

**Preview Copy of *Searching No Where*
(Book 4 of the *No Where Apocalypse*)**

by e a lake

(Chapter One)

Fall - 3 full years in, no end in sight - beginning of year 4 Day 1,130

The stabbing pain in my side made me twist and turn as I searched for the cause. Feeling something just around the right corner of my back, I pulled it out, gasping as I did. A knife covered with blood...my blood.

Behind me, my assailant laughed at my predicament. I turned and stared at her, the knife grasped tightly in my right hand.

"Problem, Bob?" she said, giggling as she spoke.

"You little bitch." She took off seeing me start for her. She and I both knew what I was going to do.

"Oh come on," she called out as she met me behind the cabin. "It's just a little foreplay. I know how you like it rough. You get all banged up and I patch you up. Every. Single. Time."

Catching up with her, I grabbed a handful of flowing, mid-back length auburn hair, except it was blonder now. This was it, I was done with her and her games.

Holding the knife before her face, I nodded several times. I was serious. She was still giggling, trying to lean in and kiss me on the lips.

"Today it ends," I stated low and clean. "Today I finally get rid of you."

But she shook her head, wiping some of the blood that had dripped from my hand onto my forearm. Licking the blood from her fingers, she displayed her crimson colored teeth.

"You say that every time," she joked, leaning her head to the left so I'd have a clear shot at her neck. "Go ahead. I know you want to do it. And I just want to make you happy."

I thrust the knife with all of my strength. It should have buried to the hilt in the soft flesh, diving deep into a vital area. Instead, it came to an abrupt stop, not even making a mark on her pale skin. I'd failed...again.

"You know you can't hurt me," she said, taking the knife from me and tossing it aside. "You may want to, but you can't. You want to blame your whole miserable time here on me, but you can't; because I haven't done this to you. And believe it or not, you haven't even done it to yourself. It just happened."

She leaned over and kissed my wound. When she rose I expected to find her face covered in blood. Instead, it was as clean as ever. "There, all better," she said, kissing me again. "You were hurt and I fixed you. Just like always."

My breathing became shallow and I felt as if I could faint.

"You look pale," she cooed. "Come sit down on the bench out front, out of the sun. You work too hard, Bob, do you know that?"

I sat and blew several forced breaths out of my lungs. I closed my eyes, but only for a second.

A hand dropped on my shoulder. "Bob," a sweet voice called from somewhere beyond. "Bob, are you okay?"

Forcing my eyes open, I looked for the kind feminine soul. Above me she hovered, the sun directly behind her head, causing me to squint and cover my eyes. I expected someone else, someone I loved, someone I missed. Instead, I found her.

"Are you okay, Bob?" she repeated. "I heard you murmuring out here and I came to check on you." She moved out of the sun and I saw her face plainly.

"Hey, Violet," I replied, barely unable to hide my disappointment.

#

No words were spoken as we sat together for a long while. A few minutes after hurting her with my words, she took my hand. A few minutes later she took my arm. Not long after that she laid her head on my shoulder and began to sniffle.

The past few weeks had been like this. A fight every other day, harsh words at bedtime and meals, and me falling asleep midday, only to be awakened by Violet from a terrible nightmare...or premonition.

"I know you still blame me," Violet whispered as we watched Libby push Hope around the yard in an old stroller Grandpa

Wilson had found. "I would have done anything to have the Weston's take me instead of Daisy," she paused, just like she always did at that part.

"But they didn't, Bob. I wish you'd quit hating me for something I tried to stop from happening," Violet paused and drew a deep breath, "I know it will still take a while to get over it. I understand. Just let me know when you're ready to start anew."

Yep, same shit different day.

"You mean go find Daisy," I replied. "I'll let you know when I'm ready to go find Daisy."

I felt her head come off my shoulder and knew she was staring at me. Most likely looking hurt, again.

"If that's what you want," she said forcefully, "then that's what we'll do. You and me will go find Daisy."

I turned to face her, not believing a word she spoke.

"You'll do that?" I asked.

Wiping away a stray tear, she smiled. "I'd do anything for you. You just haven't figured that out yet."

I nodded slightly. "Then we should start planning our trip."

She sighed and her face went tense.

"You know we're never going to find her, right?" Her sad young eyes tightened on mine. "We don't even know where to start."

Yeah, that part. I always kept forgetting that minor detail.