

## Chapter 5

-Lucas-

We started running in the other direction and I gave them a look. We were going into wolf territory and we didn't even care. We were more afraid of the thing after us than an entire pack of wolves.

As we were about to cross into wolf territory, the thing grabbed me by my torso, and started to crush me. The pain was unbearable and every time I tried to take a breath, the thing would hold me tighter, suffocating me.

I slowly started to lose consciousness, giving myself to the darkness, knowing this was the end but relieved I had entertained the beast enough for Eli and Noah to escape. I fell to the ground with a loud thud and to my dismay, someone picked me up; they had come back for me, they hadn't escaped.

Eli picked me up and started running, if you can even call it that, but the thing had Noah by his mid body, crushing him slowly. I heard bones crack, and faint whimpering. Noah was being killed. I freed myself from Eli's grasp, ready to launch myself at it but Eli stopped me, signaling for me to run.

I couldn't. I was frozen. Not out of fear for the thing, but out of fear of losing someone I considered my older brother. Nonetheless, Eli outranked me and I couldn't defy his order.

With a pain that was more than physical gripping my heart, we started running. Not a minute after we started running, we heard something coming from our left side.

Wolves.

The pack of wolves came running at full speed and howling and fangs bared. Eli took a defensive stand but I instead started running towards Noah. If the thing also attacked the wolves, it would leave Noah long enough for us to get to him. It was a cruel plan, but this thing was already on wolf territory and was likely to attack them anyway.

The wolves followed me to the clearing where Noah was lying on the ground, immobile. I feared for the worst. As I approached, I realized Eli was behind me and we both picked our friend up. He was still hanging on, barely breathing.

As we turned around to run, we realized the wolves were fighting with the thing, apparently it had attacked them too, just as I predicted. Eli went to attack it too; if we had any chance to discovering what this thing was, we had to kill it, and right now, we could only do it with the wolves' help.

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After a few moments, it was clear even the wolves were helpless against the invisible demon. Many of them were hurt, one of them I believed was dead, so their leader gave them a signal to retreat and gestured at us to follow.

In a panic, we didn't think twice. We started running once again, deeper into wolf territory. I kept glancing back, as if I would be able to see the creature following us. It was silly, but it was instinct.

Once we reached the clearing, I noticed there were many wolves already there, snarling and growling loudly. They let us pass through and tightly closed their lines, clearly expecting an attack.

We headed towards a modern looking building, much different from our castles, and entered. I noticed the people there were already tending to the wolf I thought was dead; I was in such a panic I didn't even realize they had separated from us and arrived first.

A wide-eyed doctor saw us come in and immediately sprinted to action, guiding Eli and I to a bed to place Noah in. Eli and I collapsed. I was about to pass out but noticed Noah was awake and looking at the doctor, he was whispering something and she got closer to hear him; I heard him the first time. I listened more intently the second time.

"Mate," he says. I'm wide eyed as I regard the doctor. Is she really Noah's mate? He flat lines and I fight my body, willing it to stand. I'm right next to him as the doctor shocks him once, twice, three times until he's back. They wheel him out to an OR, and I pass out cold on the floor.

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"Noah..." is all I can manage when I finally come to. I'm on a hospital bed, fully bandaged with an I.V drip on my arm. My throat feels painfully hoarse and dry. Eli looks at me as he cuts a piece of adhesive with his teeth.

"He's in surgery. That doctor took him about two hours ago." He finishes and stands, filling a glass of water for me. I need it desperately. When I can speak again, I can't help but ask,

"Why don't you let them take care of that for you? It looks like shit." I'm referring to his bandaged arm; I assume the other one is broken.

“We’re in enemy territory, kid. None of those mutts is coming close to me if I can help it.” He gives me a stern look. Enemy territory or not, I’m grateful to be out of the woods and out of that nightmare. “What did he tell her?” Eli is giving me his best menacing look. I act dumb.

“I couldn’t hear him.” If I were to tell him that doc is Noah’s mate, he would probably burn this whole place down. Eli is very old school and into the whole ‘no cross-species breeding,’ crap. That’s probably why he’s gonna die bitter and alone.