

## Chapter 7

Blakely's POV

What the hell is going on here? I'm exing my ngers on the couch and trying to focus on my father, who has some explaining to do, but I keep having these inappropriate visions of Alpha Jake's hands running up my thigh...I glance over at him and he is looking at my thighs.

Oh, God. It feels like he is in my head, reading my thoughts.

I shake my shoulders and mentally tell myself to focus, again.

I have never seen my father looking so unsure, so uncomfortable, at a loss for words. He's an Alpha! He is always condent and sure of himself. I feel sympathy towards him.

As I look at him, he looks downright miserable.

"Father..." I gently urge him to let him know I'm waiting, and I'm getting more impatient the longer he takes.

Alpha Brad gives me one more tortured look, then leans forward, placing his elbows on his knees and his head into his hands, something I have never seen him do.

"Blakely, you know the story of how the Blue Hills Pack became the South Appalachian Pack." I nod quickly.

He looks up at me through his spread ngers, head still in his large hands.

"What you don't know, is that we owed the North Appalachian pack a debt for saving us."

"I thought that was why we became the South Appalachian..."

Alpha Brad cuts me off. He sits back and waves his hand dismissively while shaking his head.

"No. We did that as a way to form a union together. It was in the hopes that we would be stronger allies, working together and forming friendships." He glanced briedly at Alpha Jake as he said this. Alpha Jake's face is impassive.

"But we owed the North Appalachian a great debt. They came to our aide, at the cost of many lives to their own pack, to ensure that our pack could live safely once again." Alpha Brad shook his head. "We were losing pack members in huge numbers before they came. If the North Appalachian pack hadn't came to ght along side us, there wouldn't be any of us left."

It was like he was defending his story. I knew all this already though. I knew we were ghting a battle that we couldn't win twenty years ago.

"When the North Appalachian pack came, the elders got together to discuss a battle plan, and payment for their services...we reached an...agreement." He looks at me.

"We agreed that the best payment, would be to give the North Appalachian pack our strongest ghter. However, as we were going into battle, and knew that we might lose our strongest ghter, or that we would be weak and recovering for years, so we needed all our strongest ghters to help build the pack back up, we decided that we would give our strongest ghter to the North Appalachian pack after the new generation had grown, in twenty years."

My mouth felt dry. My ngers had stopped exing. I'm staring numbly at my father.

"So, it made sense to agree that we send our Beta to the North Appalachian pack, and to ensure we stayed a strong ally, that Beta would become the Beta to the Alpha of the North Appalachian pack."

No. No! Thoughts are starting to form in my head. Accusations. Understanding, but not understanding.

"Father..." my voice sounds foreign, not like my own. "Father, you made me your Beta."

My father looks at me in agony.

"You made me your Beta, knowing that I would have to leave as part of this agreement?" My father places his face in his hands again, but I don't feel sorry for him anymore. I stand up and start pacing. My ngers are exing again and I am not even trying to control my tone.

"You made me your Beta!! No one makes females their Beta!! No one makes their DAUGHTER their Beta!"

I turn and face my father, throwing my hands onto the top of my head.

"And YOU made me your Beta, ME, your DAUGHTER, knowing full well that I would have to leave you, and the entire pack, MY HOME, because of some stupid debt you owed?? I'm a payment??"

I'm full on shouting now, but I can't control it. I catch a glimpse of Alpha Jake, he's wincing, but hasn't moved and isn't saying anything.

"Blakely..." Alpha Brad's voice sounds weak.

"No!" I turn around and start pacing again. "I am the smallest person in the pack. I would never have naturally been assigned Beta, I would have never became the strongest pack member on my own." I point my nger at Alpha Brad. "But YOU trained me! You trained me every single day!"

I throw my hands up in the air. "You wanted me to leave!!"

Alpha Brad's face is completely covered and his shoulders as shaking. What the hell? Is he crying? I'm horrified by this, but I'm too angry to stop.

"Did you ever even love me? Obviously, my whole life was a lie! You just raised me to be sent away and belong to another pack!"

I feel waves of calmness hit me, like actual waves of water, almost knocking me over. But I don't want to calm down.

I turn to Alpha Jake and swipe my arm, as if to push off the waves that I know he is sending my way. "STOP IT!"

Alpha Jake pushes back against his chair, as if I physically pushed him.

I turn back to my father. "Why?"

Alpha Brad takes a few seconds and then lifts his head to look at me. He swallows.

"I had hoped, if I made you my Beta, that they wouldn't take you. That we could renegotiate the agreement." He looks at Alpha Jake.

I look at him too. Alpha Jake's face is still impassive.

"I am here to honor the agreement that the South Appalachian pack made to North Appalachian pack twenty years ago." He looks at my father. "Your Beta will become mine."