

Miles

Miles sat in the truck, surrounded by the scent of fresh pine and the winding road that led them north on Hidden Highway. With him were Felix and their dog, Sandro, both of whom seemed to share an unspoken understanding of the journey they were undertaking. Their destination was the hot springs where Cassidy awaited, but Miles found himself more preoccupied with the confusing swirl of emotions he felt toward Felix. Despite the humor-filled banter between Miles and Sandro, he couldn't deny the growing attraction he felt toward Felix, which was made even more complex by Felix's cheerful yet distant demeanor. Felix, although a good friend, remained emotionally unavailable, something that only seemed to deepen Miles's internal struggle. This attraction was hard for him to ignore, yet every time he thought he could push his feelings aside, they came rushing back, making the long drive feel both exhilarating and unnerving.

The deeper they traveled into the mountainous terrain, the more Miles became lost in his own thoughts. With every turn of the road, Felix pointed out various landmarks, describing the sights along the route to Whispering River with excitement. But even as Felix filled the air with stories, Miles couldn't shake the nagging worry that Felix might be interested in Cassidy instead. Their friendly chatter became a backdrop to Miles's growing inner conflict about his feelings. He kept wondering if he should act on his emotions or ignore them, trying to focus on the task at hand—finding Cassidy—but each time he did, his mind would wander back to Felix. The entire journey was turning into a mix of anxiety, longing, and unresolved desire.

The drive continued, with Miles trying to distract himself by thinking about the stop at Bell Ranch, where they picked up Sandro. The visit to his own home was even more emotionally charged, as it reminded him of his brother, Wynton, and all the unresolved feelings tied to their family. As Felix continued to talk about Cassidy's research into his

family for a school project, Miles began to feel a greater sense of unease. The names Felix mentioned from his family's past, like those of the de Fallas family, felt unfamiliar, yet there was something about them that piqued his curiosity. He had always wondered about his heritage, but now, hearing these names stirred a deeper sense of wanting to understand his own place within the tangled history that Felix was sharing.

But as the day wore on, and Felix continued to speak, the attraction Miles felt for him became harder to suppress. There was something magnetic about Felix's presence that Miles couldn't ignore. The moment Felix changed clothes in front of him only heightened the tension between them, leaving Miles more confused than ever. He excused himself quickly, unable to handle the surge of feelings that seemed to be overwhelming him. Yet, despite the awkwardness, there was also a sense of connection that Miles couldn't ignore. The bond they shared, although complicated by his growing feelings, remained genuine, and it became clearer to him that Felix wasn't just a friend. He was something more—someone who made him feel both vulnerable and alive.

Felix's quiet maturity added another layer to their connection, and Miles began to see that their friendship might be evolving into something deeper. In the midst of their journey, the realization hit him that the bond he shared with Felix wasn't just based on mutual attraction but also on a growing emotional connection. The quiet moments between them, the thoughtful exchanges, were beginning to feel more significant than anything he had experienced with anyone else. The trio continued their journey deeper into the dusky forest, heading toward Cassidy's hot springs. As the landscape around them shifted and changed, so too did the dynamics of their relationship, hinting at a future full of potential challenges, growth, and emotional discoveries that would reshape the course of Miles's life forever.