

The Unwanted Wolf

Chapter 9

Tjolted awake, my heart racing. I had been stuck in that strange rooin in my dream for what felt like hours, and it was a weird feeling. I couldn't figure out how to wake myself up. Then suddenly I was falling, and my eyes opened as my body lunged forward. I felt disoriented and looked around to get my bearings. I was still in Mark's room, and he was lying next to me.

"Are you okay?" he mumbled from his half awake state.

"I had a weird dream." I wasn't sure if it had been a dream exactly. It felt more like I had been transported to another dimension or something. I sat up, knowing I was awake for the day.

Mark slowly moved in response. He was still sleepy, his eyes not fully open yet. The hair on the back of his head was sticking straight up, almost like a bird. I chuckled a little at this. He looked so cute first thing in the morning.

"What are you laughing at?" Mark yawned and stretched his arms out. He looked at me again, this time with more clarity in his eyes.

"Nothing," I said, unable to hide my smile. It was a little weird waking up next to another person, but I didn't hate it.

Mark narrowed his eyes, not believing me. "What was your dream about?" I thought over the conversation I had had in my dream. "Have you ever spoken to your wolf in your dream, like actually talked to your wolf?"

Mark rubbed his eyes for a moment. "I don't think I have. Is that what your dream was?"

"I'm not sure. It didn't feel like a dream. It almost felt too real. I don't know how to explain it." I chewed on my lip.

"Have you had a dream like this before?" Mark ran his fingers through his hair, making it look a lot less like a bird's nest.

I shook my head. "The first time was when I passed out from the wolfsbane."

"Maybe that triggered something? That's interesting for sure. We can try to research that before, see if any other werewolf had experienced that before." Mark looked down, thinking about it a little more. I left out the part of the dream about the other voice. I knew it was an

important factor, but it also felt like a mystery I needed to uncover myself. If there was another entity hidden in my brain, it might have something to do with my mixed blood, but I didn't know much about other magical creatures. Werewolves tended to avoid others for simplicity's sake.

Mark yawned, stretching again. "What time is it anyway?"

I pulled out my phone and checked. My eyes widened. "It's already 5:15am. I have to get ready for work." I started untangling the blankets from my legs and crawling out of bed.

Mark's eyes widened. "You have to work that early?"

I nodded. "Coffee shops open early so people can get their fix before work. It's one of the busiest times. You can go back to bed if you want."

Mark shook his head. "I'm awake now. Besides, you'll need a ride to work. I will make sure someone is sent over to the coffee shop during the day to keep an eye on you."

I pulled my lips tight at the thought of this. I still wasn't thrilled by the idea of a personal bodyguard, but I had agreed to it already. I wasn't about to go back on my word. "Okay, just make sure they don't act weird. If too much attention is drawn to them, it could cause issues for them and me."

"Don't worry. I will send over the best. Go get dressed, and I will meet you downstairs when I'm ready?" Mark smiled at me.

I smiled back at him and nodded. I opened his door softly. I knew it was still early, so I wasn't expecting to see anyone else. I snuck down the hallway as quietly as possible, not wanting to wake anyone up.

"Are you sneaking out again?" Doctor Zayla asked from the top of the stairs, making me jump. I hadn't even heard her approach.

"No," I quickly said. "I just didn't want to disturb anyone. I need to get ready and go to work soon though. Mark is going to drive

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"Excellent." Doctor Zayla took a sip of her coffee. "Mark deserves better than someone who is going to just abandon him."

My chest tightened from her words, and I felt defensive. I didn't think it was fair to blame me for what had happened before. I bit my tongue, feeling like it wasn't worth defending myself. It didn't matter what she thought as long as Mark wasn't upset with me, and I knew

I hadn't done anything wrong. I had only done what I thought was the best with the information I had.

“I won’t just leave without telling Mark first.” I stared Doctor Zayla in the eyes. I still wasn’t sure if I would stay yet, but I knew that if I decided this wasn’t the best for me, I would at the very least tell Mark to his face. He deserved at least that much from me. My heart ached at the thought of having that conversation.

“I will hold you to that.” Doctor Zayla nodded her head and walked past me. I took a deep breath, trying not to let that conversation get to me. I continued to the guest room I was set up in and started getting ready for work. The clothes Rie had given me were nicer than the normal clothes I wore to work. They were more comfortable as well. I would have to thank her when I finally met her. I finished getting dressed and pulled my hair into a ponytail. I didn’t have time to shower and hated having my hair down when it wasn’t freshly washed. When I was done, I made my way down the stairs.

Mark was already waiting for me by the door, and I paused the moment I saw him. He was wearing a simple t-shirt and a pair of jeans, and he looked amazing. He was looking at his phone, and I couldn’t help but stare at those broad shoulders and long torso.

Finally, he glanced up at me and smiled when his eyes met mine. “Ready to go?”

I blinked a few times, realizing I had been staring. “Yes!” I scurried down the rest of the stairs, and Mark opened the door for me.

We walked over to his car and got in. He had the radio playing at a low volume. I looked around his car and realized just how nice it was. The inside was covered in black leather and was immaculate. There wasn’t a speck of dust in sight. I didn’t understand how he kept his car so clean. I had never owned a car before, but based on how I kept my apartment, I was positive my car would look this clean for one day after buying it.

“I will stick around a bit until my replacement comes to take over,” Mark said, pulling me from my thoughts. “I hope that’s okay.

I looked over at Mark, and he looked good just driving. He didn’t even have to do anything special to get my heart racing. What was happening? “That’s fine. The shop doesn’t open until six though, and I can’t bring you inside early.”

“That’s fine. I don’t mind waiting.”

Most of the drive was spent in silence after that. It was still early, and with how late I had fallen asleep, my body was screaming for more rest. Mark pulled up to the sidewalk in front of the shop and put the

car in park.

“Thank you for the ride.” I smiled at him to show my appreciation.

“Anything to make your life easier.” I knew his words were honest and true.

I went to pull the door handle, and Mark started speaking again. “Would you like to go on that date with me tonight?”

My stomach fluttered at the question. I had already agreed to the date, but we hadn’t set a time earlier. After last night, I was even more excited to go on the date. “I would love to. I will just need to go to my apartment to get ready after work.”

“Text me your address and I’ll be there.” Mark was beaming now.

“Okay. I can’t wait.” I actually meant that, which surprised me a little. I wasn’t used to being the girl who got excited over boys. I

opened the car door and practically skipped to the employee entrance of the coffee shop.

When I opened the door, I was surprised to see Haley and Crystal in the break room already. I checked the time, and it was already 5:50. I had never been that late to work.

“Look what the cat dragged in,” Haley said, a sneer on her face.

“I don’t think we have ever beat you here before,” Crystal added. “Are you okay?” There was genuine worry in her voice, which was a little surprising.

“Everything is fine.” I smiled at the girls and started putting my bag into my locker.

Crystal walked over to me, eyeing me carefully. “Wait a second. Did you meet a boy?”

My eyes widened. “What? Why would you say that?”

“OMG! You totally did. That explains the lack of sleep in your eyes, and that stupid smile on your face.” Crystal was giddy at the

thought. This was the most interest she had taken in me in the six months she had worked here. I shouldn’t have been surprised that a boy is what would make her show interest in me.

“Who cares if she got laid last night?” Haley rolled her eyes and shut her locker a little too loudly. She stormed off, leaving Crystal gaping at her.

“What’s her problem?” Crystal asked.

I shrugged, not thinking too much of it. Crystal’s behavior seemed more odd to me than Haley’s. The two of them were always making snide remarks and giving me dirty looks. “Come on. It’s almost time to open.”

Lana emerged from her office just in time to unlock the doors for the morning rush. She passed off a key to me and said, “Next shift you’re opening by yourself. I have confidence you will do just fine.” After

that, she disappeared into her office again.

Even with the lack of sleep, I couldn't help but smile as the people piled into the shop. Between holding the key to the shop and having a date with Mark later, I felt like I was floating. Mark entered the coffee shop a few minutes after we ordered, and I couldn't help but stare at him. Haley was the one taking the orders while Crystal and I made the drinks. I could barely keep focused while Mark was in the shop.

I tuned my ears to the conversation Haley was having with Mark.

"You've been coming here a lot lately. It's been nice seeing such a pretty face." Haley was using her customer service voice on Mark, and it made my blood boil. She was definitely flirting.

"I will take a coffee with cream," Mark said, ignoring Haley's comment. Haley huffed a little after being ignored. She was extremely pretty and guys simply did not ignore her. "Coming right up." Mark tried handing her cash. Haley waved him off. "This one is on me. Why don't you make it up to me by taking me on a date?"

I could barely contain myself as Haley continued to flirt. I wanted to put her in her place, but I knew I couldn't do anything about it.

"No thanks. I insist on paying. I only have eyes for one person, and that's not you." Mark didn't have any bitterness in his voice. He was very matter of factly in his commentary.

Haley snatched the bill from Mark, scowling in return. Something told me she had never been rejected like that before. I tried to hide my smile, but it was difficult. It felt nice that Mark had rejected someone instead of pretending to be flirty. It made me feel even more special.

After Haley gave him his change, Mark moved to one of the tables, waiting for his drink. I tried not to stare at him and focus on my work, but it was hard not to steal glances at him. He was looking at me every time I looked at him, and it made me blush. The next drink made was his, and when it was done, I placed it at the pick-up window and called his name.

He moved to the counter and grabbed his drink. He gave me a brilliant smile and said, "Thank you." He nodded his head as if to say bye. I mouthed the word "bye" back and Mark left the coffee shop.

I looked around, trying to see if I could see Mark's replacement. I wasn't sure if I would recognize the werewolf that was assigned to me, but I was sure I would be able to smell the wolf. I didn't see anyone at

first. Then the bell above the door rang as a new customer walked in. My eyes widened as Scythe walked through the door.