CHAPTER SEVEN

"Sarah!"

My father wraps me in his arms when I throw myself at him, sobbing, "Dad!"

His familiar scent wraps around me and my knees turn weak. But my strong, dependable father holds up my weight, "Baby. Sarah, are you hurt? Are you okay?"

Then I find myself being yanked back, out of his hold, before I can respond and Lucas

shoves me behind him, snarling fiercely.

"Lucas?" At first my father sounds confused and then his voice holds traces of anger. "Let my daughter go! She didn't do anything wrong!"

"No, Dad. Lucas, let me talk to him!"

But Lucas doesn't seem to be listening to me and I feel his aggression within me, our bond turning hot with anger and possessiveness.

"It's my father!" I scream when I realize that he's going to attack my dad. "You can't!"

I push him and when he turns to me with a snarl, his teeth bared in warning, I feel a hint of fear and my wolf suddenly whimpers in confusion and terror.

It's my reaction that has the wolf in Lucas's eyes fading.

"I wasn't —" His expression is dark. "Don't touch other men."

My voice is unsteady, "I'm – He's my father."

Lucas's voice is a scratchy growl, not quite his normal voice, "It's driving me – Till you have the mating mark, I can't handle other males touching you."

My father's voice is wary, "Mating mark? What are you talking about? What is he talking about, Sarah?!"

I take a step towards my father and then Lucas grabs me by the waist, pulling me into his

chest, my back pressed against it, "This distance is fine."

I grind my teeth, both furious and upset but considering that Lucas is the pack hunter, I don't

want him to hurt my father so I choose to stay still.

"I – Lucas and I are true mates."

accidentally bonded with him."

My father turns white as a sheet. I had expected disbelief but not the fear in his eyes as he whispers, "No. How is that – You bonded with my daughter?!"

I can see his skin ripple and I raise my voice, "It was my fault, Dad! Lucas didn't know. I

I can see my father struggle and then his expression turns distraught, "I thought you were

dead, Sarah. I thought – Hunter, he said – I didn't believe him. Even Valerie –"

I can see the tears in my father's eyes and my heart breaks.

"Lucas, please," I whisper, my voice thick. "Let me go to him."

I can feel his arm flex around my waist and then he murmurs, "Wait."

He lowers his mouth to my neck and I hear. My father say something but nothing registers on me as my vision turns white for a moment when Lucas's teeth sink into my neck in a bite that doesn't quite break my skin.

And then he's letting me go and I stumble forward. My father catches me, holding me tightly, and glaring at Lucas, "You marked her!"

"It's temporary," Lucas growls at him. "I've not given her the mating mark yet. This is just so that I don't lose control of my instincts when you touch her."

"Dad, it's fine," I say, shakily, wrapping my arms around him in a hug. "I miss you so much. I never thought I'd see you again. How did you find me?"

Lucas glances at us and he looks relatively calmer, "Let's head back home. Safer there."

Safer from what?

I was vague."

He looks at my father and this time there's no hint of his previous anger, "where are you followed?"

His voice is grim and filled with a fury that I have seldom heard.

My father studies him and then shakes his head, "They think she's dead."

My heart nearly stops and I look at Lucas, "You told Hunter I was dead?"

How did Hunter even believe that? The Alpha bond allows the Alpha to know whether the pack members are alive or not.

"I didn't tell him you were dead. His little bitch tried to get me to say it a couple of times but

We go back to the treehouse, my father's arm over my shoulders the whole time, as if he can't bear to not touch me. I have been starved of affection since I was exiled from the pack. So I soak it in and my wolf rumbles happily, grateful for the contact.

on any details."

"I want to know what happened," My father finally asks when we reach. "And don't skip out

the same time he has a strange look in his eyes.

I recount everything that happened and by the end of it my father looks curious. However, at

"Wolfsbane," He murmurs. "Where would Valerie get a hold of it?"

I stare at him, "So, you believe me?"

He gives me a hard look, "Of course I do. I raised you. I didn't expect this from Valerie. I also didn't expect that Hunter would banish you from the pack so abruptly."

"I wanted to come and talk to you, at least say some sort of goodbye-"

"Your mother and I were called into an emergency meeting, out of nowhere, as soon as you left," My father says, heavily. "There was nothing important in that meeting but they

meeting was adjourned. You had already been forced out by that time."

"Why would they-?"

"I went looking for you as soon as the meeting ended and I saw Valerie in Hunter's arms.

When she saw me, she burst into tears and started telling me this insane story. It was all very

wouldn't let us leave, coming up with excuses. It was only when someone came in that the

convenient. When I demanded to see you, Hunter refused, saying you had been banished."

I frown, feeling confused, "I don't understand."

left for the Luna."

"It was all planned, Sarah. Hunter was planning to exile you from the pack before you even