

Chapter 7

My mother handed me the suitcase in the foyer when I reappeared wearing ripped jeans and a hoodie. I could feel the pressure of the old daisy necklace in my pocket. I didn't have much selection as she cleaned out the majority of closets and stuffed it into this damn suitcase. I took it from her and when her hands were free she wrapped both arms around me in a tight hug.

"Be careful," she whispered in my ear. "And don't bring this man back here. For the good of the pack." 171

I pulled away from her, then realized I was standing next to the dark man. Hades. I swallowed and took a side step away as if a pocket of air would protect me from him, from all that he was.

"I'm sorry that we had to meet under such circumstances," Hades began, that silky voice filling the air. 58

"Well, best be on your way," my father interjected. 46

"Oh, yes, of course," Hades murmured, then turned to me. Those amber, burning eyes settled on to me. "Do you have everything that you need? I don't mind-" 34

"Yes, she does," my mother announced. I didn't miss the way she had grabbed onto my father's arm and slipped behind him, using him as a human shield. I couldn't say that I blamed her; I had done the same thing less than an hour ago. 36

"Very well, I guess it's best we get going," Hades mused. His hand reached behind his body and he opened my front door. I just stared at him for a moment, so far in my disbelief that I didn't understand what was expected of me. After an uncomfortable moment he gestured to the outdoors. "After you." 26

My legs carried me outside of my own home on their own accord. I didn't want to go, but I also didn't feel like I could stop myself either. And I knew that if I turned around, even just a for a moment to say a second goodbye, my parents' faces would be filled with dread. I was now considered the vehicle for getting this man on our pack land. I knew my mother and my father well enough to understand that they would do anything to protect the pack. Even this. 15

"Charlotte is a lovely name," Hades began, strolling beside me with his hands shoved into the pockets of those borrowed jeans. 123

I said nothing and stared straight ahead. I could see some of my pack members watching us from afar, their eyes troubled. Did they think that I wanted to go with him? They had to know me better than that. They had to know how much I loved Caleb. 9

"Is it a family name? Are you named after a relative?" he pushed. 27

My lips didn't quiver and my mind didn't even try to form an answer. All I could think about was the way my feet were betraying me, taking me farther and farther away from the only people I loved. 3

"This all must be quite a shock to you. I must admit that it's a shock to me as well," he continued, as if I were actually responding to him. 101

We were getting closer to the edge of my packlands. We were getting closer to crossing the border between everything I knew and a whole world outside that I didn't feel like I understood anymore. I used to think that I would only ever leave the packlands to get my education. I would always be allowed to return, to come back and hold my family.

Now I felt like I was leaving behind a kingdom from a fairy-tale and entering a dark haunted forest that only offered curses and damnation. But that still didn't stop me from moving forward. 2

"Whenever these kinds of things happen, I always have Ethel drive out to pick me up. She should be fairly close by, she just doesn't like to cross into foreign territory. She doesn't exactly have the same power I do, it could be very dangerous for her," he rambled on. "Oh, here, let me grab that," he said, while taking the suitcase out of my hand. 101

When his fingers brushed against the back of mine a delightful sensation trickled up my arm. I let out a hiss as if he had scalded me and jerked my arm away. I saw his eyebrows raise, as if he was surprised, but no other reaction came from him. I almost wanted an outburst and I certainly expected it. It was clear that this man was used to being respected and I was doing the absolute opposite. And, maybe if I made him mad enough, he would swing at me. We were close enough to my lands, my parents would surely hear me and come running. Then, this awful nightmare would be over. 3

But I couldn't make myself do anything more. I had seen what he was capable of. And I wouldn't risk it, even if it was for the chance to undo everything that my parents had allowed. Plus, I could be putting everyone around me at risk.

"Ah, there's Ethel now," Hades said, using his free hand to point to a black car that was pulled over on the side of a nearby gravel road. 4

A handsome smile broke out across his face when a woman in her early forties exited the vehicle. And I understood why. There was something about the woman that just exuded kindness. From her curly shoulder length hair to her glittering eyes, and cute boots, she was a ray of comfort. 9

But what I didn't understand was that she was also grinning at Hades.

"I see that you've brought along a visitor," she pointed out.

"Ethel, this is Charlotte, my mate." 8

~~~Distraction Section~~~

I hope you are all well and happy. How do you feel about Hades? What about her parents? I'm not going to lie it was really tough for me to write this chapter because I loathed so many people in it. 45

On a positive note, we crossed 1000 reads! Thank you all so much. To keep the excitement going I'm going to do four updates back to back! Check back every twenty four hours for another post!

Question of the Day:

What is your favorite song currently? 268

I'm in love with Dermot Kennedy right now! Moments passed is just my jam! 6