

Broken by one, claimed by three novel

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I couldn't see much of the pack from the window. The house was surrounded by other houses, some with colourful gardens. There were more houses beyond with tall buildings. And in the distance, I could make out the tall trees of the forest that surrounded the houses. It looked a lot different than my old pack. I turned away from the window and glanced around at the room once again. It was small but cozy.

There was a built-in closet across from the double bed with a chair and a small table next to it. The walls were painted a light blue with white wooden furniture and dark blue bedding. The room reminded me of something you would find in a guest house by the beach. After eating, I made the bed, braided my hair, and then tried to get some sleep, but failed. My mind was too busy. My arrival at my new home wasn't exactly how I had imagined it.

I thought that I would have been calm and level-headed to make a good impression. Not dressed in my night clothes, soaking wet and feeling like shit. June had been nice to me when she helped me warm up, but the look in her eyes hadn't been welcoming. I looked down at the clothes I was wearing. A pair of yoga pants and a black T-shirt that was two sizes too big. Raising the material to my nose, I sucked in a deep breath. It smelled like..earth. Like earth after it rained, clean and fresh.

My eyes fluttered closed as I sucked in another deep breath. I jerked in fright when someone knocked on the door. It opened before I could drop the shirt back into place.

Keiran paused in the doorway, eyes widening slightly when they locked on me.

"I...I...uhm..." I fixed the shirt and shifted from foot to foot. "Mom said that you haven't left your room." He stepped fully into the room. "You're free to move around the house." "T-thank you." My eyes dropped to my clothes.

Keiran cleared his throat, and gestured towards the bed. I sank down on the edge of it and watched him as he took a seat in the chair. "I called Rowan," he said softly. "I wanted to make arrangements to pick up your stuff." He paused. "I'm afraid...your cabin caught on fire early this morning." "W-what?" I gasped. "He's not sure how the fire started, but I'm afraid they weren't able to get anything out in time." I swallowed. "N-nothing?" "I'm sorry." Tears filled my eyes.

I bit my lip, trying my best to keep the sob from escaping. Nothing. I have nothing left. They probably didn't even try to stop the fire or get anything out. I knew that they just stood there and watched everything going up in flames. Jumping to my feet, I tried to make a run for the bathroom, but Keiran was suddenly there pulling me against his chest. He said nothing as he held me. Once my tears dried up, I pulled away from him. "I-I wasn't going to bring a lot of stuff," I croaked.

"J-just some clothes and the p-photo albums. Now...I have nothing." Biting my lip, I raised my head to look at him with teary eyes. "You don't need photos to remember all the good times or them," he said softly. "The memories are all in here." My eyes dropped to the hand he pressed to his heart. It wasn't the same. Those were the only things I had left of them, and now it was gone. "I'll send Lucas out to see if there's anything we might be able to salvage," Keiran muttered.

"T-thank you." He nodded, hesitated a moment, and then stepped forward to wipe a lingering tear away. "I know it's not the best start to a conversation, and I should probably let you be, but I need answers, Cora. The sooner we talk about this, the sooner I can handle it." I knew he was going to start questioning me, but I was hoping that I might have had more time to think about what I wanted to tell him. "Okay." Keiran led me back to the bed and took a seat in front of me. "Dean," he growled.

"He was the one who is responsible for the bruise on your neck." I nodded. "And you think that he was the one who took you from your bed?" I hesitated a moment before I nodded. "You didn't see him, but you will be able to identify him by hearing his voice?" "Y-yes." I shifted under the intensity of his gaze. "Does he have a last name?" he questioned.

I wanted nothing more than to get them punished for all the years of hell they had put me through, but I was scared that if they got punished, they would find a way to get back at me. "Cora, in this pack I don't tolerate bullying," Keiran said. "If I find out that someone is being bullied, I take care of it immediately. Bullying won't go without punishment." Swallowing, I looked away from him. But Keiran gripped my chin and turned my face back towards him.

"You don't understand the seriousness of the situation, little red. They kidnapped you and dumped you in the forest on a full moon. You could have been killed, Cora." Tears burned my eyes. "By t-those...They're not like you," I whispered. "No, they are not like us. They are rogues, soulless creatures whose only intent is to hunt and kill." His

thumbs stroked my cheeks. "We don't have evidence," I told him. "Alpha Rowan will demand evidence because Dean is his son." Keiran froze.

"Is that why he never did anything about the abuse?" I hesitated. "I-I never told him," I admitted. "Why?" he growled. "Alpha Rowan already made special rules to accommodate me because my parents asked him to. It's why they made fun of me. If I told on them, and they got punished because of me..." I left the sentence hanging in the air between us. "Did they ever get physical?" he asked.

"A push or two, but they mostly just used their words." I studied him, watching the shift of emotion in his eyes. "I don't want you to do that." He blinked at me. "Do what?" "Make special rules for me because I'm not like you." Keiran pursed his lips and remained silent for a few minutes. "I won't, but I draw the line when things start getting physical." "Okay." Keiran stood and walked over to the chair. He picked up a stack of papers and handed them over to me. "Everything you need for school.

I chose your classes based on what your father told me. You are welcome to change them." I stared down at the papers. School. If high school was anything like in the movies I watched, I preferred to stay at home. "It's going to be another big change, but it will be a great way for you to get to know everyone," he said. "I can arrange for someone to show you around school." "No!" I exclaimed. "Thank you," I said a little softer. His lips twitched.

"You shouldn't have a problem making any friends unless you're a loner like Ryder." I frowned. "My younger brother," Keiran clarified. "He's a year older than you." "Oh." I cleared my throat. "W-when do I meet him?" "He's away at the moment but he should

be back next week." He smiled. "You already met Axel and Mom." "They've been...nice." "They take some getting used to." "Do you...do you want me to call you uncle or alpha?" I asked him to break the silence that had fallen between us.

"Keiran is fine." His smile widened. "We have a few hours left before dinner. Why don't we go shopping?" Shopping? My eyes widened and colour flooded my cheeks in shame. It took me only a second to realize that the only thing I owned was the night clothes I was wearing when they found me. I didn't even have a pair of shoes! My eyes dropped to my feet. "I—" "Let me do this for you, Cora." "I don't have any money to pay you back," I argued. "You don't have to." Keiran paused.

"If you really want to, I'm sure we will think of a way." "I don't have any shoes." I wiggled my foot. "I'll find you some shoes." Keiran opened the door. "Come on." I hesitated. "This will also be the perfect opportunity to show you around your new home." I was kind of curious about his pack. And it would do me good to get some fresh air. "Didn't the doctor say I should stay in bed?" I asked as I stood. "He won't know unless you tell him." The smile slipped from his face.

"Unless you're feeling sick?" I shook my head. "I don't," I told him softly. "Come on, Cora."