

## *Chapter Four*

As I'm walking to my car from the shop, I unlock my car door and as I'm about to slide into the driver's seat, a little dog runs up to me and barks. I look down and at the dog, which is partly covered in snow. The dog has white fur that blends in with the snow. The dog shivers as it looks up at me, wagging its tail and it barks again. I get out of the car and I kneel down in front of the dog. I look at its neck to see if there is a collar and there is. I tilt the collar up where I can see the name, or possibly the number so I can return it. But it just says the name which is Arya. I look at her and she tilts her head, and barks at me again, pawing me at the leg. I smile and I pick her up. Later today I'll go around the neighborhood and return her once I feed her and bathe her, because she smells like mud. I pick her up and put her in the passenger seat. I shut the doors and drive off, heading back home. Once I park in the driveway, I pick her up and bring her into the house. I put her on the ground and she sniffs and roams around the house. I watch her and wait until she's done exploring, so I can give her a bath. After what feels like two hours, I call her name and she runs happily into the bathroom, which I'm waiting at the bathtub and getting the water nice and warm. She stares at the bathtub, as if it's a demon. I slowly walk up to her and gently pick her up, and I place her in the tub. She tries to jump out but I keep my eyes peeled. I scrub her good with shampoo from a website called PureHaven and when I'm done scrubbing her, I rinse her off and I get a towel. I should've been more aware because when I take my eyes off her for one second, she jumps out of the tub and she runs out of the bathroom. I spin around, holding a blue towel and look at the puddles of water leading out the bathroom. "Arya!" I shout and I run out, almost falling on my back. I grab the door frame and save myself from sliding down the hallway. I look down the hallway and see the puddles. I run down the hallway, falling on my back this time and sliding so fast down the hallway I thought I was going to faint. I slam into the wall and I look to the right side and I see Arya looking at me as if she's laughing at me. I quickly grab her and dry her off with the towel I'm holding. I carry her down to the living room and I place her on the couch, and I clean all the messes she made. When I'm done, I go into my kitchen and I cut an apple for her. She hears the cutting and she rushes in, I don't have a dog bowl for her, I just use a regular one. She inhales the apple slices and she licks the bowl when she's done. I pick the bowl up from the ground and I wash it off. I dry it and I put it back in the cabinet. As soon as I shut the cabinet door, my doorbell sounds and I wipe my hands down on my jeans as I'm walking to the door. I'm expecting a package but instead of that, I see my neighbor standing at the door. "Can I help you?" I ask, crossing my arms from the cold that rushes in the house. "I'm looking for my dog, she is quite the wanderer but she has been gone for two hours, which is unusual for her because it's so cold. Have you seen her?" As he talks, Arya comes running at him and she jumps on him. She licks his cheek and he chuckles. "Arya is your dog?" I ask, confuzzled.

"Yeah, how did you two meet?"

"When I left the shop she ran up to me. And I didn't want her to be lonely and cold so I picked her up and bathed her." I say, barely holding eye contact as his piercing gaze seems to be looking right through me. "Well, thank you for taking care of her." I smile softly and the corners of his mouth tug into a smirk. He leaves with Arya and I shut the door behind him, a fluttery sensation in my chest and stomach. Is it weird that I might have a thing for a person I don't even know their name?