

Chapter 5

Asher's Point of View

The greetings blur together. Too many faces, too many voices. I force a smile, shake hands, nod at words I don't actually hear, because my mind is still on her. On Sienna.

Bianca's hand in mine is the only thing tethering me to the moment. I introduce her, the words coming out automatically, practiced and hollow. The crowd coos over her belly, congratulates us, and offers us their well-wishes.

I give polite answers and smiles, before quickly excusing us both.

I can't do this right now.

I guide Bianca into the packhouse, up the stairs, and into one of the guest rooms.

"Finally."

She sighs happily, glad to be off of her feet, as I help her settle onto the bed.

I look down at her and she smiles at me. She looks glowing, and happy and it makes me heart clench with guilt.

I offer her a little smile press a soft kiss to her forehead.

"You get comfortable, and maybe take a nap. I will have your things send up and you can unpack when you are feeling up to it. I will be back in a little while." 1

I say softly and she nods, yawning, her hand sliding protectively over her stomach.

She doesn't question me, just happily settles into the covers and close her eyes. 1

I leave the room quietly, retreating to the sanctuary of my old room.

The door shuts behind me, muffling the noise from the hall and then the silence hits me.

I lean against the wall and close my eyes. I run a hand through my hair as the memories comes surging back, memories that I have buried for years.

Five years ago

"D, I just heard from Alice about Sienna. Why didn't you tell me your little doctor sister is off the market?"

Scott casually asks my Beta as he sits down at our table. I choke on my coffee, coughing as the words sink in.

"What are you talking about?"

I ask, looking between the two of them. Scott blinks surprised.

"You didn't know either? Seems he has been holding out on all of us. Sienna met her mate, and they are having a baby." 1

My world tilts sideways. My chest tightening making me feel like I can't breathe.



My chair scrapes violently against the floor as I shoved it back before it falls over and I stumble outside.

"Asher!"

I hear Derek's footsteps rushing after me. He touches my shoulder but I rip away from him.

"Why didn't you tell me?"

I ask, my voice raw as I spin around to face him.

His face crumples, and I see the guilt shadowing his eyes.

"I am so sorry, Asher. I only found out about last night when we came back. I wanted to tell you, I just... I didn't know how." 

I stare at him, but the words barely registered in my mind. Everything around me buzzes, my vision blurring.

"I have to go."

I say, shaking my head as I step away from him.

Before he can stop me, I have already shifted into my wolf, my claws tearing into the earth as I run, hoping to dull the pain.

I continue to run hard and fast, until my lungs burn and my muscles scream at me. I run until the pain in my chest dulls into numbness.

Now



This is a mistake... There has to be some kind of an explanation.

The room feels smaller than I remember. The walls press in, familiar and suffocating at the same time.

I drag a hand down my face, as I begin to pace across the floor of my room. My fists clenching and unclenching as I try to burn off the restless energy coursing through me.

My wolf is still prowling just beneath the surface, snarling at me, demanding that I go after her.

"There is no mistake. She is our mate. Always was. Always will be."

He growls, but that makes no sense to me.

Sienna had already met her mate. She'd had a child with him. That was what I was told, what I believed for years.

So how... how is it possible that the bond I felt between us, the moment I stepped out of that car was real?

Unless... unless something happened to him. Did she lose him? Did she suffer alone all this time, raising that boy without him? Maybe that is why she just ran away... Why she looked at me like I was the last thing she wanted to see...

Did she run away from me, because she doesn't want another mate?

My chest aches at the thought, and my wolf snarls, fury rippling through him, but I force the connection down, locking him away before he can break free.



I grit my teeth, dragging my hands through my hair, tugging at the roots as if pain might help me focus. But nothing works.

Six years. Six years I buried her in the farthest corner of my heart, convinced she belonged to someone else. Convinced I had no right to her.

I slam my fist against the wall, the sharp sting grounding me.

No, whatever the reason this bond exists between us, it doesn't matter. It can't matter.

We both made our choices. I have Bianca and our baby to focus on. That is my life now. That is where my loyalty lies.

But no matter how many times I repeat those words to myself, no matter how hard I try to believe them, the image stays burned in my mind.

Sienna's eyes, wide and shattered when she saw Bianca. The way her arms tightened around the boy.

The boy...

I let out a shaky breath, closing my eyes again.

There was something in him. Something in his gaze when it briefly locked with mine.

Something about those brown eyes felt familiar. Too familiar. Something deep inside of me twists again.

I shake my head hard. No. Don't go there. Don't torture yourself more



than you already have.

I press the heels of my palms into my eyes.

"You can't have her. You can't think of her. You can't..."

The words are shaky, hollow. I don't even believe them.

I whisper harshly to myself. The words come out shaky, and hollow.
And even as I say them, I don't believe them.

Because no matter how hard I try to lock it away, my wolf is still there,
pacing inside of me, whispering that she is ours. That she always
has been.