

Two Years Gone Novel

Chapter 26

ELLA

I stretched and rolled over in bed, savoring the warmth and comfort for a few more minutes while Zane showered.

The bathroom door opened, and I opened my eyes to see the beautiful man standing in front of me: tall, muscular, chiseled, and damn hot.

I could feel my face blush as I gazed at him and the few glistening droplets of water gliding down his broad chest and arms.

“Like what you see, huh?” Zane smirked.

I met his eyes and hummed.

“No, I was just, uh...”

I trailed off when he walked out of the room and dropped his towel, revealing his sculpted backside.

“Oh my gosh,” I gasped, quickly averting my eyes away as my wolf just about screamed.

I made my way into the bathroom and took a shower, trying to calm my racing heart and my body’s involuntary arousal.

I shut my eyes as the water ran over me, hoping my heart would catch up with my head as I mumbled to myself, “This won’t last. One day he’ll wake up and realize you’re still an omega.”

My wolf whined and I took a deep breath and stepped out of the shower.

There’s nothing wrong with having a little fun until that happens, though. I smirked and decided to get him back for the teasing, wrapping myself in a towel before walking out of the bathroom.

Zane was sitting on a chair putting his shoes on. He looked up and his eyes widened. I gave him a small smile before making my way to the closet to get dressed.

As I turned back before closing the door, I began to take the towel off so that he just barely got a peek at my side. His eyes went dark. I smirked and quickly shut the door.

I stepped out in a pair of cropped skinny jeans and a light pullover and carried my Converse to the chair Zane had been sitting in to put them on.

I looked around the room and wondered where he had gone before going back to the bathroom to do my hair and put on some light makeup.

I made my way downstairs to help with breakfast before we left. It didn't feel right, making everyone else work.

Zane sat at the island, his eyes wandering over my body.

"So, what are we doing today?" I asked as I turned to him.

"What would you like to do?"

I shrugged.

"You asked me. I assumed you had a plan."

Zane smiled at me.

"Well then, I guess it'll be a surprise."

"That's code for he has nothing planned," my mother teased as she sat down next to Zane.

I laughed and looked at Zane with a smirk.

"So, you invited me to spend the day with you but didn't actually know what you were doing?"

He shrugged, shoving a bite of food in his mouth to keep from answering.

After breakfast, Zane told me to grab a coat and meet him outside.

Zane climbed onto the seat of an ATV and patted the seat behind him. I looked at him hesitantly before climbing on.

"Where are we going?" I asked as he took my hands and wrapped them around his waist.

"I'm kidnapping you; couldn't you tell?" he smirked, sarcasm dripping off his words. I rolled my eyes.

“Hold on tight.” The vehicle took off with a jerk, and I let out a soft squeal as we made our way around the house and to the back.

We rode through the open plains and trees, and I loved the beauty of our home.

Once in a while, Zane would speed up and I would tighten my grip on him and dig my face into his back. After he had done it a few times, I knew he was doing it on purpose, which made me laugh.

We rode until we came to the edge of the pack boundary to the west. My eyes widened as I looked at the beauty of the cliffs in front of me and the ocean past them.

“Zane, it’s...” I had lost all words. I climbed off the back of the ATV and walked toward the edge. Zane grabbed something from the back of the ATV and made his way over to me.

I stood there for a long time breathing in the cold, salty air and feeling the wind push against my body and blow through my hair.

I turned around, my cheeks pink from the cold air, to see Zane sitting on a blanket on the ground. I smiled and sat beside him.

“You like it?” he asked.

“Zane, it’s one of the most beautiful things I’ve ever seen.” I looked back out over the cliffs and smiled. Zane turned and pulled out a basket from next to the ATV.

“Lunch?” he offered as he opened the basket. I nodded my head and sat up straighter to try and see into the basket. Zane turned away with a “tsk” before pulling out what he had brought.

Wine, roast beef, bread, cheese, fruit. This man definitely knew how to be romantic, that was for certain. My wolf shivered with desire, and it was hard not to give in.

We enjoyed our food and time spent talking and looking out over the cliffs. It was calming and I closed my eyes, my head falling back as I felt the sun on my face.

I opened them to see Zane staring at me with warmth in his eyes. Screw it, I thought to myself and before I knew what my body was doing, I leaned in and kissed him.

Chapter 27

ZANE

When Ella's lips touched mine, it sent sparks through my whole body. Her kiss was gentle, and the taste of her lips was enough for my wolf to go crazy. Enough for me to go crazy.

I raised my hand to her face, cupping her cheek and pulling her face closer. She responded and knotted her fingers in my hair.

My desire pushed through to the surface, and I kissed her more passionately, my tongue tasting hers as we explored each other's mouths.

I grabbed her hips and pulled her body above mine, her hips straddling me as we dove deeper into our kiss.

My hands ran down her back, resting on her hips as she sat above me with her arms around my neck.

My lips traveled away from hers, kissing and nipping at her jawline, down her neck to the spot between her neck and shoulder where I should have marked her.

I kissed her there, and she let out a soft moan before my lips came crashing down on hers again. We continued kissing feverishly until we stopped to catch our breath.

Ella sat back down on the blanket, leaning against my shoulder. I kissed the top of her head and looked out over the cliffs.

"I'm glad you're here," I said quietly.

"I'm glad I'm here too." She smiled up at me before her expression changed.

"Zane?"

"Hmm?" I responded, looking at the water.

"What is this?"

My head snapped down to look at her.

"What do you mean?"

"What is this?" She motioned between us, and I understood.

I sighed.

"Ella, you know what this is."

"I don't, Zane. I can't get rid of this knot in my stomach, thinking you'll wake up one day and realize I'm just an omega. I need you to tell me what's going on."

I scowled.

"Ella, I'm not going to reject you."

She looked up at me with sadness and quickly lowered her head.

"You already did..."

I immediately regretted what I said and let out a frustrated sigh.

"We should probably head back."

Ella nodded and turned to place everything back in the basket. She picked it up and placed it on the rack on the back of the ATV.

I ran my hand through my hair, irritated that our perfect day had just been ruined by two stupid comments.

I stood and folded the blanket, placing it on the rack next to the basket, and climbed on. Ella took one last look at the cliffs before climbing on and wrapping her arms around me.

I drove us back to the packhouse. When we arrived, I stepped off the ATV and walked up to the house without speaking a word to Ella. I was angry and needed a moment. But I wasn't about to get it.

"Zane?" Ella opened the door slowly and walked in.

"What?" I turned to her, almost yelling. She flinched, which only made me more upset.

"I just..." Ella lowered her head.

"Thank you for today. It really was wonderful."

I glowered.

"Yeah, sure. Ella, I need a minute, I'll see you down at dinner."

Ella stepped forward, attempting to say something before I pulled away, my eyes going dark.

"Go away, Ella!"

She snapped her hand back, hurt plain on her face as she turned and ran out of the room.

“Crap,” I muttered and ran after her.

“Ella, wait!”

I ran down the stairs and looked around the house for her. I made my way into the kitchen, only to find the cooks.

“Have you seen Ella?”

Sophie shook her head.

“I just got here, hun. I haven’t seen anyone.”

I ran my hand through my hair.

“I need to find her.”

Sophie knotted her brow.

“What happened?”

“I said something stupid.” I shook my head.

Chapter 28

ELLA

“Go away, Ella!”

His words stung like a knife to the chest. Of all the things he could say, that was one of the worst. He didn’t want me here. He didn’t want me.

I ran out of the room and down the stairs. I could hear him call after me, but I didn’t listen. I turned from the staircase to make my way through the kitchen when I crashed into someone.

I looked up, tears filling my eyes, and met the worried gaze of Alpha Daniel.

“Ella!”

Daniel looked up and back at me. I sniffed, trying to keep back my tears.

“Come on, my girl.” He wrapped his arm around me and led me to the backyard.

We walked away from the house in silence until we came to a large fallen tree and Daniel sat down on it, looking out at the open fields. I sat next to him and tried to collect myself.

Daniel turned to me.

“Are you alright?”

I nodded, but the heaving of my shoulders gave away my real feelings. Daniel put his arm around my shoulder and gave me a comforting squeeze.

When I had finished having a good cry, I looked up at him and gave him a warm, grateful smile.

“Thank you for sitting with me.”

“Any time dear,” he smiled.

“Now are you going to tell me what’s going on?”

“I just... he...” I looked down, not knowing what to say.

Daniel rested a hand on mine.

“Ella, he’s my son, I know what an idiot he can be. You can talk to me.”

I looked back up at him with a small smile on my face. I missed having a father in my life, and for a moment my thoughts were taken to my dad and how he would comfort me in this situation.

“I made him angry. I didn’t mean to, I just said something I shouldn’t have, and it upset him. When I tried to talk to him again, he yelled at me, told me to go away.”

Daniel made a small scowl but continued listening.

“I shouldn’t have pushed him. But when he said that, I panicked. ‘Go away’ is just a step down from a rejection.”

Daniel looked at the evening sky, the light beginning to fade.

“I can see how that would have upset you. He was an idiot to let his frustration out on you in that way.”

I smiled.

"It wasn't all his fault... He told me he needed a minute, but I pushed him, I wanted to explain." I took in a ragged breath and the words caught in my throat: "I-I just didn't—"

"Ella, it's nobody's fault. He was upset. You were upset. You both pushed and both said some things." Daniel shrugged.

"I guess..." I looked out at the fields as the sky turned orange.

"Do you mind if I ask what you said to make him so upset in the first place?"

I grimaced.

"I asked him what we were doing. I told him I was nervous, that I had this sinking feeling he was going to change his mind about me again."

Daniel's eyes widened.

"You really think that?"

"When he rejected me the first time, I accepted it, but now it's different. He's different. But he's still an alpha. At some point, he's going to wake up and realize I'm just an omega. That I'm nothing."

Daniel took my hand and clasped it between his two large hands.

"My dear, he loves you."

I snapped my head up and looked at Daniel in shock.

"What did you say?"

Daniel laughed.

"You heard me. That boy is crazy about you."

"I don't know about that." I shrugged.

"Alpha?"

"Hmm?" He looked at me with his kind eyes.

"What if he does? What if we go back in there and he doesn't want me...again?"

"Well, then I'll smack him," Daniel joked, making me giggle.

“But in all seriousness Ella, I don’t see that ever happening. You two are allowed to get upset at each other sometimes. Heaven knows Cara and I had our fair share of spats.”

I took a deep breath and stood.

“I guess we should go back and find out then.”

Daniel stood and took my arm with a wink.

“You think we’ve been gone long enough to make him sweat?”

I laughed.

“You’re horrible.”

“What kind of father would I be if I didn’t mess with him a little bit? Especially when he’s being a fool.”

We walked back to the house, and I turned to him before going inside, “Thank you, Alpha, for talking me off that ledge.”

“Anytime, my dear.” He patted my hand, and we walked inside.

“Ella!” Zane ran over, throwing his arms around me.

“Zane,” I replied softly.

He pulled away and cupped her face in his hands.

“Where were you?”

“We took a walk,” Daniel spoke as he made his way past us. Zane looked up at him and then back to me. I could see the sadness and the worry in his eyes.

“I’m sorry I lost control of myself. Forgive me?” Zane asked, almost begging.

I smiled.

“I’m sorry too. I shouldn’t have pushed you.”

Zane leaned his head down, touching his forehead to mine.

“I shouldn’t have said what I did. I don’t ever want you to go away.”

Chapter 29

ZANE

I woke in the morning and pulled myself close to Ella. I didn't enjoy our little argument last night, and she had worried me when she disappeared like that.

I was glad she had been with my father, or it would have been even worse. I had insisted she sleep in my bed last night, hoping being close would reassure her that I really did want her.

I nuzzled my face into her hair and wrapped my arms around her. I didn't care if she woke up; I wanted to be close to her. I breathed in her scent of apple cider.

It filled my senses, and it made my wolf stir. I felt my body responding to being so close to my mate. In her sleep, Ella leaned into me, her body rubbing against mine for a moment.

I backed up and ran my fingers through my hair. This girl was going to drive me crazy. Maybe a shower would calm me down. I slid carefully out of bed and walked to the bathroom.

The warm water enveloped me as I tried to get my mind off Ella when suddenly, the door opened.

Ella walked in, eyes still half-closed and barely awake, and made her way to the vanity next to the shower. I stood there in shock. She hadn't even noticed the shower was on or that I was in there.

But as I watched her walk toward me, her hips swaying gently and her face pouty with sleep, I felt my eyes grow dark.

Before I knew what I was doing, I opened the shower door and took her wrist, pulling her into the shower with me.

The shock on Ella's face was priceless as she stood in the stream of the water, her eyes wide with surprise and her wet clothes sticking to her body and revealing the outline of her breasts. Her eyes wandered my body, quickly snapping up when she ventured too low for comfort.

"Zane! What the—"

I pushed her up against the wall of the shower, my body against hers with my hands against the wall near her head.

"Ella. I need you."

Ella looked into my eyes, and I could feel her desire. But she began to shake her head.

“Zane, I—”

She was interrupted when my lips crashed into hers. I kissed her passionately, channeling all my need for her. My mouth hungered for her, and I moaned when she opened hers, letting in my tongue.

She wrapped her arms around my neck and pulled me closer, kissing me with equal fervor. I ran my hands down her body, resting at the hem of her shirt and running my finger along the top of her pants.

She inhaled deeply as I released her lips and my mouth traveled down her neck, kissing and nipping at her until finally resting on the spot that should have held my mark.

My hands made their way under her shirt and up her tight body, exploring every inch of her.

She let out a quiet moan as my hands reached her breasts and gently massaged them, her nipples pebbling at my touch.

I let out a low growl and quickly removed my hands from under her shirt, placed them on the back of her thighs, and picked her up. She wrapped her legs around my waist, her body rubbing against mine.

I took my hand and moved it up her thigh, rubbing the thin fabric of her underwear. She gasped and kissed me harder, her hands knotting through my hair.

My fingers wandered past her panties and attempted to touch their way inside.

Suddenly, Ella pulled away, shaking her head.

“Zane, I can’t. Not now.”

I sighed and set her down, resting my head on her shoulder and inhaling her scent before I turned the water off and stepped out, handing Ella a towel.

I wrapped myself up and made my way into the closet to get dressed. I heard the shower turn back on and assumed Ella was washing up.

After getting dressed, I sat on a chair to pull on my shoes when Ella emerged from the bathroom wrapped in a towel. She walked past me with a smile and left for her own room to change.

“I should just make her move in here,” I mumbled as I watched her walk by.

I walked into her room as she emerged from her closet, her skinny jeans hugging all the right places. I rubbed the back of my head and exhaled, shaking the dirty thoughts out of my mind.

“Ready to head down?”

Ella nodded with a smile, and we walked down together. With the new schedule, she was only working four days a week, which meant today she had the day off.

I took her hand as we walked down the stairs.

“I really am sorry about yesterday.”

“I know, Zane.” She smiled and squeezed my hand.

“I’m sorry too.”

“Let me make it up to you?”

Ella grinned and nudged my arm with hers.

“What do you have in mind? Please tell me it’s ice cream.”

When we reached the bottom of the stairs, I gripped her hand and rushed down the hallway toward my office.

“Zane! What are you doing?” Ella laughed as she attempted to keep up with me.

I pushed through the door to the office and flung her inside before locking it behind me.

Ella’s cheeks were flushed from our dash down the hallway, making me all the more heated as I stepped closer to her.

Ella backed up.

“Zane...what do you think you’re—”

I lunged forward, pulling her into my arms. She let out a squeal as I lifted her and set her down on my desk. I kissed her hard, every bit of passion spilling over.

She gripped my arms, her legs wrapped around me as I leaned her back slightly, kissing my way down her neck and chest. She let out a soft moan, which only excited me more.

“Zane, I can’t...,” she sighed as her hands moved to my chest and began playing with the buttons on my shirt.

I met her eyes.

“I’m not going to do anything more than worship you the way you deserve,” I growled, returning my mouth to hers.

My kiss was deep, taking in the taste of her mouth and her lips. I undid the button on her pants and removed them in one swift move.

I practically ripped the panties off her body, my hand moving to her pearl. I stroked it, and she let out a moan, her need consuming her.

I leaned her back on the desk as I kissed my way down her body, my mouth stopping to suck her slit. Ella gasped in pleasure, her back arching.

She knotted her hand in my hair as I kissed and sucked and licked, tasting her.

“Zane!” she moaned as the pressure built. When it finally spilled over, I traveled back up her body, my lips brushing her cheek.

“I told you I would make it up to you,” I said in a low, husky voice.

Chapter 30

ELLA

After straightening myself out, I made my way to the kitchen, cheeks still flushed from our encounter.

Zane walked in after me, smiling like a fool. I checked the hallway. If anyone saw us, they would know exactly what had happened.

Zane sensed my tension and walked over to me. I gasped as he wrapped his arms around me, dipping me low and enveloping my lips in a deep kiss.

A chorus of whistles rang out from all the single males in the dining hall that caught sight of us.

Zane brought us upright again, and I could feel my cheeks blush even more.

I looked up to see my mom smiling at me, and I smiled back, our unspoken words telling just how happy we both were.

“I have some business I need to take care of this morning with my dad. I’ll probably be gone for a few hours.”

I shrugged.

“That’s okay, I need to do some things anyway.”

I really didn’t, I just needed space. Some time to clear my head. Things had really started moving forward fast with Zane, and I needed to make a choice.

I needed to decide if I was really going to let him in, to let him be my mate again. I didn’t even know how to do that.

I didn’t have the mate pull, all the feelings I had for him were genuine. How did I get it back? Could you even take back a mate?

I was lost in thought when Alpha Daniel walked in.

“Alpha?” I looked up at him, hoping he could offer some answers.

“Good morning, Ella.” He gave a warm smile.

“Do you have a minute? I know you have a busy day of meetings with Zane.”

“Of course, I always have time for you,” Alpha Daniel winked, moving us toward his office. Daniel sat down in a chair and motioned for me to sit beside him.

“What can I do for you, Ella?”

“I was just, well...” I was suddenly nervous.

“How do you take back a mate?”

I could see the alpha’s face light up with joy and hope that things between Zane and I had worked.

“Well, I think it depends on each case. It’s not usually heard of for rejected mates to take it back.”

My expression dropped. I knew it was too late.

“But in your case...”

I perked up, hoping he had an answer for me.

“I may have looked it up.” He smiled sheepishly, making me laugh.

“Since his wolf is still technically mated, it’s just you that needs to take back your acceptance of his rejection. Your wolf needs to want to take back the rejection as well.”

“And that would work?”

Daniel shrugged.

"I don't see why it wouldn't."

"Thank you, Alpha," I smiled, getting up from my seat.

"I'm glad that things worked out. He's a better person because of you."

I made my way upstairs. Since it was my day off, I was going to enjoy it as much as I could. I grabbed a book and my sunglasses and made my way outside.

I found a shady spot under a tree and let myself relax for a while, looking up only once when Declan whistled at me from across the field. I waved with a smile before looking back down.

I was interrupted when a shadow stood above me. I looked up, rolling my eyes when I saw who it was.

"Hello, Mariah."

Mariah huffed.

"Omega," she spat, her words dripping with venom.

"Do you mind?" I snapped, frustrated I had to still deal with this girl after all these years.

"Oh, so now that you're screwing the alpha, you think you can talk above your status?"

"Well, I'm pretty sure that's none of your business." I widened my eyes sarcastically before turning my attention back to my book.

"And last I checked, it wasn't my status that's in question. When is your interview again?"

She glared at me darkly.

"If I get demoted because of you, you'll be sorry." She began to walk away before turning back to me with a smug look.

"He'll get tired of you. He always gets tired of his whores and then comes back to me. Every time. You are nothing, Omega, remember that!" she hissed before turning and walking away.

I could feel the tears welling in my eyes. I shook my head and whispered, "No." I was done being humiliated and abused by that girl.

“No more tears,” I said as I wiped at my eyes and walked to the packhouse.

It was a long day. I hadn’t realized just how much I would miss seeing Zane throughout the day.

I decided to take a nap in the afternoon and was awakened by a strong pair of arms wrapping themselves around me. I smiled and leaned into him.

“I missed you,” Zane whispered as he nuzzled my neck.

“I missed you too.” I smiled, enjoying the warmth of his body near mine. We slept for a little while, waking just before dinner.

“Are you ready?” I asked my wolf. My wolf purred with excitement, and I smiled before rolling over and looking into Zane’s eyes.

I bit my lip, still nervous and unsure how he would respond.

“Zane?”

Zane smiled at me, nodding for me to continue. I took a deep breath and cupped his face in my hands.

“I, Ella Matthews, do not accept your rejection.”

A shockwave sparked through my whole body and centered in my chest. I could feel the warmth rising within me, a pull that I recognized began to form inside.

Suddenly, I could feel him, my senses heightened by his closeness. I could smell his wonderful, intoxicating scent of cinnamon and pine.

I had taken it back, and I was terrified, knowing there was no going back. I had just given him all the power.