

Chapter 5: The Big Move

"In all the world, there is no heart for me like yours. In all the world, there is no love for you like mine." –Maya Angelou

"Look...I'm sorry if this is all too much for you." Xavier spoke quickly as they stood staring at each other. "But I...I'm committed to someone else. I can't be your mate."

"It's not like I expect you too." Rose replied honestly. "I think you should be able to choose who you want to be with. Isn't it a little gothic to be pushed into a relationship with someone you don't even know? I don't know much about werewolves but I definitely know what a mating ceremony means." She gave a quick shudder. "That's not something I'd want to do with someone I didn't care about or...or love." Rose spoke the last few words softly but Xavier's werewolf hearing picked up on it.

"You know...that's why they want to take you back to the pack now. They want us to get to know each other and maybe develop feelings but I don't want to give you the wrong idea. I'm already with someone I care a lot about." Xavier looked at Rose square in the eye. "Do you want to go back to join the pack?"

Rose shrugged her shoulders. "I don't know about the pack but I do know that I want to be able to get to know my dad." She spoke, choosing her words carefully. "Even if I go back, It's not like I'm going to expect anything from you." She assured him. "I'm on your side here. I...I want to be with someone for love. I want to fall in love." Rose smiled softly at the mere thought of it. Life was too beautiful to waste being with someone she didn't love.

Xavier nodded and was momentarily taken aback when she gave him a small smile. She had a cute smile...shaking his head and internally scolding himself, Xavier gave her a tight smile in return.

"As long as we have an understanding." He spoke up.

Rose turned around to walk back inside and gure out what to do now that she knew the truth. Should she go join the pack and throw herself headrst into an entirely new life, or should she stay here where she was in her comfort zone?

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One week later...

In the end, Thomas won out and Rose found herself packing up everything with her aunt to move back to pack territory. It was around that time that she also found the courage to nally exchange numbers with Jake to keep in touch. Rose didn't think her departure would bother Jake all that much. All the girls fawned over him and it's not like he had ever remotely shown any interest in her. But Rose couldn't shake off the memory of how visibly agitated he'd been when he found out she was moving. He kept going on about how they hadn't had time to exchange ideas for their mid-term report yet and even said she was pretty cool for always helping him out. Summoning up her courage, Rose had exchanged not only phone numbers but email addresses as well and told him he could message her anytime. That had calmed him down slightly and he seemed visibly appeased.

Feeling giddy over the fact that maybe her crush really did have feelings for her, Rose checked her email and text messages for the ftieth time as she approached pack territory in her aunt's ashy car.

"So all our money was actually coming from the pack's funds?" Rose asked, setting aside her cellphone disappointed that Jake hadn't messaged her.

Aunty Maria nodded enthusiastically, bobbing her head up and down with the music.

"The previous Alpha had dispersed funds for us. I do have my own money which is how I bought this baby here." She patted the dashboard of the car lovingly. "But all of our living expenses were paid for by the pack so we could make sure you had a good life growing up."

Rose swallowed a lump of emotion in her throat. All this time, she had thought it was just the two of them against the world. She had never in her wildest dreams imagined that there was an entire group of people standing in the shadows as her support system. For that matter, never had she imagined that Aunty Maria had gone through a dangerous, life-risking process of being turned into a werewolf to be able to guard her more effectively.

"We're here!" exclaimed Aunty Maria interrupting Rose's thoughts.

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"Rose!" exclaimed Josie, coming over to give her a big hug as Maria and Rose entered the Alpha's mansion. "My you've grown!" she pulled back to give Rose a once over, her eyes misting over.

"Apparently not much." scoffed Xavier. He was leaning against the wall in the foyer's entry way. Behind him were double doors opening into a huge conference room. where the pack usually had their gettogethers.

Rose shot him a mean look for that comment. He may be the pack's Alpha, but that didn't mean he could bully her around.

"Xavier!" admonished Josie. "That's not very nice! Rose is just a late bloomer!" And then Josie realized her outburst and looked sheepishly at Rose.

"It's OK." Rose assured, stepping into the pack house where her father had brought her to meet everyone. "I know I'm not as curvy as the other girls." She gave a small shrug as if it didn't bother her and made a beeline for the refreshments.

Josie turned on her son.

"Xavier Edmund Sinclair!" Josie scolded, rounding in on him. "I've taught you better than that on how to treat a lady." Her shrill voice was so loud, almost everyone turned to see their powerful Alpha being scolded by his petite, mother who usually doted on him.

To his credit, the Alpha didn't get even a little angry over his mother scolding him in front of everyone.

He just gave a small shrug and replied sardonically, "A lady? Mom she's a child. Look at her. Are you sure she's 16? She looks like a 12 year old. And you want her to be my mate? Sorry mom but I'm not into little girls."

Josie reddened. "She's a lovely young lady Xavier and no one's asking you to take her for your mate right now. We'll revisit this topic once she turns 18. You're only two years older than her, you know." His mother pointed out crabbily. "You be nice to her and make her feel welcome. That's all anyone is asking of you. No need to be so rude. She's part of the pack and you're responsibility, just like everyone else in this pack." Josie nished snappishly.

Xavier didn't say another word, even though he was sorely tempted too. Instead, he simply walked over to his girlfriend, Alyssa, and slung an arm around her waist. He didn't know why but Rose's mere presence was setting him on edge. He was never this mean to anyone but Rose seemed to be bringing out the mean streak in him.

"Let's get out of her baby." Alyssa purred, running a perfectly manicured hand through his jet black locks of hair. Glancing back at the crowd in his house, Xavier saw that most of the people were all now watching to see what he did—go to his supposed Luna, or follow his girlfriend?

Rose for her part, had her back to them, seemingly oblivious to everyone except her father who stood next to her in the conference room talking animatedly. With a wolsh grin, Xavier pulled Alyssa out of the pack house and they got in his car, driving off to someplace they could have some privacy.

Meanwhile...

Rose clenched her plastic cup a little too tightly as Xavier followed Alyssa out.

You are not supposed to expect anything from him she scolded herself as her father talked on and on next to her, completely oblivious. But she couldn't help it because ever since she'd met him, she couldn't get his achingly handsome face out of her mind. He was good-looking and had eyes as deep as the ocean. Shaking herself out of her thoughts, Rose looked up as people began gathering around her for introductions. In all honesty, Rose had to admit it felt good to nally be part of...something. Up till now, her aunt and her had always lived a very secluded life. She owed it to these people to be what they needed her to be.