

The Howling Heart's Forgiveness

Chapter 3

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A dull humming of pain wakes me from the darkness, the scent of my home being the first thing I notice as soon as I come to my senses.

“Good, you’re awake Brynlee.” Turning to the sound of the voice, I see Miss Asteria standing before me as she removes pictures from frames and carefully sets them into a box. She is meticulous in her packing, making sure not to bend the only images I have of me and my parents.

“I don’t want to hear you protest. Gale and I already renounced our status as members of Pine Moon and packed away our house.” She cuts me off as I open my mouth, her hazel eyes staring into mine. I want to say something, to make her change her mind, but Miss Asteria is an Alpha blooded wolf. Once she makes up her mind there is no turning back.

“Valor and Rune went too far and you deserve better. I will not stay here while they destroy the pack my ancestors built.” Miss Asteria states as I slowly push myself into a sitting position on my couch. Looking around the room I notice the pictures of my parents and I taken from the wall, the frames sitting on the floor beside the table Miss Asteria uses. She must have been at this task for a while to have found every image that was once on my walls.

“But Valor is your brother. Wouldn’t you want to stay here?” I ask Miss Asteria, getting a scoff in return. I can see the distain in her eyes as I mention her brother and realize there is no familial love there for him.

“Valor is a power hungry bastard. The only reason he is Alpha is because of the law in Pine Moon that states a she-wolf can’t be Alpha. Otherwise I would have been the Alpha and he would have learned his place a long time ago.” She explains, anger evident in her voice. It is clear to me that Miss Asteria and Valor were never close and by how that man has treated me, I can understand why.

“Why are you here then? If you are determined to leave shouldn’t you be packing?” Deciding not to fight with Miss Asteria – one of the only wolves standing up for me – I change the topic to her own packing.

“Gale and I already packed. You’ve been unconscious for five hours and it’s currently three in the afternoon. The pups and him were loading the trailer we have while I came to start the packing for you while you healed from your wounds.” Shocked, I turn to look at the clock on the wall confirm with my own eyes that it is indeed three in the afternoon. I woke up at nine thirty this morning. Woke up thinking that I would be mated and made Luna in a few weeks time. But clearly Valor and Rune had other plans for me after Rune used me.

At the thought of my Ex-Mate and the rejection, pain shoots through me causing me to double over and nearly fall off the couch. Everything feels so fresh and raw and thinking about what just happened amplified the pain to a new extreme. My Mate rejected me, harmed me. He abandoned me when I needed him all because of a betrothal. Not only that, but Alpha Valor banished me and kicked me from Pine Moon where my family has been Betas since the beginning of the pack.

“Shh, its okay Brynlee.” Miss Asteria is at my side, her hands cupping my face as she whips away tears. Her touch is soothing, helping me to think clearly once again.

“I-it hurts!” I whimper out, my breath coming in ragged gulps as sobs wrack my body. How can so much pain be forced on someone to endure.

“I know baby girl. Its going to hurt until you or him mates another wolf.” She validates my feelings, scooting closer to me and pulling me into her arms.

“It is going to be a long time before the pain is gone and I hate to say this but right now I need you to be strong. Do you think you can be strong?” I nod to her question, getting a relieved smile in return. It seems that my pain will have to be delt with later.

“Good. Breath with me. In. Out. In. Out.” Her voice is calming as she instructs me how to breath again. It grounds me and soon the pain lessons until I am able to breath easily with out sharp, knife like stabbing pains coursing through my heart and soul.

“Good. You are going to hate me for saying this but we only have nine hours left before they hunt us off of Pine Moon land. I need you to force what just happened aside and pack. Do you think you can do this?” She explains as soon as I can breath again. I hesitate to answer as packing away everything means leaving behind my parents for good. But the threat of being hunted and killed looms over me.

“I-I’m not sure.” I state, closing my eyes and taking a deep breath.

“But I can try.” Opening my eyes, I find Miss Asteria staring at me with pride. She stands from the couch and ruffles my hair with her hand.

“Good girl. Now go. I will get all the pictures packed, you get your clothes and keepsakes ready. We leave in four hours.” With her prompting I push off from the couch, taking a moment to steady myself before I move towards the stairs and make my way to my bed room where I find a pile of boxes, two black sharpies, and a tape gun with a new roll of tape inside. I should consider myself lucky. Most newly made Rogues get an hour to pack before they are hunted and are not able to take many of their belongings with them. I was given nearly a full day out of curtesy and I know it is only a way for Valor to save face with the pack after the way he treated me.

Consigned to my fate, I change into a sun dress from my closet and throw Rune’s town and bloodied clothes in the trash. I hate knowing that his scent still lingers on me with the pain he just put me through. Hate knowing I gave myself to him the moment we realized we were Mates

thinking he would mark me right then and there and we will be together like the Goddess intended.

The pain comes back with a vengeance and I stumble, nearly falling to my knees beside my bed. I feel like my chest is being constricted as the broken bond demands to be fixed. But I can't do it. Rune doesn't want me, he made it clear. Pine Moon doesn't want me, Alpha Valor made that clear.

Tears fall from my eyes once more as I try to breathe, try to focus on the moment right in front of me. I can't control what just happened. Can't turn back time and stop myself from giving myself to Rune nor can I stop the rejection. I can only control what I do from here on out.

My breath comes easier as I force down the pain until the tears stop once more and I can find my strength again. I stand on shaky legs and take another deep breath. I will do what Miss Asteria told me to do and push my emotions aside.

Right now I need to be strong. I need to keep myself together long enough to make it out of Pine Moon alive. I remind myself that other than Caspian, I have no one left here. That nothing remains for me other than imminent death. I feel a strange sense of calm wash over me and get to work. The sooner I finish packing, the sooner I can restart my life and focus on myself.