

Chapter 11

Calvin

I gently lay Dorothy's head back against the headrest and climb out of the car, careful not to wake her.

"Back so soon," Rob jokes with me, but I just shake my head. "Come on, let's get back to the packhouse."

I nod, grab my bag, and toss it into the SUV before gently lifting Dorothy from the car. She doesn't stir.

"Is she wearing your clothes?" he asks, and I nod, not wanting to make any sound. "Lay her across the back."

Rob opens the door, and somehow, I get her into the SUV without waking her.

"She's out," he says.

I nod. "She said she hasn't felt safe in a long time."

He smiles sadly. That's the thing I've learned about Rob. He makes a lot of jokes, but when push comes to shove, he cares deeply about his pack and will do anything to protect it.

"The Luna told her she couldn't keep the clothes she wore since they gave them to her," I explain. "So she took them off right outside of a ball."

He smirks. "Brave girl. Peter said she's an Alpha's daughter?"

"Yeah, well, one who was ousted. I didn't get the whole story."

"I've been instructed to put her in the safe room until he arrives tomorrow. He said he has more questions and will either drive through the night or leave early in the morning."

I glance back at her, still sleeping soundly, nally safe. "I'll stay with her, just in case."

"I'll have a warrior come down in the morning. I'm going to teach you to drive."

"Probably for the best," I say with a smirk. "If it had just been me, I'd have tried it, but I didn't want to risk hurting her."

He tilts his head, glancing at me. "She's your mate?"

"No," I admit. "I think her sister is. She's missing."

He nods, not asking anymore, which I'm thankful for because I can't handle speaking anymore today.

When we arrive, I pull the backpack on and open the door, carefully lifting Dorothy into my arms. She snuggles into my chest, taking a deep breath as she sleeps. Rob leads us down to the safe room, where I lay her on a mattress on the ground and pull a blanket over her.

"You sure you want to stay here?" Rob asks.

"Yeah," I tell him, glancing at her over my shoulder. "I don't want her to wake up alone."

He pats my back, turning to leave. "I'll send some clothes for her down with breakfast in the morning."

"Thanks," I tell him, closing the door behind him and locking it.

I sit on the couch, nally taking a deep breath. I could feel my mate again as we arrived, but I don't want Dorothy to know. I don't want anyone else to. This one is lasting longer than some others have, which leads me to believe I'm feeling her physical pain and not just her fear. It's terrible.

It's happening again, and it's lasting longer.

I'll be there around ten tomorrow morning.

I take slow, deep breaths before moving to the bathroom to be sure my breathing doesn't wake Dorothy. I turn on the shower and step into the warm spray, letting it cascade around me. Leaning against the shower wall, I mentally reach inside, grab my aura, and push it toward her... I think. I try, anyway. When I'm about to stop because this is ridiculous, the feeling begins to lessen.

It worked. She can feel it. I reach in deep and push as much to her as I can. "I'm here," I say with it, not knowing if she can even hear it, but just in case. "I'm going to nd you."

It is working, Mace says with relief, pushing his aura through the icker of our bond for her wolf.

"We're going to nd you and bring you somewhere safe," I tell her softly.

I wake to the sound of movement and sit straight up to nd Dorothy tiptoeing to the bathroom.

"I'm so sorry," she whispers. "I was trying to nd the bathroom. I didn't mean to wake you."

I nod and point her in the right direction. "It's in there. They're sending some clothes for you with breakfast."

She nods and disappears as I sit up and quickly pull on my jeans and shirt before she returns. I don't want to make the girl uncomfortable, and while she has seemed unphased, stripping down in front of your Alpha and Luna because they won't let you take the clothes has to be humiliating.

"Have you felt her again?" she asks upon her return and sits at the other end of the couch.

"No."

Dorothy smiles at me sadly. "You're a terrible liar."

I sigh, looking down at my hands. "I didn't want you to worry. I DID feel her again, but I think I was able to help her, or at least comfort her some."

"Good," she says, her voice cracking. "I don't want her to think she's alone, and we've forgotten about her. Are you alright, Calvin?"

I pause. Am I? "I don't know," I nally admit. "I feel terrible that I didn't know what it was for so long. I just want to nd her, and I don't know how, but I swear that when I do, I'll kill anyone who hurt her."

Breakfast is sent down, as are Dorothy's promised clothes. As we sit at the small table and eat, my curiosity gets the better of me.

"What happened at your pack?" I blurt out, but she doesn't seem to mind. "I mean, why did you have to run? Why are you still hiding?"

She pushes some food around her plate, nally looking up at me. "My brother wanted to become Alpha," she says. "Unfortunately for him, I was born rst, and our father was planning to pass the pack to me."

I tilt my head. "I was away for a long time, but I didn't realize that the line of succession had changed," I say, but then I realize that Cora was born rst, but Andrew will inherit the throne, so it hasn't.

"My dad wasn't one to follow rules that didn't make sense to him," she shrugs. "He received approval from King Peter when I was a child and trained me to take over. Anthony was furious, but we weren't prepared for him to cause an uprising."

"We all ran," she says sadly. "Mom died, but Ada and Dad are... somewhere."

"And your brother is now the Alpha?" I say, shaking my head, but she smiles.

"Nope."

I furrow my brow at her, trying to gure out what else could have happened.

"Dad changed the line of succession, so when Dad ed, it removed him as Alpha, but since he's not dead and I had crossed the border rst, it transferred to me," she says with a mischievous smile. "Anthony is pretending to be the Alpha and lying to the packs outside Worm Moon, but it's me."

"Impressive," I say with a small laugh. "Didn't realize I was having breakfast with an actual Alpha today."

She shrugs. "It's cost me a lot. Probably more than it's worth. Most of the pack backed my brother. They don't want me."

I think back to the moment I saw her in the kitchen, how I was sure she was well trained, and I was right. She's small, but I have no doubt she can hold her own in a ght.

Dorothy clears her throat. "I'm going to go shower now," she says, rising and taking the clothes from Rob.

"I likely won't be here when you're done," I explain. "Alpha Robert is going to teach me to drive this morning."

She smiles kindly and disappears into the bathroom, leaving me with my breakfast and thoughts. I wonder which of them Ada believes should be Alpha, though I'm pretty sure it's Dorothy since she ran. Or... did she? Peter won't like it, but I think we should travel to the Worm Moon pack this afternoon.

Rob knocks on the door and takes me outside to the same SUV he picked me up in last night, tossing the keys to me.

"You really don't know how to drive?" he asks as we get in.

I shake my head. "Where would I have driven? You saw the house I was living in, and it was in the Rogue Lands. There aren't any roads out there."

He nods, leaning over to run through the basics of driving with me. It's a little intimidating, but once we begin moving, I nd it's not dicult.

"See, you could have done this last night," he tells me.

"I didn't know anything about drive and park and... I don't remember the others."

Rob laughs. "You'll never use them. Have Peter let you drive some while you travel."

Maybe I will, I think, taking a deep breath as I turn the wheel to point the car back toward the packhouse.