

Chapter Seven

Start from the beginning □

I tried to clear my mind of the pregnancy, as the day was for Abel, but it was hard. So, I decided that I would use the drive to work out how I was going to tell Quinn about being pregnant. Almost a month had passed since Quinn and I had slept together and almost two weeks since I had completely blown him off, telling him I wanted nothing more with him.

And I still didn't want to be with him. I'd given everything I had to Drew and he'd broken every part of me. I never wanted to care for someone like that, or fall in love again, or marry again. The idea of being so vulnerable to someone again wasn't something I ever wanted to do again. And Quinn was one of those people that it was marriage until old age or nothing, Quinn was not the type of person to do casual dating. And, honestly, I wasn't either.

Devon met me on the border of the Black Bloods Pack. He looked no different to how I remembered – midnight dark skin, shining dark eyes and features almost too harsh to be attractive. He leant casually against a tree, arms and legs crossed, wearing the usual grey sweatpants and dark shirt combination that both twins usually wore.

I parked my car up and headed over. "Hey stranger. Guarding your territory?" I teased, trying for a smile.

"Got to make sure the likes of you stay out now that we've got rid of you" he threw back, flashing me a smile that made his white teeth glisten. He pushed off from the tree and pulled me in for a hug. His familiar scent surrounded me as I slumped against his hard chest. Nostalgia for younger times filled my mind as I inhaled his scent.

I pulled away as he pressed a sweet kiss to the top of my head. "You ready?" he asked me, holding me at arm's length.

"No, but I never am" I replied, shrugging slightly.

"You look more worried than usual" Devon frowned. "If it's about Drew, I promise that he won't know you're here or get anywhere near you".

"Oh I know, I know" I waved dismissively, "I just have a lot of other stuff on my mind at the moment".

Devon led me through the woods and in the direction of the Pack's cemetery. "You know you can talk to me about anything, Eden".

"I know" I said, glancing over at him with a soft smile. "Maybe I will later. For now...I'm just working things through". I bumped his shoulder in thanks as we walked. Silence reigned for a long moment as we walked. The sun was warm, but nothing compared to the Southern heat I had gotten used to since living in Memphis.

In the movies a cemetery is always dark and sinister, but the Black Bloods cemetery was the complete opposite. There were no high fences or cryptic signs. You didn't realise you were in a cemetery until you looked down and were surrounded by headstones. Forests surrounded the outside of the cemetery, but the grassy field of the grave sites were intercepted by a small dirt path.

Devon led me down the path, for about five minutes, before we turned left and weaved through numerous headstones. It was less than a minute before we reached the small headstone – small like the body buried beneath. I rounded to the front of it and looked down at it with a painful heart.

I sunk down in front of the headstone. Nothing fancy was written on it, simply Abel's name and a date – the date of both his birth and his death. There was no fancy embellishments or pictures. It was the most basic of headstones that I picked out, uncaring, in my grief. Every time I came to see the headstone I always wished I'd have picked a nicer one out.

That day a small bouquet of flowers and a small brown teddy bear were in front of the headstone. I sat down crossed legged and picked up the flowers. I admired them for a moment before reading the small card; 'to our darling grandson, we miss you every day'.

"From your mother?" Devon asked, standing slightly away from me.

"Always".

"I'm sure she'd like to see you while you're here" he commented.

"I'm sure she would. But I'm not ready yet" I replied, not looking away from the flowers. I straightened the petals on one of the flowers before propping it back next to the gravestone. I then picked up the bear curiously – for the past few years only my mother and I left things at Abel's grave.

There was a small tag attached to the bear's ear. Before I could turn it around and read it, Devon snatched it out of my hands. I made a noise of shock, and annoyance, as he looked over the tag. "Son of a bitch" he growled out.

I was silent for a long while, sat on the ground looking up at Devon, as I gathered my thoughts. "Is it from him?"

"Yeah" Devon breathed out. He didn't say anymore, he knew that it wasn't needed. One of the reasons that Devon was such a good friend to me, was that we had known each other for so long that he knew me. And he knew that when I was like this, it was better just to let me work through it on my own.

"I want to see it" I said, holding my hand out for it. Devon considered that for a few minutes before passing the small bear back to me. My hands shook as I took it in my hands and looked at it.

"I'll be over by the big rock. Come grab me when you're done, and I'll walk you back to your car" Devon said, before walking away and leaving me alone.

I was still for a long moment, before I flipped the bear over and read the tag. 'To my baby boy on his birthday. Love you always, Dad'. I read the message, re-read the message, and then read it a third time to be sure. Tears burned and stung my eyes – tears of upset, grief and pure fury.

How dare Drew leave that at Abel's grave? It was his fault that Abel was dead. He had no right to taint my son's grave like that. I pulled my arm back, ready to throw the teddy bear across the cemetery, but my brain couldn't get my arm to cooperate. In the end, I put the bear down and lay it down next to the flowers from my mother.

I stared at the name on the gravestone 'Baby Abel Jones'. I could do nothing but break down in sobs. And there, knelt in front of my son's grave, I swore that my unborn baby would not have the same fate as him.

And, that, was a promise.