

The Luna He Left Behind

Chapter 4

The hum of the engine does nothing to drown out my thoughts.

Six years away, and somehow this drive back feels heavier than leaving ever did.

As we make our way to the pack house, I see the crowd has already gathered and the tension in my shoulders increases. I have been back in Black Wood for less than a minute, and the tension already has me on edge.

I slowly pull up to the pack house, and out of habit, my gaze sweeps over the crowd gathered on the lawn. And that is when I see her.

Sienna.

My hands tighten on the steering wheel before I can stop them.

She is standing just a few meters away, the sunlight catching her golden hair, her green dress hugging her figure perfectly. I swallow hard as her beauty hits me. I haven't seen her in six years, but she still manages to take my breath away.

I tear my gaze away from her, looking towards the little boy that she is holding. Her mate's son.

The words taste bitter in my mouth, and it still makes my stomach twist, and my heart clenches.

Don't look too long, Asher.

She is not yours. She never was.

I swallow hard, again, and force my eyes away from her, reminding myself that I have no right to look at her like that. No right to feel this hollow ache in my chest.

Not anymore.

Bianca's hand brushes my arm from the seat next to me, her rounded belly brushing against my elbow as she shifts, another sharp reminder that Sienna can never be mine.

"Hey, are you okay?"

Bianca's voice breaks into my thoughts. I glance over at her, and I see her studying me, one hand resting on her very pregnant stomach.

I force a small smile and nod my head.

“Yeah... I'm fine. I just have a lot on my mind, don't worry about me. Are you okay?”

She nods, and lets out a small chuckle.

“Aside from feeling like I’m smuggling a watermelon? Perfect.”

I let out a quiet laugh, using it as an excuse to push everything else down. Focus on her, on the baby. Not on the woman standing in the crowd with a child that is not mine.

I shut off the engine, step out of the car, and then...

Then it hits me.

Warm vanilla. Wild jasmine. The rain after a storm.

I don't even have to look to know who that scent belongs to.

I can still smell her beneath everything. Sienna... She is my fated mate.

It’s like a punch straight to the stomach. Every nerve in my body is pulling towards her. My instincts scream at me to turn around, to cross the distance between us, to take her face in my hands and never let her go again. My wolf surges forward, snarling and howling in my head as he starts clawing to get to her.

But I don’t give in. I steel myself, and I force the connection down, locking it in the deepest part of me, ignoring the way my chest burns from the effort.

Even though she is your fated mate, she belongs to someone else...

I quietly remind myself.

My jaw tightens as I round the car, still refusing to give in to the urge to glance back at her one more time.

Bianca is watching me with a soft, expectant smile when I reach her side.

I open the door for her.

“Careful.”

I murmur, offering my hand to help her out of the car. She takes it, and smiles up at me, completely unaware of the war raging inside my chest. As she steps out her free one instinctively cradles her belly, and once again I have to force myself to keep my gaze on her. I keep fighting the urge to look towards where I know Sienna is standing.

She is right there, close enough that if I just turned my head slightly, I could see her clearly.

But I don’t.

I can't.

Because if I do, I know I won't be able to stop myself.

The scent is still in the air, pulling at me like a tether but I focus on the excited hum of the crowd instead, and on the way Bianca's fingers tighten around mine.

Bianca squeezes my hand and I glance at her, giving her the smallest smile that I can manage, masking the war inside of me. I shut the door and the crowd begins descending on us.

The crowd is loud, people greeting me from all around us, voices calling my name.

Through the chaos around us I realize her scent hasn't come closer and I glance up despite myself.

My gaze immediately lands on her.

Sienna is still standing where she was before, but her smile is gone. She looks frozen in place, staring at me like I have ripped the ground out from under her.

Her arms tighten around the boy, pushing his head to her shoulder, and then, just like that, she turns around without hesitation.

She begins to quickly push through the crowd, the boy still in her arms. He is clinging to her, but he has lifted his head off of her shoulders. His eyes find mine and something in my chest shifts.

A woman I recognize as Ava, rushes after her, calling out her name, pulling my attention off of the boy.

Ava calls again but Sienna doesn't slow down.

Something in me lurches forward, every instinct inside of me telling me to run after her, to stop her, to explain, but my feet stay rooted to my spot.

My wolf growls low in my head.

'Go after her, you idiot! Claim her!'

He snarls, his voice angry and desperate and I grit my teeth.

'No. I can't. We both made our choices a long time ago. There is no going back, now. She belongs to someone else, she has his child, and we have Bianca and our baby to think of.'

I say coldly, before cutting our connection.

My jaw tightens as I watch her disappear, and for the first time in years... Since that day...

I feel like I can't breathe.

The crowd surges in, cutting off my view, but the image stays burned into my mind.

Sienna walking away from me without a word.

Taking her son.

And not looking back at me once.