



Epilogue

ONE WEEK LATER

I stood by the car as Xaden walked up to the house slowly. I knew he was nervous; his body was tense as he moved. Ashton leaned against the car beside me, fidgeting his hands anxiously.

I placed my hand on his shoulder. "Calm down, Ash."

He rubbed the back of his neck. "I can't help it."

"You and Xaden have enough nervous energy to power a small city," I laughed before turning back to watch my mate.

Just as Xaden stepped onto the front porch, the door swung open. I watched with wide eyes as a small brunette woman with big green eyes stepped onto the porch. A gasp escaped her lips as tears filled her eyes.

"Xaden?" she said softly, her voice quivering.

I smiled as she jumped into Xaden's arms, her gasps and happy tears filling the air.

"You're here!" she kept saying. "I can't believe you're here!"

He set her down and cupped her face in his hands. I couldn't make out the words he whispered to her, but I could see her shoulders slump with relief.

I stood straighter when Xaden turned and walked back down the steps.

Ginger froze for a moment on the steps, her eyes glued to Ashton.

"Ginger," he sighed as he pushed off from the car.

A sob escaped her lips, and she ran down the steps and threw herself into Ashton's arms, wrapping her legs around his waist as she hugged him tightly.

I stood beside Xaden and wound my arm around his waist, my head leaning against his shoulder as we watched Ginger and Ashton whisper softly to each other before Ashton crushed his lips to hers.

I looked up at Xaden curiously. "I thought they weren't mates."

"They were second chance mates..." he said with a smile. "It snapped into place the moment my father killed her first mate. But they hid it for fear of my father's wrath. They've kept it a secret."

"This whole time?"

"This whole time..." he echoed. "Thankfully the alpha here was too scared of me to say anything. He let my father believe he'd made my sister his luna."

"How long has she been here?" I asked in disbelief.

"Five years."

My jaw dropped. "Poor Ashton..." I muttered as I turned back to them.

As soon as Ashton released his mate, they walked toward us, both of them beaming happily.

"Ginger," Xaden said with a smile, "This is my mate, Emma."

Ginger smiled brightly before pulling me into a hug. "I'm so happy to meet you." She pulled back and looked into my eyes, her green eyes filled with unshed tears. "I always wanted a sister. I was always surrounded by these guys." She nudged Xaden in the ribs with a laugh.

"I have two older brothers; I understand," I chuckled.

She turned back to Ashton and took his hand in hers. "Can we go home now?"

Ashton kissed her hand, the look of love in his eyes too hard to miss.

"Let's go home," Xaden said before opening the passenger door for me.

That night, I sat at a picnic table behind the pack house as our pack celebrated my sister's return home. I

wrapped my arm around Emma's shoulders and pulled her in close to me before pressing a kiss to the top of her head.

"You happy?" she asked as she looked up at me, her bright blue eyes filled with joy.

"I don't think I could possibly be any happier," I said with a sigh as I watched my sister talk with old friends.

"We have a lot of work to do here," I continued, "but our people are strong. They'll bounce back."

"I know we will," she said as she leaned into me.

"Thank you, by the way..."

She looked up at me curiously. "For what?"

"For sticking by me, after everything. You could have walked away and didn't."

She shrugged, a smile creeping across her face. "I thought about it—that's for sure."

I laughed out loud. "You didn't just think about it; you attempted it several times, if I remember correctly."

"That was before I had decided to stay!" she hollered, pushing me so that I swayed to the side.

I grabbed her and pulled her closer. "Well, there's no getting rid of you now, is there?" I said, the teasing smirk on my face earning a chuckle from my mate before I pressed my lips to hers.

She hummed happily. "You're stuck with me, babe."

"I'll just have to suffer through it," I muttered against her lips, knowing well there would be little suffering in my life with her in it.

"Poor dear," she whispered back. She pushed away from me and stood from the bench, offering a sultry wink before walking toward Ginger. I watched as Emma looped her arm through Ginger's and talked happily with her as they walked toward the drinks.

Finally, my people were at peace.

I was at peace.

I was at peace.

And it was all because of a wild woman I found in the woods.