

Chapter 5

Kris's POV

We loaded our bags into the SUV the night before. We had to leave at an ungodly hour for the 9-hour journey to the Yellow Forest Pack. "That's nine hours without stopping, Kris," Rylee informs me. "Oh, goddess," Lacie says, looking like someone just ate her last chocolate bar.

She was no better in the morning when our alarms went off. Complaining about it being too early and that she needed her beauty sleep. "Stop being a princess." Rylee told her, "At least you can sleep on the way." She still looked unhappy, but it was her choice to come.

We all offered to drive. But Rylee doesn't trust any of us driving for any great distance. Telling us that our attention span was too short and that he wanted to get there in one piece.

It was a long journey, but it was fun, and we stopped frequently for coffee. Eventually, we checked in with the border patrol at the Yellow Forest gates. They gave us directions to the pack house and off we drove.

As we headed towards our destination, we noticed a car at the side of the road. A woman was standing by the car while a few children were running around. Rylee stopped the car. "I'm going to help her, Kris. We would help anyone in our pack," Rylee says. "I also have a soft spot for single moms as well, to be honest."

Nathan once told me that Rylee's mom raised him alone after his dad was killed. It was hard, but the single moms stuck together, helping each other when they could. It made him a better man, in Nathan's opinion.

Rylee jumps out of the SUV with us all following him. The woman is very thankful for our willingness to assist. She had been there a while but kept having to stop because of her ghting children.

I told Lacie and Erin to take the car to the pack house while the rest of us helped the stranded family. I asked Lacie to inform Alpha Gunner that we would be delayed. I didn't want him to think we had gotten lost in his pack seeing that the border patrol told him I was here. "We can distract the kids, while Rylee helps change the tire," I told Isabelle.

We are doing such a good job distracting the kids. So good that I don't see a rock. Tripping and falling into a deep ditch at the side of the road. I am covered in dirt and mud. At least I hope it's mud! From the smell of it, there is something else mixed in with it. The kids and Isabelle laughed so hard I thought they were going to wet themselves.

I tried to climb out of the ditch, but I kept sliding down the bank. Eventually, I realized it was time to ask for help, "Help me out, Izzy." Isabelle tries to help pull me out, but I pull her in. "That's for laughing at me." Now we are both covered in mud. She laughs, knowing it will wash off. At least now we can all laugh together.

Rylee eventually comes to help us. "Look at the state of you two," he said, laughing. "Mud is supposed to be good for the skin," Isabelle says to him.

Once we had had our laughs, we started the 2-mile walk to the pack house. It's nice to stretch my legs after such a long drive.

Siren becomes agitated, and neither of us can gure out why. But she just can't settle. A red sports car sped past us. Nearly knocking us over. As it passed, a dust cloud followed it. The dust stuck to the mud, making us both dirtier. "Great," I shouted after the car.

"Idiots," Isabelle states. I am seething. "If I catch anyone at home going that speed, they are walking everywhere for a year," I tell them both. Siren calms down, but she still feels on edge.

As we got to the pack house. That bloody red car pulled up behind us. Siren gets agitated again, "Mate." Siren yells in my mind. I looked over to see who she was talking about. It could be anyone in the car. All the doors open. Lastly, the driver opens his door and steps out of the car. "Mate," Siren yells again.

My heart stops when I see him. He stands tall next to his car. Sharp features and blonde hair. He looks like a model. "Our mate is handsome," I told Siren. When he looks at me, he doesn't look pleased. He turns to his friends, who start laughing. What's the hold-up? I ask myself.

Taking the lead, I walked over to him. Rylee and Isabelle are behind me, no doubt curious about where I am going. "Hi Mate," I said, tapping his shoulder. Isabelle gasped.

Slowly, he turned around and looked me up and down. "What is your name?" He asked me.

"I am Kristen Steel from River Valley Pack," I told him proudly.

"Well, Kristen Steel from River Valley Pack, I reject you." I couldn't believe what he was saying. Then he started speaking again. "I, Gerrard Gunner, son of Alpha Gunner of the Yellow Forest Pack. Reject you, Kristen Steel of River Valley pack." I don't know what to say or feel. He is right out rejecting me. "Accept my rejection," he demands.

I looked at him. He is supposed to be my true love, my soul mate. He has just snatched away my chance of happiness. Why would he do that? "Accept the rejection he demands again," this time telling his friends to see how disgusting and pathetic I am.

I am not sure if I want someone like him as my mate. I looked straight into his eyes. "I, Kristen Steel of River Valley Pack. Accept your rejection, Gerrard Gunner of Yellow Forest Pack." Even though Siren is heartbroken, she knows it's the right decision.

When I was a child, I used to read about rejections. In all the books read, a mate rejection feels like you have taken a kicking to the stomach when it happened. Well, from my experience, it felt like a piece of my heart had been ripped away. I lowered my eyes, took a deep breath, turned around, and walked to our vehicle. Telling Rylee to drive.

He saw what happened. I didn't need to explain why I wanted to leave. We left the Yellow Forest Pack and drove to the nearest motel. No one said anything on the journey. I went and showered, crying to myself the entire time. Questioning why he would do such a thing? Siren sobbed. She was also rejected.

Eventually, when I came out of the bathroom, Erin walked right up to me. Shook my shoulders, "He isn't worth it,"

"I know," I responded.

Lacie spoke up. "You are the Alpha of the River Valley Pack. What is he? Who does he think he is? Are you going to live your life living in the shadow of a man? Especially one as pretty as him." She is right. "Who the hell does he think he is and who the hell does he think he is talking to? In a relationship, the man shouldn't be the prettier one. You wouldn't want a trophy, mate. I know you wouldn't. He wouldn't be your equal. He has nothing to offer you, Kris." She carries on saying. That is the Pep talk I needed. "Now stop feeling sorry for yourself, acting all pathetic over that worthless piece of trash."

"You know what? You're right." I got changed, and we all climbed into our SUV and drove to the Yellow Forest Pack. This time will be different. This time, the rejection will be on my terms. I realized something today. I am not a Luna waiting to be swept off my feet. I am an Alpha. He should reach my standards. Not the other way around.

Alpha Gunner was there to greet us. "I wanted to make sure I met you this time," he says jokingly, holding out his hand and inviting us into his home. He made us feel very welcome, introducing us to his Luna. Then his eldest son, Charlie. He is the future Alpha. His mate is resting upstairs, as she is heavily pregnant.

Then he introduced me to his youngest son, Gerrard. I looked at Lacie and smiled. Payback is a b***h. "I have already met Gerrard," I told Alpha Gunner, who looked confused. I turned my focus to Gerrard. "Just to be very clear, if it wasn't earlier. I, Alpha Kristen Steel of River Valley Pack. Accept your rejection, Gerrard Gunner of Yellow Forest Pack."

Gerrard drops to his knees. "I wonder if I said it right last time? It's affecting him this time." But his dad, mom, and brother stared at him in shock.

I explained to the Gunner family what had happened earlier in the day. How we aided a pack member of theirs, how we are not afraid to help those in need. How Gerrard covered us in dust as his car sped by. Then being made fun of by his son before he rejected me.

"She was dirty and disgusting, Dad. I can't have a mate that looks like that," Gerrard chimed up from the oor. Alpha Gunner looked like he was ready to explode. But his anger was not directed towards me.

"You put your ashy car and fancy clothes above your fated mate, who turns out to be an Alpha. I knew you were an i***t; this just proves it." His face was bright red as he snarled at his son.

"We are grateful, Alpha Gunner, for the invitation to visit your pack. But we have decided to leave."

Siren and I are a little hurt by the rejection. But this has made us both realize we will not settle. We want a mate that compliments us. At least now I can choose my mate unless the goddess gives me a second chance. But I won't know about that until it happens.

"Some people all they care about are looks and money. They don't look beyond that. I would accept you in a heartbeat, Kris, and you aren't even my type." Erin says on the journey home. I have some great friends.

"We need to come up with a plan for any future visits." Rylee commented, "Yeah right, let's go undercover." Isabelle suggested. Everyone laughs. But her words make sense. Is it a valid suggestion? It's something to consider.