

~CARTER~

I groan and cover my face with my hands.

f\*\*k.

My heart hurt more than my body did. Why was it in so much pain?

There was something that I should remember but what was it?

Scarlett.

My eyes widened and I jolted awake.

I pick myself off the bed as the reminder of everything hit me harder than anything ever did in the past.

My wife.

My baby.

They were both missing.

No.

I grab my phone off the counter and storm out of my room. I wince when I feel dizziness and pain hit me all at once. I ignore it and race down the stairs. I searched the entire house until I found my family members in the family room with the last people I expected to see them with.

The Fawns.

They were all here.

What the f\*\*k?

What were they doing here? We didn't get along, not even in the slightest. However, I knew Scarlett and Clara were friends with their wives.

I look at Alaric, waiting for an explanation or an update. Anything at all.

"Scarlett?" I whisper. "Why is everyone just sitting here? Where is my wife? Do we know who took her yet?"

Alaric looks ashamed, and he can barely look me in the eyes. I knew the answer even before anyone could say anything. They didn't have any news on her. She was still missing. They were both still missing.

How long have I been asleep for?

What the f\*\*k was wrong with me? How could I rest while my wife was in danger? What kind of a man was I?

I felt sick to my stomach. I've never been more disappointed in myself than I am now.

"We've been doing the best we can, son." My father informs me. "But so far, we don't know who took her. We've been trying. Someone messed with the cameras, and the kidnapper left no hints behind. We don't know why anyone would want to hurt Scarlett. We're trying to figure it out but we keep coming up to a dead end."

"I'm sorry." Alaric apologizes to me. "I should have found her for you by now."

No.

f\*\*k no.

Tell me this was just a nightmare. I don't want this to be real.

My hands tighten around my phone.

I turn to leave when Alaric places a hand on my shoulder, "where are you going?"

"To find my wife," I growl. "I'm going to find out who did this and make him pay."

"You can't just roam around town looking for her, Carter. You'll never find her that way. We must act logically and can't do this without you here." He tried to speak calmly, but his tone was still rough.

I close my eyes and open my phone, hoping that someone would have seen something that could help us.

My eyes zero in on a message from an unknown sender.

The second I read it, everything inside of me goes entirely still.

I freeze.

Unable to move for a few seconds.

'Someone named Joshua kidnapped me. He blames Apollo for his sister's death. I love you, Carter.'

My heart squeezes at those last four words.

"What's wrong?" Ares asks. "Did you see something?"

"Apollo," I growl. "Joshua. He's the one behind this."

Everyone stiffens at the mention of his name.

"Joshua?" my mother gasps. "You can't mean. . ."

I point the phone at them. "We don't have time. We know who we are looking for now."

I knew that there were many questions, but I didn't have any time. It could be a trap, but I was willing to take the risk for Scarlett.

"I know where he lives," Apollo shouts. "You can follow me."

He jumps into his truck, and I jump into mine. Alaric and Clara got in right behind me.

The second that we hit the road, I could feel the adrenaline kick in.

I mashed the accelerator as far as the peddle could go.

I'm coming, Scarlett.

I'm coming.

. . . . .

~SCARLETT~

"Where are you taking me?" I demand as 'my mate' shoves me into his jeep.

He doesn't answer me; he hasn't said anything since he called me his mate earlier.

"Should we be taking her home, Wilder?" One of the hybrids asks.

Wilder?

Was that his name?

Wilder doesn't answer him either.

"He doesn't want to f\*\*\*\*\*g talk Dash." The only one with red hair says.

"Please," I whisper. "I have a husband. I want to get back to him. His name is Carter Prince. I know he must be searching everywhere for me. Please return me to him. I want to go home."

Wilder's hands tighten on the steering wheel at my words, and my heart aches. It was the mate bond; when he felt pain, I could feel it, also.

I dug my nails into my legs. I didn't want to feel any pain for him. I didn't love him. I only loved Carter.

"How can you say that?" The red hair hybrid asks me. "He's your mate. How dare you mention another man's name in front of him?"

"Shut your f\*\*\*\*\*g mouth, Fox," Wilder growls.

I jump at his cold tone.

"Great, now you scared her." Dash sighs. "If you want her to accept you, I wouldn't use that tone around her."

Wilder glances at me, and I quickly look away.

I didn't care who he was. I didn't care that he was my mate. Still, whenever I felt his pain, I felt like I was betraying Carter.

"Jagger is unusually quiet." Fox points out. "Don't you have anything to say?"

"I told you to leave her there." Jagger growls. "She's already taken."

He's the only one that seemed to agree with me. Everyone else wanted to force me to accept Wilder, it was something I knew would never happen.

"She's mine," Wilder growls. "No one is f\*\*\*\*\*g taking her from me. She's not taken. I haven't claimed her yet but soon I will."