

Chapter 4

Alpha Jake's POV

I'm leaning against a rock and looking up at the tree covered forest sky. I had fallen asleep after the long tedious journey towards the South Appalachian pack's territory.

I really didn't want to make this trip. I have tried to avoid this territory for as long as I could.

I push my long body off the rock and walk over to the water to splash my face.

Those eyes had been haunting my dreams again. An oddly glowing, golden pair of eyes.

I splash my face a few more times with the water, trying to wash the image away.

"Should we head into the village?" My friend and Beta, Brett, walks over to me, glancing around. He's a good Beta, always on alert. Always has had my back through all the ghts.

Damn the South Appalachian Pack. Damn the agreement my father made with them twenty years ago.

I stand and run my hands through my white blonde hair. I didn't want to head into the village. Even after the long hard journey we just made, I wanted to turn around and go back. But I couldn't. I had to honor the agreement. Or at least try to renegotiate the agreement.

After my father had died and I became Alpha, I came up with a plan. I was not the one who made this ridiculous agreement with the weak South Appalachian Pack. I could nd a way to honor my father and both packs a different way, one that would suit me and my pack better.

Brett looks at me as if reading my mind.

"Come on Jake, it won't be that bad." Brett grins. "Who knows, maybe we'll nd our mates here."

A growl escapes me. A mate from the South Appalachian Pack? Never.

Ever since I was eight years old, our whole pack has hated the South Appalachian Pack. I was there for the merger of our two packs. When the Blue Hills Pack became the South Appalachian Pack under the North Appalachian pack's protection. After the battle that took so many of our own pack's lives to help the Blue Hills Pack. When that damn agreement was created.

And for what? What has the South Appalachian Pack ever done for the North Appalachian Pack? They add no value. If it were up to me, we would severe ties completely with them.

But I have to honor my father's agreement. This agreement cost many lives, it must be important in some weird way. Or at least it was in my father's mind at the time.

"No North Appalachian member will ever be mated with a South Appalachian." I say rmly.

Brett laughs and shrugs. "Can't control who your mate is."

I growl again. Brett is frustrating. He is always so upbeat. It's annoying. I wouldn't allow any other pack member to speak this way to me, so casually and teasing, but Brett has been my friend since childhood. We made the trip to South Appalachian pack together last time and I couldn't imagine him not being with me for this trip. However, right now, his being upbeat is making me feel way worse.

"I would reject any mate that came from South Appalachian. No one there is worthy to become the Luna of the North Appalachian Pack." I stride past Brett and pick up my backpack. The rest of the pack accompanying me on this trip are all standing around watching me, ready to go. Twenty-two members in total. All larger than normal werewolves. Most with the typical blonde hair and blue eyes that was associated with the North Appalachian Pack.

All erce ghters that could take on the South Appalachian Pack in it's entirety.

"Alpha Jake" Eric spoke softly as he walked towards me. "We have two heading this way now. We should move if we wish for our early visit to still be a surprise."

I nod. "Let's go."

I wanted to arrive early, make sure to throw the South Appalachian off their guard. I didn't fully trust this pack.

We start moving into the woods and I am about 100 yards away when I smell it. I stop with a jerk and stand motionless. It was the most wonderful smell I had ever experienced. It smelled like a mix between apple pie, fresh snow, and something else I couldn't quite gure out.

"Alpha?" Brett had doubled back and was standing in front of me.

"Just a moment. I want to check something." I turn and make my way stealthily back to the water, which is where the scent is now coming from. Brett follows me quietly without hesitating, making a signal over his shoulder for the others to wait.

As I reach the edge of the woods, I crouch behind a bush and see an absolutely stunning woman with a long brown braid and a tiny but strong looking body, leaning against the rock that I had just been against. She has her arms folded across her chest with a cocky grin on her face. A black-haired man is walking towards her and putting his hands on either side of her and moving way too close to her.

I feel rage building inside of me. This isn't right. He shouldn't be kissing her. He shouldn't be touching her, and she shouldn't be touching him.

As his hand dips into her bra, I stand, about to shift, a growl on my lips, ready to drag this man off by the neck, when Brett grabs my shoulders and pushed me down, just as the woman pushes the man away and looks around her, her entire tiny body alert.

"Let's go" Brett whispers and pulls on my shoulder. I don't want to go. Every single ounce of my body wants to stay here and ght this man. But as I watch, the black-haired man shifts into a black furred wolf and crouches in front of the woman, who surprisingly, doesn't shift, but stands with her hands to her side, looking ready to ght.

I take a steadying breathe to calm myself and turn and quietly, and quickly move away towards the rest of my pack.

Everyone is looking at me, some with questions on their faces. I nod and move towards the village without saying anything. No one talks as we move.

I can't stop thinking about the beautiful woman I just saw. Every step I am taking away from her is effortful. I want to go back. I'm inwardly ghting the urge to run back. I feel Brett glancing at me more than usual. I refuse to look at him.

As much as I want to deny it, I know I have just found my mate, and she's from the damn South Appalachian pack.