

Chapter Eight

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Alpha Quinn Danvers

I wiped the sweat from my brow as I slowed to a walk, my breath blowing out so heavily that I was sure the entire Pack would hear me. The hot sticky night air making it harder to catch my breath. I pulled my shirt o , practically having to peel it away from the sweaty skin, before using it to wipe my face. I grimaced at the ripe smell of my own perspiration.

"Out for a run again, Quinn?" a voice called out to me. I mentally groaned, wondering if I could feign deafness and start running again. But I reminded myself – as I always did when I had the urge to run away from Anna – that I was an Alpha and I needed to conduct myself as such.

So, I plastered on a smile I rehearsed well. It was my 'I'm a kind Alpha but I am also busy and do not have the time to speak to you' smile. "Anna, how are you?" I asked. Anna Yelgin was a forty-two-year-old woman whose husband had died five years back, and since then she'd been on 'Cougar Patrol' as Ken called it. Anna had made it very clear that she was interested in me, in more than a friend and Alpha, who was happy to give me the heir and love that I wanted.

Diana always told me to go for it, that it was unlikely that I was every going to find a woman who was actually single and willing to have my child within the Werewolf community. And, as she always reminded me, Anna was pretty – tight firm body, short blonde hair and smooth youthful skin. She may have been almost a decade older than me, but she looked younger.

And, maybe, I should have taken her o er. But, I felt if I did that I would be settling. I didn't look at Anna and get butterflies, my heart didn't skip a beat when she smiled at me. Perhaps I was too old for that, but I couldn't help but want for that. And it put me o slightly that Ken always thought of her as a Cougar.

"I'm good thank you, Quinn. I just finished dropping the twins o at school" she grinned at me. Her twin boys were almost sixteen and they were good kids, but I had never imagined being a step-father. "You out running again?"

"Yep, just a nice way to wake myself up" I lied smoothly. Since I was rejected by Ruth I spent most of my free time working out to both distract myself and get rid of excess energy. Anna opened her mouth to speak to me some more, but before she did I noticed a familiar shock of bright red hair.

I turned my back to Anna instantly to look over to the edge of the forest where I saw Ruth. She had a du le bag over her shoulder as she scurried through the woodland towards her cottage. Her cheeks were flushed as she pushed forward, small loose strands of blazing hair were highlighting her face.

As if she felt my stair she looked up, meeting my eyes, before practically skidding to a stop. Her bag was obviously heavy as she lost her footing and stumbled to right herself. Forgetting Anna, I rushed over to her side and steadied her.

"Thank you" she whispered, voice angelic and sweet.

"Welcome back" I smiled, relief that she had returned from her visit to Black Bloods Pack obvious.

"It's good to be back" she nodded. She looked down at her feet, before taking a deep breath and looked back up at me. Her beautiful emerald eyes sparkled at me, unshed tears obvious, as she opened her mouth to speak.

"Oh, Eden, have you been away?" Anna cut in, moving closer to us and cutting o whatever Ruth was about to say. I bit my tongue in anger for cutting o whatever Ruth was building up to saying to me.

"Just visiting my old Pack..." she trailed o giving the older woman a blank stare.

"Anna" she prompted.

"Right, Anna, of course" Ruth smiled. She took a large step back and readjusted her bag. "Well, I'll see you all later". She moved away, walking towards the Pack village, before pausing – rocking on her heels – and turning back to us quickly. "Quinn, I need to speak to you".

My heart skipped a beat in excitement, but I tried to keep up a poker face. "Of course. What is wrong?"

She glanced at my half-dressed appearance, then at Anna, before back to me once more. "Why don't I come to your o ice later? It's a delicate matter and I would like to discuss it in private".

"Oh, yes, sure" I nodded, too eagerly. "Just come by anytime. I'll be waiting...I mean I'm not busy...I'll be there". I was rambling, but I couldn't help it – that would always be the di erence between Anna and Ruth. With Anna I had friendship, with Ruth I got butterflies.

"Okay" she nodded, before turning and walking away. I think Anna said something else to me, and I replied, but I couldn't tell you what we'd spoken about. I managed to escape, or maybe I just walked away, I can't quite remember what happened. But, I quickly raced back home to get showered and dressed.

Ken was waiting inside my o ice, when I got there, with a file of work. "I'm busy, I'll get to it later" I announced before he'd even spoken. He raised an eyebrow at me in confusion as I rushed inside like a madman.

"What's up with you, man?" he asked, laughing as I straightened my messy desk pointlessly.

"Nothing. Like I said, I'll get to that file later. Could you work on something else for now" I muttered dismissively. Ken watched me closely for a moment, assessing, before heading over to the door to leave. As he opened the door, he came face-to-face with Ruth whose hand was raised in a knock. "Ruth, come in, come in" I rambled, rushing past Ken to move him out the way.

"If you're busy I can come back" she muttered, eyes cast away from me.

"No, no, it's fine" I said quickly – sounding like the most desperate man in the universe. I turned to Ken and gave him a look that said; 'go away'. And, luckily, Ken had been my best friend was since I was a kid, so he knew every one of my looks. He quickly disappeared.

I directed Ruth over to the couch, before shutting the door and sitting down next to her. I could see that her hands were shaking and her heart rate was soaring. "How was your trip, darlin'?" I asked her.

She opened her mouth, paused, before speaking. "It was alright...I was visiting Abel's grave". There was a long pause, as I felt like the worst guy in the world. I had been jealous and anxious that Ruth was running back to her mate, when in reality she was visiting her son's graveside.

"I'm sorry. How are you feeling?"

"I don't want to talk about Abel right now" she shrugged. "When I was away I was sick and it took me a while to realise why". She was silent for a long while, I was not sure where she was going.

"I...fuck...Quinn, I'm pregnant".

Her green eyes shone up at me and nothing came out of my mouth. The world froze for a moment as I looked at her – the beautiful fiery haired pixie – as I processed her words. Pregnant. She was going to have my baby. Ruth Eden Glass was going to have my baby.

I'd always wanted to be a father and I'd never kept that a secret. The idea of having a child of my own, someone who I helped make, someone who would love me unconditionally. And the fact that it was Ruth who was pregnant with my baby as well, just made it so much better.

A noise came out of my mouth, something like a yell and a cry of pure happiness. I grabbed her shoulders and hugged her so tightly she squeaked. Pulling back, my eyes blurring with unshed tears, I grinned at her. I thought the chance of being a father died when my mate did.

I felt something I had not felt since my mate had died. I felt hope. Hope for the future.

"You're pregnant? We're going to have a baby?" I squealed out.

"Yeah" she breathed out. I couldn't work out how she felt about it – I imagined that she wasn't sure herself. But I knew how I felt; happy and hopeful. She needed more hopeful than I'd ever been.

"You need to see a doctor" I blurted out, jumping to my feet. Ruth blinked in shock as she watched me stalk over to my o ice phone. I picked it up and dialled the Pack doctor quickly. "Jack, I need you to see Ruth and I immediately. I'm bringing her to the practice now".

"Ruth? Oh, you mean Eden Glass?"

"Yes, we're coming down now" I replied, before hanging up. Walking over, in a manic mood, I pulled her to her feet. "Come on, we need to get a check-up. Then we need to make plans. We'll move your stu into my house, we can get married and get things we need for the baby. We need to decide if we want to know the sex. I mean, I understand that some people don't want to know, but in order to buy things and decorate a nursery we should find out. Not to mention we need to--"

"Stop" Ruth yelled, cutting me o . A single tear spilled over his cheeks and she wiped it away angrily. "Quinn, I haven't changed my mind. I can't be with you. Just because I'm pregnant, it doesn't mean that I'm going to suddenly marry you and spend my life with you".

"But...but...we're having a baby" I stuttered out, blinking slowly in shock.

"I know. But, let's just start out with the doctors check-up and then we can have lunch and discuss things from there".

She sounded so practical and sensible that it calmed me down. She was right, we needed to take things slowly. There was only one important thing.

I was going to be a father...and Ruth was going to be the mother.