

Chapter 69

Emily's pov

I thanked the woman for her concern and made my way towards the Misty Mountain. Her warning clear in my head.

I couldn't admit that her words did frighten me but I was still determined to at least try to find my

Hopefully.....he was still alive. Because he may be the only one I have left.

Sadness weighed my shoulders down and I gripped the duffel bag tighter.

I had been holding the bag for hours and it was starting to become bothersome.

But I couldn't just drop it and walk away even though I was tempted to.

So with a slight huff, I began my journey up the mountain.

The journey was challenging, and the mountain trail was steep and and slippery from the misting rain.

The thick forest surrounding the path made it easy to understand why people might go missing in these woods.

But I couldn't turn back now. I had come too far to let fear hold me back.

My hair clung to me, the clothes in my duffel bag no doubt soaked. Being so made the bag heavier.

"Ah!" I screamed as my shoes slipped on some green slimy leaf and I'm toppled on the muddy ground in seconds.

A second pass.

Then two.

Before I could no longer hold it in and screamed.

I screamed from the pain of having to leave Bryson. I screamed from the pain of having to leave my parents.

I screamed from the pain not knowing what they were going through now.

Did the council punish my mom for her helping me escape?

Were they torturing her now to make her tell them my whereabouts?

Was Bryson okay?

Does he hate me?

I lift my finger to my neck and touched where his mark once was.

There's no longer the feel of his mark on my skin and I cried.

Would he ever forgive me?

Was he searching for me?

Those questions would never be answered and that revelation made me weep even more.

I hated this pain.

I hated this feeling.

I hated this loss.

The pain of leaving him behind weighed heavily on my heart. But I knew it was the only way to protect him and everyone I cared about.

I clutched my shirt, where my heart pounded painfully. I know I was dirtying it with my muddy hands but I didn't care.

I cried for what it felt like hours until the misting rain stopped and the sun rays beamed down on me through the cracks of the leaves.

I looked up, watching the stream of light hit my face. It warmed it and I closed my eyes, breathing in the scent of the forest around me.

The tension in my heart eased and I finally mustered up the courage to stand back on my feet.

With a new sense of determination, I continued my journey.

Hours passed as I climbed higher and higher, my determination driving me forward.

The air grew cooler, and the mist started to thicken around me, cloaking the trees in a surreal haze. My legs ached, and exhaustion threatened to overwhelm me.

But I pushed on, refusing to give up.

Mom and dad wouldn't want me to give up.

Bryson wouldn't want me to give up.

Shawn wouldn't want me to give up.

And for them, I pushed myself not to.

Finally, after what felt like an eternity, I reached the top of the Misty Mountain.

Breathless and spent with my heart pounding, I stood there, taking in the breathtaking view of the little town below. The mountains stretched far and wide, and the forest below looked like the green sea.

It was breathtakingly beautiful.

The climb up here was challenging and if I was not careful and followed my mom's instructions on the sticky note, I'd surely be one of those that got lost.

Thankfully I made it up here.

I smiled.

I did it mom.

I turned around and continued to walk through the mist in search of the cabin mom talked about.

What if it was no longer still here?

There was a possibility my biological father was no longer there.

But I don't make the thought detour me and continued on.

Finally, amidst the mist, I saw a small cabin in the distance. My heart skipped a beat, and a mix of excitement and nervousness washed over me. This was it. This must be it.

Gathering my strength, I walked towards the cabin. As I approached, I noticed how old the cabin really was. The wood was a grimly grey color and it somehow blended with the mist.

Even though I was unsure if anyone still lived in it, I strutted forward, gripping my duffel bag close.

With a deep breath, I knocked on the cabin door. Moments passed that felt like an eternity, and then the door slowly cracked open, revealing a girl not much older than me with striking crystal clear blue eyes.