

Chapter 25

Rye Day 28

Everybody had already left as I brushed my cheek, where that damn snow leopard had scratched me. As I held out my hand to examine it, I saw a thin coat of red that was wrapped around my fingers.

“Thanks, sis,” I said, as I turned to look Fare in the eye and lowered my arm.

She didn’t even bother to look at me. “I didn’t do it for you,”

I nervously scratched behind my ear with my blood-free hand. “Yeah. I know. But thanks anyways,”

“Don’t mention it,”

Fare walked away and left me there, bleeding in front of my hut, alone.

Alone.

The word tasted more bitter than usual and the stone that had been sitting inside my hollow chest grew even heavier.