

## Alpha Caius and the Runaway Luna

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### Chapter 0001

Anastasia

If you were to have asked me to pinpoint the moment my life fell apart and the world that I knew came crashing down in an explosion of shattered hopes, wishes, and dreams, I would've said it started the day my father called me into his o

As the Alpha of our large pack, located along the coast of Virginia, my father had a lot on his hands. He was almost always busy, which made it even more surprising that he'd call for me early on a Monday.

He sat behind his hand-crafted executive desk, wearing one of his tailored suits that clung to his massive frame. All it did was highlight the differences between us.

Where he was hard, I was soft. Where he was stern and disciplined, I was kind and wild.

"Anastasia, come. Sit." He beckoned me in a way one might call a beloved pet. "We have something important to discuss."

Much to his ire, I didn't sit. I planted my hands on my hips and proceeded to tap my stiletto, the ones he hated with a vengeance, on the hardwood

His nostrils flared, and brown eyes darkened. Releasing an exasperated sigh, he smoothed his fingers over his mustache.

"Fine, show one last shred of defiance. Get it out of your system, daughter. Henceforth, your days of willful disobedience are at an end."

What was that supposed to mean? Was he going to take away my credit card again? "I am an old man, Anastasia. It is time I step down and let a new generation rule this pack."

I perked up immediately. My entire life I'd been studying and training to step into my father's shoes. The people of this pack adored me, and not just for the various programs I'd started to aid them and their children. It was a relationship that had taken me years to build. One I cherished with my whole heart.

"Are you serious?" I all but squealed, my hands clasped together. "You won't regret this. I have so many plans—"

"I know I will not regret this, because you are not ruling alone." Father cleared his throat, "There is a law your great-grandfather put into action, one you are to abide by. Before stepping into your role as Luna, you must marry."

The joy that raced through my veins evaporated. My jaw dropped, and I found myself trapped in my chest, yet couldn't seem to break free of the cage they were trapped in.

"I—I'm going to what?"

"You are getting married, Anastasia." Father then turned his head to the door. "You may come in now, Jayden."

Jayden Warner, my preening douchebag of an ex, strutted into my father's office, his tanned skin, slicked back hair, and chocolate eyes had once drawn me in and left me stumbling over my own two feet.

That was until he opened his mouth and showed his true colors.

It had taken a total of ten dates for Jayden to reveal himself as a typical misogynistic wolf. Even worse, I had already slept with the guy by then. It didn't matter how many showers I took; I could still feel his sperm seeping into my skin.

"Hello, Ana."

I snarled openly, "Do not call me that."

My father's expression hardened, his eyes flashing with rage at my outburst. He'd trained me—raised me—better than that, but something about Jayden never failed to make me lose control.

"You will treat your niece with respect, Anastasia." He said in his booming voice, "I am sure you're unaware, but Jayden's company has taken over since the months you two have parted. He's made connections all across the country, with both the wolves and humans. He will be an invaluable asset to this pack, and an Alpha worthy of taking over."

Giving into him in my veins, I slid my stare over to Jayden. As we locked eyes, his lips tipped up into a smug smile. The sight of it sent me reeling back to our last date, where everything had crashed and burned.

We were at a local club named Euphoria, dancing and drinking the night away with a few of his friends.

The night took a turn when Jayden slipped out of the club and headed to the bathroom. I continued to twirl beneath the lights, taking a break only when my dry mouth begged me to do so.

It was at the bar where I began chatting with one of Jayden's closest friends.

Stephen was one of those jock-types, always smiling and laughing. His good mood was infectious.

The conversation was innocent. He'd been joking about something his niece did when Jayden swooped in, his eyes narrowed and jaw clenched. I removed my hand from Stephen's shoulder, where it had been as I threw my head back in laughter.

Not a word was spoken when Jayden led me away from his friend to a darkened hallway where he pushed me against the wall and snarled low in my ear.

"What the hell was that?"

I blinked up at him, confused and just a tad buzzed. His hand wrapped around my wrist, digging in tightly. The pain was numbed by the alcohol, a distant thought in the face of my confusion.

"What was what?"

"Do you know how disrespectful and embarrassing it is to see my woman screwing with another male? How am I supposed to trust you after this? You practically threw yourself at him, Ana. Goddess, can you even comprehend how desperate you looked?"

I couldn't form words, or a single coherent thought as I stared into the eyes of the same man who had claimed my body mere days ago. What was wrong with him? Had he been talking to his friend really set him off?

It was insanity.

"You're lucky I even let you come out here tonight." He shook his head, the lights dancing on his slicked back hair. "This won't happen again."

My mother's voice whispered in my ear, reminding me that I was worth more than this. She might've been gone, lost many years ago, but not a day went by when I didn't think about her.

She had raised me better than this.

That night, I had broken up with Jayden and left him in the dust. Ignoring his calls and texts had been easy, even when they increased in intensity over the course of a few days.

The names he had called me stuck with me even months later.

I whirled on my father, furious and desperate, and hating every second of it.

"You can't do this. I've been training to become Luna my entire life. You can't seriously think I need a man to—what? To keep me in place? To rule over me? That law is out dated and misogynistic!"

Jayden said nothing, as I knew he would. My father on the other hand, stood from his desk, towering over me in an act of pure power. I bit the inside of my cheek until I tasted blood, refusing to cower before him.

"That is exactly what you need, Anastasia. You are too wild, too reckless. You, like the rest of your gender, are run by your emotions. This pack needs logic. It needs someone dedicated to its people." His voice dropped to a low snarl, "Do not think Jayden didn't inform me of the reason behind your breakup. You are lucky he is willing to look past your inane desire to frequent clubs and drink yourself into oblivion."

My jaw dropped. "He's lying. I left him because he's a sleezy, controlling asshole."

"Anastasia!"

My father's snarl crackled throughout the room. The numerous books he kept in neat rows on his shelves began to tremble, a sign he was losing his patience. Deep within my chest, my wolf squirmed. Her rage coated my tongue, as did her shame. It went against our nature to disrespect our Alpha, yet how could I not?

"I apologize for my daughter's behavior, Jayden. It was my hope that she would someday mature."

Jayden laid a hand over his chest, right below that gaudy golden chain he wore, and preened at my father. "It's quite all right, Alpha. I understand this is a big adjustment for her." His eyes coasted over to where I stood. "You belong by my side, Ana. You're everything I've ever wanted in a woman, and someday you'll raise our pups to have that same."

Absolutely not.

Then, as though this day couldn't get any worse, father turned his cold, dead stare to my face and said the words that would shatter my heart and seal my fate.

"Your mother would be so disappointed in you."

Static crawled across the corners of my mind. I could no longer hold the tears at bay. As they fell my eyes, I turned and sprinted from the room, not stopping until I reached my bedroom suite.

Sobs tore at my chest. I scrambled for my cellphone, and quickly dialed my best-friends number.

Princess Evangeline Montgomery

The world changed when Alpha Nox Einar and his mate, Luna Lilac Einar, revealed the existence of our kind to the humans. To prevent another war, the United States government sectioned off pieces of the country to create dedicated pack lines. Those with larger territories were now considered kingdoms.

Since then, our people have been paving a path to peace between us and the humans.

Well, most of us. My father and a few others were the exception.

My dearest friend picked up the phone, still in the middle of a rant, "Anastasia, what's wrong?"

I sunk to the floor beside my bed, the carpet digging into my bare knees.

"Evangeline, I need your help."

She listened in silence, comforting me when the sobs became too much, as I told her about the mess my life had suddenly become. It was her that told me I had a choice, one that needed to be made right here, right now.

I could stay and let my father marry me to Jayden, gifting me like a prized horse with no other value other than the children she could bear.

Or, I could leave.

I could take control of my life and live it the way I wanted. Some day, when I was a way around my father's rules, I could return to claim what was mine.

I knew what I needed to do.

With the help of my ability, one no one—not even my father—knew about, I slipped from the estate. I went to the nearest gas station to pull every single dollar from my bank account.

Afterwards, I waited in the small parking lot beside the pumps for Evangeline's contact to meet up with me.

I was surprised to find her personal bodyguard driving the car that would serve as my getaway. He was a known teleporter, and a powerful one at that.

As I slid into the passenger seat, he handed me a manilla folder.

"Everything's in there. New ID's, birth certificates, and passports should you need to leave the country." Peter said, his eyes latched onto the blackened road. His accent was light and refined. "Princess Evangeline would like me to remind you that you are always welcome in her kingdom."

Tears flooded my eyes, not because of what I was about to do, but because of my best friend.

"I know," I said, sniffling. "I can't risk her getting caught up in this. She's the person father will turn to once he realizes I've left."

Peter grunted, understanding my reasoning even when Evangeline herself couldn't. She was wild too, and just as reckless as I was. Risking everything for those she loved came naturally to her. It was one of the many things we had in common.

Holding my new life in my trembling hands, we sped down the road, leaving my pack, my people, and my father in the dust.

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