

Book 1 Chapter 12

VERITY

I nished my food fast. I placed my knife and fork on the plate and took my coffee mug in my hand, taking a sip.

I placed my coffee mug down and looked at the map the woman had brought. I opened it up and placed it on the table to look through.

My eyes skimmed over, and then I found my old small town. I gured out how far I drove, which was a shock as I went without sleep and food. I had driven over eighty miles through the night.

I could hear movement, which made me look up and notice the men that came in moments ago, tucking into their food.

My eyes scanned over them, but none noticed me, but the woman from the counter was staring at me. She was leaning on the counter, twirling a pen in her hand.

When she realized that I was looking at her, I gave her a small smile.

The woman smiled and pushed off the counter. She grabbed the coffee pot and walked around the men at the counter, making her way over to me.

I watched her as she came over and took the chair before me.

"Do you mind if I join you?" she asked.

I nodded.

The woman poured the coffee into my mug. Once my cup was full, she placed the coffee pot to the side and looked at me as she leaned into the chair.

"How was the food?" she asked as she glanced at the empty plate. "Carlton makes the best breakfast in the town."

I stared at her as her eyes met mine. "The food was lovely," I said.

The woman nodded.

"My name is Sandy," she said.

Her eyes landed on the map.

"So, where are you going?" she asked.

I looked at her for a moment, but I glanced down at the map.

Where was I going?

I needed to leave but never thought about where I would end up.

I shrugged and looked back at Sandy.

"I left without warning," I said. "I needed to leave, and I did."

Sandy nodded and looked at me.

"Why did you have to leave?" she asked.

I stared at her, trying to gure out what to tell her. I didn't want to tell her the whole truth. I don't know what people think when it comes to werewolves.

I cleared my throat. "I was with someone," I said. "Well, not with someone, we were merely hooking, and I caught feelings for him."

Technically, I wasn't lying. I just left out the werewolf part. And I was going to leave out him nding his mate.

Sandy looked at me, but I carried on. "He told me he was in love with someone else," I said. I knew it wasn't true, but Sandy didn't need to know. He would be in love with someone else.

"I was left hurt," I said. "He wanted to spend one last weekend, but I could only do one night with him. When he messaged me hours ago, I planned on going to him, but I couldn't. I felt broken."

I could see sadness swipe over Sandy's face as she stared at me.

"I packed up my things and left," I said.

"Oh, I am sorry," she said. "I think you had feelings for the guy and never told him."

I shook my head. "I was too scared, too," I said. "We only hooked up when he came into town, but we did text all the time. There were a few calls, but they stopped for a while."

Sandy nodded but didn't say anything.

I kept my eyes on the map, feeling slightly off.

Where the hell was I going to go?

Sandy leaned forward and looked at the map. She scanned over and pointed to a wooded area. "I came from here," she said, looking up at me with a smile. "It's a small town, and everyone is really friendly."

I smiled.

"Why did you leave?" I asked.

Sandy looked at me and gave me a small smile.

"Long story," she murmured. "But something similar to you, all over a guy."

I stared at her.

Whatever happened had Sandy in pain. I could see the pain on her face. If it was all over a guy, I knew how she felt.

Sandy looked at me.

"You know I never caught your name?" she said with a smile.

"I'm sorry," I said. "I forgot to be polite; my name is Verity."

I smiled.

Sandy smiled back and looked toward where her nger was on the map. "I'm still in contact with some people down there," she said as she looked up at me, a slow smile itching her face. "I could see if there is a place for you to stay and even a job."

My eyes widened.

"You would do that for me," I asked. "Why? You don't know me."

Sandy looked at me and c***d her head to the side. "You reminded me of me three years ago," she said. "I was in so much pain; I needed to leave. The people I stayed with helped me, even helped me leave. They saved me."

"Why didn't you go back or even stay?" I asked as I placed my hand on my mug and grabbed my coffee. I put the cup down and looked at Sandy, who was looking over the counter, but her eyes returned to me. "I didn't stay as the man I fell in love with showed up," she said. "I knew if I stayed, he would try to get me to leave with him."

Sandy sighed.

"I would go back," she said. "Only if there was no sign of the guy. He made me feel weak, and I hate being like that toward a man. I don't know what it is with some; they can place you on hold, making it easy to fall in love with them. But getting away is hard."

I knew how she felt.

Axel was a werewolf, but he played on my feelings. He was easy to fall in love with, from his good looks to his personality. The mere thought of him being with someone else makes me sick. I knew leaving would be the only thing I could do, especially if he brought her to town.

Sandy looked at me but glanced at the clock.

She groaned.

"It's going to be a long day," she said as she grabbed the coffee pot, moved back on the chair, and stood. I watched her every move, but her eyes landed.

"Have you had any sleep?" she asked.

I shook my head, and right on cue, a yawn escaped my lips.

I was full from the food, but I was feeling slightly tired.

"I live above this place," Sandy said with a smile. "I can take you up, and you have a sleep. I have work till three, but I can check on you in my break."

MY eyebrows scrunched up as I stared at her. "I shouldn't..." I said, but I was cut off by Sandy shaking her head. "Verity," she said. "Us women have to stick together. I got my keys behind the counter and can meet you around the back. You can park up there, and your car will be safe there; Carlton will keep an eye on it."

I stared at her, trying to gure out her motive.

I had never had anyone be this nice to me before. Well, besides Kelly.

"Okay," I said, a little weary. "I will take you up on the offer."

Sandy smiled.

"I will get my keys and tell Carlton what's happening," she said. "Go and move your car to the back, and I will meet you there in ten minutes."

I nodded.

Sandy turned around and headed to the counter.

I looked at the empty plate.

Crap, I forgot to ask for the bill.

I looked toward my purse and grabbed it. I quickly grabbed the menu by the side and determined how much I had to pay. I grabbed cash from my wallet and placed it on the table with a tip.

I quickly grabbed my bag and walked through the cafe, and headed through the door and straight to my car.

I placed everything to the side and started the engine.

I looked around, reversed out, and headed to the back of the building. I drove to the back; I noticed three cars parked next to a silver one.

I turned off the engine and looked up; Sandy was at the cafe door with a grin.

I quickly grabbed my things again and climbed out of the car. I closed the door and locked the car.

Sandy stepped closer. "Can I help you with your bag?" she asked.

I smiled and handed her my bag.

Sandy placed my bag on her shoulder and turned around. "Come on," she said. "I bet you are exhausted."

I couldn't lie to her; I was. I needed to sleep for a few hours.

Sandy walked toward the door she came out of, and I followed.

As I stepped in, the smell of food hit me.

I looked around, but my eyes met a man who looked like someone you would never think would be the cook. He had tattoos all over his body, including his neck and the side of his face.

The man smiled.

"Carlton," he said, holding his hand. "And you are?"

I took his hand and shook. "Verity," I murmured.

Carlton smiled. "I will keep an eye on your car while you rest," he said as he glanced toward the window. "No one will steal it, but I guess you have everything in there."

I didn't say anything, making Carlton look back at me. He smiled.

I felt a hand being placed on my shoulder. I looked back and saw Sandy looking back at me. "Come on," she said. "I will show you to the at."

She glanced toward Carlton. "I won't be long," she said. "I'm just going to take her up, and I will be back down."

I looked over to Carlton, who nodded. "It was nice to meet you, Verity," he said and turned around. I looked at him for a few seconds, but Sandy called. "Verity," she called. "Let's get you settled."

I turned to face and nodded.

Sandy turned around and headed up some stairs, and I followed her.

At the top of the stairs, there were ve doors. "Carlton lives in the one down the end of the hall," she said as she stepped onto the landing and outside a door. She looked at me with a smile. "This one is mine," she said, placing her key in the door. She turned it and opened the door.

Sandy stepped inside and moved out of the way for me to walk in.

I glanced around and stared.

The place was small but spacious. There was a bed by the window, over to one side. In the middle of the room were a couch and a door not far behind it.

"Here is my bed," Sandy said, pulling me out of my thoughts. Sandy pointed to everything and approached the middle door between the bedroom and kitchen. "In here," she said. "Is my bathroom. You can freshen up here and take the bed if you want."

I nodded, but I knew I wouldn't take the bed. I would feel uncomfortable if I slept in Sandy's bed. I most likely sleep on the couch.

Sandy took a step closer to me, which made me look at her.

She grinned.

"I have to go," she said. "I will ring my friends in that little town and see if they can help you."

I stared at her but shook my head.

"You don't have to do that," I said. "You have already done so much for me already."

Sandy frowned.

"I want to help," she said. "I have been where you are, and I had Carlton for help. You don't seem to have anyone. I want to be that someone, even if it means helping you move from here."

I looked at her, and a slow smile itched the corners of my mouth.

"Thank you," I said. "I won't take much of your time. I will want to be on the road soon as I can."

Sandy nodded.

"I will ring them when I get the chance," she said. "Now freshen up and have a sleep. I will bring up something for you to eat."

I said nothing as Sandy handed me my bad and turned around. She walked toward her door, headed through it, and closed it behind her.

I let out the breath I was holding. I felt relieved someone was nice to me, but I also felt slightly weird about it.

I walked around, taking in her room. I came to the couch and sat down while placing my bag beside me.

The couch was soft and comfy, and I couldn't help but lean further into it.

I looked to the side and noticed a blanket. I placed it over me and leaned back.

It wasn't long till my eyes were closed, and I was sent into darkness as I let sleep take over me. I was too exhausted to ght it. I needed to sleep.