Chapter 8

 Ever since that night you could hardly find Eya and Savoy apart. They talked and laughed and played and did just about everything together. All the other wolves were taken aback by such a change. Silver laughed, Moon spied, Sage stuck his tongue out, and Dokami seemed to be determined to outdo them. When Savoy and Eya ate together, Dokami ate with Kili. When Savoy brought Eya a flower, Dokami brought Kili a bouquet. I think Kili was enjoying it while it lasted.

 Also, Griffen was constantly trying to please me more than ever, which didn't take a whole lot of effort on his part. As the sun visited more often so did Griffen. He was always hanging around the kennel like a bug to light, but a lot cuter. He got to know the pack even better, talking with the girls, wrestling with the boys, and occasionally eating with us, sometimes even bringing over his own kill. I accompanied him on his hunts every once and a while, just for the fun of it. And sometimes I wondered what life would have been like in the forest if I had not been abducted.

 "What happened to Eya? Since when did she start smiling?" Griffen questioned happily. "Same thing that happened to us." I replied as we saw Eya and Savoy stroll around the field, deep in conversation. Eya was still her snappy old self, but that seemed to melt away when she was with him. I was glad she had someone else to be herself around. "If you ask me, I think she's always been a softie on the inside." Dokami said smugly as Kili groomed his shiny black fur. "Your only saying that because she let you live when you stepped on her tail." Kili laughed cordially. "Never had the guts to finish me off." He smirked. "I think they're adorable together." Moon squeaked, her golden fur shining in the sunlight. It was a perfect day. The sun was smiling down on us and a few puffy clouds drifted lazily up in the clear blue sky. The birds were chirping and the activity in the forest was heard from quite a distance around. Fresh scents of grass and new things I had never smelt before wafted through the air.

 Eya and her lover came in for breakfast, both looking thrilled. "I'd better get a move on." Griffen stated. "Can't you stay?" I whined batting my eyelashes, trying to woo him into changing his mind. I know it was desperate, but it almost always worked. He considered it for a moment, "If you insist." He answered casually, but I knew that he wanted to get out of the kennel. I couldn't blame him, after a while in the forest even I felt cramped in the cage.

 Master Todd came out to visit us for a little bit and gave us our breakfast. In the corner Savoy yakked nonstop and I began to wonder if he ever took a break to inhale, "Are you okay? Take mine, you need it more than I do. How do you feel?" And Eya's patience was wearing thin, "I'm fine. Eat your breakfast." She moaned. He seemed perfectly happy to oblige. Something was fishy, and I was determined to find out what. "Is something wrong?" I interrogated, concerned. "Quite the opposite actually." She replied contently, throwing a glancing at Savoy. He caught the message and left us to talk in private, tail wagging joyfully. Eya turned to me looking elated, "Mayda, I'm pregnant!"

 "What?!?" I screamed ecstatically. "Isn't it wonderful?" She exclaimed with glee. "Wow that was fast! How long?" I asked enthusiastically. "I don't know, I only found out today!" She squealed. This was incredible news! I'm going to be an aunt! "I can't wait to tell the others!" Eya howled with delight, "Come on!"

 I drifted into the crowd as Eya made her way to the center, Savoy at her side looking dazed. "Everyone! We have an announcement to make!" He called and everyone turned their attention to the center, "We- She- I--" he stammered . Eya decided to step in, "I'm going to have a puppy!" Dokami's mouth dropped and Kili and Moon went to go congratulate her. Silver had begun loading her with motherly tips and Sage was utterly befuddled. Dokami finally composed himself and stepped forward to give his congratulations to Savoy. After everything had died down a little bit, we all sat down to discuss the news. "I'm so happy for you!" Kili said cheerfully, "I can't wait until we have the new member! The puppy is going to be adorable, you two make such a handsome couple." "Indeed." Moon added dreamily.

 I gaped at the shadowing sky. A dark curtain was easing its way over the horizon and the early moon had not yet invited the stars out. Everything was so peaceful and serene. The grass swayed in the gentle breeze that swept away the heat and shadows stretched out beneath the trees that seemed to shutter in the wind. It was spring, flowers were blooming and trees put their coats back on and decorated themselves with buds and flowers. It was the season of beginnings and all the animals rejoiced in the new sunlight that winter had finally come to an end. All the young spinsters searching for that special someone. It was this time of year that I took me back to the time when I was trying to keep up with my mother, dodging bushes and hopping roots, I saw the squirrels play chase and the birds called to each other, each wearing it's best coat of feathers. I asked my mother why the animals were acting in such a ridiculous behavior and she told me about how Spring is the season when the young animals find a mate to settle down with. "Your father was just as jittery as a chipmunk when we first met. He was so kind and caring, but he fought valiantly for me. I was devastated when the hunter shot him. But someday you and Eya will be of age to find your mate," She explained fondly. My mother had always been so gentle and dainty. "But how will I know who the right one is?" I fretted as I bounded down the faded rabbit track. "You will know," she chuckled, "You will know."

 Her words resounded in my head and I knew that she was right. But my daydreaming was cut off as I became aware of a figure in the distance that appeared to be approaching us from the forest.

 *Maybe it's Griffen*, I thought to myself, *no! He's right next to me! My imagination is getting the best of me.*

I tried to shrug it off, but as it came closer I could make out a shape of a wolf. I was managing to smother my panic when the shape duplicated and another silhouette became visible next to the first. "Griffen!" I whispered, on the verge of panic, "Someone is coming." He immediately turned to see for himself, ears pricked and listening for any abnormal activity. "I see them too."

 The gray and white wolf stood up to get a better look at the shadows, squinting. He sniffed the air and exhaled worriedly, "Unless my nose deceives me, they are of the River Pack." All the other wolves shifted to get a better look. "What do they want?" Dokami snorted pompously as if they were just some pesky neighbors. "Watch your tongue," Eya growled, throwing a sharp look," they might be able to hear us." Savoy shuffled closer, examining the strangers curiously, "Do you think they are going to pick a fight?" he wondered aloud. Everyone exchanged fretful glances. "They would sooner pick a fight with a grizzly. No sensible wolf would purposely cross paths with another wolf pack unless they had a good excuse." Silver reasoned dismissively. "Or suicidal." Moon suggested as nonchalant as if she was suggesting what to eat that morning. Dokami moved protectively in front of Kili, who had her brow furrowed, apparently deep in thought, "Are we really even a pack?"

 Everyone turned to stare at her. "I mean, we don't have borders or an alpha or anything." she added defensively, obviously ruffled from the attention. "Of course we are," Moon said stubbornly, "Technically pack is a group of wolves. It has nothing to do with ranks and territory." The wolves accepted this silently. Nevertheless, as we turned our attention back to the approaching visitors we couldn't help but feel a little unsettled.