~CARTER~

"I'm going for a run," I tell Alaric.

I couldn't rest peacefully knowing that Scarlertt was with her mate. It's been on my mind since my brother broke the news to me. It was hard for me to stomach. I didn't want to believe that it was true.

I know my heart wouldn't be able to take it if she fell in love with someone else.

I'd rather die than watch Scarlett love another man. She's everything to me, and I couldn't lose her. I promised her that if she ever found her mate, I would ght till my death for her, and I intended to keep that promise. She was my woman; no one else could take her from me.

"Please don't do anything stupid." Alaric pleads with me. "I would hate for something to happen to you out there. Scarlett needs you alive."

"I need the fresh air, Alaric," I explain. "I won't be gone for long. If anything changes, let me know immediately."

He nods, "Don't go too far."

I don't wait for him to say anything else as I race out of the house and shift into my wolf. Within seconds, I'm running through the forest with no destination in sight.

I was hoping to pick up on Scarlett's scent. I was hoping for a bloody miracle at this point. The more time she spent with her mate, the faster she would fall in love with him.

I felt like I was helpless. I couldn't do anything until I knew where she was located.

I'd done some digging up on the Cage family, and they were just as dangerous as I was told, maybe even a little more. I wouldn't want Scarlett living amongst people like that, even if one of them were her mate.

She wouldn't be safe there. She wouldn't be treated like the princess she was.

My wolf pauses as memories of her ash before our minds. I missed her like crazy.

How did my life turn into this f*****g mess? It was already horrible because of the curse, but I didn't think it could worsen until now.

Everything felt like torture now that Scarlett was no longer by my side.

My wolf lifts his head back and howls in pain. I'd never heard his cry like this before; it was new. It almost sounded like a wolf who'd just lost his mate.

.....

I was struggling without her presence, and he must have felt it, also. He was in pain, just like I was.

~SCARLETT~

~SCARLETT

It was my second day with the Cage family; I hadn't slept last night. My mind was racing with so many thoughts.

"Did you sleep well?" Elsa asks me as she hands me a dress. "You can take a shower and change into this. You'll feel much more comfortable."

I take the dress from her hand as I say, "I couldn't sleep."

"It will get easier, I promise." She tells me.

After getting dressed, Elsa guided me into one of the rooms where the rest of her siblings were seated. They were probably about to have breakfast.

After I get seated, multiple maids walk over and offer everyone food. I refuse each time they pass by me.

them and was asking questions about our location."

person looking for us. It's multiple people."

I didn't think I could eat again until I returned to Carter.

"I think some people have been trying to get information on us." I hear Dash say to Wilder suddenly.

My heart skips a beat at his words. Was it Carter? There was a high possibility that it was him.

"Why do you think that?" Wilder asks him. "Did you hear something?"

Wilder stiffens, "Did they describe the person?"

He shook his head, "I can't say for sure. There are mixed descriptions. I think it's safe to say that it isn't just one

He nods, "I've gotten multiple reports. A few men approached me this morning and said that someone approached

Wilder sighs, "As long as they don't come close to our home and family, I wouldn't worry much about it."

My eyes narrow as I glare at him. He could try to keep me here, but as long as Carter was alive, I would

Dash looks at me, "do you think it's her family looking for her? Possibly her husband?"

Wilder's hands tightened into sts, "he can look for her all he wants. He's never getting her back."

you do, I want to see every detail about him. I want to know exactly what his weaknesses are."

him.

"I want more information on Carter Prince," Wilder says suddenly. "Find out everything you can about him, and when

ght to escape

"No!" I shout. "Leave Carter out of this. He has nothing to do with any of you."

Wilder looks agitated, "he should have thought about that before he started snooping around my family."

"He wouldn't need to do it if you'd just let me go!" I snap at him. "Let me go, damn it! I do not want to be here!"

"Let's all calm down," Elena says as she rushes to my side. "We're not even sure that her husband has been snooping

"Who else could it be?" Dash asks. "This only happened after we took her from Joshua's residence. It has to be Carter or at least her family."

I could feel my ngers begin to shake uncontrollably.

I was losing my mind. I was terri ed that these people would do something horrible to Carter.

I couldn't let it happen.

I bit down on my lip hard.

"If you lay a single on him, if you hurt any part of his body," I say low and dangerously. "I would never forgive you. I would never forgive you for hurting him."

around. Let's not jump to any conclusions just yet."

Wilder looks away from my glare. He slams his st against the table before him and storms out of the room.

I fell back against the chair with tears in my eyes. They were going after him, and I wouldn't be able to stop it.

I couldn't.

I meant every single one of those words.