

05 | She Hurt You

My eyelids flicker open, just barely enough to recognize the blurred blues, blacks, and whites of the night forest. I immediately notice the burning, sharp pain that's lighting my neck on fire with discomfort. Like there's canines sinking into my flesh and winning a tug-of-war match with gravity.

I'm... being carried? Like a fucking wolf pup?

Cold wind blows against my face, cutting right through my clothes and causing me to shiver.

Blindly I reach my hand out, trying to feel for anything at all. Warm fur tickles my palm, sending a jolt of electricity through my chest.

I remember what I saw. A giant wolf leaping out of the woods, roaring louder than any monster ever could.

A sort of drugged, calm fear comes over me. I don't want to face this thing, whatever the hell it is.

So I close my eyes and let the safety of the darkness seep back in.

...

I wake up to a pounding ache in the left side of my skull, right above my temple. My eyes open, which makes the pounding worse. Out of instinct, my hand reaches up to the source of the pain. Instead of oozing blood like I'd expected, I'm surprised to feel the soft gauze of a bandage wrapped securely around my head.

I roll my head to the side to take in my surroundings. Through the trees, in the distance, a bright orange flicker stands out against the night.

The bonfire. I can barely see it through the trees. How did I get out here so far?

Sitting up, I close eyes close tightly as I wait for the spinning to stop and the nausea to pass. When I finally open them again, my heart stalls.

Staring straight at me is a complete stranger. Though strange is far from the word I'd use to describe him.

As soon as my eyes lock with his, all of my senses immediately pulse in unison, shaking me to my core. All my attention is on him and only him. His smell, his looks, and even the pleasant rhythm of his heart in my hyperactive hearing. Or maybe that's just mine beating violently out of my chest.

He's sitting cross legged on the forest floor, leaning forward as if to get a closer look at me. His eyes are a pure obsidian color, and they hold an uncanny resemblance to the glowing red ones I vaguely remember. His messy hair is a brownish copper, which matches the thin layer of clean cut stubble on his perfect jawline.

Even with the small bit of distance between us, it's clear that his build is larger than an average person's. Not to mention three times as muscular.

I can't even try to think straight. He's attractive in a way no one person should be allowed to be.

His fingers flex in and out, the tendons in his wrists popping up along with some veins in his forearms. Judging from the raw power stored in that action alone, it would be ridiculously easy for him to take a life away.

Those hands look like they could bring death in a dozen different brutal ways—and I feel like they have. Yet for some reason, I yearn to reach out and touch them.

The pulsing sensation gets stronger, making my focus on him so heightened that everything else is dull.

My lips part slightly, but no words come out. Instead it gets stuck in the front of my mind, lingering at the tip of my tongue.

Mate.

I flinch at the word.

He makes a move to get up and I scramble backwards on my butt, fighting my every instinct to go forward.

My back meets the smooth trunk of a snow covered, fallen beech tree. It blocks me from going any further and I exhale heavily. Of course that's my luck.

He's coming slowly toward me, making my breath hitch. From a standing position his size looks impossibly larger, and impossibly like a force not to be reckoned with.

His nostrils flare as he sniffs the air. A low growl rumbles in his chest, getting louder as it travels up to his throat. "You smell like him" he says in disgust, pushing it out through gritted teeth.

Him? Does he mean Nathan?

But if that bothers him, then that makes two of us.

"And you smell like a wet dog," I retort without missing a beat. That was a lie. That was the biggest lie I've told in my entire life.

He smells good. Really good. Like an addictive, masculine cologne mixed with the natural scent of a pine forest. And the fact that that scent makes my stomach twist with nerves scares me.

His gaze burns into me, telling me I made a mistake. The lighting in his dark eyes seems to dance, like a black and grey fire burning in his irises. It's as though it signifies a battle of some kind... like he's fighting with his own inner wolf.

"What are you to him," he finally asks, the growl still in his voice.

"Why does it matter," I fire back. My wolf may already trust him, begging for his arms to encompass me, but I can't say the same.

He takes another step forward, hands clenching into fists. "Answer. The. Question."

I stay silent for what feels like centuries. Some part of me doesn't want to tell him the truth. Not only because it would be voicing my misfortune and misery, but also because I somehow feel like I've betrayed him.

"Where is everyone?" I ask instead, trying to change the subject.

His shoulders visibly tense, as if I've made him uncomfortable. For the first time, he breaks eye contact.

The way I see it, he doesn't have the right to be uncomfortable in this situation. I do.

He doesn't answer the question, which only makes my mind race faster. I happen to glance past him and a lump forms in my throat at what I see. The snow is disturbed and sprawled everywhere. Bright patches of red stain what was once sparkling white.

Among that, my eyes land on a piece of hot pink fabric laying in the middle of it. A headband.

I dare to venture further, looking even farther past.

A body is laid, sprawled and broken in the snow. I recognize the disheveled fiery red hair.

My blood runs cold.

"Did you...?" I don't need nor want to finish the sentence.

He follows my line of vision before answering with a simple, emotionless reply.

"Yes."

I swallow hard, feeling my hands start to shake. Goddamn it, why am I so nervous? If he wanted me dead he would've killed me while I was unconscious.

"W-Why...?"

"She hurt you."

As if on cue, my hand comes up to touch the bandage around my head. He cares if I'm hurt or not?

No response comes to mind for that. That girl didn't mean anything to me. She made snide comments about everything and walked over everyone. She was rude and a pain in the neck, but still... it doesn't seem believable.

But if Sophia is dead... who else went with her?

I hadn't even realized I was lost in thought, staring at the ground until the snap of a twig pulls me back to reality. My neck doesn't even have time to turn before I'm being scooped off the ground, pressed against a warm, solid body.

An electric sensation ignites wherever we touch, erupting my skin in a tingling, pleasant fire. It's like a chain reaction, making my heart start to pound again in my chest, along with my muscles relaxing instantly.

The logical part of my brain tells me I should be concerned about where he's taking me. But I can't focus on anything except his body against mine. My neck tilts to rest on his shoulder, the sensation lulling me into a state of tranquility.

Whether it's the possible concussion giving me hallucinations or not, I think I hear a faint, animalistic purr in response.

I close my eyelids, focusing on the smooth gait of his walk while being carried by arms that make me the equivalent of weightless.

It seems like minutes pass by before I open my eyes again. When I do, we're in the small village of my pack. I happen to look up, and in the second story window of one of the houses, half a dozen pairs of eyes are staring down at us.

Among them are Mya's. Her face is twisted with contempt, glaring hatred at me even through the glass. I can't be bothered to react this time.

I look around and notice that not a single person is outside. They're all in the windows, peaking out and watching us like hawks. It's almost as if they're scared of something.

What did they witness that I didn't? Besides Sophia's death...

I'm carried straight through the middle of the village, right to the grand cabin at the end; the one notoriously known as the Alpha's house. The stranger carrying me—my mate?—is unfazed. He continues on as if it's his territory. As if he has every right to be here.

He steps over the threshold of the front door, angling me carefully so that my feet don't hit the frame when we pass.

The entire pack just watched helplessly as a trespasser waltzed through our village, and stepped into the Alpha's house without a trace of hesitation.

What did he do to them?

The door clicks shut, plunging the room into darkness at the mercy of night.

But more importantly my stomach knots as the stairs creak under the weight, what will he do to me?

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Sorry there wasn't much dialogue this chapter! Trust me, you'll get to know "him" more later ;)

If anyone knows any good faceclaims do send them my way ;)

What do you think he plans to do with Adrienne?

Thank you for reading!

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