

Chapter 1 Berry Hunt

Willow's POV

As a young child, I wandered onto Waning Moon Pack territory in a dirty pajama onesie. I did not remember my name, age, parents, or where I came from. The pack doctors examined me for nearly a week yet found nothing wrong with me that could have caused my amnesia. The pack's beta, Martavis Hawkwood, adopted me as his child after convicting his alpha to allow me to stay. His mate passed shortly before my arrival and left him with no child to call his own. So he brought me into his home, raised me, and even taught me some combat skills so that I could protect myself.

Though being the adopted daughter of the beta didn't mean anything when you were a human. Even the omegas looked down on me when Martavis wasn't looking. I was tormented, teased, and ganged on at every turn when at school or doing chores with the omegas. They even got the human students to harass me just because my pack mates were considered the cool kids. My father always told me that I was beautiful with my chocolate brown hair and baby-blue eyes. I gured he only told me that because he adopted me and had to say that I was pretty.

Not even the alpha's son, Samuel Ulric, sparred me from torment. However, when he did bully me, it seemed that he only did it because it was something the pack expected of him. So what he did was nowhere near as bad as the others. It was what attracted me to Sam in the rst place. My feelings for him grew when we were in high school. Sam had blonde hair that shined like gold in the sunlight, his deep blue eyes reminded me of the wild blueberries I picked on my walks in the forest, and his well-toned body from years of training. Whenever he glanced my way, it felt like I would have a good day despite the bullying.

That day was particularly bad, however. At the estimated age of twenty years old, I still couldn't get myself a job. My adoptive father promised to give me a car of my own if I could get myself a job. I was determined to pay my own way through college and he agreed, yet I had failed once again to get even a serving job at the local diner. So, I took the long walk back to the pack lands, where I xed my hair to get my long bangs out of my face before walking into the house.

Martavis always said he didn't like how I always hid my face, yet everyone else around me stated that they couldn't stand looking at me. So when I was at home, I showed my face to my father. When I was outside of the home, my bangs and long hair covered my face and eyes. It made walking dicult as I constantly bumped into things or people.

"Dad, I'm home," I called out meekly while setting my bag by the door.

"Welcome back, how did things go this time?" Martavis was in the living room going over papers. He patted the spot next to him on the couch for me to sit.

"Not great, they told me that they already lled that position yesterday."

"That's odd because I could have sworn I overheard them saying that they needed three more servers just before talking to you." He nally looked up from his paperwork and brushed a bit of my hair behind my ear. "Were you hiding your face again under all those thick waves? Willow, you are too pretty to hide from the world."

"No, Dad, I wasn't doing that," I answered while playing with the small catch in my shirt. He just sighed while patting my head before going back to his paperwork. "What are you looking at?"

"List of guests coming to Samuel's upcoming party. Alpha Jason is nally naming that punk next in line as alpha."

"Samual isn't a punk, Dad," I chewed him out with a pout. He looked up at me with a small smirk and a raised eyebrow.

"He is most certainly a punk because he stole my daughter's heart." That made me blush before I went back to picking at my shirt. "Anyway, it was probably a good thing that you haven't gotten a job yet. We'll need your help prepping for the party. I have to make sure that none of the guests step out of line and it would really help if I had some of your macarons."

That made me giggle a bit which caused my dad to smile at me. "Okay, Dad. I'll make sure to make an extra special batch just for you."

"The blueberry ones right?"

"Of course! And I'll go pick the blueberries myself to make sure you get only the best ones." He pulled me into a hug with his muscular arm before kissing the top of my head.

"That's my moon child."

The following day, after I nished up my morning chores in the kitchen, I grabbed my basket to go berry picking in the forest. I knew all the best spots where the best blueberries grew. My secret trail that no one else knew about. I waved to the warriors patrolling the inner part of the pack lands before heading into the dense forest behind the pack house.

It took me about fteen minutes but I nally made it to the area of the forest that was littered with wild lowbush blueberries. I slowly went from one bush to the next, picking only the berries that were ready to be used in baking.

When I got to the fourth bush, something bright shined in my eyes. I turned to look at what it was and dropped my berry basket. Laying on the forest oor was a hunter's silver dagger. That wasn't what caused me to gasp; however, it was the lifeless body of a man next to it. His throat was gone, leaving only a bloody mess in its absence. As I tried to dig my phone out of my pocket, more bodies caught my eye. My little berry oasis was tainted with the smell of death and coated red. My heart dropped when I saw a familiar gure in the middle of all the c****e.

"Alpha!" I ran over to the unmoving form that was Alpha Jason. When I dropped to my knees next to him, I saw several darts had pierced his body. Believing them to be wolfsbane darts, I quickly removed each one before I rolled the large man from his stomach to his side. "No no no no, please be alive. Alpha Jason?"

As I pressed my ngers to his neck to check for a pulse, he let out a soft groan as he twitched. Thank the Goddess! I quickly pulled out my phone and called my father. "Hey, Willow. Now isn't a good time. Can I call you back?"

"Alpha Jason has been attacked!"

"Where are you," his voice quickly became serious and stern. I sent him my location through a text message. Minutes later, Dad showed up with some warriors and Gamma Colin.

"Holy s**t," muttered Colin when he saw the scene that I found myself in.

"Daddy," I said while ghting back tears. "He's alive but I don't know what to do."

"It's okay, sweetie. We got it from here." Gamma Colin and another warrior picked up Alpha Jason to carry away to the pack doctor. My dad picked me up and cradled me princess-style in his arms. "Let's go get you cleaned up, okay?" I looked down at myself and saw that not only was there blood on my hands where I tried to apply pressure to the alpha's wounds, but my clothes were also stained.

Martavis took me home, where I all but ripped off my clothes and jumped into the shower. No matter how I scrubbed, it felt like I couldn't get all the blood off of me.