

Chapter 19 Moonlight Manners

Kelsey

It was like I had been hit by a freight train, uncontrollable emotions vengefully spewing through me. Amongst the soft glow of the burning fire nearby, I noticed all the little things about Blake that made my heart throb. The things that I had spent years trying to scorch from my memory. His soft raven hair framed his face effortlessly, his crystal blue eyes that I easily got lost in, his sharp jawline that I longed to hold against the palm of my hand, and... that laugh. That laugh that still manages to echo in my brain even when I’m miles apart from him.

“I should go, it’s getting late”, I shoot out feeling the sting of water building behind my eyes.

It didn’t matter how hard I tried, my stubborn eyes still deceived me and crept over to Blake’s. It felt like two magnets being pulled apart, neither of us wanting the moment to end. It was the first time I had noticed something different swirling in his crystal blue eyes. I noticed sadness, grief and above all, anger.

My wolf howled as I tore myself away from Alpha Blake, nearly bursting my eardrums with each step further from him as Leila cried out loud. I wondered how the Moon Goddess could have been so cruel, dangling a mate that rejected the bond in front of me like this. It didn’t matter how much I desperately wanted to hate him, this tug and pull between us was becoming too much.

As the scent of butterscotch misted with sandalwood became fainter with each stride that I forced away from Blake, my mind began to reel. A thick fog was clouding my mind and making it difficult to think about anything but my mate.

I contemplated shifting into my wolf and going for a run, a usual tactic that seemed to soothe my soul. Instead, I let my legs carry me wherever they might. I looked up at the full moon above, shining brightly down on my face until I realized that my heart had brought me out to the same pier that I hadn’t dared to step foot on for years. A place that held so many memories.

A chilling breeze sifted across my skin as I sat down on the edge of the dock and let my legs hang off the side. There was a strange comfort; being here in a familiar place, a place where I still remember the sting of my heart piercing into pieces.

I had gotten lost in time, staring down at the moon’s brightly lit reflection against the calm water. My mind was blank, my soul at peace. I wondered if the beer had finally gotten hold of me when I noticed a familiar figure standing behind me.

“How did I know I would find you here?”, a low, husky voice says that sent a shiver up my spine. A voice that literally haunts me in my dreams.

I struggle to keep myself composed, squaring off my shoulders and sitting up just a little bit straighter. Feeling the pull of the mate bond, I decide to fight it and continue staring into the water. “Old habits die hard, I guess,” heaving a defeated sigh from my chest.

It felt as if my wolf was doing backflips inside my stomach, “mate! Mate came to find us!”, she cheered. “Yeah, this is one of my favorite places in the Blackclaw too. Sometimes I come out here and I swear I can hear your voice.”

Butterscotch bubbled in the air as Blake crouched down beside me and draped a black fleece blanket over my shoulders. He slid his legs over the edge, taking a seat dangerously close to me. I felt his shoulder bump into mine, sparks igniting all over my skin. I felt a prick glaze across my eyes again making me close my eyes and take a deep breath.

“I thought you said you were going home?”, he asked with a chuckle, feeling his eyes burn into the side of my face.

I pressed my lips together as my eyes fluttered open, fighting the pull that was calling out to me to look at him. “I was going too, but there’s something about being home. I want to cherish these moments I guess. Not many piers I can escape to in Arizona,” I confessed.

I felt his body tense as the words rolled off my lips. “Home, huh? Nice to know that you still think of Blackclaw as home,” he replied with a smirk.

“Blackclaw will forever be my home. I was born here, grew up here. But, I won’t deny that Arizona has grown on me,” I said, struggling to trifle my giggle.

I saw through the water’s reflection that a smile filled with pride now beamed across his chiseled face. “My dad’s told me you’ve been doing some pretty big things out in the city. I always knew you would Kels.” His voice sounded small, filled with regret almost.

“Yup”, I said as I popped the p. A silence settled between us as we sat staring into the calm tides of the water. There wasn’t much more that needed to be said, it was one of those moments when you could just feel the air thickening around you.

“Hey, I want to show you something,” he finally shot out after a moment of silence between the two of us. His hand slid to my hand under the blanket. That touch causing sparks to dance across my skin again.

My wolf howled inside, again with that goddamn shrieking I thought. “Sorry Alpha, it’s late. I should actually head home, for real, this time,” I retorted in an icy voice and pulled my hand away from his. “Next time,” I said with a smile as I turned to look at him but I was sure he could hear the regret laced in my voice.

I was certain that time had stopped around me, his eyes locked with mine and making my mind go fuzzy. Those crystal blue eyes pulled me in, nearly knocking the air from my chest like they were reading every single thought engraved inside of me. I wasn’t sure how long we had spent like that, both of us fighting to rip apart.

“Come on Kels, just give me five minutes,” he pled, still maintaining this unbreakable hold over me. The harder I tugged to look away, the harder it became. “Don’t make me throw you over my shoulder, you know I will,” he said in a low voice as he wrapped his arms around my waist.

I closed my eyes tightly, racking my brain for any bit of common sense. Finally, I opened them and heaved a sigh, “you’ve got five minutes. Make it good.” I stood up, folding the blanket and passing it back to Alpha Blake. “Only because you came to the rescue with a blanket,” I teased.