

Chapter 10

Calvin

"I'm not very good at this," I tell Dorothy as we approach the ballroom. "Actually, I'm terrible."

She giggles, her grip on my arm tightening a bit. "At dancing?"

"Yes," I tell her. "Well, all of it, really. This fancy royalty s**t. I've never been around it until recently."

"You're doing ne," she tries to reassure me as we reach the door. "You're sure about this?"

I nod and smirk. "I am. I won't leave here tomorrow until you've left with the guys from Lunar Falls to make sure you're safe."

"Thank you," she says with a smile] as we enter the room.

We go straight to the dance oor, looking like a complete mess. Dorothy is wearing all black, which seems to be the uniform for the Omegas tonight, while I'm still in my tux, tie undone and collar open.

"I'll try not to step on you," I tell her.

She giggles. "I can handle it."

We begin to dance, and I really try hard not to embarrass her more than is already happening because she's not supposed to be here. Still, she smiles at me.

"You seem nice," she tells me. "I hope that you're correct and Ada is your mate."

"How old is she?" I ask, knowing that I am entirely too old for her.

"She would have turned 19 recently," I feel a pang in my chest. "She won't care how old you are."

I offer her a sad smile and nod once. She will. She'd be crazy not to.

"You have the Alpha gene," she says, and I guess I look surprised because she giggles a little. "We can all feel your aura. Why don't you have a pack?"

I sigh, glancing around to make sure no one is close enough to hear me tell her about my father and how he was cast out. She nods, not judging me in any way but almost sympathetically.

"So you live at the palace?" she asks.

I shake my head. "No," I admit. "I don't actually have a home yet. I decided to nd my mate and gure it out after, though I don't think the palace is where I'd like to live."

She smiles and squeezes my hand gently. "I'm sure you'll nd the perfect place," she reassures me. "If Ada IS your mate, and things work out, I'd like to stay close to her."

"Of course," I tell her. "I wish I could have been close to my sister all those years."

"You can now," she shrugs.

"No," I tell her gently. "The palace isn't for me. Maybe I'll visit, but I don't think I could live there."

The song ends, and I feel uncomfortable as everyone stares at us. I'm sure Dorothy feels just as uncomfortable, so I continue to hold her hand and lead her to the door and outside.

"That should hopefully put them in their place a bit," I mutter, leaning against a cement rail.

"Doubtful," she smirks. "You haven't been to many packs, have you?"

I look at her in confusion. "No, not yet."

"Most of them are like this," she shrugs. "My father wasn't, but many that we visited were. I remember when I was a kid, we went to one pack and they were beating some omegas outside the packhouse."

"What?!" I ask, feeling anger rise inside me. Luna Grace got mad because a girl offered to take my empty glass. Would some Alpha's physically punish wolves for something so simple?

She nods at me. "What do you think is happening when you feel the bond?"

"I... I don't know," I admit. "I didn't even know what it was until last night. I've thought for a year that they are panic attacks."

She leans against the rail beside me. "I also carry the Alpha gene, you know? But no pack will let me come in and be anything but an Omega. There's too great of a chance of me trying to take their place, even as a shewolf. I'm sure that where Ada is, she's experiencing the same."

I sigh, shaking my head. I need to nd her.

"What's your plan if you nd her and she's not your mate?" Dorothy asks.

"Bring her to you," I explain.

She nods. "And if you nd your mate before you nd Ada?"

I pause. I hadn't considered that could be possible. "Peter will nd her. Depending on the situation with my mate, I'll help if I can. If not, I'll get Molly involved, but they WILL nd her."

"Promise?" she asks, blinking up at me with hope.

"Yes." Someone should have been searching for them all this time.

"Dorothy, you're needed back in the kitchen," Luna Grace says, a fake smile plastered on her face as she approaches us.

"No," I say, leaning forward and standing at my full height before Dorothy can move. "She doesn't work for you."

She looks at me, shocked at my words. "That is not for you to decide."

"She is leaving tomorrow," I remind her, not backing down.

"You need to learn your place," she hisses at me as Peter and Adrian join us.

"Grace," the Alpha admonishes, but she's not interested in anything he has to say.

She shakes her head, taking a step toward me. "They cannot take that girl."

"The King has approved it," Peter reminds her.

She crosses her arms, clearly unhappy. Why does she want her? It doesn't make sense. Is this all to make her work in an attempt to humiliate her?

"Then I suppose you don't have anywhere to live now," Grace says, looking at Dorothy behind me. "You can get out of the territory immediately."

Peter's jaw tenses, and I'm fairly sure he's struggling to contain his wolf as he turns to me. "Take the girl to get her things and go where we stayed last night."

I nod, but Grace speaks up. "She came to us with nothing. The clothes she is wearing belong to us."

"Fine," Dorothy says, stepping from behind me and pulls the shirt over her head.

I meet Peter's eyes, and he looks like he could murder the Luna, but he's glaring at the Alpha, who isn't doing anything to stop this.

Dorothy stands before us all, completely naked. "I don't want your shit."

I pull my jacket off and unbutton my shirt, removing it and wrapping it around her. I lead her back into the packhouse and gather my things before dragging them wordlessly to the SUV.

I'll stay tonight and bring the men from Lunar Falls in the morning. The Alpha is expecting you to cross, so you shouldn't have any issues.

Should I take her to the packhouse instead?

No. I don't want anyone else to know we've located her. I believe her brother is searching for her, and he is the one who led the uprising.

There's more to this situation than I realize, so I put her in the car, but I realize... I can't drive.

I... I can't drive.

I hadn't considered that. The territory line isn't far. Walk her over it, and I will have him send a car.

"I'm sorry," I tell her sheepishly, completely embarrassed by my shortcomings. "We are going to have to walk."

"I'm going to shift," she tells me, unbothered, as she hands my shirt back to me. "I don't have any shoes."

I nod and turn away from her as I grab my old, worn bag from the car. I pull out a worn pair of jeans, a T-shirt, and a sweatshirt and change while standing outside the packhouse. I put on my boots and nod to the dusty white wolf beside me, ensuring I have some clothes for her to put on before we begin our walk.

We walk a few miles when I feel the change in the territory around us. "We're safe," I tell her softly, and she continues to walk. "I'm real sorry. I... I never learned to drive. Peter is having the Alpha send a car, but he doesn't want it to get out that you're under his protection now. I'm honestly not sure what his plan is now."

The wolf doesn't respond. Obviously, it's a wolf, but she continues her walk, not seeming bothered by anything I've said. A car appears and pauses just before us, Alpha Chris climbing out of it.

"Come on," he says with a nod and wave. "I'm taking you to the border of Lunar Falls."

Dorothy shifts back, and I reach into the bag, handing her the shorts and T-shirt that are too big but the smallest I could nd for her. She pulls them on, and we both climb in the back seat. She shivers beside me, so I pull off the sweatshirt and hand it to her.

"I'll be safe there?" she asks, and I nod with a sad smile. As safe as she can be. "It's been so long since I've felt safe."

She pulls the sweatshirt over her head as Chris drives us and falls asleep, leaning over onto my arm. If she's felt this unsafe while in a pack, I can only imagine how Ada must feel.