

The Unwanted Wolf

Chapter 12

Mark stopped the car at a park with very few lights. He grabbed a bag from the back seat, while I carried our frozen yogurt.

“What are we doing here?” I asked. Mark only smirked at me in response. I followed him as he walked deeper into the grassy field. I was grateful for my wolf vision enhancing everything. I would have easily tripped otherwise. As we reached the other end of the field, Mark set down the tote and pulled out a couple of blankets. He lay it on the ground and motioned for me to sit down. I sat cross-legged, and he sat across from me.

“Will you tell me now why we are out here?” I passed him his frozen yogurt.

“There’s a meteor shower that’s supposed to start soon. I thought we could stargaze together.” He held up the other blanket we brought. “This is so we don’t get too cold.”

“I love shooting stars.” I put a bite of frozen yogurt in my mouth and hummed with delight.

Mark started eating his frozen yogurt as well, and we sat there chatting and enjoying each other’s company while waiting for the shooting stars to start. I found myself laughing more than usual. I hadn’t felt this comfortable with someone in a long, long time.

When I finished my yogurt, I set it to the side. “How are you doing on your yogurt?”

Mark took another bite and sighed. “There is so much and I’m already so full. Mistakes were made.”

I giggled in response. “You don’t actually have to finish it if you are too full.”

“I have made a commitment. I’m not going to back down from a challenge.”

Mark took another bite, but I could tell he was struggling.

“You’re going to make yourself sick!” I leaned forward to try to snatch the cup away from Mark. He easily moved it out of my grasp, and I ended up falling forward into him. He fell back, unable to keep his balance. Mark dropped the rest of his yogurt and grabbed my waist as we fell back together.

I felt Mark’s chest rise and fall and I lay on top of him. I felt out of breath staring at him, and there was something about his arm

around me that just felt so right. I knew in that moment there was no going back. Mark had to be in my life. I wanted him to fill my life with laughter and warmth. I leaned forward, stopping my face only inches away from his. He brushed a few strands of hair out of my face and let his fingers linger a moment longer on his face.

My heart pounded in anticipation. I could feel his hot breath against my lips, and I wanted Mark to make the next move. I was too terrified to move myself. Our chests heaved up and down, almost in rhythm, and the anticipation was starting to kill me..

After what felt like a lifetime, Mark said, "Oh! A shooting star! I think it's starting."

"Oh." I shifted to get off of Mark. I was going to give him some space, but then he pulled me into him. I used his arm as a pillow as we lay on the blanket together. Mark pulled the other blanket towards us. I stared at the sky, waiting for the next shooting star to appear. I nuzzled into Mark closer as I felt the cold start to surround us. He was a constant source of heat, and despite the temperature continuing to drop, I felt perfectly fine, with the exception of my nose.

"I see one!" I quickly pointed to the sky where I saw my first shooting star.

"Don't forget to make a wish." I closed my eyes, focusing on what I wanted, and the only thing that came to my mind was Mark, and I knew my wish.

When I opened my eyes, Mark was staring at me. "What did you wish for?"

"I can't tell you, or it won't come true."

"I know what I wished for." Mark kept his eyes glued to me.

I put my finger on his lips. "Don't tell me. I want your wish to come true."

Mark smiled under my finger. Then he took my hand and kissed the back of it. "Okay."

We settled back into watching the stars, taking turns pointing out the shooting stars as we saw them. We didn't talk much. Each other's company was enough and the silence felt more than comfortable.

After a while, I felt my eyes growing heavier and it was harder to keep them open. I hadn't slept well in days, and it was starting to hit me.

"I can make it on my own from here," I said, my voice cracking.

Mark slowly set me down and opened the car door for me. He made sure I was inside before shutting the door and moving to the driver's seat.

"Am I taking you home or back to the pack house?" Mark turned on the car. I thought about it for a moment. It would be easier to go back to my apartment, but the idea of going back there right now almost felt lonely. "Pack house."

“As you wish.” Mark pulled out and drove to the pack house. Thad a hard time keeping my eyes open on the car ride back, but I forced myself to stay awake. I didn’t want to fall asleep on Mark again. When we finally made it back to the pack house, I slowly got out of the car, and Mark was quickly by my side.

“Are you okay to walk on your own?” Mark was already holding my hand, prepared to pick me up.

“I can walk.” I was sleepy, but I didn’t want Mark to start carrying me around because of it. Mark started walking towards the house, but I pulled on his arm, stopping him. “Wait,” I said.

Mark turned towards me. “Everything okay?”

I stepped forward and placed my hand on his cheek. “Everything is perfect. Everything is better than it has been in awhile, and it’s all thanks to you.” I leaned forward, hoping it was enough of a signal for Mark. Mark placed his hand over the one I had on his face and leaned into it. “I made a promise to you, and I plan on keeping it. I will do whatever it takes to protect you and keep you happy.”

My heart fluttered, and I didn’t want to wait any longer. “Kiss me,” I whispered.

Without hesitation, Mark wrapped his arm around my waist, pulling me flushed against him. His other hand dropped and gently cupped the back of my head. The next moment his lips were on mine, and I felt like fireworks were exploding. He moved his lips against mine while running his hand through my hair. I melted into the kiss, and my hands started moving on their own. I wrapped them around the back of his neck and stood on my toes, pulling myself even closer to him. It still didn’t feel close enough. I just wanted more.

After a moment, we released each other to catch our breaths. I had never felt so out of breath and full of air at the same time. I was practically floating. “Wow.” The word escaped my lips.

Mark pressed his forehead against mine, his breath still heavy. “We should go inside.” He stayed there for a moment longer, and I wasn’t in a rush either.

Eventually, we parted and went into the pack house. It was late and the house was quiet as we stepped through the door. I was grateful for the quietness. I was feeling comfortable around Mark now, but I still wasn’t ready to be bombarded with the rest of the pack. I was hoping that would come later at a slower pace.

When we made it to the third floor, Mark paused at the top of the stairs. “Where do you want to sleep?”

“Your room.” It wasn’t even a question, but I appreciated Mark not assuming as much. He was being so kind and respectful over everything, and it only confirmed I had made the right choice.

We entered Mark’s room hand in hand, but once the door was shut, Mark let go. He went over to his dresser and handed me a t-shirt.

“You can wear this to bed for now. I’m sure Rie is already asleep, or else I would ask her for something else.”

“This is perfect. I should have packed a bag just in case.” I took the shirt from Mark and held it close to my body, unsure of how I should act. I felt more nervous tonight than the previous night. I had made decisions while half awake last time, but after our kiss, I was hyper aware of everything going on.

Mark gestured to a door towards the back of the room. “There’s a bathroom in there if you want to wash up and change. There should be a spare toothbrush on the counter as well.”

“Thanks.” I moved to the bathroom, thankful for Mark’s guidance. I slipped out of my dress and put on the shirt Mark gave me. It was a little big, but it felt comfortable and smelled like him. I could live in the shirt. I washed my face and found the spare toothbrush to use. I wondered if Mark had thought ahead to the possibility of me sleeping over again or if he just kept a spare toothbrush around.

When I left the bathroom, I saw Mark had already changed into plaid pajama bottoms and a tank top. He took his turn in the bathroom, and I climbed into his bed while waiting. My heart pounded as I sat there, listening to the water running in the bathroom sink.

Sitting there by myself made me realize just how fast things were moving with Mark. We had only known each other for a couple of days, and I was already sleeping in his bed. I was falling faster than I could have ever imagined, and suddenly a wave of fear hit me. Was I making a mistake? Mark finished up the bathroom and moved to the opposite side of the bed. I couldn’t look at him as doubt filled me. This felt too good to be true, and I was afraid it would all be ripped away from me in an instant.

Mark pulled back the covers, but he paused before getting into the bed.

“What’s wrong?”

Was I that obvious? “Are we moving too fast?”

“Do you want me to sleep on the couch? If you’re not comfortable-”

My hand reached for him faster than I could speak. “No, it’s not that. I just feel like I have been standing on a cliff by myself for so long. Now I’m falling. No. I dove off the cliff, and I don’t know what’s below me. I’m afraid

I'm just going to crash into the ground if I'm not careful."

Mark finally sat in the bed, studying my face. "Impossible. There's no way for you to crash if I'm there to catch you."

I laughed at his response. "You are so cheesy, and you are too good to be true." I paused for a moment. "Just don't disappear on me, okay? I don't want to wake up to realize this was just a dream."

"I will be by your side for as long as you'll have me." Mark leaned in and kissed me again. This time it was a lot more tender.

I still felt a fire burn inside of me and knew I had to pull away sooner than I wanted. My body would betray me otherwise. "We should get some rest."

Mark nodded in agreement, and we both settled into bed. I turned to my side and pulled Mark's arm around my waist. As much as I wanted him to make the moves, I knew that he was trying to be respectful and didn't want to risk making me feel uncomfortable.

Wrapped in Mark's embrace, I quickly found myself drifting to sleep.