

Sienna

Aiden took me back to the pack house that night. We hadn't been apart ever since I'd spoken to Charlotte and learned the truth.

He'd been holding me so tight I felt like I might snap in two in his arms.

I wanted to tell him what I knew now. But it wasn't the time.

I was too weak.

Everything felt too fragile.

When he laid me down in the healer room in the pack house, I was surprised that Jocelyn wasn't there. Aiden seemed to read my mind because he patted my leg.

"I told her she didn't have to stay around," he said. "After what happened and how I reacted to Nina and..."

"It's okay," I said. "You don't need to explain."

He nodded. I hoped that Jocelyn hadn't left for good, that she was back in her room, that I might see her again and talk about what I'd discovered from Charlotte.

"Do you need anything?" Aiden asked.

I wasn't hungry or thirsty in the slightest, but I wanted to make Aiden feel important. He needed to feel like he could help me right now. I smiled softly.

"Hot chocolate would be nice," I said.

"I'll be right back."

With that, Aiden left me alone. I sighed and laid down on the bed, wondering where my phone was, if any of my friends had been checking in.

I found it in the pocket of my folded jeans, laid beside me on the side table. The same clothes I'd been wearing when...

I shook it off. I couldn't go there right now. I turned on my phone to see hundreds of messages already waiting for me.

Some were even texting now.

Mom



Mom

Honey, when you get home, just take it easy, alright?

Mom

Your dad and I love you so much.

Selene

You're strong, sis.

Selene

Stronger than any she-wolf I know.

Selene

You're going to make it through this.

Erica

Si!!!

Erica

When can we come see you????

Mia



Mia



Mia

We're here for you if you need anything.

Erica

Exactly

I lowered the phone, my heart feeling full for the first time since the miscarriage. I was so lucky to have so many people who loved me, who cared enough to check in and so often.

Even though the loneliness of an empty womb was profound, having people like this in my life made it slightly better.

I had a family. I had Aiden. I had so much still to live for.

The only person who I hadn't heard from, to my surprise, was Michelle. I knew she and Josh were on some sort of road trip.

But, still, you would've thought she'd have heard by now.

I felt a small bit of resentment toward my friend for a second but shook it off. Now was not the time to sweat the small stuff. Not when



not the time to sweat the small stuff. Not when a real, true tragedy had taken over.

There was no knowing what could possibly happen next. So, I put aside the phone and waited for Aiden to return. I would respond to my loved ones later.

Right now, all I wanted was silence.

Which was when I heard a knock at the door.

“That was fast,” I said, turning, expecting to see Aiden.

But it wasn't.

“Who...who are you?”

A man stood in the doorway. A bearded man I faintly recognized somehow. But from where, I couldn't say.

His silent stance in the doorway made me stiffen with anxiety.

“What are you doing here?” I asked.

“I've been watching you for a few months. Trying to keep my distance. But...after what happened, I couldn't bear to be away from you



any longer.”

He's been watching me?! Who the hell was this man? I was beginning to get scared now. I couldn't take another surprise right now.

“Tell me who you are, or I'll scream,” I said.

“Sienna, my name is Rowan. I was mated to a woman named Vanessa years ago.”

Vanessa. My mother. It couldn't be, could it?

“We had a child. A little girl.”

And now his eyes sparkled with bittersweet warmth. “I'm your father, Sienna.”

Nothing in the world could have prepared me for this. Although the man had done what I'd demanded and told me who he was, I couldn't keep my end of the deal.

I screamed.

Aiden

I was just beginning to add the marshmallows to Sienna's hot chocolate when I heard it. The piercing, ear-shattering shriek of my mate.



I dropped the mug, barely hearing it shatter beneath my feet, as I turned and sprinted toward the healer room as fast as I could.

When I made it to the doorway, I saw a tall bearded man standing there, towering over Sienna, still in bed, tears in her eyes. I shoved him against the wall.

“WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?!”

“Please,” he said. “Allow me to explain.”

But I wasn’t in any mood to listen to explanations. Not from surprise visitors. Not from unwelcome guests. Not after everything Sienna and I had been through.

I threw him from the room.

“Get out. GET OUT!”

“Please, Alpha,” he begged in the hallway. “I’m Rowan. I’m Sienna’s father. Her biological father.”

“You’re... *what?*!”

I turned to look at Sienna. She was shaking her head and crying uncontrollably. Even if this Rowan man was telling the truth, this was



this Rowan man was telling the truth, this was not the time or place.

“Go. Now,” I ordered.

Rowan nodded his head, eyes cast downward. But before he turned to go, he gently grabbed my shoulder.

“There is much you do not know about your mate. What she is capable of. Where she comes from. When the time is right, I will return.”

With that, he lowered his hand and left the pack house. I was shaking with confusion and anger and fear. Hearing my mate’s scream had triggered something inside me.

I turned to her, hurrying back into the healer room. “Are you okay, Sienna? Are you hurt? Did anything—”

“I’m fine, Aiden,” she said. “Just...confused.”

I sat down on the bed beside my mate and took her hand. “He said—”

“I know what he said,” she interrupted. “He told me the same thing.”

“Do you believe him?”



Sienna looked away, searching herself. “I don’t know what to believe anymore.”

My poor mate. All I wanted was to comfort her, to make her feel safe and loved. And for whatever reason, I kept failing.

Even now, I’d failed to be here when a stranger, a man claiming to be her father, had burst inside the pack house.

“Where was security?!” I mumbled. “How did I not scent him?”

“He covers it.”

I looked at Sienna, surprised. How did she know that? If he was a stranger, how was she aware of any of his powers?

“Sienna,” I said, moving closer. “May I ask you something?”

“Only if it’s easy to answer.”

“We’ll see,” I said with a wry smile. “When we were still in the hospital, you didn’t want to speak with anyone. Except my mother. And you two aren’t close at all. So...why?”

Sienna looked torn. She wanted to tell me. But she was afraid to for some reason. I shook my



head.

“Forget it,” I said. “It’s clearly *not* easy to answer. So—”

“Aiden, wait.”

She put a hand to my chest, feeling my heartbeat. The touch of my mate made me feel alive again. Like, until now, I had been a dead man walking.

“Did I ever tell you why...” Sienna began, “why I volunteered the name Vanessa to my sister? For her child?”

“No,” I said, shaking my head. “I never gave it much thought.”

“That was the name of my mother, Aiden. My real mother.”

My eyes widened. Sienna knew more about her past than she’d ever let on. But I was still confused. “What does this have to do with what my mom—”

“She knew about her. About him. Rowan. My real father. What he is. Why we can’t scent him.”

There were too many revelations unraveling at



once. I felt like my head might explode.

“And?” I asked, almost begging for resolution.

“And...I think I know why we lost the baby, Aiden.”

“What do you mean? It was because...”

But she shook her head. “I have to be sure first. Before I tell you. But it wasn’t about me shifting. It wasn’t about you fighting with Nina. None of that.”

“Then what?”

I was begging for answers. But before Sienna could reply, there was another knock on the door behind us. *Is Rowan back already?!*

I spun, enraged. “WHAT?!” I bellowed.

But it wasn’t the stranger Rowan in the doorway now. It was Josh and Michelle.

They were here.

They were back.

“Michelle!” Sienna cried out.



Before I knew what was happening, Michelle ran inside and threw herself into Sienna's arms. The two girls held each other, crying, for what felt like years.

"I didn't think you would come," Sienna said. "I thought—"

"Of course, we're here," Michelle responded. "We came the second we heard."

I slowly stood up and approached Josh, offering a solemn handshake.

"My Alpha... words can't express how... God, this is fucked up."

I appreciated Josh's vulgarity right now. He'd tried to say the usual line, express his sympathies, but he couldn't keep it up.

Which was exactly what I needed right now. Someone who could just be straight with me.

"I'm glad you're here," I said, patting him on the shoulder. "You're right. It is fucked."

"How are you two holding up?"

I turned to see Michelle rocking Sienna back and forth in bed.



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“I’m glad you’re here,” I said, patting him on the shoulder. “You’re right. It is fucked.”

“How are you two holding up?”

I turned to see Michelle rocking Sienna back and forth in bed.

“How do you think?” I asked.

“Yeah, that makes sense,” Josh mumbled.

Sienna pulled away from Michelle and took her hands, frowning with curiosity. “Where have you two been?”

Josh and Michelle exchanged a loaded look. They had discovered something, it seemed.

Something huge.

Josh cleared his throat. “We may all want to sit down for this.”

Next Chapter

