

## Chapter 87

Emily's pov

I heard the first spark when I turned around to draw Raiden's little body closer to me. At first I thought nothing of it.

Until.....the sparks grew and one by one I can hear the branches fall to the earth. My eyes peeled open lazily and I blinked the blurriness away.

When my vision adjusted, my gaze swept to the window. The haze of bright orange, yellow and red made my heart drop in my stomach.

The smell of the smoke creeping through the windows and assaulting my nose made me cough. I quickly turn to Raiden, my fight instinct to get my son to safety kicking in.

"Lucy!" I shouted, panic coursing through my veins. Lucy was sleeping on the floor, just an arm length away.

When she heard my panicked loud tone she jumped up, her sleepy eyes looking tiredly around. "What's going on?" She yawned, clearly not catching sight of the raging fire through the window.

Raiden stirred in his sleep, the sound of my voice rousing him. His eyes blinked open and he looked at me with confusion, his innocent gaze now clouded with fear as he sensed the urgency in my voice.

"Mama?" he whimpered, clutching onto his stuffed toy Lucy bought him for his second birthday tightly.

"It's okay, baby," I assured him as I scooped him up in my arms, holding him close.

"There's a fire. The forest is on fire!" I yelled to Lucy who still looked like she was half asleep.

When the word fire pushed out of my lips, Lucy's eyes widen and she finally looked more alert. She rushed over to the window to observe the disaster that was happening outside.

Her eyes widen.

The flames were growing more intense by the second, the thick smoke billowed into the cabin, making it harder to breathe. We needed to get out of here and fast.

"We need to flee now!" Lucy urged turning around with panic in her gaze.

"We need to get dad," I said with a desperate cry as I rushed out the door with Raiden in my hold.

By now the cabin was filled with smoke and I could barely make my way through. "Dad!" I yelled, my voice choking with fear and urgency.

Lucy followed closely behind me, her own voice joining mine as she called out to our father. The flames crackled and roared outside, their intensity growing with each passing second.

"Dad!" I called again, my heart pounding as I moved deeper into the cabin. The smoke was making it difficult to breathe and I could feel my throat burning. But I couldn't give up, I needed to find him.

As I reached the small room where Dad usually slept, I pushed open the door, my eyes stinging from the smoke. Relief flooded over me as I saw him, still in his wheelchair, struggling to breathe in the smoky air.

His eyes lift to mine.

"Dad, we need to get you out of here!" I shouted, rushing over to him. Lucy was by my side in an instant, trying to lift dad off the wheelchair. But he gripped the edges of the chair and shook his head.

"Dad please we must leave now!" Lucy urged with a cry.

"Go," he signed, his hands moving with purpose. "You leave me here, I'd be a burden."

Tears welled up in my eyes, and I shook my head, refusing to leave him behind. "No, Dad, we're not leaving you!"

Lucy, too, was determined not to abandon him. She tried once more to lift him from the wheelchair but he resisted, his grip on the chair was pretty fucking strong.

"Dad, please," I pleaded, my voice breaking. "We can't leave you here. We'll find a way to get you out."

Dad looked at me sadly, a small smile on his face. "I've already lived a wonderful life with my two daughters and my grandson. It's okay."

He looked at both Lucy and I, tears gleaming in his eyes. "You two need to leave to save Raiden. Please go." He signed.

The tears in his eyes mirrored our own, and I knew that this was his final wish.

Lucy and I exchanged a glance, our hearts heavy with the weight of our father's decision. Raiden clung to me, his little face filled with fear and confusion as he sensed the turmoil in the room.

Dad's mouth cracked open and for the first time we heard his voice. It was faint, and throaty and broke in between but we heard it.

"I lo-ve y-ou." His eyes shifting between all three of us as he said those words, his face a mixture of pain and contentment. He coughed, the stench of blood hung in the air, coming from his tongue.

"Dad, we love you too." I choked out through tears, my heart shattering into a million pieces at his words. Lucy cried, launching herself at him and hugging him tightly.

I do the same too, making sure I imprint the smell of him in my brain. Raiden who didn't really understand what was going on clung to his grandfather, his eyes filled with fear as he sensed the sadness in the room.

We had to leave now. If we didn't we'd be screwed.

With one last, painful look at our father, Lucy and I turned away, our hearts heavy with the knowledge that we will never see him again.

The smoke grew thicker, making it even harder to breathe, we had to flee now.

Lucy and I rushed out the door but she stopped abruptly. "Wait, meet me outside I'll be back." she urged.

I had no time to ask her questions and just did as she told me to. As soon as I was out, I held Raiden even tighter as I watch the chaos around us.

We were surrounded by fire and I wasn't sure we'd be able to make it out of here alive.

The roar of the fire was deafening and the heat was unbearable. I could feel the sweat and tears mingling on my face as I struggled to catch my breath. My heart pounds in my chest as I watched the flames devour everything we had ever known.

Just as I thought of how we could possibly escape Lucy come back with a long bed sheet. "Come on follow me." She urged, racing to the backyard. The fire was already so close here too.

Lucy dipped the sheet in the water and brought it over to me. "You need to shift so I can tie Raiden to you with this sheet."

I understood her completely and set Raiden on the dirt. "Mama's going to shift okay buddy?"

He nods, the fear still in his eyes. I really didn't want him to be afraid, it hurts my heart to see him so scared.

Lucy pass me the sheet and holds Raiden as I shift.

Shifting came to me easy now and in a second I was now on my all fours. Lucy set Raiden on my back and told him to cling to my fur like he usually did. I could feel the fear in his grip and I whined.

Lucy gently wrapped the wet bed sheet around Raiden, securing him to my back. She made sure it was snug but not too tight, ensuring he was safe and would not fall off.

"We stick to the stream, the closer we are to water the better. Wherever we end up, we'll go from here." She said as she stripped of her clothes.

I nod and held my clothes in my jaw. When she was naked she shifted and set her path forward, urging me to follow.

With Raiden clinging to my back, I followed Lucy as she led the way. The flames were closing in, their crackling and roaring growing louder. The heat was almost unbearable and I could literally feel the ashes falling around us.

But we continued on, determined to save the little boy clinging to me. There was no way I'd let my son die this way. I'll fight with everything I have.

Little did I know that the chaos had only just begun.