

7. Mates?

After minutes of awkward silence James asks me if I want to walk back to the house seeing as it is less than a half a mile away from this house. I nod my head yes and we begin our walk out of the building.

When we walk out of the house and into the sunlight it takes a couple minutes to adjust to the brightness. I look around at the spring air, noticing how warm it is with the slight breeze still. Because I am only wearing cotton shorts and a t-shirt that Hazel had brought me last night, I get slight goosebumps on my arms and shiver.

I feel someone's gaze on me and I look over to see James looking at me worriedly and torn, like he doesn't know if he should help or keep his distance. After looking at him a bit more I make the decision for him and start walking closer to him linking my arm with his.

The smile he gives me has to be the most breath taking smile I have ever seen.

It lights up his whole face and you can just feel the happiness radiating off of him. I don't know why this small gesture would make him feel and that's when I remember what Hazel said about mates.

I will have to find some way to figure out about that later.

About a half an hour later we arrive at a house the size of a mansion. I am very out of breath from the short walk and the reason it took so long is because of me. I am slow seeing as I hadn't walked very far when I was captive.

I had a little 5-by-5 cell I was never allowed to leave and the two times I did try to escape, I never made it far and I was brutally punished for both times.

We make our way into the house and once inside I look at how nice the place is. It has wooden floors with a chandelier right in the front entrance.

"Would you like anything to drink or eat? Or we could take a tour of the house? If you are tired you can rest too if that's what you want? Or I could call Hazel if you would rather be with her, I understand it's fine I'll go call Hazel" he looks like he wants to cry as he rambles and starts walking away, but I grab his arm before he gets more than a foot away and stop him. I shake my head no and he looks slightly confused.

Looking up at him I smile and point to my mouth.

"Hungry?" He asks a little hesitant. I nod my head and link my arm with his again

"Okay well I have plenty of food, I mean I'm not a good cook but we can figure something out!" He says all excited now.

We make it to the kitchen a couple minutes later and I look around at how big and extravagant everything in this house is.

There are stainless steel appliances everywhere with marble countertop and a huge double door refrigerator. When we get there he pulls out a stool for me and turns to walk towards the refrigerator.

"What would you like we have some pizza, some pasta, fruit, are you thirsty?" He turns around and looks at me and I nod.

"Water or juice?" He asks me. I hold up my first finger hoping he gets what I mean.

"Water?" He asks and I nod my head. I smile knowing there is some way to communicate with him and he smiles also.

He pours me glass of water then gives me three more options.

"Pizza, pasta or fruit?" He asks as I gulp down my water.

I hold up three fingers.

"Fruit it is! Apples, grapes, watermelon or all of the above?" He asks looking at me, I think for a minute then hold up four fingers.

Seeing my answer he reaches in and grabs all of the fruit and carries it to the countertop on front of me. He puts the all in a big bowl like a fruit salad and gets us two forks.

We start eating and while we do he starts talking about himself, how he has a younger sister, but she lives in another pack with her mate, his favorite color is green, he hates lasagna and how spring is his favorite season.

In my opinion, he is just filling the silence because of my lack of input, but oddly it is comforting to just listen to his voice even when he talks about silly things like the seasons.

I find myself smiling looking up at him when he starts telling me about his friends and Hazel.

Hazel is his betas mate and wife who is his second in command, Dave, and helps James run the pack when James needs it or is out of town. Callie is their daughter who they had together and she is about four.

I learned that Hazel is in fact a couple years older than me at 21 and Dave is the brunette who was in the woods that found me, and he is 22. The third guy from the woods is Cole who is the third in command and helps when the alpha and beta aren't around but his main job is being the guard of the Luna when she is found and becomes a part of the pack.

James starts talking about how that will be me and Cole will be my guard...

I get confused when I hear the word Luna and that Cole will be near me until I remember that James is the alpha of this pack. My eyes go wide and I start to panic.

When James looks over at me he gets confused,

"What's wrong Grace?" He asks I just shake my head back and forth while tears threaten to come out.

They are going to have someone keeping me hostage, someone with me at all times, what I she going to do to me?

Is he going to hurt me like the last 'guards' I had?

When I start crying James puts his arms around me and pulls me onto his lap and into a hug while rubbing my back trying to get me to calm down.

Minutes later I am still sniffling but being in James' arms is very comforting and I still don't understand why or why he even has me here.

I lift my head up and look into his eyes realizing that they are bright green just like mine. When I reach up to touch his face I feel those same tingles again and realize I am feeling them everywhere on my body that has contact with his body. Confusingly I look down at my hand pulling it away from his face.

"It's the mate bond" he says lowly. I look up at him confused and realization dawns in his eyes. "You don't know what that is do you?" He asks

I shake my head no and he starts to explain.

"A mate for wolves, like me and you, is like your soul mate, your other half. They complete you in a way that nobody else can and the two are meant to be together. Every wolf only has one mate and some are unlucky enough not to find theirs. People usually find their mates by the age of 18 and I had almost completely given up before finding you." Towards the end of his speech he looks down but not before I see tears in his eyes and I feel bad.

"Grace I don't know what happened to you but I would like to..." He trails off. Shaking my head and starting to panic I try and get up looking for an escape route, I can't do this again.

When he realizes this he holds me tighter and starts shushing me and trying to get me to calm down.

"Grace, Grace calm down nobody is going to touch you" stopping I look up at him to see a look in his face I have never seen before, protectiveness maybe? That can't be right..

"Grace nobody will ever hurt you, I will make sure of that please trust that. You don't have to tell me what happened now but someday soon I think you should let somebody know, it can't be easy what you went through..." He looked down visibly upset and distraught.

I don't like to see him upset and I don't know what to do to help him. I bring my hands up to his face and tilt his head closer wiping at the one tear that escaped. He smiles and tilts his head wiping to mine looking down at my lips. Right before we are about to kiss he whispers lowly,

"If you want to stop now is the time because in a few seconds I am going to kiss you..."

But I don't want him to stop, I want to kiss him and it's an odd sensation, the men who had taken me never kissed me they just used my body for their pleasure and this was a new thing for me.

Seconds later I lean in and kiss him lightly on the lips.

If I thought touching him and feeling those tingles were nice, it was nothing compared to kissing him.

It was like fireworks going on in my head and my chest felt all warm and fluttery. A few seconds later he pulls back and looks at me a smile on his face. He hugs me and buries his head in my neck breathing slowly.

When I look out the window I realize we have been eating and talking for hours and it's now dark out. I look at the clock and see it is about 9 and before I know it I am yawning.

"Want to go to bed Princess?" James says, I blush and look down nodding my head. He lifts my head up and kisses my red cheeks,

"alright let's go then."

Towards the stairs he doesn't put me down and starts carrying me towards the stairs. Enjoying the feeling I lay my head on his shoulder while I have my arms wrapped around his neck and my legs around his waist.

Seeing as he is almost double my size and height he had no problem carrying me up the stairs and into a room.

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