

## Chapter 89

Bryson's pov

"Dude we need to be on our way. The pack is expecting us before one tomorrow. If we want to get there on time it would be best for us to hit the road now," Shawn pointed out, peeking his head inside the office.

I looked up from the papers, checked the time and nod silently.

I have been drowning myself in pack work for the past few years after taking over the pack fully. It kept my mind off of her after I laid off the search three years ago.

The more the years weighed on my soul, the more I realized I may never see her again.

"Let me just pack this up and we'll head out."

Since Maya was dead I gave the position of beta to my trusted friend Shawn. There was no one more deserving than him. He had been by my side through thick and thin and there was no one I had certainty to watch my back.

"What about Kira? She's outside waiting," Shawn said softly, scratching his stubble chin.

I stiffen when her name reaches my ears and try to relax my shoulders as I busied myself with packing the papers.

"I told her she doesn't have to tag along," I grumble, trying my best to not sound upset.

Shawn winced. "Well she's hell bent on coming along. She's packed and waiting by the jeep."

I sighed heavily, rising to my feet. "I'll meet you downstairs." I dismissed him as I packed up the rest of the stuff. Shawn nods and exits the room.

When he's gone I clench my hands, gritting my teeth. I know Kira had good intentions but lately she has been clingy.

Three years ago when she stumbled upon us as a rogue, I took her in because my wolf would not allow me to just dismiss her. Somehow by a cruel fate, she was my second chance mate.

I didn't want one, but clearly fate decided to play a cruel joke on me.

I didn't reject her, of course because having no mate to help with my pack would cause issues down the line. So I made an agreement with her.

She'll help me lead the pack but without us being completely bonded. I made it known that she should not expect anything from me. It was impossible to love another.

I could not get over Emily and kind of never made an effort to. While my wolf pinned for a mate, my human heart knew that Emily was always the one for me.

Second chance or not, no one could replace Emily.

Kira understood that and agreed to help me with the pack in exchange for her not being a rogue anymore.

It's been three years since the mate bond still crackled between us but I had no desire to officially mark her. I know she went through storms of heat and I know she wants me, that much was clear.

But I.....didn't want her. Not in that way. I just couldn't bring myself to love another. Not when my heart was still beating for Emily.

I know, I was cruel to keep her at arms length knowing she had hope that one day I'd accept her. But every day I made it known that we cannot be, I also gave her the option to leave, to reject me. Yet she refused.

I'll admit that if I didn't need someone to help me with the pack, I would've rejected her that day. But a mateless alpha was frowned upon, especially by the council. So I did what was best for the pack. That's what Emily would have wanted.

It was crazy how a mate bond could not heal the hole I Emily left when she run away.

When I reached the ground floor, I found Kira waiting by the jeep. Her golden-brown hair cascaded down her back in waves, her hazel eyes meeting mine. She smiles, the happiness glinting in her warm eyes.

Another reason why I trusted Kira with the pack was that she she cared about my people. Especially the kids.

She had been patient with me, more patient than anyone deserved, given how mentally screwed I was.

"Ready to hit the road?" she asked, her voice soft and caring, as always.

We had a meeting with alpha Falcon to negotiate on some business deals. He was very good in the stock market and would be a good ally.

I nodded, trying to muster a smile. "Yeah, let's hit the road."

Shawn was in the passenger seat so Kira climbed at the back as I settled in the driver's seat.

As I started the engine, I couldn't help but steal a glance at Kira in the backseat.

She deserved better than this, than me. She deserved a mate who could love her with the same intensity she felt for them. It was a cruel twist of fate that she had been bonded to an Alpha who couldn't reciprocate those feelings.

The ride was a silent one. We hit the road at eight in the morning and by four p.m we were not even half way there.

Shawn and I took turns driving and before we know it, it was another day.

Shawn scrolls through his phone. "I think there's another path that can get us there much quicker."

I gave him a confused stare and he showed me the goggle map on his phone. "If we take this path up ahead we can get to alpha Falcon's pack in less than five hours from now."

Though his suggestion was tempting, we were unfamiliar with this path.

Seeing my hesitation, Kira spoke up from the backseat, her voice gentle yet determined. "Bryson, if it can get us to Alpha Falcon's pack more quickly, it might be worth the risk. Besides its always good to explore unknown places."

"I don't want to trespass on anyone's territory." I uttered, still in contemplation if to go ahead with Shawn's plan or not.

It would be quicker, but exploring a new territory can pose some risks.

"I don't think the land is owned by anyone. I've never heard of this place. Besides we come to harm no one." Shawn pointed out and sold me on the idea after a few talks.

We drove onto the less traveled road, the scenery around us changed. The road was smaller and the trees were much taller. So tall they casted shadows that stretched across the narrow road and made it look a lot darker than it was supposed to be.

The road ahead twisted and turned, leading us deeper into the unknown. The further we delved in, the darker it became. It was still early, about nine thirty.

An hour passed and the road seemed to stretch on longer before us. I couldn't help but wonder if we had made the right decision. We hadn't encountered any signs of civilization or other wolves, which made me question the accuracy of the map.

"Are you sure we are on the right path," I asked Shawn as I turn to him. His brows furrowed and he looks at his phone before turning it to me. "Yeah man we-

"Bryson watch out!" Kira screeched behind me, her voice a shrill that startled me.

It was too late though. I felt when the front of the jeep collided with something hard.

The sudden impact sent the jeep lurching forward, causing my hands to tighten on the steering wheel. I looked ahead, seeing the glare of a white blur. A wolf.

A white wolf?

"What the fuck?" Shawn hissed as he was jolted forward and knocked his forehead on the dashboard.

"You knocked someone?" Kira gasped.

My heart jumps in my throat. "Yeah, a white wolf." I whispered as I stare at the motionless wolf just a few feet ahead.

"A white wolf?" Shawn asked in confusion, lifting his head with his hand on his forehead.

My shaky hands gripped the door handle to open when I froze seeing another blur of white bounding over to the motionless one. One the wolf's back is what I presume as a white sheets wrapped around its body.

That wasn't what that caught my attention, it was the child securely tucked in the sheet to keep him safe from falling over. I could not really see his face properly.

Something was strange about this. I had never seen a white wolf before. They were not supposed to exist.

Even with my disbelief and reluctance, I got out of the vehicle to see if the wolf was okay. As soon as I stepped foot out, a familiar scent hit me.

My heart sped, my hands shook as I started for the wolves only to stop abruptly when the little boy's face snapped to mine.

I stumbled back, my heart dropping, horror settling on my features as I got a good look at him. Those eyes, the hair, everything. It was like I was staring at a mirror image of me.

The little boy eyes shone in recognition, like he knew me and a tiny cute smile reared on his face. "Dad."