nurse Mary continued, her expression sympathetic. "I understand your confusion," she said softly. "When you arrived here, I could feel your wolf's presence. But now... it's gone."

Elora's breath caught in her throat, her eyes widening in shock. "Gone?" she echoed, her voice barely above a whisper.

Nurse Mary nodded solemnly. "Yes, dear. It seems that your wolf sacrificed herself to keep your human side alive," she explained, her tone lled with compassion.

Tears welled up in Elora's eyes as the weight of Nurse Mary's words settled upon her. She had lost her wolf, her constant companion and protector. Lina's last words became clear to her now, and the realization lled her with anguish and pain.

Unable to contain her emotions any longer, Elora buried her face in her hands, tears streaming down her cheeks as she mourned the loss of her loyal companion. The room fell silent except for the sound of her muffled sobs, her heart shattered into a million pieces at the devastating revelation.

After some time, Elora gathered the courage to look up at Nurse Mary, her eyes lled with uncertainty. "Are you... are you a rogue too?" she asked hesitantly.

Nurse Mary shook her head gently. "No, dear. I used to belong to a pack," she began, her voice tinged with sorrow. "But after I lost my mate and son in a rogue attack, I couldn't bear to stay. Everything reminded me of them, so I chose to live in the human world like a lone wolf. I could return at any time, but it is just too painful."

Elora listened intently, her heart heavy with empathy for the nurse's pain. After a brief pause, Nurse Mary turned to her, her gaze searching. "Tell me the truth, Lora," she said softly. "Despite smelling like a rogue, I know one when I see it. And you... you are not that. What is really your story?"

Elora's emotions threatened to overwhelm her as she struggled to find the words. Finally, she broke down, tears streaming down her cheeks as she poured out her story to Nurse Mary. She recounted the disappointment of her family, the betrayal of her sister, the rogues in the forest, the alpha who saved her and their time together, her family reaction, her banishing, and the agony of losing her wolf.

As she finished speaking, Elora looked up at Nurse Mary, her heart laid bare. The nurse's eyes glistened with tears as she listened, her expression lled with anger, compassion and understanding. "Oh, my sweet child," she murmured, her voice trembling with emotion.

Without hesitation, Nurse Mary gathered Elora into her arms, holding her tightly in a comforting embrace.