

## Chapter Six

Beth's POV

"Jessica!" Mrs. Smith said with mortification clear on her face. I, however, was thankful that Jess spit it all out for me in a no-nonsense way. At least now I understand what this process entailed. While I was terrified out of my mind that I wouldn't be what Ethan was used to in that department, I would be lying if I said I wasn't more than interested in taking part in this little ritual. Especially if it means that I can get rid of that monster's DNA in my children. I was all for that.

"So. What you are telling me is that as long as I take part in this 'ritual' my children will no longer have that monster's DNA and I will essentially be free of him forever?" I clarified.

"Essentially, yes. Ethan's DNA would wipe out any traces of his. Beth sweetie. Even if you do this, it doesn't erase the trauma you had to endure, just remember that please before you make your decision." Jessica said to me. I nodded my head to her and stood up. I started to pace back and forth in the small space while I thought out my options more clearly without jumping feet first in the deep end. Was I ready for something like this? Can I willingly give myself to an essential stranger even though he is my mate and guaranteed to be with me forever? Am I willing to jump head first into a relationship in order to remove that monster from my children? Yes, I would. I would be lying if I didn't say that my biggest fear was that my children would come out looking like their father and I would be reminded of that every time I looked at their faces. I was struggling with myself about whether I would be able to love my children unconditionally without resentment. By doing this ritual, though, I guarantee that I won't have to face that dilemma.

With a deep breath in and out, I turned and faced the four wolves watching me intently. I looked down at my hands and said, "Well then. I guess I need to tell my Mom that I won't be home for a few days."

When I looked up, I saw Jess had a smirk on her face and Ethan had a cheesy grin as he ran over to me and spun me in his arms. I giggled as he sat me down. Mr. and Mrs. Smith had shock written across their features. Another knock came at the door. This time Mr. Smith went to see who it was. Mr. Matthews was at the door looking angry about being kicked out of his office for so long. "Mr. Smith, while I do appreciate that this was a matter of importance to the pack, I do still have a school to run and require the use of my office." Said the principal.

"Yes, of course. We were just nishing up here. My wife and I will be signing our children out for the rest of the day and Beth as well. If you could let their teachers know. Also, Beth and Ethan will be out for the rest of this week. Please send their work that needs to be completed home with Jessica tomorrow." Mr. Smith said.

"My apologies, Alpha, but you cannot take Ms. Carter out of school. You are not her parent and therefore can't make that decision." Mr. Matthews said with a slight quiver in his voice.

"Excuse me sir. I am 18 and can sign myself out. Please follow Mr. Smith's request for my departure for the remainder of the week as well. I haven't been feeling well with the morning sickness and I've been struggling with classes because some people's perfumes are causing me to be quite ill. I'm hoping by taking this time that I will be able to return without being a disturbance to my fellow classmates." I said as innocently as possible. Mr. Matthews paled a bit and agreed that my staying out for the remainder of the week would be best.

As we left the office, I saw Mr. Smith removed the device from the principal's desk and turned it off. When we exited the building, Jessica said, "Damn Beth. You really know how to lay it on thick don't you." Jessica laughed at her own comment and kept on chattering away about the look on the principal's face when we left. Ethan was holding my hand and walking with me. I didn't think about it before, but now that we were outside, I realized that I would have to walk home since Mom was going to be at work. I mentally sighed, knowing that I wasn't prepared for that walk after spending most of the day either being sick or feeling sick. They never tell you in the movies how hard and exhausting being pregnant is. Sure, they show you how uncomfortable women are at the end of their pregnancy, but not at the beginning.

"Where is your car, baby? Either you can follow me or Jess can drive your car and you can ride with me." Ethan said, taking me out of my thoughts.

"Umm. I don't have a car. I walk to and from school. My father and stepmother wouldn't let me learn when I lived with them. Mom hasn't had the time to teach me after having started a new job." I said, embarrassed. I know I shouldn't be, because there are plenty of people who don't know how to drive at my age. Though just having to tell my mate that I can't do something depresses and scares me. What if he realizes I have too much baggage or that I am too dumb to be his mate? What if he decides he doesn't want to be with me because of it?

"Well, not anymore baby. From now on, I will be taking you to and from school. I'll also teach you to drive if that is something you want to learn. Though I must say I do like the idea of being able to do something for you without you being able to tell me you can do it for yourself." He said with a broad grin on his face. I wasn't sure if I wanted to melt or smack him in his arm for that last bit. In the end, I just smiled and gave a small giggle.

"I would appreciate the rides. Also, that would be wonderful. I would love to be able to learn how to drive. I am going to be a mom soon and it would make sense to know how to drive so I can go to my appointments and the babies' appointments when they are here. Especially if Mom has to work and can't take me." I said while thinking about all the other things I would be able to do, so Mom didn't have as much on her plate to deal with.

"Baby. You know that you have me now too, right? You aren't alone in this. You have your mom, but you now have me, Jess, and our parents to help you too if you want and need it. You'll never be alone again. I promise." Ethan told me as he kissed me on the cheek. He then started to walk to his car and opened the passenger side door for me. I blushed as I thanked him and got into his car.

"So where are we going? I didn't even think to ask before." I said to no one in particular.

"We are going to go grab a bite to eat. Then we can decide how to talk to your mom about what happened today. Then go from there. Are you sure you are OK with and want to do the offspring claiming? You don't have to do it if you feel like you need to, because I put my foot in my mouth. I don't want you to do anything you aren't comfortable with," Ethan said to me.

I mulled over what to say to him to make sure he realizes that I am doing this for me and not him. Honestly, from everything I heard about him from Jess in the short time I have known her, he seems like he is a pretty nice guy. So it isn't like I am with a stranger. Honestly, he feels like home to me, and I feel complete when he is near. Before we were called to the office, I had been feeling like something was missing until I met him in the hall. This must be what they call the mate bond at work.

"Honestly Ethan. I am OK with this. It isn't like I don't know you. From everything Jess has said about you since I have known her, it is all good things. Unless you are a serial killer or a major playboy, I don't see the problem. I know this may sound weird, but I feel whole and complete when I am near you. Like I was missing something my whole life until I saw you. I feel like I finally have a home when you simply hold my hand." I said with a blush. "Also, if this gives me the opportunity to erase that bastard from my children's DNA, then I want to do it. I don't want to look at my babies and see him. I don't think I would be able to survive if they looked like him when they came." I nished as I started to cry.

Ethan mumbled a curse and swerved the car over to the side of the road and parked the car. He got out and went around to my side and opened the door. Before I could say anything, Ethan had me in his arms cradling me, trying to give me comfort. I couldn't help it and let out a wailing sob and clutched onto him for dear life as I cried my heart out. I distantly felt Ethan move us to the back seat of the car and heard the driver's side door close. Then the car started moving again, this time with me in Ethan's arms, still crying and Jess driving. I cried for a good 10 minutes before I got it all out and started to snie and calm down.

"I'm sorry. It's these hormones. I swear. I really am not like this." I said, blushing and sniing.

"It's ok baby. You've had a lot going on the last few months. It's understandable. You cry all you want and I will hold you and comfort you through it. That's my job as your mate. Not that it is work being your mate. Or that I don't want to do it or have to. I want to be there for you. I want you to be able to cry on my shoulder and share your worries and pain with me. Not that I want you to be in pain. I mean, s\*\*t! I am screwing this up." Ethan said. I couldn't help but giggle at him. That was the sweetest thing I have ever heard.

"You didn't screw anything up. That was sweet. I know what you are trying to say because I feel the same as you." I said to him to help ease his stress.

"We're here guys. Do you need a few minutes, Beth?" Jess said from the front seat. I didn't even realize that the car had stopped. I was so lost in Ethan's eyes.

I blushed and said, "I think I'll be OK if I can just splash some cold water into my face in the bathroom. I'll be right back." I rushed into the building and straight to the bathroom. I leaned against the sink for a minute before sighing and turning on the tap. After splashing the cold water in my face, I checked my eyes to see the damage from all of that crying. Surprisingly, it wasn't as bad as I thought. A little splotchy but not very noticeable unless you are up close. I dried my hands and walked out of the bathroom. If I had been paying attention, I probably would have noticed the big chest in front of the door. But no, that wasn't me and I ran straight into said chest. I almost fell backwards but strong hands gripped my waist to steady me. I looked up into Ethan's eyes and got lost in them. It felt like I could see into his soul and him into mine.

"I'm sorry baby. I didn't mean to hurt you. Are you OK?" Ethan said, slightly panicking. It was cute.

"I'm ne Mr. Worry Wolf. Just a little surprised is all. I really should pay attention to where I am going." I replied to him.

"O.K. If you are sure, let's go. Jess and my parents are already at the table waiting for us," Ethan said as he grabbed my hand and interlaced our fingers together. I nodded and we walked to the table with everyone already there.