

## Luna Aleksa's Escape Chapter 36

\*Aleksa POV\*

A wave of apprehension overtook me after learning of Lachlan's attempts at finding us. Confirming that he was actively searching for us, and how much closer he was getting made me feel nauseous. I felt like I was going to be sick. My stomach was churning at the thought of him finding us. It wasn't myself that I was worried about, it was Liam and Layla.

I would never let him take my pups from me. I would never go back to Evergreen with him. I had loved that pack like family. I was so broken when I realized that they had all known what was happening all along. I still felt so betrayed by them all. With the exception of Caleb and Kali of course. Caleb was under an alpha command, I know now that he couldn't physically tell me. And they had both risked so much to help us all escape from Evergreen. And for that, I would be eternally grateful.

I had hoped that Lachlan would just go about his business with Eva and forget about us. Actually, I take that back as I remember that Eva is Sam's mate. Poor Sam. I wish I had let him know what I had discovered before I escaped. I had been so caught up I hadn't even considered that he would still be suffering at the hands of Lachlan and Eva.

I would need to discuss this with Kingston. I'm sure he could help me think of something. Some way we could ease his suffering. How Eva could hurt someone as sweet as Sam I'll never know. He deserved so much better. I needed to make that right somehow. And I would. I just wasn't sure how.

I was interrupted from my thoughts when Kingston placed his hands on mine and I felt tingles and the calm of our mate bond.

As Mason looked at me with grave concern on his face I had no words. I didn't want Kingston to know how terrified I was right now. He already had so much on with the Royal Alpha Summit that was fast approaching.

This was such bad timing. We were just starting to settle here at Rocky Mountain. The pack members were all so welcoming and accepting. Mason and Kaia were settled and had roles within the pack hierarchy. Liam and Layla were settled at daycare and thriving. I was about to officially become Luna. I couldn't expect the pack to fight for me. They hardly knew me. It was only a

matter of time before Lachlan found us – especially if he was distributing our images.

“Aleksa, I can feel your fear through our bond. I know you are nervous – but you don’t need to be. I will protect you and our pups. I realize Lachlan is their biological father, but I also have a bond with Liam and Layla and I will protect them both with my life. I will not let him take you or take them. You are Luna of this pack. We will all protect you with our lives.” Kingston declared to me looking into my eyes and cupping my face with his strong and calloused hands.

“I would never expect anyone to risk their life for me. Kingston, they don’t deserve this. They hardly know me. I can’t put this on the pack.” I told him trying to fight the tears that were starting to well up in my eyes.

“Aleska, you are safe. You always will be safe. And whatever you are thinking right now – stop it. You will not run. You are not putting anyone out. Rocky Mountain has waited for you for a long time. You make the pack stronger just by being here. The fact that you want to protect the pack shows how amazing you are. We will figure this out.” Kingston reassured me, pulling me into his chest for comfort. This action alone gives me a sense of security and calms my nerves somewhat.

“Alpha, if I may suggest something?” Mason interjected.

“What if you sent an announcement out to the media and to all of the packs. Informing them of Rocky Mountain’s new Luna, and your true mate. That would let Lachlan know that Aleksa had found her second chance mate and had been claimed by another alpha. It will help to draw some attention to this. The council will be watching no doubt. It will be much harder for him to make a move, or do anything underhanded if he is being closely watched.” Mason suggested.

Kingston took a moment to consider the idea. “It could work. It would definitely be the more diplomatic approach and it would put the spotlight on it for a bit. It would make it more challenging for Lachlan to act on any urges he may have.”

I took a breath and tried to imagine what Lachlan’s reaction to such an announcement might be. I was interrupted from my thoughts when I notice both Kingston and Mason looking at me as if they were waiting for my response.

“Sorry. I kinda zoned out then. Did you say something?” I asked them both simultaneously.

“I asked you how you felt about us putting out an announcement? Perhaps a follow up to that might be a phone call or a video conference if required.” Kingston added.

“Uh, yeah let’s give it a go I guess,” I said, still feeling unsure about it all, and still feeling a bit distracted thinking about Sam.

“He might be willing to let me go, but I worry about Liam and Layla, he’s biologically their father, he does have a claim to them. But I absolutely refuse to give them up to him. I will not let him take them!” I said exasperatedly, feeling my heart racing in my chest, and feeling my anxiety surge through me.

“Aleksa, we will work something out. I promise you. No one will take Liam and Layla from you. You are their mother. And an amazing one at that.” Kingston declared to me, and I found a sense of calm in his words.

“Aleksa – Luna, we have all come so far. We will not let anything happen to you or your pups. We are a family. And family protects one another.” Mason declared. He looked at me with determination and sincerity.

I looked into Mason’s eyes and I felt tears start to fall from my eyes. I felt so blessed and so lucky to have made strong bonds with people that I now call my family. I felt such a sense of belonging.

My stomach growled loudly, snapping me out of my train of thought. I felt a warm blush creep over my face, of embarrassment. Kingston and Mason chuckled. “Perhaps we should have some breakfast?” Kingston suggested.

“Sounds like a good idea. I’ll mind-link Quinn to bring Liam and Layla down to join us.” Mason replied to Kingston.

“Come, my love, let’s get some food into your stomach. We have a big day ahead of us.” Kingston remarked to me.

“Mason, thank you, for everything. I am so lucky to have you in my life. You are like the brother I never had.” I tell him, as I launched at him for a hug. Mason embraced me for a hug also, however, at that moment Kingston growled at our closeness, and Mason and I both looked back at him.

“Sorry guys, Sabre gets a little overprotective of his mate” Kingston replied chuckling.

Mason then added, “That’s understandable Alpha.”

“Aleksa, I feel the same way about you. Ever since we met in the dungeons of Evergreen I’ve felt this overwhelming urge to protect you. You are also like a little sister to me.”

My heart instantly swelled at Mason’s words.

“I sure am a lucky girl. I have some really special people in my life. And I feel so grateful for you all.” I said to Mason, while I locked hands with Kingston getting ready to leave the room.

“See you at breakfast!” I called out to Mason, as Kingston lead me out the door.

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It was approaching midday, and in light of the news that we had learned of earlier this morning, I had decided to cancel my brunch date with Quinn and Kaia. I ended up explaining the situation to them since it directly involved them both anyway. They pretty much repeated what Mason had told me, about us all being family, and having each other’s backs. Again my heart swelled with love, I had always wanted sisters, and now that dream had come true. I loved them both with all my heart. Sometimes when you meet people you just instantly click, and that’s exactly what happened when I met Kaia and Quinn.

They both offered to watch Liam and Layla for me while I met the Healer. This was a relief for me because I didn’t know what to expect from our meeting today. I was nervous yet excited, and I was curious to learn more. It all felt very surreal.

I was on my way to meet Xanthe and to learn more about my birth parents and my lineage. It was a gorgeous sunny day and it was so warm. Too warm to be sitting inside even though there is air conditioning. I thought it might be nice to chat outside, so we are on our way to a gazebo that was located near the rosegardens.

It really was a sight to behold, the roses were in full bloom and they smelt amazing. There was a crawling red rose bush covering the sides of the

gazebo, and it looked so magical. Kingston must have asked someone to bring a table and chairs prior to our meeting because the set in front of us didn't look like it was supposed to be there. It looked brand new rather than the weathered set you would expect to see outside. There was a large jug of water and some glasses in the centre of the table.

We took a seat, and moments later Xanthe appeared before us.

"Hello Aleksa, I trust you are well-rested and ready to hear what I have to say?" Xanthe looked at me with a small smile on her face.

"Hello Xanthe, yes, please let me apologise for my behaviour yesterday, I was rude. I am not usually that way towards others. I was just dealing with a lot, and everything kinda overwhelmed me." I said pausing to take a breath. Xanthe just watched me and waited patiently as if she knew I wasn't finished.

"I think I just needed a good night's sleep and to spend some time with Liam and Layla. Thank you so much for coming back to speak with me. It means the world to me. I have so many questions!" I said, ready to unleash my questions on Xanthe.

"No need to apologize. How about you hear what I have to say. Then we can have question time afterwards." Xanthe said rhetorically.

"That sounds fair," I said. Although I was a little disappointed that I would have to wait. Chill Aleksa, I thought to myself. Yesterday I didn't want to hear any of this, and today I want to bombard her with questions. I swear I am all over the place at the moment. I looked up at Xanthe who was ready to speak.

"Let's start at the beginning then shall we." Xanthe begun.

\*Xanthe POV\*

"I'm not going to beat around the bush. I'm going to tell you this straight. So brace yourself." I started to tell Aleksa, deciding that what I had to tell her would be overwhelming so I may as well keep to the point.

"Many millennia ago, the moon goddess blessed a lineage of wolves with special protective and healing powers, their role was to help heal and protect vulnerable wolves, they were known as the crescent moon wolves."

“Crescent moon wolves carried a unique marking, which consisted of a sapphire blue crescent moon with two wolves under it, and a crown with a purple hue to it. Unfortunately, crescent moon wolves were constantly hunted and exploited, many living their lives in captivity, many dying after being drained of their powers and healing abilities. There were many powerful wolves who wished to harness their special abilities. I realize this all sounds unbelievable to you right now. Especially since you were led to believe you were human for the first eighteen years of your life. But I can assure you that it is all true.”

“Aleksa, your mother was a crescent moon wolf with special abilities and healing powers. She had left her pack when she met your father. You see Aleksa, your Grandfather was the Alpha of Moon Valley Pack. He was aware of Kristina’s abilities from a very young age and knew that she was a gifted wolf, as her mother was also one, and it was passed down by females in the family.”

“Back then, an alpha female taking the role of Alpha alone was unheard of, so they needed her to be mated and marked so that there would be a male alpha running the pack, thus maintaining their reputation and bloodline.”

“They (her parents) had planned to marry her off to the Alpha heir of a neighboring pack, in a bid to merge the two packs as they had no male heir so that their son would take the role of Alpha, and Kristina would be his Luna.”

“The alpha heir of the neighboring pack was an unkind, arrogant, and evil wolf, and rumor had it that he had planned to use Kristina for her gifts to heal his mistress, who suffered from some rare disease for which there was no known cure. The Alpha’s Heir was in love with his mistress and wanted to take her as his luna, but his parents had denied him.”

“And, Kristina had no intention of being mated to or being marked by him. Not long before the agreement was made, Kristina had met her fated mate in a chance meeting, your father. He was from another pack, and he was a warrior. When Kristina told her parents this news, they were not accepting of this, they felt that he had nothing to offer them, and being that they were in so much debt at the time, they refused to acknowledge her fated mate.”

“You see, I had met your mother back at her birth pack – Moon Valley. I would occasionally consult at the pack hospital. I had met your mother on a few occasions as she would volunteer at the hospital regularly. We had an instant connection. I met your father, Aleksander, a few times also. Actually, Kristina

had only met him a few times before they ran off together. I met your father because your mother needed help leaving the packhouse to visit him. I was usually her cover story as she was constantly followed by her father's guards. We would tell them that she was volunteering at the hospital, she would sneak out the back, and meet Aleksander just outside the pack boundary."

"Worried that Kristina might defy them, and mess up their plans, her parents fast-tracked the agreement. The night before Kristina was supposed to leave for the neighboring pack, Aleksander with the help of some of his fellow warriors created a distraction and managed to help Kristina escape. That was the last she saw of her parents and her pack. They were on the run for months putting as much distance between them as they could."

"Kristina's parents never stopped looking for her. Their debts got higher, and they were on the brink of losing their pack when a Hunter came to them and made them a proposition. He would bankroll the pack but they wanted Kristina's firstborn daughter in return. Somehow they were aware of her crescent moon wolf lineage. Kristina's father was desperate to retain his title and his pack so he reluctantly agreed to the hunter's proposition."

"After some time the hunter had managed to find her, and surely enough, Kristina and Aleksander had mated and had a baby girl -that was you Aleksa. They came for you, time and time again. Aleksander and Kristina were so determined to keep you safe and hidden that they veered away from packs and pack life, and opted for life in the human world."

"However, one day they were caught unprepared, and that is the day Aleksander died trying to protect you."

"Kristina was on her own then, she was heartbroken but determined to protect you with her life. She moved from town to town and worked menial jobs in order to support you, over the course of a few months she managed to do this well until they came again one night. They came in the still of the night, Kristina managed to hide you in the ceiling. She fought hard and managed to take them all out, however, she was critically injured and died from blood loss that night."

"When Kristina didn't show up to work the next day I had a feeling something had gone horribly wrong. I left work at midday and when I arrived at the flat I was horrified at the scene that awaited me. It was like a scene from a horror movie, with bodies, and blood everywhere."



“I found Kristina on the floor in front of her bedroom, the door was shut behind her, she was protecting you trying to keep them from finding you. I checked for a pulse but I already knew Kristina was gone, she was so cold and I couldn’t sense her energy. I will never forget that terrifying feeling that struck me when I realized that you were unaccounted for. I searched frantically. Then I focussed my mind and found you fast asleep in the ceiling, warm, and unscathed, although a little dehydrated and hungry when you finally woke.”

“I had decided it was best that we left that town as soon as possible. I bent down and kissed sweet Kristina on her forehead, and that’s when I saw the locket. She wore it everywhere and treasured it with her heart. I knew I should grab it so that you always had something of your mother’s with you.”

“I took you home with me, and then I decided it was time to move on. I needed to get you somewhere safe, as there was a high chance that they would still be looking for you.”

“We traveled for a few weeks, and then I realized that this was no life for a little pup. I realized that I couldn’t give you what you needed. I managed to find a job and somewhere for us to stay in a small town a few states over, it was a lovely quiet Christian community. I had gotten a job as a cleaner at a local church and would often overhear conversations between people. One day I heard an older couple talking about how they wished they had been blessed with a child that they could shower with love. I watched them for a few more weeks, did some background checks, and then I decided they were the perfect couple to raise you and love you.”

“Often they ran the community soup kitchen at the church and they were often the last to leave, so I wrapped you up in a little Moses basket and left you with a note at the door. I rang the bell then ran into the bushes and waited and watched.”

“I saw the amazement and concern and love in their eyes as they fussed over you. I saw the police arrive. I watched in the background over the next few months and I watched them take you in and eventually adopt you as their own. I then went on my way. I would check in every now and then to ensure they were taking good care of you and to watch you grow. I was so proud of the beautiful person you had become.”

“I was there when you met Lachlan and I knew what was coming but I couldn’t interfere. I just watched on the sidelines, waiting for the time to come when you would need me.”



“When you had made your way here to Rocky Mountain and I had heard that Kingston was requesting a Healer, I knew it was the right time for me to make an appearance in your life.”

“So Aleksa that is the story of your parents and what happened to them, that is also the story of how you came to be adopted and live in a human town. Now you know you are a Crescent Moon Wolf, there is still so much I have to tell you, you will need to learn to properly harness your powers and your gifts, and in time you will.”

“I knew one day you would need to know everything, and I needed to be able to explain it to you. You might ask why I did not tell you earlier that you were a werewolf. I planned to trust me. I was planning to come to you and reveal myself to you just before your eighteenth birthday and to be there with you when you shifted for the first time. I couldn’t let you go through it alone.”

“However, my past had caught up with me. You see I too was on the run. Probably part of the reason Kristina and I understood each other so well. We were in similar situations. I was detained against my will, and it was a few years before I could escape. I am so sorry my child. I am sorry that I had let you down, and that I had left Kristina down. But I am here now and I will answer any questions you have to the best of my ability.”

I looked up at Aleksa and I could sense a sadness within her. She was not looking back at me, she had her head down and was quietly sniffing and wiping back her tears. I looked to Kingston who looked astonished as if he was still processing what I’d just said.

Silence enveloped us and I waited patiently for Aleksa’s response and her impending questions. I also hoped that she would forgive me for my failures.

\*Aleksa POV\*

I sat there listening to Xanthe tell me about my birth parents – Aleksander and Kristina. I felt something I didn’t expect to feel. I felt an overwhelming sense of determination. A desire to do better, to be better, to be stronger, and to fight harder. I didn’t want my parent’s death to have been in vain. They had sacrificed so much for me. And now it was my turn to do the same for my children.

I would be damned if I was going to let something happen to my precious pups, especially Layla. If what Xanthe is saying is correct, then Layla is also a crescent moon wolf. That means she is in danger.

I felt a sense of fear and panic engulf me, all I wanted to do is to run to my precious Liam and Layla and hold them tight. But I needed to finish this conversation. There were still questions to be answered. I needed to be strong and know what we are up against.

A flurry of emotions was consuming me right now. There was a determination to make my birth parents proud. Fear that my children, especially Layla, were in danger, not just from the threat of being taken back to Evergreen and separated from me, but that there were wolves out there who may know of her existence and wish to harm and exploit her. Sadness – that I was the reason my parents died. If it weren't for me they may not have been caught off guard and might still be here today. I was also concerned that this will all be too much for Kingston and the pack. And finally, anger, at the people that had hunted my parents and me and in the process robbed me of the life I was supposed to have, the one where my biological parents never died, where I was raised with my birth pack.

Just breathe Aleksa I told myself, as I felt Kingston's arms wrap around me for comfort. He must have sensed my emotional hurricane through our mate bond. I looked up at him and he has a soft smile on his face, I can feel that he is concerned about me.

I nodded at him and told him through the mind-link that I'd be ok. And thanked him for being here for me.

I looked back at Xanthe and I said "There are so many questions I want to ask you, especially about what being a Crescent Moon wolf means. But I feel the first question I need to ask is this – where are my Grandparents? Are they still alive, and if so where?"

My rationale for this is that I need to know how much of a threat they were, as they are the reason that both my parents are dead. They were ruthless, they cared not for the mate bond, not for their own blood, and their greed and ambition were clearly their priorities. I wanted to know where they were and if there was any chance that they could know of my existence and of Liam and Layla's. Although in all honesty, I hoped there were gone. I had no intention of ever meeting such cruel people, in my mind, there were already dead.

“Aleksa, I wish I could answer this question without a doubt but I can’t. Your grandmother passed not long after Kristina was murdered. My contacts told me she took her own life out of heartbreak and regret. Apparently, she never wanted any of this for her daughter, and she was a subservient Luna and did what her mate had commanded her to do. While she didn’t agree with his actions, she also didn’t take a stand against them either. As for your grandfather, when the agreement with the neighboring pack fell through and Kristina left, there was no heir to take over. After the Luna passed, your grandfather’s wolf became feral and started to lose his grasp on reality, the pack began to suffer, and at this time the neighboring pack invaded the Moon Valley and took over control.

There was an alpha challenge, and your grandfather was grievously wounded, but it is unknown as to whether he actually died, as a rogue attack occurred while the challenge was taking place, and chaos ensued, it was at this time he disappeared, and his body was never found, although it is assumed he died but it is not certain. The wounds he sustained in the challenge coupled with losing his mate would be enough to end any wolf. I don’t think he is a threat to you Aleska, or to your pups.” Xanthe told me looking absolute in her answer.

“And, the Hunter, did you ever find out his identity? Who was the person that made the agreement with my Grandfather for my mother’s firstborn daughter?” I asked Xanthe, wanting to get an idea of the players that were involved here, and who we were up against.

“No, I’m afraid not. I tried to keep a low profile. I had to keep you safe. I used some of my contacts to find out about your grandparents, but I was unable to find anything about the Hunter. I didn’t want people to know I was asking questions.” Xanthe told me apologetically.

“Hmmn, ok, fair enough, thank you Xanthe for everything, you have done for me. I do appreciate it. It sounds like I owe you my life. I’m not sure how I can ever repay you, but I will surely try.” I told Xanthe, feeling a great deal of respect for the woman sitting in front of me right now.

“If you don’t mind, I do have some more questions?” I ask Xanthe.

“That is fine Aleksa, I have no place else to be right now. Fire away.” Xanthe said sweetly.

“You said that my mother died fighting to protect me. But I don’t understand. If she was also a Crescent Moon wolf, why did she die? Why didn’t she use her

powers?" I questioned Xanthe. As that is one part of this story that I can't seem to get my head around.

"I wondered when you were gonna ask me that question. The wolves that showed up that night didn't appear to have any scents. And when I arrived on the scene I detected the faintest hint of magic, of dark magic Aleksa. I fear that a witch who practices dark magic was involved. I can't say for certain, but I imagine that there was a barrier or forcefield that your mother's powers couldn't penetrate. I've wracked my brain throughout the years trying to understand what happened there, that's all I have come up with that makes any real sense." Xanthe told me bowing her head down. I got the impression she was unhappy that she hadn't been able to uncover more.

"Dark magic? So she stood no chance then? Outnumbered by wolves and facing off against a dark witch." I said anger searing through me, I feel my whole body starting to shake, and I could feel my eyes glowing.

"Aleksa, honey, try to calm down, just breathe," Kingston said as he tried to calm me down, his touch alone was enough to soothe my soul.

"Aleksa, I can help you. Just knowing that there was a dark witch involved gives us more of an advantage. We can prepare better. I'm sorry I know this is all a lot. I know it's horrible. I hate that this all happened and I couldn't do anything to help. We have a chance here though, to prevent history from repeating." Xanthe soothingly tells me while placing her hands on my hands.

"Tell me of my father's death. I need to know – everything." I expressed to Xanthe. I needed to know as much as I could about the events that had transpired all those years ago.

"Aleksander was a warrior from a pack a state over from Moon Valley. They met by chance really. Kristina would every once in a while sneak out with her friends into one of the nearby human towns for a bit of dancing and fun. One night she bumped into Aleksander while leaving the club, they knew they were mates right away, and instantly connected. They would meet every chance they got, as Kristina set about introducing him to her father. Aleksander wasn't able to mark and mate with Kristina straight away with her being the alpha's daughter, so he had to be patient and undergo formalities, however, the alpha was opposed to their mateship."

"You see, Aleksander was an elite warrior for the Dark Moon pack, he was revered among his squad, and everyone that met Aleksander took an instant

liking to him. He was very popular with the she-wolves but was determined to wait for his mate, which he did. Your mother – Kristina was the same, she was holding out for her mate too. They were so in love. It was a perfect match.”

“You wanted to ask how your father died. He was a fierce fighter, but he was outnumbered the night that they first came for you, however, he was holding his own just fine. but the rogues that attacked him stabbed him in the back multiple times with a silver blade laced with wolfsbane. He wasn’t able to heal and ultimately died of blood loss and wolfsbane poisoning. I’m sorry Aleksa, he was so courageous right to the very end. He managed to take them all out with him. When they had first attacked, he had already told Kristina to take you and run, which she did reluctantly. No one anticipated a silver blade and wolfsbane, they fought dirty.” Xanthe explained. “Your mother never forgave herself for that. No matter how much I would tell her that she did the right thing, she followed Aleksander’s orders and got you to safety. Kristina was heartbroken but found the strength to go on for you. She was most likely able to do this because she was a Crescent Moon wolf.”

” She knew she would meet Aleksander again one day, and she wanted to make him proud by protecting you.”

Salty tears were slowly escaping my eyes as Xanthe recounted the events leading up to my father’s death. I had so much love and respect and regret in my heart right now for the parents I had once thought hadn’t wanted me.

I wiped away my tears, took a sip from the glass of water in front of me, and took a few breaths.

“What more can you tell me about my wolf? You said I am a Crescent Moon wolf. How can I find more information about myself, about my powers and abilities? I need to know how to use them properly, and how to control them. Everything that has happened so far happened randomly. I have no clue of what I am doing.” I confessed to Xanthe.

“There is not a lot of information about the Crescent Moon wolves. Aside from Kristina, I had not heard of a Crescent Moon wolf until then. Kristina learned to harness her powers to a point, but even she didn’t know a lot about her powers, and she never had a chance to master them. And with all that was going on we didn’t speak much of them.” Xanthe replied.

“The best way for us to learn more about your wolf would be to speak with an elder. I have some contacts we can utilize, but we need to be careful as to

who we trust with this. Can you give me a few days? Give me some time to reach out to a few of my contacts. I feel they will be able to point us in the right direction?" Xanthe asked me.

"Of course. Maybe we should end this meeting here. I need to get back to Liam and Layla, and I'm sure Kingston has plenty of pack business to attend to. Xanthe, thank you for your time. I appreciate everything you have told me. I really do appreciate you coming here." I thanked Xanthe.

"Aleksa, Kingston has my details, and you can contact me anytime. I want to be here for you." Xanthe said warmly as she got up from her seat.

"Can I just say how much you look like your mother? You really are the spitting image of her." Xanthe told me. That made my heart swell with pride. Kingston and I stood up from our seats.

"Uh, Xanthe, do you have any photos of my parents? I've never met them or even seen a picture of them. I don't even know what they look like, and I would like to." I asked Xanthe, as my lips started to quiver, I was fighting to prevent my emotions from consuming me once again.

"I actually do. I'm sorry Aleksa, I wasn't thinking. Of course, you would want a photo of them. I believe I have one or two. I could bring them with me when I come back in a few days if you like." Xanthe asked me.

"That would be amazing – thank you! Well, we will get going and we look forward to hearing from you in few days, all going well. Goodbye Xanthe!" I said as I walked over to Xanthe embracing her in a hug, she smelt like wild jasmine, the hug felt strangely familiar, as did her scent. I walked over to Kingston, and we locked hands and walked off through the gardens. I lay my head against his shoulder and we walked together, our bodies molding into one another's. I could feel the warmth from the bond. I looked up at Kingston's face while we were walking, he looked down at me and kissed me on the forehead. "I love you so much," I said to Kingston.

"I love you too, Aleksa," Kingston said back. And we kept walking towards the packhouse to see our pups on this warm sunny day, the blue sky was dotted with fluffy white clouds, there was a gentle breeze passing us, I could hear the birds chirping in the background, bees buzzing over the wildflowers that littered the sides of the path we walked on, and a faint sound of children playing with frisbees on the grass in front of the packhouse.

There was so much going through my mind right now, but it could all wait a few hours. This mama needed some time with her pups.

\*Aleksa POV\*

It's been two weeks since we spoke with Xanthe, and strangely we haven't heard back from her yet. We assume she has been busy or hasn't yet found anything further out about crescent moon wolves. It's been very busy here at the packhouse lately.

Everyone is getting prepared for the Royal Alpha Summit which will be taking place over the next week. We've had the caterers in to organize the meals for the week-long event. Quinn has been helping me with this as I am still new to all of this. Back at Evergreen we never had an event even remotely resembling this. It's all a learning curve for me.

We decided against the media release about Kingston and I's mateship. The pack knew most importantly, but the rest of the world could wait a little bit longer.

After speaking with Xanthe and learning what we did about my lineage, about the Crescent Moon wolves being hunted, about my grandparents, and the Hunter that was potentially looking for me and Layla, we decided that it was best to keep things under wraps for now. We would wait for the summit and deal with things as they happened. Meaning that we would be dealing with the Lachlan situation as it arose.

I really hoped that Lachlan wouldn't attend the Royal Alpha Summit. He had never attended one previously so with a little bit of luck he wouldn't attend this one. Although, in saying that we weren't leaving it to luck. Kingston and Asher were working on a plan for what would happen if he did attend and how we would approach that situation without placing a damper on the celebrations or any disrespect to the alpha king himself.

Kingston was determined that this would be the best summit he had organized yet. We had all the accommodation organized, housekeeping was paying attention to detail to ensure that everything was perfect for our guests, and we had guides and point of contact organized for each pack.

We had entertainment organized for each night of the summit. The conference room had been extended and prepared to seat all attending alphas comfortably. Maintenance had outdone themselves, as the pack landscaping



looked immaculate. The pack members were all excited and ready to host the attending packs. Unmated wolves were excited at the possibility of meeting their mates at the summit. The pack was a hive of excitement and anticipation.

While I was putting on a brave face, my anxiety was at an all-time high. I was trying to distract myself and not overanalyze everything because I knew Kingston would feel it through our bond, but I just couldn't. I was scared of what would happen if Lachlan attended. So much so that I had made plans to have Kingston's parents Chase and Cordelia take Liam and Layla away to a cabin in a nearby state for the week of the summit. I needed to know that they were safe especially if I was to see Lachlan face to face. Also, I would constantly be on edge worrying about whether or not they were safe if they were to be here while the Summit was taking place.

Although I would worry regardless, I would worry less knowing that they were in the capable hands of Chase and Cordelia. We had gotten to know each other a lot more over the past few weeks. They were very welcoming and genuinely happy for us both. They knew of my past with Lachlan and Evergreen, and accepted me with open arms.

Chase was still very fit and also very intimidating when you first met him, he was an older more distinguished version of Kingston, and Cordelia was sophisticated and elegant, she looked like an older version of Quinn, she was very nurturing and absolutely loved being around children, she doted on Liam and Layla as if they were her own pups. They would be leaving two days before the summit started, which I was happy with, as it gave us that little bit more time to plan, and sort our backup plan, as well as our back up to the backup plan.

Kingston had been very busy, but he had a very capable team working with him, he was at this point just checking that everything was organized and ready to go. Initially, he had played a bigger role in preparing the summit, but in light of the rogue attacks, Xanthe telling us of mine and Layla's lineage and preparing for the probable fallout with Lachlan, he had decided to delegate.

Quinn and Mason had been busy renovating their cottage, and it was almost ready, they were just putting the finishing touches on it. They were so happy stuck in their own little love bubble. Kingston had been giving Mason more and more responsibility within the pack leadership and Mason was handling it all so well. He seemed very comfortable and settled here. I was so happy for my friend. He deserved happiness.

Kaia was still heavily involved with the warrior squad and practically trained all day every day. She was still spending a lot of time with Asher, they had even been on their first date. They were taking things slowly but you could feel the s\*\*\*\*l tension in the air whenever those two were around each other.

Liam and Layla were settled and fitted in so well with the pack, everyone had been so welcoming towards them. It's crazy to think that in a few months they would be celebrating their third birthdays. I hadn't planned anything yet for that but I plan to once the summit is over, and everything is sorted out in regards to Lachlan, I will start planning for it then.

I was on my way to Kingston's office to bring him some lunch as he tended to skip meals often when he was hyperfocused and immersed in pack business. Liam and Layla were at daycare so I was just doing errands today and helping with the final preparations. As I walked down the hallway I heard raised voices coming from Kingston's office.

The voices stopped. I assumed they could scent me considering I was standing just outside the office. "Come in Aleksa" Kingston called out.

I walked in to see Kingston leaning back in his chair, Asher was sitting on the chair in front of Lachlan's desk. "Good afternoon Asher, good afternoon My Love," I said as I walked up to Kingston, placing his lunch on his desk in front of him and kissing him on his forehead.

"Did I walk in on something?" I ask sheepishly.

Asher shifts uncomfortably in his chair.

"Just tell her Asher," Kingston says to Asher sighing.

"Well Aleksa, I'm sorry to be the bearer of bad news, but it would appear that news of Lachlan's bounty has traveled, your images have been posted all over the town. It's only a matter of time before someone contacts Lachlan, and he knows where you are." Asher tells me, releasing the breath he was holding in.

My heart starts racing rapidly and I feel a shiver ripple throughout my body. My eyes begin to tear up. Then I close my eyes and focus my energy. I will not let this fear consume me. I take a few deep breaths and try to control my emotions.

Kingston goes to pull me into him and sit me on his lap, while I would usually feel comfort and protection in this action, right now I want to stand. I need to stand. I will not cower and let fear take over whenever a curveball is thrown at me. I am to be Luna of this pack Although I love that Kingston wants to protect me, I am done with being a passive subservient Luna like I was when I was at Evergreen. I need to learn to protect myself, my pups, and my pack properly. Kingston growls at my actions and looks at me questionably.

“Okay, so, we need a plan! We can’t leave anything to chance, we really need to be a few steps ahead of Lachlan at all times!” I declare to them both.

Asher looks at me incredulously, usually, I would be an emotional wreck right now, and would act before thinking. But I was done with being that girl. Kingston looks at me with a proud look on his face. I can feel through the bond that he approves of this side of me.

“Well Luna, I have taken them all down, but we have to work on the premise that they have already been seen by most people.”

“For example, the people that knew you from working at the tavern, people who may be walked past you in the street, or saw you in a shop. We will speak with all pack members, I can’t imagine we would have any problems there. But the humans and any rogues we will have no control over.” Asher replied.

“I have just called all pack members to the training grounds in fifteen minutes, we will discuss this issue with them immediately. Aleksa we will need to tell them about your past, about Lachlan, and about Evergreen. What are your thoughts on this?” Kingston asks me.

“I agree. The pack needs to know the truth. It is better that they know now before they decide whether or not they will accept me as their Luna officially.” I said.

Kingston growled. “They have already accepted you. You are their Luna.” He declared.

I put my hands on his cheek and pulled him in for a quick kiss to calm his wolf.

“Looks like we will be speaking with Lachlan sooner than we expected,” Kingston says to Asher, their eyes meeting each other knowingly in agreeance.

“I will have two elite warriors assigned to Liam and Layla twenty-four hours a day, I will also assign two elite warriors to the Luna if you agree Alpha?” Asher asked Kingston.

“Sounds good. We will need to tighten pack security and double the patrols. I will have to speak with our neighboring packs to advise them of the situation and ensure our bases are covered should we need additional backup.” Kingston tells Asher.

“Everything will be ok Aleksa, you are safe, Liam and Layla are safe. Your pack will protect you.” Kingston reassures me.

“I know we will be. I refuse to let Lachlan control our lives. I am done with running and done with being afraid. That being said, I need a little help with something Asher. If you have some free time later this afternoon?” I ask him hopefully.

“Of course Luna, although I must say I am rather curious,” Asher remarks to me. Kingston is looking at me, raising an eyebrow.

“Relax, I just need a little training, some basic but effective defensive moves, I need to be able to fight if necessary,” I tell them both.

Kingston mind-links me “This more dominant side of you is turning me right now on my love!”

“Uh guys, I’m still here,” Asher says, looking uncomfortable.

Kingston and I both chuckle, “Sorry man” Kingston says to Asher.

I feel the heat creep over my cheeks, I know that I am blushing right now.

A few minutes later, there is a knock on the door. “Mason, please come in,” Kingston calls out.

Mason walks in, “Alpha, Luna, Beta Asher,” He says as he nodded his head respectfully. “What can I do for you?” He asks.

“Well Mason, we have a problem. Those images you warned us of, well they have been posted all over town. We have to assume that Lachlan already knows where Aleksa and the twins are, so we have a problem.”

“I asked you to come here today in the hopes that you would consider being Liam and Layla’s protection detail for now, until this is all resolved. I would also assign two of our elite warriors to the twins, but I think it would be reassuring for Aleksa to have someone she trusts looking out for the twins, and less stressful for them to have a familiar face around them.” Kingston asks Mason.

Mason answers straight away as if he didn’t even have to consider the request. “Absolutely Alpha, I would be honored to.” He said, winking at me, which made me smile, lessening my nerves a little.

Kingston got up out of his seat and everyone else stood and made their way out of the office. It was time to address the pack and tell them of my life before coming to Rocky Mountain. It was time to tell them of the threat to the pack. Although it wasn’t the time to tell them of my lineage and that I was a Crescent Moon wolf as I still didn’t really know what that meant myself.

I had just hoped that they would still accept the twins and I once they knew the truth about my past before coming to Rocky Mountain.

\*Aleksa POV\*

It’s been a few days since we had “the talk” with our pack. It actually went really well. Everyone was a bit quiet initially. I could hear gasps and whispers, but I kept talking, telling my story, and before long, I could sense that the pack understood what I was saying and why I had to leave my previous pack. I explained what happened with Lachlan and Eva, and how I ended up in the pack dungeons. Then I explained how I had to leave with my pups, and mentioned my friends, Mason and Kaia, who helped facilitate that escape. Everyone just stood and listened to what I had to say. Kingston took over and explained to the pack about the bounty placed on me, as well as explaining that what Lachlan had told people about Mason and Kaia was untrue, that they were helping me, not kidnapping me, and to not pay attention to the lies they might hear. He reassured the pack that he had done his due diligence before we came to join Rocky Mountain,

Since then, everyone has been even friendlier, which I didn’t think was possible, because they were already so welcoming. I feel lighter not having to hide my past, like a weight has been shifted from my shoulders. I feel relieved to know that the pack accepts me as their Luna, because I love Kingston and the pack, and I feel like we have made this place our home. I don’t even want

to imagine what might have happened if the pack hadn't accepted me and my pups.

Due to the news of the bounty, and mine and my pups faces being plastered everywhere, as well as Mason and Kaia's, pack security and patrols have doubled and the place is like Fort Knox around here, which is making things a little harder for the deliveries and preparations needed for the summit, but as Kingston reiterates, it's better to be safe than sorry.

I know I need to face Lachlan once and for all. And every day I feel more and more ready for it, I just want to get it over with, so we can all live our lives without having this hanging over our heads.

Asher has been taking the time out to train me twice a day. We meet at dawn and dusk. He is mostly teaching me defense. He's keeping it short and sweet for now, teaching me how I can use my size to my advantage, as well as teaching me moves that are easy to execute and are highly effective.

Tomorrow, Chase and Cordelia will be taking Liam and Layla away to a lake house in Idaho. Mason and Quinn will be accompanying them, as well as several elite warriors. I know my pups are in safe hands. I am sad that we will be separated, but I know it's only temporary. I feel confident knowing that they will be further away from Lachlan's clutches.

We are spending the day at the packhouse today. I want to make the most of my time with my pups before their trip away. I have told them they will be going away with their grandparents and they don't seem phased. I guess they are too young to really understand. But at least they have fun with Chase and Cordelia, Mason and Quinn, and they are familiar faces for them, which should help alleviate any stress or anxiety that they may feel from being away from their Mama.

I won't see Kingston until tonight as he has back-to-back meetings with some of the Alpha's from nearby packs all day, they will be busily preparing for the summit as well as Lachlan's probable arrival. I have organized a special lunch to be delivered to the conference room for them today. I know what those Alpha's are like when they are busy talking about business they often won't eat, so at least they can eat while they work. I know I will feel better knowing that they are being fed.

I hear a knock at the door and I get up from the floor where I am playing blocks with the twins to open it. I was surprised to see Kaia at the door.

“Aleksa, I wondered if you and the twins would like some company. I heard that they were leaving tomorrow and I needed to get my cuddle quota in before they leave” Kaia says enthusiastically, opening her arms up for Liam and Layla.

“Aun-ty Kaia! Aun-ty Kaia!” they yelled, barrelling towards her with open arms.

“My pups!” She replies, pulling them into her arms, and snuggling them.

“Perhaps we could go to the kitchen and get some snacks to have a picnic on the front lawn?” I suggested to everyone.

“Yay!” the twins shouted in unison.

“Sounds good to me!” Kaia says cheerfully.

I grab my go-bag for the twins, they each take Kaia’s hand, and we walk out the door, kitchen bound for snacks.

Ready to enjoy the rest of the day together creating fun memories.

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It’s the day before the summit, which means my pups are about to embark on their first holiday without their Mama this morning, and I am feeling a little anxious. I woke up super early today. I had the twins’ suitcases packed last night and had taken them to the front door, ready to be loaded into Chase’s SUV this morning.

I have already had two coffees and I’m considering my third one already. I’ve just been sitting here watching Liam and Layla sleep for the past few hours. Just thinking about how fast they are growing and wondering where the time has gone. It seems like only yesterday they were in my womb. Now they aren’t far off their third birthdays.

We have all been through so much over the past six months or so. But I wouldn’t change a thing because it has got us to this point. To Rocky Mountain, to Kingston, to our beautiful friends who have become our family. To this kind and caring and protective pack. We are all so blessed.

I am disrupted from my thought process by a sleepy Liam, “Mama?” He questions me.



“Good Morning Liam, yes it’s Mama, how did you sleep?” I asked my big boy.

“Good.” He says to me,

“Mama?” He asked me.

“Yes, Liam?” I said, trying to hold back my chuckle at how cute my little boy looked half asleep and trying to communicate with me.

“Pancakes?” Liam asks.

“Yes Liam, you can have pancakes this morning, let’s get you changed while we wait for your sister to wake up, shall we?” I said to Liam.

“I’m awake!” Layla called out.

I laughed out loud. Layla never missed an opportunity to have pancakes.

“Of course, my princess, let’s get you dressed too, and head down to the kitchen,” I say to my pups.

They both smile and start clapping with glee.

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After breakfast, I got Liam and Layla cleaned up and we made our way back downstairs to the main entrance of the pack house. Kingston and Mason help strap the twins into their car seats and I give them big cuddles and kisses goodbye. I then say thank you to everyone and wish them all a safe trip.

I waved continuously with a big smile on my face, holding back the tears until Liam and Layla were out of sight. I feel tears flooding my eyes, and I try to contain myself in front of everyone. I end up laughing at myself and overcome with emotion. I wipe my eyes and take a few breaths trying to settle myself down. Kingston pulls me into his chest and tries to console me.

“It’s for the best, Aleksa, they will be safe with my parents, and with Mason and Quinn, I promise,” Kingston tells me.

“I know, I don’t doubt that, Kingston. I’m just sad, it’s my first time away from the twins, well, with the exception of my time in the dungeons.” I replied.

Kingston growled at my mentioning the dungeons. Well, it was probably more Sabre growling in all honesty.

I wiped my eyes one last time and took a big breath and exhaled. It's time to pull myself together. I am doing this for my pups. I need to focus on the summit, on confronting Lachlan, and ensuring he is no longer a threat to me or the twins.

Kingston looks at me proudly, as if he knows exactly what I am thinking. Asher clears his throat.

"Alpha, Luna." He starts.

"Border patrol has told me that some of the Alpha's have already started to arrive for the Summit," Asher tells us.

I had a shocked expression on my face, "But the Summit doesn't start until tomorrow?" I replied to them both, suddenly wondering if we were actually ready. Although if they are already here, we will just have to be ready.

"It's okay, my love, it's not unusual for some packs to arrive a little early. We have already anticipated this. Let's quickly refresh ourselves, then come back down to greet our guests Aleksa." Kingston gestures for me to follow him.

"OK, sure, good idea," I said in reply to him, feeling a bit dazed, but following his lead. We left Asher at the main entrance, waiting to greet the guests and direct them once they arrived, as well as stalling for time as we made our way back.

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The first pack to arrive was from North Dakota. Alpha Logan and his Luna Louise looked to be in their late thirties, their Gamma Joel, who I imagine was of a similar age and accompanying them, were four elite warriors. Their Beta was at home leading the pack in their absence. They were a lovely pack, very friendly. After some small talk, Asher accompanied them to the cottage they would be residing in for the entirety of the summit. We had suggested they get settled and meet us back at the packhouse for lunch if they wish to. Which they happily accepted.

As we were about to leave to head back into the packhouse, another pack was arriving, so we decided to wait at the main entrance for them, as Asher was busy with the North Dakota pack.

Three SUVs drove up to the entrance. A burly man, probably in his early twenties, ran up to the door of the SUV and opened it for his Alpha, a very tall and muscular man who looked to be in his late twenties. He then opened the door on the other side and a gorgeous woman with red hair and green eyes walked out. She had a shy smile on her face, she joined hands with her mate and they walked up to us.

After introducing ourselves to them, we learned that they were from Nebraska, Wyatt, and Willow Robinson. They seemed like a nice couple, they seemed happy to be here, and I had a really good feeling about Willow specifically, there was something about her. I look forward to getting to know her better over the next week.

Kai arrived at the entrance, he promptly introduced himself to Wyatt and Willow and offered to take them to their cottage so that they could get settled in. They also agreed to meet us at the packhouse for lunch.

Kingston and I took this as a chance for us to spend a little time together while welcoming our guests. It was looking like the summit might be starting a bit earlier this year, so Kingston sent out a mass mind-link to the pack, informing them of the guests that had already arrived, and reminding them to make sure they all felt welcome.

As we walked inside the packhouse, I told Kingston that I needed a quick word with Rose. I said I would be quick if he could just wait for me. I made my way to the kitchen, leaving Kingston to check his emails on his smartphone in the lobby.

I needed to let Rose know our guests had started arriving and that we would be making a special lunch today for our guests. I wanted to give her a heads up numbers-wise but to also potentially prepare for even more guests, as we were not sure who else might arrive early and we didn't want anyone going hungry.

Rose was excited to hear that our guests were arriving and she got to work organizing food. I asked Rose if she would like some help, but she just started shoo-ing me out of the kitchen. So I took the hint and made my way to Kingston.

“My love, you still haven’t told me what you and Asher have decided to do about Lachlan? What’s this grand plan? I don’t mean to pressure you, but I would really like to know what the plan is, considering it will involve me.” I told him, pouting and looking into his eyes.

“How about we get through this afternoon, and then tonight after dinner, I will call a meeting with Asher and some of our elite warriors, then we can all talk about it then and there. Does that sound fair?” Kingston asked me. Although it was more of a statement than a question if you ask me.

“I guess I can wait,” I said, feeling unimpressed that he seemed to be stalling me.

“So uh, if we have some free time now, would you like a massage?” Kingston says with a cheeky grin on his face.

“How about we get through this afternoon, have dinner, and then after the meeting we can spend some quality time together. Does that sound fair?” I said smugly to Kingston, trying to stifle my laugh.

“I see what you did there. Touche.” Kingston says, trying to suppress his laughter.

“It’s ok. Come to think of it I should really go over everything one last time, and check in with security.” Kingston says matter of factly.

“Ah, yes, and I will touch base with the planning team for the festivities, to ensure everything is on schedule,” I said to Kingston, leaning on him to kiss him on the cheek.

“I love you!” I said to Kingston as I looked into his eyes sincerely.

“I love you too!” He replied back to me. And we go our separate ways.

As I was walking down the hallway, I realized I had left my phone in the kitchen, so I turned back and headed toward the kitchen. As I walked through the door, I saw that Rose and some of the kitchen staff were busy preparing lunch. I could hear a commotion outside, so I quickly grabbed my phone and made my way outside.

As I opened the door and walked down the steps of the packhouse following the raised voices, I saw some of our pack members preparing to direct our

guests. One of them has a checklist, and the other is trying to communicate with the driver of the first SUV. A total of two SUVs have arrived at the main entrance of the packhouse. I am surprised there are no ranked wolves down here to greet them, so I quickly mind-linked Kingston telling him we have more guests arriving. Then I started to confidently stride toward the SUV. I've got this thought to myself, it's just meet and greet, how hard can it be.

I then see a tall and muscular man in a fitted black suit step out of the first SUV and as he turns towards me I gasp, stopping in my tracks.

"Aleksa? Well, this is a pleasant surprise."

## **Luna Aleksa's Escape Chapter 37**

\*Xanthe POV\*

"I'm not going to beat around the bush. I'm going to tell you this straight. So brace yourself." I started to tell Aleksa, deciding that what I had to tell her would be overwhelming so I may as well keep to the point.

"Many millennia ago, the moon goddess blessed a lineage of wolves with special protective and healing powers, their role was to help heal and protect vulnerable wolves, they were known as the crescent moon wolves."

"Crescent moon wolves carried a unique marking, which consisted of a sapphire blue crescent moon with two wolves under it, and a crown with a purple hue to it. Unfortunately, crescent moon wolves were constantly hunted and exploited, many living their lives in captivity, many dying after being drained of their powers and healing abilities. There were many powerful wolves who wished to harness their special abilities. I realize this all sounds unbelievable to you right now. Especially since you were led to believe you were human for the first eighteen years of your life. But I can assure you that it is all true."

"Aleksa, your mother was a crescent moon wolf with special abilities and healing powers. She had left her pack when she met your father. You see Aleksa, your Grandfather was the Alpha of Moon Valley Pack. He was aware of Kristina's abilities from a very young age and knew that she was a gifted wolf, as her mother was also one, and it was passed down by females in the family."

“Back then, an alpha female taking the role of Alpha alone was unheard of, so they needed her to be mated and marked so that there would be a male alpha running the pack, thus maintaining their reputation and bloodline.”

“They (her parents) had planned to marry her off to the Alpha heir of a neighboring pack, in a bid to merge the two packs as they had no male heir so that their son would take the role of Alpha, and Kristina would be his Luna.”

“The alpha heir of the neighboring pack was an unkind, arrogant, and evil wolf, and rumor had it that he had planned to use Kristina for her gifts to heal his mistress, who suffered from some rare disease for which there was no known cure. The Alpha’s Heir was in love with his mistress and wanted to take her as his luna, but his parents had denied him.”

“And, Kristina had no intention of being mated to or being marked by him. Not long before the agreement was made, Kristina had met her fated mate in a chance meeting, your father. He was from another pack, and he was a warrior. When Kristina told her parents this news, they were not accepting of this, they felt that he had nothing to offer them, and being that they were in so much debt at the time, they refused to acknowledge her fated mate.”

“You see, I had met your mother back at her birth pack – Moon Valley. I would occasionally consult at the pack hospital. I had met your mother on a few occasions as she would volunteer at the hospital regularly. We had an instant connection. I met your father, Aleksander, a few times also. Actually, Kristina had only met him a few times before they ran off together. I met your father because your mother needed help leaving the packhouse to visit him. I was usually her cover story as she was constantly followed by her father’s guards. We would tell them that she was volunteering at the hospital, she would sneak out the back, and meet Aleksander just outside the pack boundary.”

“Worried that Kristina might defy them, and mess up their plans, her parents fast-tracked the agreement. The night before Kristina was supposed to leave for the neighboring pack, Aleksander with the help of some of his fellow warriors created a distraction and managed to help Kristina escape. That was the last she saw of her parents and her pack. They were on the run for months putting as much distance between them as they could.”

“Kristina’s parents never stopped looking for her. Their debts got higher, and they were on the brink of losing their pack when a Hunter came to them and made them a proposition. He would bankroll the pack but they wanted Kristina’s firstborn daughter in return. Somehow they were aware of her

crescent moon wolf lineage. Kristina's father was desperate to retain his title and his pack so he reluctantly agreed to the hunter's proposition."

"After some time the hunter had managed to find her, and surely enough, Kristina and Aleksander had mated and had a baby girl -that was you Aleksa. They came for you, time and time again. Aleksander and Kristina were so determined to keep you safe and hidden that they veered away from packs and pack life, and opted for life in the human world."

"However, one day they were caught unprepared, and that is the day Aleksander died trying to protect you."

"Kristina was on her own then, she was heartbroken but determined to protect you with her life. She moved from town to town and worked menial jobs in order to support you, over the course of a few months she managed to do this well until they came again one night. They came in the still of the night, Kristina managed to hide you in the ceiling. She fought hard and managed to take them all out, however, she was critically injured and died from blood loss that night."

"When Kristina didn't show up to work the next day I had a feeling something had gone horribly wrong. I left work at midday and when I arrived at the flat I was horrified at the scene that awaited me. It was like a scene from a horror movie, with bodies, and blood everywhere."

"I found Kristina on the floor in front of her bedroom, the door was shut behind her, she was protecting you trying to keep them from finding you. I checked for a pulse but I already knew Kristina was gone, she was so cold and I couldn't sense her energy. I will never forget that terrifying feeling that struck me when I realized that you were unaccounted for. I searched frantically. Then I focussed my mind and found you fast asleep in the ceiling, warm, and unscathed, although a little dehydrated and hungry when you finally woke."

"I had decided it was best that we left that town as soon as possible. I bent down and kissed sweet Kristina on her forehead, and that's when I saw the locket. She wore it everywhere and treasured it with her heart. I knew I should grab it so that you always had something of your mother's with you."

"I took you home with me, and then I decided it was time to move on. I needed to get you somewhere safe, as there was a high chance that they would still be looking for you."



“We traveled for a few weeks, and then I realized that this was no life for a little pup. I realized that I couldn’t give you what you needed. I managed to find a job and somewhere for us to stay in a small town a few states over, it was a lovely quiet Christian community. I had gotten a job as a cleaner at a local church and would often overhear conversations between people. One day I heard an older couple talking about how they wished they had been blessed with a child that they could shower with love. I watched them for a few more weeks, did some background checks, and then I decided they were the perfect couple to raise you and love you.”

“Often they ran the community soup kitchen at the church and they were often the last to leave, so I wrapped you up in a little Moses basket and left you with a note at the door. I rang the bell then ran into the bushes and waited and watched.”

“I saw the amazement and concern and love in their eyes as they fussed over you. I saw the police arrive. I watched in the background over the next few months and I watched them take you in and eventually adopt you as their own. I then went on my way. I would check in every now and then to ensure they were taking good care of you and to watch you grow. I was so proud of the beautiful person you had become.”

“I was there when you met Lachlan and I knew what was coming but I couldn’t interfere. I just watched on the sidelines, waiting for the time to come when you would need me.”

“When you had made your way here to Rocky Mountain and I had heard that Kingston was requesting a Healer, I knew it was the right time for me to make an appearance in your life.”

“So Aleksa that is the story of your parents and what happened to them, that is also the story of how you came to be adopted and live in a human town. Now you know you are a Crescent Moon Wolf, there is still so much I have to tell you, you will need to learn to properly harness your powers and your gifts, and in time you will.”

“I knew one day you would need to know everything, and I needed to be able to explain it to you. You might ask why I did not tell you earlier that you were a werewolf. I planned to trust me. I was planning to come to you and reveal myself to you just before your eighteenth birthday and to be there with you when you shifted for the first time. I couldn’t let you go through it alone.”

“However, my past had caught up with me. You see I too was on the run. Probably part of the reason Kristina and I understood each other so well. We were in similar situations. I was detained against my will, and it was a few years before I could escape. I am so sorry my child. I am sorry that I had let you down, and that I had left Kristina down. But I am here now and I will answer any questions you have to the best of my ability.”

I looked up at Aleksa and I could sense a sadness within her. She was not looking back at me, she had her head down and was quietly sniffing and wiping back her tears. I looked to Kingston who looked astonished as if he was still processing what I’d just said.

Silence enveloped us and I waited patiently for Aleksa’s response and her impending questions. I also hoped that she would forgive me for my failures.

\*Aleksa POV\*

I sat there listening to Xanthe tell me about my birth parents – Aleksander and Kristina. I felt something I didn’t expect to feel. I felt an overwhelming sense of determination. A desire to do better, to be better, to be stronger, and to fight harder. I didn’t want my parent’s death to have been in vain. They had sacrificed so much for me. And now it was my turn to do the same for my children.

I would be damned if I was going to let something happen to my precious pups, especially Layla. If what Xanthe is saying is correct, then Layla is also a crescent moon wolf. That means she is in danger.

I felt a sense of fear and panic engulf me, all I wanted to do is to run to my precious Liam and Layla and hold them tight. But I needed to finish this conversation. There were still questions to be answered. I needed to be strong and know what we are up against.

A flurry of emotions was consuming me right now. There was a determination to make my birth parents proud. Fear that my children, especially Layla, were in danger, not just from the threat of being taken back to Evergreen and separated from me, but that there were wolves out there who may know of her existence and wish to harm and exploit her. Sadness – that I was the reason my parents died. If it weren’t for me they may not have been caught off guard and might still be here today. I was also concerned that this will all be too much for Kingston and the pack. And finally, anger, at the people that had hunted my parents and me and in the process robbed me of the life I was

supposed to have, the one where my biological parents never died, where I was raised with my birth pack.

Just breathe Aleksa I told myself, as I felt Kingston's arms wrap around me for comfort. He must have sensed my emotional hurricane through our mate bond. I looked up at him and he has a soft smile on his face, I can feel that he is concerned about me.

I nodded at him and told him through the mind-link that I'd be ok. And thanked him for being here for me.

I looked back at Xanthe and I said "There are so many questions I want to ask you, especially about what being a Crescent Moon wolf means. But I feel the first question I need to ask is this – where are my Grandparents? Are they still alive, and if so where?"

My rationale for this is that I need to know how much of a threat they were, as they are the reason that both my parents are dead. They were ruthless, they cared not for the mate bond, not for their own blood, and their greed and ambition were clearly their priorities. I wanted to know where they were and if there was any chance that they could know of my existence and of Liam and Layla's. Although in all honesty, I hoped there were gone. I had no intention of ever meeting such cruel people, in my mind, there were already dead.

"Aleksa, I wish I could answer this question without a doubt but I can't. Your grandmother passed not long after Kristina was murdered. My contacts told me she took her own life out of heartbreak and regret. Apparently, she never wanted any of this for her daughter, and she was a subservient Luna and did what her mate had commanded her to do. While she didn't agree with his actions, she also didn't take a stand against them either. As for your grandfather, when the agreement with the neighboring pack fell through and Kristina left, there was no heir to take over. After the Luna passed, your grandfather's wolf became feral and started to lose his grasp on reality, the pack began to suffer, and at this time the neighboring pack invaded the Moon Valley and took over control.

There was an alpha challenge, and your grandfather was grievously wounded, but it is unknown as to whether he actually died, as a rogue attack occurred while the challenge was taking place, and chaos ensued, it was at this time he disappeared, and his body was never found, although it is assumed he died but it is not certain. The wounds he sustained in the challenge coupled with

losing his mate would be enough to end any wolf. I don't think he is a threat to you Aleska, or to your pups." Xanthe told me looking absolute in her answer.

"And, the Hunter, did you ever find out his identity? Who was the person that made the agreement with my Grandfather for my mother's firstborn daughter?" I asked Xanthe, wanting to get an idea of the players that were involved here, and who we were up against.

"No, I'm afraid not. I tried to keep a low profile. I had to keep you safe. I used some of my contacts to find out about your grandparents, but I was unable to find anything about the Hunter. I didn't want people to know I was asking questions." Xanthe told me apologetically.

"Hmmn, ok, fair enough, thank you Xanthe for everything, you have done for me. I do appreciate it. It sounds like I owe you my life. I'm not sure how I can ever repay you, but I will surely try." I told Xanthe, feeling a great deal of respect for the woman sitting in front of me right now.

"If you don't mind, I do have some more questions?" I ask Xanthe.

"That is fine Aleksa, I have no place else to be right now. Fire away." Xanthe said sweetly.

"You said that my mother died fighting to protect me. But I don't understand. If she was also a Crescent Moon wolf, why did she die? Why didn't she use her powers?" I questioned Xanthe. As that is one part of this story that I can't seem to get my head around.

"I wondered when you were gonna ask me that question. The wolves that showed up that night didn't appear to have any scents. And when I arrived on the scene I detected the faintest hint of magic, of dark magic Aleksa. I fear that a witch who practices dark magic was involved. I can't say for certain, but I imagine that there was a barrier or forcefield that your mother's powers couldn't penetrate. I've wracked my brain throughout the years trying to understand what happened there, that's all I have come up with that makes any real sense." Xanthe told me bowing her head down. I got the impression she was unhappy that she hadn't been able to uncover more.

"Dark magic? So she stood no chance then? Outnumbered by wolves and facing off against a dark witch." I said anger searing through me, I feel my whole body starting to shake, and I could feel my eyes glowing.

“Aleksa, honey, try to calm down, just breathe,” Kingston said as he tried to calm me down, his touch alone was enough to soothe my soul.

“Aleksa, I can help you. Just knowing that there was a dark witch involved gives us more of an advantage. We can prepare better. I’m sorry I know this is all a lot. I know it’s horrible. I hate that this all happened and I couldn’t do anything to help. We have a chance here though, to prevent history from repeating.” Xanthe soothingly tells me while placing her hands on my hands.

“Tell me of my father’s death. I need to know – everything.” I expressed to Xanthe. I needed to know as much as I could about the events that had transpired all those years ago.

“Aleksander was a warrior from a pack a state over from Moon Valley. They met by chance really. Kristina would every once in a while sneak out with her friends into one of the nearby human towns for a bit of dancing and fun. One night she bumped into Aleksander while leaving the club, they knew they were mates right away, and instantly connected. They would meet every chance they got, as Kristina set about introducing him to her father. Aleksander wasn’t able to mark and mate with Kristina straight away with her being the alpha’s daughter, so he had to be patient and undergo formalities, however, the alpha was opposed to their mateship.”

“You see, Aleksander was an elite warrior for the Dark Moon pack, he was revered among his squad, and everyone that met Aleksander took an instant liking to him. He was very popular with the she-wolves but was determined to wait for his mate, which he did. Your mother – Kristina was the same, she was holding out for her mate too. They were so in love. It was a perfect match.”

“You wanted to ask how your father died. He was a fierce fighter, but he was outnumbered the night that they first came for you, however, he was holding his own just fine. but the rogues that attacked him stabbed him in the back multiple times with a silver blade laced with wolfsbane. He wasn’t able to heal and ultimately died of blood loss and wolfsbane poisoning. I’m sorry Aleksa, he was so courageous right to the very end. He managed to take them all out with him. When they had first attacked, he had already told Kristina to take you and run, which she did reluctantly. No one anticipated a silver blade and wolfsbane, they fought dirty.” Xanthe explained. “Your mother never forgave herself for that. No matter how much I would tell her that she did the right thing, she followed Aleksander’s orders and got you to safety. Kristina was heartbroken but found the strength to go on for you. She was most likely able to do this because she was a Crescent Moon wolf.”

"She knew she would meet Aleksander again one day, and she wanted to make him proud by protecting you."

Salty tears were slowly escaping my eyes as Xanthe recounted the events leading up to my father's death. I had so much love and respect and regret in my heart right now for the parents I had once thought hadn't wanted me.

I wiped away my tears, took a sip from the glass of water in front of me, and took a few breaths.

"What more can you tell me about my wolf? You said I am a Crescent Moon wolf. How can I find more information about myself, about my powers and abilities? I need to know how to use them properly, and how to control them. Everything that has happened so far happened randomly. I have no clue of what I am doing." I confessed to Xanthe.

"There is not a lot of information about the Crescent Moon wolves. Aside from Kristina, I had not heard of a Crescent Moon wolf until then. Kristina learned to harness her powers to a point, but even she didn't know a lot about her powers, and she never had a chance to master them. And with all that was going on we didn't speak much of them." Xanthe replied.

"The best way for us to learn more about your wolf would be to speak with an elder. I have some contacts we can utilize, but we need to be careful as to who we trust with this. Can you give me a few days? Give me some time to reach out to a few of my contacts. I feel they will be able to point us in the right direction?" Xanthe asked me.

"Of course. Maybe we should end this meeting here. I need to get back to Liam and Layla, and I'm sure Kingston has plenty of pack business to attend to. Xanthe, thank you for your time. I appreciate everything you have told me. I really do appreciate you coming here." I thanked Xanthe.

"Aleksa, Kingston has my details, and you can contact me anytime. I want to be here for you." Xanthe said warmly as she got up from her seat.

"Can I just say how much you look like your mother? You really are the spitting image of her." Xanthe told me. That made my heart swell with pride. Kingston and I stood up from our seats.

"Uh, Xanthe, do you have any photos of my parents? I've never met them or even seen a picture of them. I don't even know what they look like, and I

would like to.” I asked Xanthe, as my lips started to quiver, I was fighting to prevent my emotions from consuming me once again.

“I actually do. I’m sorry Aleksa, I wasn’t thinking. Of course, you would want a photo of them. I believe I have one or two. I could bring them with me when I come back in a few days if you like.” Xanthe asked me.

“That would be amazing – thank you! Well, we will get going and we look forward to hearing from you in few days, all going well. Goodbye Xanthe!” I said as I walked over to Xanthe embracing her in a hug, she smelt like wild jasmine, the hug felt strangely familiar, as did her scent. I walked over to Kingston, and we locked hands and walked off through the gardens. I lay my head against his shoulder and we walked together, our bodies molding into one another’s. I could feel the warmth from the bond. I looked up at Kingston’s face while we were walking, he looked down at me and kissed me on the forehead. “I love you so much,” I said to Kingston.

“I love you too, Aleksa,” Kingston said back. And we kept walking towards the packhouse to see our pups on this warm sunny day, the blue sky was dotted with fluffy white clouds, there was a gentle breeze passing us, I could hear the birds chirping in the background, bees buzzing over the wildflowers that littered the sides of the path we walked on, and a faint sound of children playing with frisbees on the grass in front of the packhouse.

There was so much going through my mind right now, but it could all wait a few hours. This mama needed some time with her pups.

\*Aleksa POV\*

It’s been two weeks since we spoke with Xanthe, and strangely we haven’t heard back from her yet. We assume she has been busy or hasn’t yet found anything further out about crescent moon wolves. It’s been very busy here at the packhouse lately.

Everyone is getting prepared for the Royal Alpha Summit which will be taking place over the next week. We’ve had the caterers in to organize the meals for the week-long event. Quinn has been helping me with this as I am still new to all of this. Back at Evergreen we never had an event even remotely resembling this. It’s all a learning curve for me.



We decided against the media release about Kingston and I's mateship. The pack knew most importantly, but the rest of the world could wait a little bit longer.

After speaking with Xanthe and learning what we did about my lineage, about the Crescent Moon wolves being hunted, about my grandparents, and the Hunter that was potentially looking for me and Layla, we decided that it was best to keep things under wraps for now. We would wait for the summit and deal with things as they happened. Meaning that we would be dealing with the Lachlan situation as it arose.

I really hoped that Lachlan wouldn't attend the Royal Alpha Summit. He had never attended one previously so with a little bit of luck he wouldn't attend this one. Although, in saying that we weren't leaving it to luck. Kingston and Asher were working on a plan for what would happen if he did attend and how we would approach that situation without placing a damper on the celebrations or any disrespect to the alpha king himself.

Kingston was determined that this would be the best summit he had organized yet. We had all the accommodation organized, housekeeping was paying attention to detail to ensure that everything was perfect for our guests, and we had guides and point of contact organized for each pack.

We had entertainment organized for each night of the summit. The conference room had been extended and prepared to seat all attending alphas comfortably. Maintenance had outdone themselves, as the pack landscaping looked immaculate. The pack members were all excited and ready to host the attending packs. Unmated wolves were excited at the possibility of meeting their mates at the summit. The pack was a hive of excitement and anticipation.

While I was putting on a brave face, my anxiety was at an all-time high. I was trying to distract myself and not overanalyze everything because I knew Kingston would feel it through our bond, but I just couldn't. I was scared of what would happen if Lachlan attended. So much so that I had made plans to have Kingston's parents Chase and Cordelia take Liam and Layla away to a cabin in a nearby state for the week of the summit. I needed to know that they were safe especially if I was to see Lachlan face to face. Also, I would constantly be on edge worrying about whether or not they were safe if they were to be here while the Summit was taking place.



Although I would worry regardless, I would worry less knowing that they were in the capable hands of Chase and Cordelia. We had gotten to know each other a lot more over the past few weeks. They were very welcoming and genuinely happy for us both. They knew of my past with Lachlan and Evergreen, and accepted me with open arms.

Chase was still very fit and also very intimidating when you first met him, he was an older more distinguished version of Kingston, and Cordelia was sophisticated and elegant, she looked like an older version of Quinn, she was very nurturing and absolutely loved being around children, she doted on Liam and Layla as if they were her own pups. They would be leaving two days before the summit started, which I was happy with, as it gave us that little bit more time to plan, and sort our backup plan, as well as our back up to the backup plan.

Kingston had been very busy, but he had a very capable team working with him, he was at this point just checking that everything was organized and ready to go. Initially, he had played a bigger role in preparing the summit, but in light of the rogue attacks, Xanthe telling us of mine and Layla's lineage and preparing for the probable fallout with Lachlan, he had decided to delegate.

Quinn and Mason had been busy renovating their cottage, and it was almost ready, they were just putting the finishing touches on it. They were so happy stuck in their own little love bubble. Kingston had been giving Mason more and more responsibility within the pack leadership and Mason was handling it all so well. He seemed very comfortable and settled here. I was so happy for my friend. He deserved happiness.

Kaia was still heavily involved with the warrior squad and practically trained all day every day. She was still spending a lot of time with Asher, they had even been on their first date. They were taking things slowly but you could feel the s\*\*\*\*l tension in the air whenever those two were around each other.

Liam and Layla were settled and fitted in so well with the pack, everyone had been so welcoming towards them. It's crazy to think that in a few months they would be celebrating their third birthdays. I hadn't planned anything yet for that but I plan to once the summit is over, and everything is sorted out in regards to Lachlan, I will start planning for it then.

I was on my way to Kingston's office to bring him some lunch as he tended to skip meals often when he was hyperfocused and immersed in pack business. Liam and Layla were at daycare so I was just doing errands today and helping

with the final preparations. As I walked down the hallway I heard raised voices coming from Kingston's office.

The voices stopped. I assumed they could scent me considering I was standing just outside the office. "Come in Aleksa" Kingston called out.

I walked in to see Kingston leaning back in his chair, Asher was sitting on the chair in front of Lachlan's desk. "Good afternoon Asher, good afternoon My Love," I said as I walked up to Kingston, placing his lunch on his desk in front of him and kissing him on his forehead.

"Did I walk in on something?" I ask sheepishly.

Asher shifts uncomfortably in his chair.

"Just tell her Asher," Kingston says to Asher sighing.

"Well Aleksa, I'm sorry to be the bearer of bad news, but it would appear that news of Lachlan's bounty has traveled, your images have been posted all over the town. It's only a matter of time before someone contacts Lachlan, and he knows where you are." Asher tells me, releasing the breath he was holding in.

My heart starts racing rapidly and I feel a shiver ripple throughout my body. My eyes begin to tear up. Then I close my eyes and focus my energy. I will not let this fear consume me. I take a few deep breaths and try to control my emotions.

Kingston goes to pull me into him and sit me on his lap, while I would usually feel comfort and protection in this action, right now I want to stand. I need to stand. I will not cower and let fear take over whenever a curveball is thrown at me. I am to be Luna of this pack Although I love that Kingston wants to protect me, I am done with being a passive subservient Luna like I was when I was at Evergreen. I need to learn to protect myself, my pups, and my pack properly. Kingston growls at my actions and looks at me questionably.

"Okay, so, we need a plan! We can't leave anything to chance, we really need to be a few steps ahead of Lachlan at all times!" I declare to them both.

Asher looks at me incredulously, usually, I would be an emotional wreck right now, and would act before thinking. But I was done with being that girl.

Kingston looks at me with a proud look on his face. I can feel through the bond that he approves of this side of me.

“Well Luna, I have taken them all down, but we have to work on the premise that they have already been seen by most people.”

“For example, the people that knew you from working at the tavern, people who may be walked past you in the street, or saw you in a shop. We will speak with all pack members, I can’t imagine we would have any problems there. But the humans and any rogues we will have no control over.” Asher replied.

“I have just called all pack members to the training grounds in fifteen minutes, we will discuss this issue with them immediately. Aleksa we will need to tell them about your past, about Lachlan, and about Evergreen. What are your thoughts on this?” Kingston asks me.

“I agree. The pack needs to know the truth. It is better that they know now before they decide whether or not they will accept me as their Luna officially.” I said.

Kingston growled. “They have already accepted you. You are their Luna.” He declared.

I put my hands on his cheek and pulled him in for a quick kiss to calm his wolf.

“Looks like we will be speaking with Lachlan sooner than we expected,” Kingston says to Asher, their eyes meeting each other knowingly in agreeance.

“I will have two elite warriors assigned to Liam and Layla twenty-four hours a day, I will also assign two elite warriors to the Luna if you agree Alpha?” Asher asked Kingston.

“Sounds good. We will need to tighten pack security and double the patrols. I will have to speak with our neighboring packs to advise them of the situation and ensure our bases are covered should we need additional backup.” Kingston tells Asher.

“Everything will be ok Aleksa, you are safe, Liam and Layla are safe. Your pack will protect you.” Kingston reassures me.

"I know we will be. I refuse to let Lachlan control our lives. I am done with running and done with being afraid. That being said, I need a little help with something Asher. If you have some free time later this afternoon?" I ask him hopefully.

"Of course Luna, although I must say I am rather curious," Asher remarks to me. Kingston is looking at me, raising an eyebrow.

"Relax, I just need a little training, some basic but effective defensive moves, I need to be able to fight if necessary," I tell them both.

Kingston mind-links me "This more dominant side of you is turning me right now on my love!"

"Uh guys, I'm still here," Asher says, looking uncomfortable.

Kingston and I both chuckle, "Sorry man" Kingston says to Asher.

I feel the heat creep over my cheeks, I know that I am blushing right now.

A few minutes later, there is a knock on the door. "Mason, please come in," Kingston calls out.

Mason walks in, "Alpha, Luna, Beta Asher," He says as he nodded his head respectfully. "What can I do for you?" He asks.

"Well Mason, we have a problem. Those images you warned us of, well they have been posted all over town. We have to assume that Lachlan already knows where Aleksa and the twins are, so we have a problem."

"I asked you to come here today in the hopes that you would consider being Liam and Layla's protection detail for now, until this is all resolved. I would also assign to of our elite warriors to the twins, but I think it would be reassuring for Aleksa to have someone she trusts looking out for the twins, and less stressful for them to have a familiar face around them." Kingston asks Mason.

Mason answers straight away as if he didn't even have to consider the request. "Absolutely Alpha, I would be honored to." He said, winking at me, which made me smile, lessening my nerves a little.

Kingston got up out of his seat and everyone else stood and made their way out of the office. It was time to address the pack and tell them of my life before coming to Rocky Mountain. It was time to tell them of the threat to the pack. Although it wasn't the time to tell them of my lineage and that I was a Crescent Moon wolf as I still didn't really know what that meant myself.

I had just hoped that they would still accept the twins and I once they knew the truth about my past before coming to Rocky Mountain.

\*Aleksa POV\*

It's been a few days since we had "the talk" with our pack. It actually went really well. Everyone was a bit quiet initially. I could hear gasps and whispers, but I kept talking, telling my story, and before long, I could sense that the pack understood what I was saying and why I had to leave my previous pack. I explained what happened with Lachlan and Eva, and how I ended up in the pack dungeons. Then I explained how I had to leave with my pups, and mentioned my friends, Mason and Kaia, who helped facilitate that escape. Everyone just stood and listened to what I had to say. Kingston took over and explained to the pack about the bounty placed on me, as well as explaining that what Lachlan had told people about Mason and Kaia was untrue, that they were helping me, not k\*\*\*\*\*g me, and to not pay attention to the lies they might hear. He reassured the pack that he had done his due diligence before we came to join Rocky Mountain,

Since then, everyone has been even friendlier, which I didn't think was possible, because they were already so welcoming. I feel lighter not having to hide my past, like a weight has been shifted from my shoulders. I feel relieved to know that the pack accepts me as their Luna, because I love Kingston and the pack, and I feel like we have made this place our home. I don't even want to imagine what might have happened if the pack hadn't accepted me and my pups.

Due to the news of the bounty, and mine and my pups faces being plastered everywhere, as well as Mason and Kaia's, pack security and patrols have doubled and the place is like Fort Knox around here, which is making things a little harder for the deliveries and preparations needed for the summit, but as Kingston reiterates, it's better to be safe than sorry.

I know I need to face Lachlan once and for all. And every day I feel more and more ready for it, I just want to get it over with, so we can all live our lives without having this hanging over our heads.

Asher has been taking the time out to train me twice a day. We meet at dawn and dusk. He is mostly teaching me defense. He's keeping it short and sweet for now, teaching me how I can use my size to my advantage, as well as teaching me moves that are easy to execute and are highly effective.

Tomorrow, Chase and Cordelia will be taking Liam and Layla away to a lake house in Idaho. Mason and Quinn will be accompanying them, as well as several elite warriors. I know my pups are in safe hands. I am sad that we will be separated, but I know it's only temporary. I feel confident knowing that they will be further away from Lachlan's clutches.

We are spending the day at the packhouse today. I want to make the most of my time with my pups before their trip away. I have told them they will be going away with their grandparents and they don't seem phased. I guess they are too young to really understand. But at least they have fun with Chase and Cordelia, Mason and Quinn, and they are familiar faces for them, which should help alleviate any stress or anxiety that they may feel from being away from their Mama.

I won't see Kingston until tonight as he has back-to-back meetings with some of the Alpha's from nearby packs all day, they will be busily preparing for the summit as well as Lachlan's probable arrival. I have organized a special lunch to be delivered to the conference room for them today. I know what those Alpha's are like when they are busy talking about business they often won't eat, so at least they can eat while they work. I know I will feel better knowing that they are being fed.

I hear a knock at the door and I get up from the floor where I am playing blocks with the twins to open it. I was surprised to see Kaia at the door. "Aleksa, I wondered if you and the twins would like some company. I heard that they were leaving tomorrow and I needed to get my cuddle quota in before they leave" Kaia says enthusiastically, opening her arms up for Liam and Layla.

"Aun-ty Kaia! Aun-ty Kaia!" they yelled, barrelling towards her with open arms.

"My pups!" She replies, pulling them into her arms, and snuggling them.

"Perhaps we could go to the kitchen and get some snacks to have a picnic on the front lawn?" I suggested to everyone.

"Yay!" the twins shouted in unison.

“Sounds good to me!” Kaia says cheerfully.

I grab my go-bag for the twins, they each take Kaia’s hand, and we walk out the door, kitchen bound for snacks.

Ready to enjoy the rest of the day together creating fun memories.

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It’s the day before the summit, which means my pups are about to embark on their first holiday without their Mama this morning, and I am feeling a little anxious. I woke up super early today. I had the twins’ suitcases packed last night and had taken them to the front door, ready to be loaded into Chase’s SUV this morning.

I have already had two coffees and I’m considering my third one already. I’ve just been sitting here watching Liam and Layla sleep for the past few hours. Just thinking about how fast they are growing and wondering where the time has gone. It seems like only yesterday they were in my womb. Now they aren’t far off their third birthdays.

We have all been through so much over the past six months or so. But I wouldn’t change a thing because it has got us to this point. To Rocky Mountain, to Kingston, to our beautiful friends who have become our family. To this kind and caring and protective pack. We are all so blessed.

I am disrupted from my thought process by a sleepy Liam, “Mama?” He questions me.

“Good Morning Liam, yes it’s Mama, how did you sleep?” I asked my big boy.

“Good.” He says to me,

“Mama?” He asked me.

“Yes, Liam?” I said, trying to hold back my chuckle at how cute my little boy looked half asleep and trying to communicate with me.

“Pancakes?” Liam asks.

“Yes Liam, you can have pancakes this morning, let’s get you changed while we wait for your sister to wake up, shall we?” I said to Liam.



“I’m awake!” Layla called out.

I laughed out loud. Layla never missed an opportunity to have pancakes.

“Of course, my princess, let’s get you dressed too, and head down to the kitchen,” I say to my pups.

They both smile and start clapping with glee.

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After breakfast, I got Liam and Layla cleaned up and we made our way back downstairs to the main entrance of the pack house. Kingston and Mason help strap the twins into their car seats and I give them big cuddles and kisses goodbye. I then say thank you to everyone and wish them all a safe trip.

I waved continuously with a big smile on my face, holding back the tears until Liam and Layla were out of sight. I feel tears flooding my eyes, and I try to contain myself in front of everyone. I end up laughing at myself and overcome with emotion. I wipe my eyes and take a few breaths trying to settle myself down. Kingston pulls me into his chest and tries to console me.

“It’s for the best, Aleksa, they will be safe with my parents, and with Mason and Quinn, I promise,” Kingston tells me.

“I know, I don’t doubt that, Kingston. I’m just sad, it’s my first time away from the twins, well, with the exception of my time in the dungeons.” I replied.

Kingston growled at my mentioning the dungeons. Well, it was probably more Sabre growling in all honesty.

I wiped my eyes one last time and took a big breath and exhaled. It’s time to pull myself together. I am doing this for my pups. I need to focus on the summit, on confronting Lachlan, and ensuring he is no longer a threat to me or the twins.

Kingston looks at me proudly, as if he knows exactly what I am thinking. Asher clears his throat.

“Alpha, Luna.” He starts.

“Border patrol has told me that some of the Alpha’s have already started to arrive for the Summit,” Asher tells us.

I had a shocked expression on my face, “But the Summit doesn’t start until tomorrow?” I replied to them both, suddenly wondering if we were actually ready. Although if they are already here, we will just have to be ready.

“It’s okay, my love, it’s not unusual for some packs to arrive a little early. We have already anticipated this. Let’s quickly refresh ourselves, then come back down to greet our guests Aleksa.” Kingston gestures for me to follow him.

“ OK, sure, good idea,” I said in reply to him, feeling a bit dazed, but following his lead. We left Asher at the main entrance, waiting to greet the guests and direct them once they arrived, as well as stalling for time as we made our way back.

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The first pack to arrive was from North Dakota. Alpha Logan and his Luna Louise looked to be in their late thirties, their Gamma Joel, who I imagine was of a similar age and accompanying them, were four elite warriors. Their Beta was at home leading the pack in their absence. They were a lovely pack, very friendly. After some small talk, Asher accompanied them to the cottage they would be residing in for the entirety of the summit. We had suggested they get settled and meet us back at the packhouse for lunch if they wish to. Which they happily accepted.

As we were about to leave to head back into the packhouse, another pack was arriving, so we decided to wait at the main entrance for them, as Asher was busy with the North Dakota pack.

Three SUVs drove up to the entrance. A burly man, probably in his early twenties, ran up to the door of the SUV and opened it for his Alpha, a very tall and muscular man who looked to be in his late twenties. He then opened the door on the other side and a gorgeous woman with red hair and green eyes walked out. She had a shy smile on her face, she joined hands with her mate and they walked up to us.

After introducing ourselves to them, we learned that they were from Nebraska, Wyatt, and Willow Robinson. They seemed like a nice couple, they seemed happy to be here, and I had a really good feeling about Willow specifically, there was something about her. I look forward to getting to know her better over the next week.

Kai arrived at the entrance, he promptly introduced himself to Wyatt and Willow and offered to take them to their cottage so that they could get settled in. They also agreed to meet us at the packhouse for lunch.

Kingston and I took this as a chance for us to spend a little time together while welcoming our guests. It was looking like the summit might be starting a bit earlier this year, so Kingston sent out a mass mind-link to the pack, informing them of the guests that had already arrived, and reminding them to make sure they all felt welcome.

As we walked inside the packhouse, I told Kingston that I needed a quick word with Rose. I said I would be quick if he could just wait for me. I made my way to the kitchen, leaving Kingston to check his emails on his smartphone in the lobby.

I needed to let Rose know our guests had started arriving and that we would be making a special lunch today for our guests. I wanted to give her a heads up numbers-wise but to also potentially prepare for even more guests, as we were not sure who else might arrive early and we didn't want anyone going hungry.

Rose was excited to hear that our guests were arriving and she got to work organizing food. I asked Rose if she would like some help, but she just started shoo-ing me out of the kitchen. So I took the hint and made my way to Kingston.

"My love, you still haven't told me what you and Asher have decided to do about Lachlan? What's this grand plan? I don't mean to pressure you, but I would really like to know what the plan is, considering it will involve me." I told him, pouting and looking into his eyes.

"How about we get through this afternoon, and then tonight after dinner, I will call a meeting with Asher and some of our elite warriors, then we can all talk about it then and there. Does that sound fair?" Kingston asked me. Although it was more of a statement than a question if you ask me.

"I guess I can wait," I said, feeling unimpressed that he seemed to be stalling me.

"So uh, if we have some free time now, would you like a massage?" Kingston says with a cheeky grin on his face.

“How about we get through this afternoon, have dinner, and then after the meeting we can spend some quality time together. Does that sound fair?” I said smugly to Kingston, trying to stifle my laugh.

“I see what you did there. Touche.” Kingston says, trying to suppress his laughter.

“It’s ok. Come to think of it I should really go over everything one last time, and check in with security.” Kingston says matter of factly.

“Ah, yes, and I will touch base with the planning team for the festivities, to ensure everything is on schedule,” I said to Kingston, leaning on him to kiss him on the cheek.

“I love you!” I said to Kingston as I looked into his eyes sincerely.

“I love you too!” He replied back to me. And we go our separate ways.

As I was walking down the hallway, I realized I had left my phone in the kitchen, so I turned back and headed toward the kitchen. As I walked through the door, I saw that Rose and some of the kitchen staff were busy preparing lunch. I could hear a commotion outside, so I quickly grabbed my phone and made my way outside.

As I opened the door and walked down the steps of the packhouse following the raised voices, I saw some of our pack members preparing to direct our guests. One of them has a checklist, and the other is trying to communicate with the driver of the first SUV. A total of two SUVs have arrived at the main entrance of the packhouse. I am surprised there are no ranked wolves down here to greet them, so I quickly mind-linked Kingston telling him we have more guests arriving. Then I started to confidently stride toward the SUV. I’ve got this thought to myself, it’s just meet and greet, how hard can it be.

I then see a tall and muscular man in a fitted black suit step out of the first SUV and as he turns towards me I gasp, stopping in my tracks.

“Aleksa? Well, this is a pleasant surprise.”

## **Luna Aleksa’s Escape Chapter 38**

\*Aleksa POV\*

I sat there listening to Xanthe tell me about my birth parents – Aleksander and Kristina. I felt something I didn't expect to feel. I felt an overwhelming sense of determination. A desire to do better, to be better, to be stronger, and to fight harder. I didn't want my parent's death to have been in vain. They had sacrificed so much for me. And now it was my turn to do the same for my children.

I would be damned if I was going to let something happen to my precious pups, especially Layla. If what Xanthe is saying is correct, then Layla is also a crescent moon wolf. That means she is in danger.

I felt a sense of fear and panic engulf me, all I wanted to do is to run to my precious Liam and Layla and hold them tight. But I needed to finish this conversation. There were still questions to be answered. I needed to be strong and know what we are up against.

A flurry of emotions was consuming me right now. There was a determination to make my birth parents proud. Fear that my children, especially Layla, were in danger, not just from the threat of being taken back to Evergreen and separated from me, but that there were wolves out there who may know of her existence and wish to harm and exploit her. Sadness – that I was the reason my parents died. If it weren't for me they may not have been caught off guard and might still be here today. I was also concerned that this will all be too much for Kingston and the pack. And finally, anger, at the people that had hunted my parents and me and in the process robbed me of the life I was supposed to have, the one where my biological parents never died, where I was raised with my birth pack.

Just breathe Aleksa I told myself, as I felt Kingston's arms wrap around me for comfort. He must have sensed my emotional hurricane through our mate bond. I looked up at him and he has a soft smile on his face, I can feel that he is concerned about me.

I nodded at him and told him through the mind-link that I'd be ok. And thanked him for being here for me.

I looked back at Xanthe and I said "There are so many questions I want to ask you, especially about what being a Crescent Moon wolf means. But I feel the first question I need to ask is this – where are my Grandparents? Are they still alive, and if so where?"

My rationale for this is that I need to know how much of a threat they were, as they are the reason that both my parents are dead. They were ruthless, they cared not for the mate bond, not for their own blood, and their greed and ambition were clearly their priorities. I wanted to know where they were and if there was any chance that they could know of my existence and of Liam and Layla's. Although in all honesty, I hoped there were gone. I had no intention of ever meeting such cruel people, in my mind, there were already dead.

"Aleksa, I wish I could answer this question without a doubt but I can't. Your grandmother passed not long after Kristina was murdered. My contacts told me she took her own life out of heartbreak and regret. Apparently, she never wanted any of this for her daughter, and she was a subservient Luna and did what her mate had commanded her to do. While she didn't agree with his actions, she also didn't take a stand against them either. As for your grandfather, when the agreement with the neighboring pack fell through and Kristina left, there was no heir to take over. After the Luna passed, your grandfather's wolf became feral and started to lose his grasp on reality, the pack began to suffer, and at this time the neighboring pack invaded the Moon Valley and took over control.

There was an alpha challenge, and your grandfather was grievously wounded, but it is unknown as to whether he actually died, as a rogue attack occurred while the challenge was taking place, and chaos ensued, it was at this time he disappeared, and his body was never found, although it is assumed he died but it is not certain. The wounds he sustained in the challenge coupled with losing his mate would be enough to end any wolf. I don't think he is a threat to you Aleska, or to your pups." Xanthe told me looking absolute in her answer.

"And, the Hunter, did you ever find out his identity? Who was the person that made the agreement with my Grandfather for my mother's firstborn daughter?" I asked Xanthe, wanting to get an idea of the players that were involved here, and who we were up against.

"No, I'm afraid not. I tried to keep a low profile. I had to keep you safe. I used some of my contacts to find out about your grandparents, but I was unable to find anything about the Hunter. I didn't want people to know I was asking questions." Xanthe told me apologetically.

"Hmnm, ok, fair enough, thank you Xanthe for everything, you have done for me. I do appreciate it. It sounds like I owe you my life. I'm not sure how I can ever repay you, but I will surely try." I told Xanthe, feeling a great deal of respect for the woman sitting in front of me right now.

“If you don’t mind, I do have some more questions?” I ask Xanthe.

“That is fine Aleksa, I have no place else to be right now. Fire away.” Xanthe said sweetly.

“You said that my mother died fighting to protect me. But I don’t understand. If she was also a Crescent Moon wolf, why did she die? Why didn’t she use her powers?” I questioned Xanthe. As that is one part of this story that I can’t seem to get my head around.

“I wondered when you were gonna ask me that question. The wolves that showed up that night didn’t appear to have any scents. And when I arrived on the scene I detected the faintest hint of magic, of dark magic Aleksa. I fear that a witch who practices dark magic was involved. I can’t say for certain, but I imagine that there was a barrier or forcefield that your mother’s powers couldn’t penetrate. I’ve wracked my brain throughout the years trying to understand what happened there, that’s all I have come up with that makes any real sense.” Xanthe told me bowing her head down. I got the impression she was unhappy that she hadn’t been able to uncover more.

“Dark magic? So she stood no chance then? Outnumbered by wolves and facing off against a dark witch.” I said anger searing through me, I feel my whole body starting to shake, and I could feel my eyes glowing.

“Aleksa, honey, try to calm down, just breathe,” Kingston said as he tried to calm me down, his touch alone was enough to soothe my soul.

“Aleksa, I can help you. Just knowing that there was a dark witch involved gives us more of an advantage. We can prepare better. I’m sorry I know this is all a lot. I know it’s horrible. I hate that this all happened and I couldn’t do anything to help. We have a chance here though, to prevent history from repeating.” Xanthe soothingly tells me while placing her hands on my hands.

“Tell me of my father’s death. I need to know – everything.” I expressed to Xanthe. I needed to know as much as I could about the events that had transpired all those years ago.

“Aleksander was a warrior from a pack a state over from Moon Valley. They met by chance really. Kristina would every once in a while sneak out with her friends into one of the nearby human towns for a bit of dancing and fun. One night she bumped into Aleksander while leaving the club, they knew they were mates right away, and instantly connected. They would meet every chance



they got, as Kristina set about introducing him to her father. Aleksander wasn't able to mark and mate with Kristina straight away with her being the alpha's daughter, so he had to be patient and undergo formalities, however, the alpha was opposed to their mateship."

"You see, Aleksander was an elite warrior for the Dark Moon pack, he was revered among his squad, and everyone that met Aleksander took an instant liking to him. He was very popular with the she-wolves but was determined to wait for his mate, which he did. Your mother – Kristina was the same, she was holding out for her mate too. They were so in love. It was a perfect match."

"You wanted to ask how your father died. He was a fierce fighter, but he was outnumbered the night that they first came for you, however, he was holding his own just fine. but the rogues that attacked him stabbed him in the back multiple times with a silver blade laced with wolfsbane. He wasn't able to heal and ultimately died of blood loss and wolfsbane poisoning. I'm sorry Aleksa, he was so courageous right to the very end. He managed to take them all out with him. When they had first attacked, he had already told Kristina to take you and run, which she did reluctantly. No one anticipated a silver blade and wolfsbane, they fought dirty." Xanthe explained. "Your mother never forgave herself for that. No matter how much I would tell her that she did the right thing, she followed Aleksander's orders and got you to safety. Kristina was heartbroken but found the strength to go on for you. She was most likely able to do this because she was a Crescent Moon wolf."

" She knew she would meet Aleksander again one day, and she wanted to make him proud by protecting you."

Salty tears were slowly escaping my eyes as Xanthe recounted the events leading up to my father's death. I had so much love and respect and regret in my heart right now for the parents I had once thought hadn't wanted me.

I wiped away my tears, took a sip from the glass of water in front of me, and took a few breaths.

"What more can you tell me about my wolf? You said I am a Crescent Moon wolf. How can I find more information about myself, about my powers and abilities? I need to know how to use them properly, and how to control them. Everything that has happened so far happened randomly. I have no clue of what I am doing." I confessed to Xanthe.

“There is not a lot of information about the Crescent Moon wolves. Aside from Kristina, I had not heard of a Crescent Moon wolf until then. Kristina learned to harness her powers to a point, but even she didn’t know a lot about her powers, and she never had a chance to master them. And with all that was going on we didn’t speak much of them.” Xanthe replied.

“The best way for us to learn more about your wolf would be to speak with an elder. I have some contacts we can utilize, but we need to be careful as to who we trust with this. Can you give me a few days? Give me some time to reach out to a few of my contacts. I feel they will be able to point us in the right direction?” Xanthe asked me.

“Of course. Maybe we should end this meeting here. I need to get back to Liam and Layla, and I’m sure Kingston has plenty of pack business to attend to. Xanthe, thank you for your time. I appreciate everything you have told me. I really do appreciate you coming here.” I thanked Xanthe.

“Aleksa, Kingston has my details, and you can contact me anytime. I want to be here for you.” Xanthe said warmly as she got up from her seat.

“Can I just say how much you look like your mother? You really are the spitting image of her.” Xanthe told me. That made my heart swell with pride. Kingston and I stood up from our seats.

“Uh, Xanthe, do you have any photos of my parents? I’ve never met them or even seen a picture of them. I don’t even know what they look like, and I would like to.” I asked Xanthe, as my lips started to quiver, I was fighting to prevent my emotions from consuming me once again.

“I actually do. I’m sorry Aleksa, I wasn’t thinking. Of course, you would want a photo of them. I believe I have one or two. I could bring them with me when I come back in a few days if you like.” Xanthe asked me.

“That would be amazing – thank you! Well, we will get going and we look forward to hearing from you in few days, all going well. Goodbye Xanthe!” I said as I walked over to Xanthe embracing her in a hug, she smelt like wild jasmine, the hug felt strangely familiar, as did her scent. I walked over to Kingston, and we locked hands and walked off through the gardens. I lay my head against his shoulder and we walked together, our bodies molding into one another’s. I could feel the warmth from the bond. I looked up at Kingston’s face while we were walking, he looked down at me and kissed me on the forehead. “I love you so much,” I said to Kingston.

"I love you too, Aleksa," Kingston said back. And we kept walking towards the packhouse to see our pups on this warm sunny day, the blue sky was dotted with fluffy white clouds, there was a gentle breeze passing us, I could hear the birds chirping in the background, bees buzzing over the wildflowers that littered the sides of the path we walked on, and a faint sound of children playing with frisbees on the grass in front of the packhouse.

There was so much going through my mind right now, but it could all wait a few hours. This mama needed some time with her pups.

\*Aleksa POV\*

It's been two weeks since we spoke with Xanthe, and strangely we haven't heard back from her yet. We assume she has been busy or hasn't yet found anything further out about crescent moon wolves. It's been very busy here at the packhouse lately.

Everyone is getting prepared for the Royal Alpha Summit which will be taking place over the next week. We've had the caterers in to organize the meals for the week-long event. Quinn has been helping me with this as I am still new to all of this. Back at Evergreen we never had an event even remotely resembling this. It's all a learning curve for me.

We decided against the media release about Kingston and I's mateship. The pack knew most importantly, but the rest of the world could wait a little bit longer.

After speaking with Xanthe and learning what we did about my lineage, about the Crescent Moon wolves being hunted, about my grandparents, and the Hunter that was potentially looking for me and Layla, we decided that it was best to keep things under wraps for now. We would wait for the summit and deal with things as they happened. Meaning that we would be dealing with the Lachlan situation as it arose.

I really hoped that Lachlan wouldn't attend the Royal Alpha Summit. He had never attended one previously so with a little bit of luck he wouldn't attend this one. Although, in saying that we weren't leaving it to luck. Kingston and Asher were working on a plan for what would happen if he did attend and how we would approach that situation without placing a damper on the celebrations or any disrespect to the alpha king himself.

Kingston was determined that this would be the best summit he had organized yet. We had all the accommodation organized, housekeeping was paying attention to detail to ensure that everything was perfect for our guests, and we had guides and point of contact organized for each pack.

We had entertainment organized for each night of the summit. The conference room had been extended and prepared to seat all attending alphas comfortably. Maintenance had outdone themselves, as the pack landscaping looked immaculate. The pack members were all excited and ready to host the attending packs. Unmated wolves were excited at the possibility of meeting their mates at the summit. The pack was a hive of excitement and anticipation.

While I was putting on a brave face, my anxiety was at an all-time high. I was trying to distract myself and not overanalyze everything because I knew Kingston would feel it through our bond, but I just couldn't. I was scared of what would happen if Lachlan attended. So much so that I had made plans to have Kingston's parents Chase and Cordelia take Liam and Layla away to a cabin in a nearby state for the week of the summit. I needed to know that they were safe especially if I was to see Lachlan face to face. Also, I would constantly be on edge worrying about whether or not they were safe if they were to be here while the Summit was taking place.

Although I would worry regardless, I would worry less knowing that they were in the capable hands of Chase and Cordelia. We had gotten to know each other a lot more over the past few weeks. They were very welcoming and genuinely happy for us both. They knew of my past with Lachlan and Evergreen, and accepted me with open arms.

Chase was still very fit and also very intimidating when you first met him, he was an older more distinguished version of Kingston, and Cordelia was sophisticated and elegant, she looked like an older version of Quinn, she was very nurturing and absolutely loved being around children, she doted on Liam and Layla as if they were her own pups. They would be leaving two days before the summit started, which I was happy with, as it gave us that little bit more time to plan, and sort our backup plan, as well as our back up to the backup plan.

Kingston had been very busy, but he had a very capable team working with him, he was at this point just checking that everything was organized and ready to go. Initially, he had played a bigger role in preparing the summit, but

in light of the rogue attacks, Xanthe telling us of mine and Layla's lineage and preparing for the probable fallout with Lachlan, he had decided to delegate.

Quinn and Mason had been busy renovating their cottage, and it was almost ready, they were just putting the finishing touches on it. They were so happy stuck in their own little love bubble. Kingston had been giving Mason more and more responsibility within the pack leadership and Mason was handling it all so well. He seemed very comfortable and settled here. I was so happy for my friend. He deserved happiness.

Kaia was still heavily involved with the warrior squad and practically trained all day every day. She was still spending a lot of time with Asher, they had even been on their first date. They were taking things slowly but you could feel the s\*\*\*\*l tension in the air whenever those two were around each other.

Liam and Layla were settled and fitted in so well with the pack, everyone had been so welcoming towards them. It's crazy to think that in a few months they would be celebrating their third birthdays. I hadn't planned anything yet for that but I plan to once the summit is over, and everything is sorted out in regards to Lachlan, I will start planning for it then.

I was on my way to Kingston's office to bring him some lunch as he tended to skip meals often when he was hyperfocused and immersed in pack business. Liam and Layla were at daycare so I was just doing errands today and helping with the final preparations. As I walked down the hallway I heard raised voices coming from Kingston's office.

The voices stopped. I assumed they could scent me considering I was standing just outside the office. "Come in Aleksa" Kingston called out.

I walked in to see Kingston leaning back in his chair, Asher was sitting on the chair in front of Lachlan's desk. "Good afternoon Asher, good afternoon My Love," I said as I walked up to Kingston, placing his lunch on his desk in front of him and kissing him on his forehead.

"Did I walk in on something?" I ask sheepishly.

Asher shifts uncomfortably in his chair.

"Just tell her Asher," Kingston says to Asher sighing.

“Well Aleksa, I’m sorry to be the bearer of bad news, but it would appear that news of Lachlan’s bounty has traveled, your images have been posted all over the town. It’s only a matter of time before someone contacts Lachlan, and he knows where you are.” Asher tells me, releasing the breath he was holding in.

My heart starts racing rapidly and I feel a shiver ripple throughout my body. My eyes begin to tear up. Then I close my eyes and focus my energy. I will not let this fear consume me. I take a few deep breaths and try to control my emotions.

Kingston goes to pull me into him and sit me on his lap, while I would usually feel comfort and protection in this action, right now I want to stand. I need to stand. I will not cower and let fear take over whenever a curveball is thrown at me. I am to be Luna of this pack Although I love that Kingston wants to protect me, I am done with being a passive subservient Luna like I was when I was at Evergreen. I need to learn to protect myself, my pups, and my pack properly. Kingston growls at my actions and looks at me questionably.

“Okay, so, we need a plan! We can’t leave anything to chance, we really need to be a few steps ahead of Lachlan at all times!” I declare to them both.

Asher looks at me incredulously, usually, I would be an emotional wreck right now, and would act before thinking. But I was done with being that girl. Kingston looks at me with a proud look on his face. I can feel through the bond that he approves of this side of me.

“Well Luna, I have taken them all down, but we have to work on the premise that they have already been seen by most people.”

“For example, the people that knew you from working at the tavern, people who may be walked past you in the street, or saw you in a shop. We will speak with all pack members, I can’t imagine we would have any problems there. But the humans and any rogues we will have no control over.” Asher replied.

“I have just called all pack members to the training grounds in fifteen minutes, we will discuss this issue with them immediately. Aleksa we will need to tell them about your past, about Lachlan, and about Evergreen. What are your thoughts on this?” Kingston asks me.

“I agree. The pack needs to know the truth. It is better that they know now before they decide whether or not they will accept me as their Luna officially.” I said.

Kingston growled. “They have already accepted you. You are their Luna.” He declared.

I put my hands on his cheek and pulled him in for a quick kiss to calm his wolf.

“Looks like we will be speaking with Lachlan sooner than we expected,” Kingston says to Asher, their eyes meeting each other knowingly in agreeance.

“I will have two elite warriors assigned to Liam and Layla twenty-four hours a day, I will also assign two elite warriors to the Luna if you agree Alpha?” Asher asked Kingston.

“Sounds good. We will need to tighten pack security and double the patrols. I will have to speak with our neighboring packs to advise them of the situation and ensure our bases are covered should we need additional backup.” Kingston tells Asher.

“Everything will be ok Aleksa, you are safe, Liam and Layla are safe. Your pack will protect you.” Kingston reassures me.

“I know we will be. I refuse to let Lachlan control our lives. I am done with running and done with being afraid. That being said, I need a little help with something Asher. If you have some free time later this afternoon?” I ask him hopefully.

“Of course Luna, although I must say I am rather curious,” Asher remarks to me. Kingston is looking at me, raising an eyebrow.

“Relax, I just need a little training, some basic but effective defensive moves, I need to be able to fight if necessary,” I tell them both.

Kingston mind-links me “This more dominant side of you is turning me right now on my love!”

“Uh guys, I’m still here,” Asher says, looking uncomfortable.

Kingston and I both chuckle, “Sorry man” Kingston says to Asher.



I feel the heat creep over my cheeks, I know that I am blushing right now.

A few minutes later, there is a knock on the door. "Mason, please come in," Kingston calls out.

Mason walks in, "Alpha, Luna, Beta Asher," He says as he nodded his head respectfully. "What can I do for you?" He asks.

"Well Mason, we have a problem. Those images you warned us of, well they have been posted all over town. We have to assume that Lachlan already knows where Aleksa and the twins are, so we have a problem."

"I asked you to come here today in the hopes that you would consider being Liam and Layla's protection detail for now, until this is all resolved. I would also assign two of our elite warriors to the twins, but I think it would be reassuring for Aleksa to have someone she trusts looking out for the twins, and less stressful for them to have a familiar face around them." Kingston asks Mason.

Mason answers straight away as if he didn't even have to consider the request. "Absolutely Alpha, I would be honored to." He said, winking at me, which made me smile, lessening my nerves a little.

Kingston got up out of his seat and everyone else stood and made their way out of the office. It was time to address the pack and tell them of my life before coming to Rocky Mountain. It was time to tell them of the threat to the pack. Although it wasn't the time to tell them of my lineage and that I was a Crescent Moon wolf as I still didn't really know what that meant myself.

I had just hoped that they would still accept the twins and I once they knew the truth about my past before coming to Rocky Mountain.

\*Aleksa POV\*

It's been a few days since we had "the talk" with our pack. It actually went really well. Everyone was a bit quiet initially. I could hear gasps and whispers, but I kept talking, telling my story, and before long, I could sense that the pack understood what I was saying and why I had to leave my previous pack. I explained what happened with Lachlan and Eva, and how I ended up in the pack dungeons. Then I explained how I had to leave with my pups, and mentioned my friends, Mason and Kaia, who helped facilitate that escape. Everyone just stood and listened to what I had to say. Kingston took over and

explained to the pack about the bounty placed on me, as well as explaining that what Lachlan had told people about Mason and Kaia was untrue, that they were helping me, not k\*\*\*\*\*g me, and to not pay attention to the lies they might hear. He reassured the pack that he had done his due diligence before we came to join Rocky Mountain,

Since then, everyone has been even friendlier, which I didn't think was possible, because they were already so welcoming. I feel lighter not having to hide my past, like a weight has been shifted from my shoulders. I feel relieved to know that the pack accepts me as their Luna, because I love Kingston and the pack, and I feel like we have made this place our home. I don't even want to imagine what might have happened if the pack hadn't accepted me and my pups.

Due to the news of the bounty, and mine and my pups faces being plastered everywhere, as well as Mason and Kaia's, pack security and patrols have doubled and the place is like Fort Knox around here, which is making things a little harder for the deliveries and preparations needed for the summit, but as Kingston reiterates, it's better to be safe than sorry.

I know I need to face Lachlan once and for all. And every day I feel more and more ready for it, I just want to get it over with, so we can all live our lives without having this hanging over our heads.

Asher has been taking the time out to train me twice a day. We meet at dawn and dusk. He is mostly teaching me defense. He's keeping it short and sweet for now, teaching me how I can use my size to my advantage, as well as teaching me moves that are easy to execute and are highly effective.

Tomorrow, Chase and Cordelia will be taking Liam and Layla away to a lake house in Idaho. Mason and Quinn will be accompanying them, as well as several elite warriors. I know my pups are in safe hands. I am sad that we will be separated, but I know it's only temporary. I feel confident knowing that they will be further away from Lachlan's clutches.

We are spending the day at the packhouse today. I want to make the most of my time with my pups before their trip away. I have told them they will be going away with their grandparents and they don't seem phased. I guess they are too young to really understand. But at least they have fun with Chase and Cordelia, Mason and Quinn, and they are familiar faces for them, which should help alleviate any stress or anxiety that they may feel from being away from their Mama.

I won't see Kingston until tonight as he has back-to-back meetings with some of the Alpha's from nearby packs all day, they will be busily preparing for the summit as well as Lachlan's probable arrival. I have organized a special lunch to be delivered to the conference room for them today. I know what those Alpha's are like when they are busy talking about business they often won't eat, so at least they can eat while they work. I know I will feel better knowing that they are being fed.

I hear a knock at the door and I get up from the floor where I am playing blocks with the twins to open it. I was surprised to see Kaia at the door. "Aleksa, I wondered if you and the twins would like some company. I heard that they were leaving tomorrow and I needed to get my cuddle quota in before they leave" Kaia says enthusiastically, opening her arms up for Liam and Layla.

"Aun-ty Kaia! Aun-ty Kaia!" they yelled, barrelling towards her with open arms.

"My pups!" She replies, pulling them into her arms, and snuggling them.

"Perhaps we could go to the kitchen and get some snacks to have a picnic on the front lawn?" I suggested to everyone.

"Yay!" the twins shouted in unison.

"Sounds good to me!" Kaia says cheerfully.

I grab my go-bag for the twins, they each take Kaia's hand, and we walk out the door, kitchen bound for snacks.

Ready to enjoy the rest of the day together creating fun memories.

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It's the day before the summit, which means my pups are about to embark on their first holiday without their Mama this morning, and I am feeling a little anxious. I woke up super early today. I had the twins' suitcases packed last night and had taken them to the front door, ready to be loaded into Chase's SUV this morning.

I have already had two coffees and I'm considering my third one already. I've just been sitting here watching Liam and Layla sleep for the past few hours. Just thinking about how fast they are growing and wondering where the time

has gone. It seems like only yesterday they were in my womb. Now they aren't far off their third birthdays.

We have all been through so much over the past six months or so. But I wouldn't change a thing because it has got us to this point. To Rocky Mountain, to Kingston, to our beautiful friends who have become our family. To this kind and caring and protective pack. We are all so blessed.

I am disrupted from my thought process by a sleepy Liam, "Mama?" He questions me.

"Good Morning Liam, yes it's Mama, how did you sleep?" I asked my big boy.

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"Yes, Liam?" I said, trying to hold back my chuckle at how cute my little boy looked half asleep and trying to communicate with me.

"Pancakes?" Liam asks.

"Yes Liam, you can have pancakes this morning, let's get you changed while we wait for your sister to wake up, shall we?" I said to Liam.

"I'm awake!" Layla called out.

I laughed out loud. Layla never missed an opportunity to have pancakes.

"Of course, my princess, let's get you dressed too, and head down to the kitchen," I say to my pups.

They both smile and start clapping with glee.

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After breakfast, I got Liam and Layla cleaned up and we made our way back downstairs to the main entrance of the pack house. Kingston and Mason help strap the twins into their car seats and I give them big cuddles and kisses goodbye. I then say thank you to everyone and wish them all a safe trip.

I waved continuously with a big smile on my face, holding back the tears until Liam and Layla were out of sight. I feel tears flooding my eyes, and I try to

contain myself in front of everyone. I end up laughing at myself and overcome with emotion. I wipe my eyes and take a few breaths trying to settle myself down. Kingston pulls me into his chest and tries to console me.

“It’s for the best, Aleksa, they will be safe with my parents, and with Mason and Quinn, I promise,” Kingston tells me.

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Kingston looks at me proudly, as if he knows exactly what I am thinking. Asher clears his throat.

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“Border patrol has told me that some of the Alpha’s have already started to arrive for the Summit,” Asher tells us.

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“It’s okay, my love, it’s not unusual for some packs to arrive a little early. We have already anticipated this. Let’s quickly refresh ourselves, then come back down to greet our guests Aleksa.” Kingston gestures for me to follow him.

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Three SUVs drove up to the entrance. A burly man, probably in his early twenties, ran up to the door of the SUV and opened it for his Alpha, a very tall and muscular man who looked to be in his late twenties. He then opened the door on the other side and a gorgeous woman with red hair and green eyes walked out. She had a shy smile on her face, she joined hands with her mate and they walked up to us.

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"I see what you did there. Touche." Kingston says, trying to suppress his laughter.

"It's ok. Come to think of it I should really go over everything one last time, and check in with security." Kingston says matter of factly.

"Ah, yes, and I will touch base with the planning team for the festivities, to ensure everything is on schedule," I said to Kingston, leaning on him to kiss him on the cheek.

"I love you!" I said to Kingston as I looked into his eyes sincerely.



“I love you too!” He replied back to me. And we go our separate ways.

As I was walking down the hallway, I realized I had left my phone in the kitchen, so I turned back and headed toward the kitchen. As I walked through the door, I saw that Rose and some of the kitchen staff were busy preparing lunch. I could hear a commotion outside, so I quickly grabbed my phone and made my way outside.

As I opened the door and walked down the steps of the packhouse following the raised voices, I saw some of our pack members preparing to direct our guests. One of them has a checklist, and the other is trying to communicate with the driver of the first SUV. A total of two SUVs have arrived at the main entrance of the packhouse. I am surprised there are no ranked wolves down here to greet them, so I quickly mind-linked Kingston telling him we have more guests arriving. Then I started to confidently stride toward the SUV. I’ve got this thought to myself, it’s just meet and greet, how hard can it be.

I then see a tall and muscular man in a fitted black suit step out of the first SUV and as he turns towards me I gasp, stopping in my tracks.

“Aleksa? Well, this is a pleasant surprise.”

## **Luna Aleksa’s Escape Chapter 39**

\*Aleksa POV\*

It’s been two weeks since we spoke with Xanthe, and strangely we haven’t heard back from her yet. We assume she has been busy or hasn’t yet found anything further out about crescent moon wolves. It’s been very busy here at the packhouse lately.

Everyone is getting prepared for the Royal Alpha Summit which will be taking place over the next week. We’ve had the caterers in to organize the meals for the week-long event. Quinn has been helping me with this as I am still new to all of this. Back at Evergreen we never had an event even remotely resembling this. It’s all a learning curve for me.

We decided against the media release about Kingston and I’s mateship. The pack knew most importantly, but the rest of the world could wait a little bit longer.

After speaking with Xanthe and learning what we did about my lineage, about the Crescent Moon wolves being hunted, about my grandparents, and the Hunter that was potentially looking for me and Layla, we decided that it was best to keep things under wraps for now. We would wait for the summit and deal with things as they happened. Meaning that we would be dealing with the Lachlan situation as it arose.

I really hoped that Lachlan wouldn't attend the Royal Alpha Summit. He had never attended one previously so with a little bit of luck he wouldn't attend this one. Although, in saying that we weren't leaving it to luck. Kingston and Asher were working on a plan for what would happen if he did attend and how we would approach that situation without placing a damper on the celebrations or any disrespect to the alpha king himself.

Kingston was determined that this would be the best summit he had organized yet. We had all the accommodation organized, housekeeping was paying attention to detail to ensure that everything was perfect for our guests, and we had guides and point of contact organized for each pack.

We had entertainment organized for each night of the summit. The conference room had been extended and prepared to seat all attending alphas comfortably. Maintenance had outdone themselves, as the pack landscaping looked immaculate. The pack members were all excited and ready to host the attending packs. Unmated wolves were excited at the possibility of meeting their mates at the summit. The pack was a hive of excitement and anticipation.

While I was putting on a brave face, my anxiety was at an all-time high. I was trying to distract myself and not overanalyze everything because I knew Kingston would feel it through our bond, but I just couldn't. I was scared of what would happen if Lachlan attended. So much so that I had made plans to have Kingston's parents Chase and Cordelia take Liam and Layla away to a cabin in a nearby state for the week of the summit. I needed to know that they were safe especially if I was to see Lachlan face to face. Also, I would constantly be on edge worrying about whether or not they were safe if they were to be here while the Summit was taking place.

Although I would worry regardless, I would worry less knowing that they were in the capable hands of Chase and Cordelia. We had gotten to know each other a lot more over the past few weeks. They were very welcoming and genuinely happy for us both. They knew of my past with Lachlan and Evergreen, and accepted me with open arms.

Chase was still very fit and also very intimidating when you first met him, he was an older more distinguished version of Kingston, and Cordelia was sophisticated and elegant, she looked like an older version of Quinn, she was very nurturing and absolutely loved being around children, she doted on Liam and Layla as if they were her own pups. They would be leaving two days before the summit started, which I was happy with, as it gave us that little bit more time to plan, and sort our backup plan, as well as our back up to the backup plan.

Kingston had been very busy, but he had a very capable team working with him, he was at this point just checking that everything was organized and ready to go. Initially, he had played a bigger role in preparing the summit, but in light of the rogue attacks, Xanthe telling us of mine and Layla's lineage and preparing for the probable fallout with Lachlan, he had decided to delegate.

Quinn and Mason had been busy renovating their cottage, and it was almost ready, they were just putting the finishing touches on it. They were so happy stuck in their own little love bubble. Kingston had been giving Mason more and more responsibility within the pack leadership and Mason was handling it all so well. He seemed very comfortable and settled here. I was so happy for my friend. He deserved happiness.

Kaia was still heavily involved with the warrior squad and practically trained all day every day. She was still spending a lot of time with Asher, they had even been on their first date. They were taking things slowly but you could feel the s\*\*\*\*l tension in the air whenever those two were around each other.

Liam and Layla were settled and fitted in so well with the pack, everyone had been so welcoming towards them. It's crazy to think that in a few months they would be celebrating their third birthdays. I hadn't planned anything yet for that but I plan to once the summit is over, and everything is sorted out in regards to Lachlan, I will start planning for it then.

I was on my way to Kingston's office to bring him some lunch as he tended to skip meals often when he was hyperfocused and immersed in pack business. Liam and Layla were at daycare so I was just doing errands today and helping with the final preparations. As I walked down the hallway I heard raised voices coming from Kingston's office.

The voices stopped. I assumed they could scent me considering I was standing just outside the office. "Come in Aleksa" Kingston called out.

I walked in to see Kingston leaning back in his chair, Asher was sitting on the chair in front of Lachlan's desk. "Good afternoon Asher, good afternoon My Love," I said as I walked up to Kingston, placing his lunch on his desk in front of him and kissing him on his forehead.

"Did I walk in on something?" I ask sheepishly.

Asher shifts uncomfortably in his chair.

"Just tell her Asher," Kingston says to Asher sighing.

"Well Aleksa, I'm sorry to be the bearer of bad news, but it would appear that news of Lachlan's bounty has traveled, your images have been posted all over the town. It's only a matter of time before someone contacts Lachlan, and he knows where you are." Asher tells me, releasing the breath he was holding in.

My heart starts racing rapidly and I feel a shiver ripple throughout my body. My eyes begin to tear up. Then I close my eyes and focus my energy. I will not let this fear consume me. I take a few deep breaths and try to control my emotions.

Kingston goes to pull me into him and sit me on his lap, while I would usually feel comfort and protection in this action, right now I want to stand. I need to stand. I will not cower and let fear take over whenever a curveball is thrown at me. I am to be Luna of this pack Although I love that Kingston wants to protect me, I am done with being a passive subservient Luna like I was when I was at Evergreen. I need to learn to protect myself, my pups, and my pack properly. Kingston growls at my actions and looks at me questionably.

"Okay, so, we need a plan! We can't leave anything to chance, we really need to be a few steps ahead of Lachlan at all times!" I declare to them both.

Asher looks at me incredulously, usually, I would be an emotional wreck right now, and would act before thinking. But I was done with being that girl. Kingston looks at me with a proud look on his face. I can feel through the bond that he approves of this side of me.

"Well Luna, I have taken them all down, but we have to work on the premise that they have already been seen by most people."

“For example, the people that knew you from working at the tavern, people who may be walked past you in the street, or saw you in a shop. We will speak with all pack members, I can’t imagine we would have any problems there. But the humans and any rogues we will have no control over.” Asher replied.

“I have just called all pack members to the training grounds in fifteen minutes, we will discuss this issue with them immediately. Aleksa we will need to tell them about your past, about Lachlan, and about Evergreen. What are your thoughts on this?” Kingston asks me.

“I agree. The pack needs to know the truth. It is better that they know now before they decide whether or not they will accept me as their Luna officially.” I said.

Kingston growled. “They have already accepted you. You are their Luna.” He declared.

I put my hands on his cheek and pulled him in for a quick kiss to calm his wolf.

“Looks like we will be speaking with Lachlan sooner than we expected,” Kingston says to Asher, their eyes meeting each other knowingly in agreeance.

“I will have two elite warriors assigned to Liam and Layla twenty-four hours a day, I will also assign two elite warriors to the Luna if you agree Alpha?” Asher asked Kingston.

“Sounds good. We will need to tighten pack security and double the patrols. I will have to speak with our neighboring packs to advise them of the situation and ensure our bases are covered should we need additional backup.” Kingston tells Asher.

“Everything will be ok Aleksa, you are safe, Liam and Layla are safe. Your pack will protect you.” Kingston reassures me.

“I know we will be. I refuse to let Lachlan control our lives. I am done with running and done with being afraid. That being said, I need a little help with something Asher. If you have some free time later this afternoon?” I ask him hopefully.

“Of course Luna, although I must say I am rather curious,” Asher remarks to me. Kingston is looking at me, raising an eyebrow.

“Relax, I just need a little training, some basic but effective defensive moves, I need to be able to fight if necessary,” I tell them both.

Kingston mind-links me “This more dominant side of you is turning me right now on my love!”

“Uh guys, I’m still here,” Asher says, looking uncomfortable.

Kingston and I both chuckle, “Sorry man” Kingston says to Asher.

I feel the heat creep over my cheeks, I know that I am blushing right now.

A few minutes later, there is a knock on the door. “Mason, please come in,” Kingston calls out.

Mason walks in, “Alpha, Luna, Beta Asher,” He says as he nodded his head respectfully. “What can I do for you?” He asks.

“Well Mason, we have a problem. Those images you warned us of, well they have been posted all over town. We have to assume that Lachlan already knows where Aleksa and the twins are, so we have a problem.”

“I asked you to come here today in the hopes that you would consider being Liam and Layla’s protection detail for now, until this is all resolved. I would also assign to of our elite warriors to the twins, but I think it would be reassuring for Aleksa to have someone she trusts looking out for the twins, and less stressful for them to have a familiar face around them.” Kingston asks Mason.

Mason answers straight away as if he didn’t even have to consider the request. “Absolutely Alpha, I would be honored to.” He said, winking at me, which made me smile, lessening my nerves a little.

Kingston got up out of his seat and everyone else stood and made their way out of the office. It was time to address the pack and tell them of my life before coming to Rocky Mountain. It was time to tell them of the threat to the pack. Although it wasn’t the time to tell them of my lineage and that I was a Crescent Moon wolf as I still didn’t really know what that meant myself.

I had just hoped that they would still accept the twins and I once they knew the truth about my past before coming to Rocky Mountain.

\*Aleksa POV\*

It's been a few days since we had "the talk" with our pack. It actually went really well. Everyone was a bit quiet initially. I could hear gasps and whispers, but I kept talking, telling my story, and before long, I could sense that the pack understood what I was saying and why I had to leave my previous pack. I explained what happened with Lachlan and Eva, and how I ended up in the pack dungeons. Then I explained how I had to leave with my pups, and mentioned my friends, Mason and Kaia, who helped facilitate that escape. Everyone just stood and listened to what I had to say. Kingston took over and explained to the pack about the bounty placed on me, as well as explaining that what Lachlan had told people about Mason and Kaia was untrue, that they were helping me, not k\*\*\*\*\*g me, and to not pay attention to the lies they might hear. He reassured the pack that he had done his due diligence before we came to join Rocky Mountain,

Since then, everyone has been even friendlier, which I didn't think was possible, because they were already so welcoming. I feel lighter not having to hide my past, like a weight has been shifted from my shoulders. I feel relieved to know that the pack accepts me as their Luna, because I love Kingston and the pack, and I feel like we have made this place our home. I don't even want to imagine what might have happened if the pack hadn't accepted me and my pups.

Due to the news of the bounty, and mine and my pups faces being plastered everywhere, as well as Mason and Kaia's, pack security and patrols have doubled and the place is like Fort Knox around here, which is making things a little harder for the deliveries and preparations needed for the summit, but as Kingston reiterates, it's better to be safe than sorry.

I know I need to face Lachlan once and for all. And every day I feel more and more ready for it, I just want to get it over with, so we can all live our lives without having this hanging over our heads.

Asher has been taking the time out to train me twice a day. We meet at dawn and dusk. He is mostly teaching me defense. He's keeping it short and sweet for now, teaching me how I can use my size to my advantage, as well as teaching me moves that are easy to execute and are highly effective.



Tomorrow, Chase and Cordelia will be taking Liam and Layla away to a lake house in Idaho. Mason and Quinn will be accompanying them, as well as several elite warriors. I know my pups are in safe hands. I am sad that we will be separated, but I know it's only temporary. I feel confident knowing that they will be further away from Lachlan's clutches.

We are spending the day at the packhouse today. I want to make the most of my time with my pups before their trip away. I have told them they will be going away with their grandparents and they don't seem phased. I guess they are too young to really understand. But at least they have fun with Chase and Cordelia, Mason and Quinn, and they are familiar faces for them, which should help alleviate any stress or anxiety that they may feel from being away from their Mama.

I won't see Kingston until tonight as he has back-to-back meetings with some of the Alpha's from nearby packs all day, they will be busily preparing for the summit as well as Lachlan's probable arrival. I have organized a special lunch to be delivered to the conference room for them today. I know what those Alpha's are like when they are busy talking about business they often won't eat, so at least they can eat while they work. I know I will feel better knowing that they are being fed.

I hear a knock at the door and I get up from the floor where I am playing blocks with the twins to open it. I was surprised to see Kaia at the door. "Aleksa, I wondered if you and the twins would like some company. I heard that they were leaving tomorrow and I needed to get my cuddle quota in before they leave" Kaia says enthusiastically, opening her arms up for Liam and Layla.

"Aun-ty Kaia! Aun-ty Kaia!" they yelled, barrelling towards her with open arms.

"My pups!" She replies, pulling them into her arms, and snuggling them.

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## **Luna Aleksa’s Escape Chapter 40**

\*Aleksa POV\*

It's been a few days since we had "the talk" with our pack. It actually went really well. Everyone was a bit quiet initially. I could hear gasps and whispers, but I kept talking, telling my story, and before long, I could sense that the pack understood what I was saying and why I had to leave my previous pack. I explained what happened with Lachlan and Eva, and how I ended up in the pack dungeons. Then I explained how I had to leave with my pups, and mentioned my friends, Mason and Kaia, who helped facilitate that escape. Everyone just stood and listened to what I had to say. Kingston took over and explained to the pack about the bounty placed on me, as well as explaining that what Lachlan had told people about Mason and Kaia was untrue, that they were helping me, not k\*\*\*\*\*g me, and to not pay attention to the lies they might hear. He reassured the pack that he had done his due diligence before we came to join Rocky Mountain,

Since then, everyone has been even friendlier, which I didn't think was possible, because they were already so welcoming. I feel lighter not having to hide my past, like a weight has been shifted from my shoulders. I feel relieved to know that the pack accepts me as their Luna, because I love Kingston and the pack, and I feel like we have made this place our home. I don't even want to imagine what might have happened if the pack hadn't accepted me and my pups.

Due to the news of the bounty, and mine and my pups faces being plastered everywhere, as well as Mason and Kaia's, pack security and patrols have doubled and the place is like Fort Knox around here, which is making things a little harder for the deliveries and preparations needed for the summit, but as Kingston reiterates, it's better to be safe than sorry.

I know I need to face Lachlan once and for all. And every day I feel more and more ready for it, I just want to get it over with, so we can all live our lives without having this hanging over our heads.

Asher has been taking the time out to train me twice a day. We meet at dawn and dusk. He is mostly teaching me defense. He's keeping it short and sweet for now, teaching me how I can use my size to my advantage, as well as teaching me moves that are easy to execute and are highly effective.

Tomorrow, Chase and Cordelia will be taking Liam and Layla away to a lake house in Idaho. Mason and Quinn will be accompanying them, as well as several elite warriors. I know my pups are in safe hands. I am sad that we will be separated, but I know it's only temporary. I feel confident knowing that they will be further away from Lachlan's clutches.



We are spending the day at the packhouse today. I want to make the most of my time with my pups before their trip away. I have told them they will be going away with their grandparents and they don't seem phased. I guess they are too young to really understand. But at least they have fun with Chase and Cordelia, Mason and Quinn, and they are familiar faces for them, which should help alleviate any stress or anxiety that they may feel from being away from their Mama.

I won't see Kingston until tonight as he has back-to-back meetings with some of the Alpha's from nearby packs all day, they will be busily preparing for the summit as well as Lachlan's probable arrival. I have organized a special lunch to be delivered to the conference room for them today. I know what those Alpha's are like when they are busy talking about business they often won't eat, so at least they can eat while they work. I know I will feel better knowing that they are being fed.

I hear a knock at the door and I get up from the floor where I am playing blocks with the twins to open it. I was surprised to see Kaia at the door. "Aleksa, I wondered if you and the twins would like some company. I heard that they were leaving tomorrow and I needed to get my cuddle quota in before they leave" Kaia says enthusiastically, opening her arms up for Liam and Layla.

"Aun-ty Kaia! Aun-ty Kaia!" they yelled, barrelling towards her with open arms.

"My pups!" She replies, pulling them into her arms, and snuggling them.

"Perhaps we could go to the kitchen and get some snacks to have a picnic on the front lawn?" I suggested to everyone.

"Yay!" the twins shouted in unison.

"Sounds good to me!" Kaia says cheerfully.

I grab my go-bag for the twins, they each take Kaia's hand, and we walk out the door, kitchen bound for snacks.

Ready to enjoy the rest of the day together creating fun memories.

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It's the day before the summit, which means my pups are about to embark on their first holiday without their Mama this morning, and I am feeling a little anxious. I woke up super early today. I had the twins' suitcases packed last night and had taken them to the front door, ready to be loaded into Chase's SUV this morning.

I have already had two coffees and I'm considering my third one already. I've just been sitting here watching Liam and Layla sleep for the past few hours. Just thinking about how fast they are growing and wondering where the time has gone. It seems like only yesterday they were in my womb. Now they aren't far off their third birthdays.

We have all been through so much over the past six months or so. But I wouldn't change a thing because it has got us to this point. To Rocky Mountain, to Kingston, to our beautiful friends who have become our family. To this kind and caring and protective pack. We are all so blessed.

I am disrupted from my thought process by a sleepy Liam, "Mama?" He questions me.

"Good Morning Liam, yes it's Mama, how did you sleep?" I asked my big boy.

"Good." He says to me,

"Mama?" He asked me.

"Yes, Liam?" I said, trying to hold back my chuckle at how cute my little boy looked half asleep and trying to communicate with me.

"Pancakes?" Liam asks.

"Yes Liam, you can have pancakes this morning, let's get you changed while we wait for your sister to wake up, shall we?" I said to Liam.

"I'm awake!" Layla called out.

I laughed out loud. Layla never missed an opportunity to have pancakes.

"Of course, my princess, let's get you dressed too, and head down to the kitchen," I say to my pups.

They both smile and start clapping with glee.

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After breakfast, I got Liam and Layla cleaned up and we made our way back downstairs to the main entrance of the pack house. Kingston and Mason help strap the twins into their car seats and I give them big cuddles and kisses goodbye. I then say thank you to everyone and wish them all a safe trip.

I waved continuously with a big smile on my face, holding back the tears until Liam and Layla were out of sight. I feel tears flooding my eyes, and I try to contain myself in front of everyone. I end up laughing at myself and overcome with emotion. I wipe my eyes and take a few breaths trying to settle myself down. Kingston pulls me into his chest and tries to console me.

“It’s for the best, Aleksa, they will be safe with my parents, and with Mason and Quinn, I promise,” Kingston tells me.

“I know, I don’t doubt that, Kingston. I’m just sad, it’s my first time away from the twins, well, with the exception of my time in the dungeons.” I replied.

Kingston growled at my mentioning the dungeons. Well, it was probably more Sabre growling in all honesty.

I wiped my eyes one last time and took a big breath and exhaled. It’s time to pull myself together. I am doing this for my pups. I need to focus on the summit, on confronting Lachlan, and ensuring he is no longer a threat to me or the twins.

Kingston looks at me proudly, as if he knows exactly what I am thinking. Asher clears his throat.

“Alpha, Luna.” He starts.

“Border patrol has told me that some of the Alpha’s have already started to arrive for the Summit,” Asher tells us.

I had a shocked expression on my face, “But the Summit doesn’t start until tomorrow?” I replied to them both, suddenly wondering if we were actually ready. Although if they are already here, we will just have to be ready.

“It’s okay, my love, it’s not unusual for some packs to arrive a little early. We have already anticipated this. Let’s quickly refresh ourselves, then come back down to greet our guests Aleksa.” Kingston gestures for me to follow him.

“ OK, sure, good idea,” I said in reply to him, feeling a bit dazed, but following his lead. We left Asher at the main entrance, waiting to greet the guests and direct them once they arrived, as well as stalling for time as we made our way back.

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The first pack to arrive was from North Dakota. Alpha Logan and his Luna Louise looked to be in their late thirties, their Gamma Joel, who I imagine was of a similar age and accompanying them, were four elite warriors. Their Beta was at home leading the pack in their absence. They were a lovely pack, very friendly. After some small talk, Asher accompanied them to the cottage they would be residing in for the entirety of the summit. We had suggested they get settled and meet us back at the packhouse for lunch if they wish to. Which they happily accepted.

As we were about to leave to head back into the packhouse, another pack was arriving, so we decided to wait at the main entrance for them, as Asher was busy with the North Dakota pack.

Three SUVs drove up to the entrance. A burly man, probably in his early twenties, ran up to the door of the SUV and opened it for his Alpha, a very tall and muscular man who looked to be in his late twenties. He then opened the door on the other side and a gorgeous woman with red hair and green eyes walked out. She had a shy smile on her face, she joined hands with her mate and they walked up to us.

After introducing ourselves to them, we learned that they were from Nebraska, Wyatt, and Willow Robinson. They seemed like a nice couple, they seemed happy to be here, and I had a really good feeling about Willow specifically, there was something about her. I look forward to getting to know her better over the next week.

Kai arrived at the entrance, he promptly introduced himself to Wyatt and Willow and offered to take them to their cottage so that they could get settled in. They also agreed to meet us at the packhouse for lunch.

Kingston and I took this as a chance for us to spend a little time together while welcoming our guests. It was looking like the summit might be starting a bit earlier this year, so Kingston sent out a mass mind-link to the pack, informing them of the guests that had already arrived, and reminding them to make sure they all felt welcome.

As we walked inside the packhouse, I told Kingston that I needed a quick word with Rose. I said I would be quick if he could just wait for me. I made my way to the kitchen, leaving Kingston to check his emails on his smartphone in the lobby.

I needed to let Rose know our guests had started arriving and that we would be making a special lunch today for our guests. I wanted to give her a heads up numbers-wise but to also potentially prepare for even more guests, as we were not sure who else might arrive early and we didn't want anyone going hungry.

Rose was excited to hear that our guests were arriving and she got to work organizing food. I asked Rose if she would like some help, but she just started shoo-ing me out of the kitchen. So I took the hint and made my way to Kingston.

"My love, you still haven't told me what you and Asher have decided to do about Lachlan? What's this grand plan? I don't mean to pressure you, but I would really like to know what the plan is, considering it will involve me." I told him, pouting and looking into his eyes.

"How about we get through this afternoon, and then tonight after dinner, I will call a meeting with Asher and some of our elite warriors, then we can all talk about it then and there. Does that sound fair?" Kingston asked me. Although it was more of a statement than a question if you ask me.

"I guess I can wait," I said, feeling unimpressed that he seemed to be stalling me.

"So uh, if we have some free time now, would you like a massage?" Kingston says with a cheeky grin on his face.

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