

## The Silence

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Nothingness has several definitions, one, "it was the state or condition of being nothing; nonexistence". Two, "it is the absence of consciousness or life". Three, "it is complete insignificance or worthlessness". I have seen and felt all three all at once since the past three years but there was another definition that I have not yet felt, nothingness as an egoless state of being in which one fully realizes one's own small part in the cosmos.

"I had yet to discover the purpose of my entire existence in this world. Or maybe I had. Was my purpose in this world to suffer? To mourn and never be happy? Then I was truly nothing.

The beeping sound ringing in my ears brought me back to the light. I carefully opened my eyes to get accustomed to the intensity of light in the room. I could hear voices around me, but I was yet to discern which belonged to whom.

"What is wrong with her?" This was Kaden's voice. I was surprised that his voice sounded worried. Was he worried about me? My eyes were fully opened now, and I saw Kaden talking to a woman in her mid-forties wearing a lab coat. She must be the pack doctor. That would mean I was in the pack's clinic. I had passed out during the transformation, yet I had not completed the change.

"She is changing," the pack doctor said.

"Changing? How is that possible? Everyone changes when they turn seventeen or eighteen at most, and it's not as painful as what I just witnessed. And she is twenty-one years old!" Kaden's voice was louder than ever, and it surprised me even more. He hated me. Why did he

care if I was in pain? Wasn't that what he wanted? Wasn't that the purpose of disgracing me in front of the pack?

"She has been on strong amounts of wolfsbane for years, I presume. But her wolf needs to come out soon, or it dies," the pack doctor said, and my eyes widened.

"What... what?" I choked, gaining the attention of my mate and the pack doctor.

"You're awake. I'll check your vitals now," the pack doctor said as she walked up to my bed. Kaden was staring deeply at me, a lot of mixed feelings in his eyes. I caught on to the dots of regret in his eyes. It didn't matter if he felt regret. I didn't care. I just regretted not being able to escape when I had the chance.

"What do you mean by my wolf dies?" I asked the doctor. She smiled weakly at me.

"I'm Hannah, the pack doctor. You see, your connection with your wolf is severely severed, and your wolf is trying to bring it back. The amount of wolfsbane you had been consuming was quite substantial. Even the prisoners in the Great War weren't given half the dose you were given. Your transformation back will be a lot harder, and you might not make it. But if you don't change soon, your wolf dies, and you become human completely and forever," the doctor explained.

"Who fed you wolfsbane, and for how long?" Kaden asked through gritted teeth.

"I..." I stuttered.

"Answer me, for goodness' sake!" he said in frustration.

"My pack, RedSand. Alpha Samuel instructed it."

"How long?" Hannah asked.

"Three years," I confessed.

"Oh my dear," Hannah closed her mouth with her palms as she stared at me, shocked. Kaden was silent. The silence I had wanted while he

tarnished my name in the dining halls. Now he was silent. I wanted to laugh, but I didn't. He had threatened to torture me when I had asked for permission to relieve myself in the bush. He said he would inflict pain worse than what RedSand had given me.

Wolfsbane was not only physically but emotionally painful. It had taken me up to a year to grow accustomed to it. And by that time, I had stopped feeling my wolf close to me. Alpha Samuel had wanted me to feel alone, and he went as far as making me feel alone in my head too. I know it was more than just making me stop the mind-link with pack members or preventing me from shifting. He wanted me to be alone and eventually lose my wolf. That was his plan all along, and I had only fully realized it now.

Initially, I wanted to lose my wolf if it meant I would be able to settle in the human world. But reality had set in. My wolf had been the only thing that had been with me throughout my suffering. Though she was distant in my mind, she had still been there all this time, holding on. My wolf was my true soulmate, and now I might lose her.

I hadn't realized that I had been crying until Hannah passed me a tissue paper. I accepted it and wiped my face. Then I said the words that shocked Kaden, Hannah, and even myself.

"I want to die with my wolf. If she is dying, I want to die with her."

"What?!" Kaden growled.

"Louisiana goodness!" Hannah's eyes widened in shock. But it was too late to take back my statement. This was what I wanted. If my wolf was dying, it was only fitting that I die with her. I couldn't imagine a life without her inside me.

"Please! Help me! Do something! Set me free from this world!" I cried hysterically as I held onto Hannah's lab coat. Hannah was stunned by my behavior, but I wouldn't stop pleading for death.

"Stop it!" Kaden warned angrily, but I ignored him and kept on. I knew I was making Hannah uncomfortable, but there was a possibility that she would understand my pain and help me end it all.

"Alpha?" Hannah asked in confusion, unsure of what she should do. I gripped her coat tighter.

"Louisiana!" Kaden boomed in his Alpha's tone, but his voice did nothing to me. Maybe I had indeed gone mad.

If Hannah wasn't going to help me, I would find another way. There are millions of ways to die, aren't there? Maybe Kaden would be willing to help me, since he hated me so much. I released Hannah's coat and focused my attention on Kaden.

"You don't want me, you hate me. Do it! Kill me! Spare me from this pain!" I cried. Kaden stared at me, dumbfounded.

"Hannah, leave!" Kaden ordered.

"But Alpha—" Hannah hesitated, but Kaden cut her off.

"Now!" he yelled, and Hannah scurried out of the room. Then there were just the two of us.

"Please, Alpha, please," I cried in desperation.

"I can't," he said in a surprisingly calm voice.

"Why? I am your torture, a reminder of your pain. I am the daughter of the man who killed your mate, your pup. I do not deserve mercy. Kill me!"

"I can't," he responded again. I was disappointed. Why wouldn't he free me? Did he want to see me wither? Was that the thing that gave him pleasure?

"Please," I pleaded, clamping my hands together as tears streamed down my face. "I will do anything. I beg you. I will go through any punishment you give me. Just grant me this. This is the only duty I ask of you as a mate."

Kaden's face turned to regret and guilt. I didn't want him to feel guilty for my situation. I wanted his anger, his vexation, and his wrath. That was what I wanted from him now. It would be the only way he would set me free. He walked up to my bed, and I begged him once again. He

cupped my face in his hands.

"I will do anything you want me to do," I begged. He looked deep into my eyes, his gaze piercing into my broken soul. Before I could speak again, his lips were on mine. My eyes widened at what was happening, and sparks spread across my body. My wolf rejoiced, but I was frightened.

Then, as quickly as it happened, he removed himself and created distance between us. While I recovered from the shock of his actions, I looked at him and saw the regret in his eyes. This time it was about the kiss. It was a mistake, and I wasn't expecting it to be anything more than that.

"I can't kill you," he said, and my spirit diminished. Maybe he would feel guilty for killing his mate, but he shouldn't. I was never worthy of being his mate. This was all a mistake of nature anyway. This was never meant to be.

"You don't have to feel guilty over my death. This 'mate' thing is a glitch somewhere. See me as just a regular wolf that trespassed on your land," I reasoned.

"But you are not a regular wolf that trespassed on my land!" he slammed his hand on the cupboard by my bed. But I wasn't going to give up.

"Yes, yes, you are right. I am the daughter of a monster, the spawn of a murderer. My death is fair justice," I cajoled. That was it. I felt the anger brewing in him, and I continued to rile him up. "It is fair justice. I will do anything you want me to do, and you just have to kill me. The wolves would not dare question you. That is a fact."

I have completely lost it. I am mad, and I am accepting it. The three years of abuse have made me this way. Diana would be saddened at how low I have fallen, but she would mourn my death. I will leave a message for her, telling her that this is my choice, that this is what I craved for. I cannot live without my wolf. Then I will die with her.

"You will do anything?" Kaden asked.

"Yes," I immediately responded. My wish was finally coming to pass. I might not have had control over how my life had turned out, but at least I would have control over how I die.

"You will remain in this pack for a year, and by the third month, you must consent to bearing my pup. And by the time you have birthed him, I will grant you what you solely desire," he said. But my heart shattered. I couldn't bear a child and leave him or her alone. I couldn't abandon my pup. He was giving me an impossible choice.

"Why are you doing this to me? You do not desire me nor my body, yet you want me to bear you a pup," I said in confusion.

"I have given my condition. It is up to you to decide on the course you are going to take," he replied.

"I can't abandon my pup!" I yelled. "I don't want to leave a part of myself behind!"

"I know," he said coolly.

"What?"

"The deal is off. I refuse to stain my hands with your blood. You are not deserving of that as well."

My heart sank.

"If you want to die, I will not let you. You don't get to escape this world easily. If I suffer, you suffer," he said.

"I cannot live without my wolf, please!" I begged.

"You will have to learn to," he said as he walked out of the room, leaving me in a daze.

Kaden was aware of the worthlessness of a werewolf that has lost his or her wolf. He wanted me to feel that worthlessness. He wanted me to live and suffer at the same time. I only hope that the next time I change, I don't make it out. I hope the change succeeds in killing me. If Kaden would not give me the one thing I wish for, maybe nature would give me that mercy.