

Broken by one, claimed by three novel

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I blinked at the blue pillow a few inches from my face. It took a few minutes for the sleep to fade and the memories from last night to flood my mind. A shiver raced through me. Turning onto my back, I blinked up at the ceiling for a few seconds before I slowly sat up. My eyes darted around the room. I froze when I spotted the man occupying the chair in one corner of the room. He had a book resting on his lap. The brown leather was worn like the book was being used constantly.

"How do you feel?" His voice was deep and accented. No matter how hard I tried, I couldn't make out where his accent was from. Slowly, he raised his head to look at me. Gray eyes locked with mine for a moment and then lowered to my neck. I watched as his eyes darkened and flashed black for a second before they returned back to normal. "Doctor said that you should stay in bed for a few days until you are fully rested." He paused. "How are you feeling, Cora?" I swallowed. "F-fine," I stuttered.

It was a lie and he seemed to know it. My body ached, and I had a mild headache pestering me. It hurt when I swallowed, but I was sure that the pain would be gone in a day or two. Reaching up, I brushed my fingers against my throat. His eyes followed the movement. "Cora," he called softly. "Mom never mentioned you," I said. "We weren't close." "Alpha Rowan said that there was bad blood between you." He frowned. "I tried to clear things up with your mom, but she wouldn't listen.

I made contact with Nate a few months after she turned me away." I had a lot of questions, but there was only one thing I needed to know at the moment. "How did you find out about Mom's...that she's gone?" "Nate made me your guardian in case something ever happened to them. Rowan called me a few weeks ago." "Why?" Keiran swallowed. "When your parents found you—" he broke off and cleared his throat. "I mean when you—" "I know," I interrupted him.

"Mom and Dad told me that they found me at the side of the road when I was a baby." "Oh." He cleared his throat again. "Sorry. I'm already messing this up." My eyes dropped to my hands. "Mom said that she wanted me to know the truth in case any of the pack members ever mentioned where I came from." Keiran closed the book and placed it down on the small table next to the chair. Leaning forward, he rested his elbows on his knees and locked his fingers together as he watched me.

"I'll answer all your questions to the best of my ability, but after you answer some of mine." I looked away from him. "What were you doing there?" I pursed my lips. "Cora, do you have any idea how dangerous it is to be wandering around the forest on a full moon?" he growled. I might have grown up in a pack, but that didn't mean I knew everything about them. "You have two options; either you tell me yourself, or Axel will get me the answers I want," he threatened.

"Are you going to use him as a threat every time I misbehave?" He raised an eyebrow. "Are you planning on misbehaving a lot?" Yes, I wanted to tell him, I'm planning on making your life hell. But I shook my head instead. "It's okay if you are," Keiran said

softly. "I know what it's like being a youth. I was one once. There are only a few rules I expect you to follow, and if you do that, you are free to do as you please." "What type of rules?" Keiran smiled.

"You're changing the topic." I sighed. It was worth a try. Dad was always so easily distracted. Swallowing, I leaned back against the pillows. My mind raced. There were a few lies I could think of, but one look at him made me change my mind. "He took me from my bed," I said softly. "He covered my mouth with a cloth that smelled awful.

The next thing I know, I wake up in the forest." "Does he have anything to do with the bruise on your neck?" he questioned, eyes dropping to my neck for a few seconds. "I don't know," I answered him truthfully. "I didn't see his face." "But you recognized his voice?" I hesitated a moment before I nodded. He was silent for a few seconds. "Do you know why he would do something like this?" I hesitated. "They never liked me.

I think it's because he rejected me." "He what?" Keiran exclaimed loudly, making me jump. He was on his feet in the next second. I watched in horror as dark fur started covering his exposed skin and his eyes turned black. "Calm, brother." The familiar voice echoed around the room but there was no sign of him. "Fuck off," Keiran growled in a deeper voice. I gasped, and nearly jumped out of my skin when Axel suddenly materialized out of thin air. "Take a walk, Keiran," Axel hissed.

He snarled at his brother but stormed out of the room. I stared at the closed door for a few seconds, and then turned my head to look at Axel. Axel stood with his back against the wall in the darkest corner of the room. "Do you sparkle in the sun?" I questioned in

curiosity. His lips twitched. "No, although it doesn't kill me, the brightness of it does hurt my eyes and the burn of it is very unpleasant." I bit my lip, eyes darting over to the door.

"A mate is something that should be cherished," he muttered. "Rejecting someone who was made specially for you is...immoral." "Mom told me about it," I said softly. "I didn't feel anything when he rejected me." Axel frowned. "You didn't have a bond?" "A bond?" Throwing the sheets aside, I scooted closer to the edge of the bed.

"I had a crush on him when I was younger, but it faded when I realized what an asshole he is." He didn't reply, but I could feel his eyes burning into me as I slowly stood. My muscles pulled tight from overuse, but it was manageable. I took a small step forward, and then another. The process was slower than I liked. When I reached the chair Keiran had occupied earlier, I leaned down to take the book. Axel was at my side in a second, picking up the book before my fingertips even touched it.

I raised my head to look at him. Now that I could see him clearly, I realized that he was just as handsome as Keiran. He was only a few inches taller than me. Some muscles were hiding under his clothes, but he was slim. His skin was pale, almost in a sickly way. Pale green eyes watched me with curiosity. "You have long hair," I muttered. It was not something I had noticed last night. "Shoulder length. It needs to be cut." I slowly straightened, making him take a step back.

"I'll let them know that you're awake so they can prepare something for you to eat." He was gone before I could utter a word. Letting out a sigh, I entered the bathroom and headed straight for the mirror above the faucet. I winced. My hair was a tangled mess. It was going to take a while for me to get all the knots out. I took in my own pale skin and

then my eyes dropped lower. Definitely hard to miss the bruise there. It was already starting to turn purple.

I raised my hand and paused when my eyes locked on the bruise around my wrist. Biting my lips, I carefully moved it in circles. It didn't hurt when I put any weight on it. Turning away from the mirror, I emptied my bladder and then searched through the drawers for a brush. Luckily, I found one with a few hair ties. There was a knock on the door just as I took a seat on the bed again. It opened revealing a much calmer Keiran carrying a tray.

My stomach growled when the smell of freshly baked bread filled my nostrils. Lowering the tray to the bed, he took a few steps towards the door, but stopped before he exited the room. "I'm sorry," he apologized softly. "For my reaction earlier." "Dean is an asshole," I muttered. "It didn't hurt me when he rejected me." "Not even a little?" I shook my head. "I'm human, remember? I don't feel the bond like you." Keiran nodded as he took a step back. "I have a few things to take care of. When I return, we can finish our conversation."