Chapter 9

The blue and silver female sat confidently next to her silver companion, eyeing us warily. I tried to do the same, but I couldn't help but twitch with anticipation. "I expect you have a good reason to barge in on us at such an hour." Eya challenged, reserved yet ready for anything. The silver brute spoke up, clearly less collected than his partner, "Sorry, we got lost--" He was cut off with a warning look from the silver and blue wolf. "We have a proposal," She said simply. But Dokami was not quick to believe, "Shouldn't we know the names of our intruders first?" he scorned. She disregarded his hostility and nodded, "Of course. I am Marine, and this is Speero," She examined Eya and added, "You must be the alpha?" Eya looked momentarily taken aback, but hastily decided that it would be best to let them think they had a superior. She nodded reluctantly. "Hey! She's not--" Sage protested, but Kili cut her off. Dokami bared his teeth disapprovingly, but he kept his mouth shut. They ignored them and continued, "Our pack is in great need. The Razor Pack has been intruding in our land and stealing our prey. We tried to negotiate, but it only lead to war. I've met a few of them, and most of them aren't so bad. It's the leader and his followers that cause most of the trouble. They won't listen to the law of the forest and Caro is ruthless," Speero sneered in disgust at the mention of Caro's name, "We have fought them for a while, but our forces are weakening and we are outnumbered. We need your help."

"What makes you think we are going to risk our necks for you?" Dokami jeered, earning a shove from Kili. "Sorry for his rudeness," Dokami sniffed at this, "What he means is, will there be any benefits on our account if we do decide to help?" She corrected. Speero eyed Dokami with distaste, "Of course. We can offer you are large chunk of land on this side of the river. We barely use it and it's too much for us to guard considering our predicament." Griffen's ears perked with interest and Eya nodded slowly, though I can't imagine what we would do with all that land. "We would like a night to discuss your offer." Eya announced. Marine nodded back and told her that she could find them short ways across the river.

Dokami glowered at them as they trotted back towards the river. "Those flea-bitten intruders think they can just barge in here and demand us to kill ourselves for something that's none of our concern. There is no way we are going to help those filthy furballs." He scoffed. Eya bristled at him warningly. "What makes you think *you* decide what we are and aren't going to do?" she snarled. "What makes *you* think you can tell me what to do? Or has the alpha act gotten to your head?" He retorted, hackles raising angrily. "Maybe I should be the alpha to keep wolves like you in line!" She spat heatedly. Dokami had had enough. He leaped on top of her and clamped his teeth down on her neck and threw his head side to side. But Eya was prepared, kicking him off with her hind legs, she bit down on his scruff and threw him down, knocking the breath out of him. Scrambling up, his fur was on end with fury. He dived in and they tore at each other like ravenous ravens fighting for the last of the meat.

"Shouldn't we do something?" I yipped fearfully. I couldn't decide which one to be more concerned about. Kili tried to stop them but they ignored her and continued attempting to rip each other to shreds. Savoy sat there gaping. "Let them fight it out. There's nothing we can do." Griffen told me placidly, but the worried glint in his eyes betrayed him.

Dokami snapped at her leg ferociously, Eya dodged it and sank her teeth into his shoulder, lifting him off the ground and slamming him back down. He fought for breath but nothing seemed to be entering his lungs, so he just lay there in defeat. Eya growled at him, panting and ready for another attack, but nothing came.

He staggered up right and bowed his head respectively, though not without reluctance. His sleek black fur was ruffled and blood trickled from a few small cuts. She lifted her head and stared around her, daring anybody to challenge her. After a moment, Moon bowed her head also, followed by the rest of the pack. Eya's defiance changed to confusion as we lowered our heads respectively. "What are you guys doing?" she demanded as she stared around. I was not sure myself, but instinct told me that Eya was a wolf to be respected. Griffen lifted his head and answered, "You have earned your rank as alpha. No one seems to object, therefore you are our leader."

"What? I can't be alpha! I'm a girl, and I'm pregnant!" She stuttered. Griffen smiled respectfully, "The forest law says nothing against being a female. Plus, usually the alpha is *supposed* to have puppies." The rest of us chuckled and I licked her in the ear. "Well, I guess I really have to you now." I joked affectionately. Savoy jumped for joy and licked her cheek several times before he said anything. Only Dokami looked agitated. "Don't we have something to discuss?" he interrupted, and Eya nodded reluctantly.

The wolves sat in a circle and waited for Eya to start the meeting. "We have come across a very unexpected opportunity. Now we must decide if we are going to take it," Silence, "If we help them then they will give us part of their territory." Eya didn't have to wait for an answer, "What would we do with it?" Dokami scorned. He may have to accept that she was alpha now, but he wasn't going to let it pass so easily. Kili started to scold him but Eya silenced her, "Don't be a fool, Dokami. Do you really think that we can stay cooped up forever? Mayda has already figured that much out, and I think it's time that we face the facts. Wolves were not meant to be caged. The wild blood runs strong in our blood, and no matter what loyalties lie with Master Todd, it cannot change the fact that we were meant to rule the forest, not the pound. We have already taken on the customs of the forest when I became alpha. I think it is time we live where we belong. I think it is time we return to our home. We must return to the forest. But we can only do that if we help someone who needs our help." She finished.

I was taken aback by her speech. At first I thought she was crazy, but the more I thought about it the I began to realize that we were meant to be in the forest. I glanced at Dokami, who had his ears flattened, but dared not challenge her again. If I didn't know better I would have thought he agreed with her. I shifted my gaze to the others. Their faces shown with determination and zeal. They were waiting for Eya to make the next move, and I realized I was too. She waited until her speech had sunken in and continued, "But we cannot approach them with an unorganized pack. We need a beta and a pack name," We nodded in agreement, "I think we should start with the beta. Griffen is an honest wolf, not to mention he knows the forest better than any of us. I think it is appropriate that Griffen should be beta, that is, if you will." She smiled at Griffen's blank face. Too stunned to speak, he just nodded. "Well then, now we have the pack name to worry about. Any suggestions?"

"Forest Pack?" Someone suggested feebly. We considered this and decided it was too lame. "Bear Pack?" Savoy tried. This one didn't appeal to us either. Plus Silver said that the bears might not appreciate it. Griffen recovered from his shock and chipped in with a little advice, "Usually the name reflects the pack. Like Razor Pack because they are sharp and dangerous and River Pack because they are they live by the river." Sage, nearly bursting with excited energy, burst into the center of the meeting. "But we are better than any old razor or river," He bragged gleefully, "We are faster than an arrow, and sharper too!" I laughed along with the others at his surety, until I realized that he had unknowingly mentioned the perfect name for our pack. "I've got it!" I jumped up with enthusiasm, "Arrow Pack!"

Their reaction was immediate, "Perfect!", "How fitting!", and, "That's it!" were three of the many words of approval that had filled the air as soon as I had uttered it. Eya called the meeting back to order and addressed us with a smile and shining eyes, "Tomorrow we will go to their aid as Arrow Pack. But for now, we must sleep!" She was responded with howls of delight. We were now officially not only pack mates, but closer, pack brothers and sisters.